

TOP SECRET

20

Prime Minister

To remind you. I think

You know this story and need
not read it in detail.

Ref. A083/2127

MR BUTLER

Mrs Jenifer Hart

FERB

19.7.

The Sunday Times of 17 July and the Daily Telegraph and a number of other newspapers of 18 and 19 July contained articles --- (copies attached) reporting that Mrs Jenifer Hart (nee Fischer-Williams), the wife of Professor Herbert Hart, had admitted being recruited as a Soviet spy before going to work in the Home Office in the late 1930s.

2. This is not a new story. In his book "Their Trade is Treachery", published in March 1981, Chapman Pincher described a woman who was allegedly recruited "to the Soviet cause" by Bernard Floud, joined the Home Office and was subsequently interrogated by MI5. This was a reference to Mrs Hart, to which I drew attention in my minute of 16 March 1981 to the Prime Minister (reference A04473).

3. On 3 November 1981 there was an article in the Observer --- by Andrew Wilson entitled "Acts of the Apostles" (copy attached). This article made no reference to Pincher's book, but stated that when Floud was interrogated in 1967 he had claimed that he had approached Jenifer Fischer-Williams (as she then was) to "join the Soviet spy network". In fact, Floud made no such claim, and Mrs Hart's involvement had first come to notice five years before, in 1962. The article went on to describe Mrs Hart's work in the Home Office and her subsequent interview with MI5. Wilson reported that when he telephoned Mrs Hart she told him, after 24 hours reflection, that she was not prepared to say anything. Wilson concluded "I have no evidence to suggest that she was anything other than the innocent victim of circumstance".

4. In Nigel West's book "A Matter of Trust" published in December 1982 there was a reference (on page 168) to Mrs Hart as "another of those associated with Floud". He mentioned her work in the Home Office, strong left-wing sympathies and her interview by MI5. Floud was named as a Soviet agent, but Mrs Hart was not.

TOP SECRET

- 5. I attach a separate background note on Mrs Hart. I also
--- attach a speaking note, in case Mr Leadbitter (or another MP)
asks the Prime Minister to comment.

RIA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

19 July 1983

SPEAKING NOTE

Mrs Jenifer Hart

The reports which have appeared in the press recently of Mrs Hart's admission to having been a secret member of the Communist Party are consistent with what she said to the Security Service in a number of interviews, and we have no evidence to suggest that she was not telling the truth.

She was not an overt member of the Communist Party, but counted herself a Communist from 1935, having been recruited by Bernard Floud, later a Member of this House. She joined the Home Office as an Assistant Principal, having been guided to the Home Office as a Department where she would have access to information likely to be of value to the Communist Party. She was to be a "sleeper": in other words, she was not to pass information at once, but to develop her career in the expectation of being valuable later. In 1937 and 1938 she had a number of meetings with people she believed to be representatives of the Russian intelligence services, but she has always said that she did not pass any information to her contacts. In March 1939 she became Private Secretary to the Permanent Under Secretary of State at the Home Office, where she had access to a great deal of highly classified information [including Home Office warrants for the interception of communications]. She has said that later that year, in the light particularly of the Nazi-Soviet pact, she became disenchanted with Communism, and her contacts ceased.

Professor Hart, whom Mrs Hart married in 1941, was a member of the Security Service during the war. Mrs Hart was never a member of the Security Service.

As I say, there is no evidence which would suggest that Mrs Hart is not telling the truth about her contacts with foreign intelligence services.

Michael Ward



Open-air communion in Oxford yesterday

...rongs, says ...Canterbury

...ion that this happiness could be a
...ty for the whole world.
...biblical Christianity, he said, claimed that
...nd women do not grow to their full
...until they surrender their own rights in
...rice of the love of God and neighbour";
...t "joy and fullness of life is the gift of
...ich comes to some of those, like the poor
...mentioned in St. Matthew's gospel,
...modern man would count most
...le."
...s contrast, said the archbishop, there was
...nge to all Christians to take up the
...Movement's example of "a great
...ary effort to our country and culture".
...cession of priests in matching white
...es moved out from the polychromatic
...n gothic of Keble College to take part in
...ce. The Oxford Movement prepared the
...a revived affection, in parts of the
...of England, for ritual and gothic
...ure. Its admirers then and now have
...en interested in reunion with Roman
...ism. The movement came effectively to
...in 1845 when one of its leaders, John
...ewman, went over to Rome.

I was Russian spy, says MI5 man's wife

by Simon Freeman and
Barrie Penrose

A RETIRED Oxford don, the wife of one of Britain's most distinguished professors of law, has reopened the controversy about Soviet penetration of the British security services and political establishment. Mrs Jenifer Hart, married to Professor Herbert Hart, a former principal of Brasenose College, Oxford, says that she was recruited to spy for the Soviet cause shortly before joining the Home Office in the late 1930s.

Mrs Hart, a former history don at St Anne's College, Oxford, says that she has told her story for the first time in an effort to quell suspicions that she had passed secret information to Soviet agents while working in Whitehall. But her statement leaves unanswered the question of whether Herbert Hart, a senior MI5 officer during the war, whom she married in 1941, knew of her activities.

Mrs Hart will not say whether she ever told her husband about her communist beliefs and her role as a "sleeper" in the Home Office - the term used in espionage circles to describe an agent who only begins spying after establishing an impeccable reputation.

Mrs Hart has even admitted that she recommended one young man to MI5. "I saw a lot of the MI5 people and got on very well with them," she says. "I think they trusted me implicitly. One day, the head or the deputy head of MI5 said - I think this was in May 1940 - that they were desperately short of people and did I know any bright young men? I recommended someone who got in at once. They were very pleased with him. I could have easily recommended someone who either was or had been a communist."

Mrs Hart told the Sunday Times yesterday that her communist controllers had wanted her to wait before leaking material. "You don't rush into the Civil Service and start giving secrets away," she says. "It's commonsense." Mrs



Jenifer Hart as a young wife and, below, as she appears in the TV programme



Hart has told her story in detail on BBC2's programme *Time-watch*, due to be screened on July 27.

The cast of characters in Mrs Hart's bizarre story reads like a *Who's Who* of top British spies. For example, her husband, Herbert worked alongside Anthony Blunt in MI5. At one stage Mrs Hart had the same Soviet controller as Burgess and Maclean - like Blunt, members of the Cambridge spy ring.

Like many Communist sympathisers in the 1930s Mrs Hart was intellectual and middle class, her father was the distinguished international lawyer Sir John Fischer Williams.

Jenifer Hart was first recruited as a spy by Bernard

Floud, later a Labour MP, who committed suicide in 1967 after being interrogated by MI5 about his KGB connections. Floud had just been offered a junior ministership by the then Prime Minister, Harold Wilson.

Mrs Hart supported the communists in the 1930s because she was "desperately worried", like many people about the rise of fascism and unemployment in Britain. "I was called a secret member so I never saw a party card and was told not to associate with members of the Communist Party."

Having taken the Civil Service entrance examination Mrs Hart was encouraged by her communist controllers to work at a major office of state. She says: "They said that I ought to go into something where I would be useful to them." The Civil Service Commission was also keen to use the high flying Jenifer in a key role.

She ended up in the department dealing with telephone tapping and mail intercepts - work which involved her with MI5's surveillance of political extremists, including communists. Mrs Hart says she had several controllers, including one man, a central European, whom she found "creepy" and who enjoyed taking her for long walks on Hampstead Heath.

None of this, says Mrs Hart, was glamorous or enjoyable. Her motives, even now, seem confused. And although she admits to her recruitment as a mole she insists, paradoxically, that she never really intended to become a spy. "It was all very vague and not as tight as people might imagine," she says. "But I agree that most British communists then didn't disapprove of leaking material."

Mrs Hart was eventually interrogated by MI5 in 1967 - the year that Floud committed suicide and began to discover the full extent of the Soviet penetration that began in the 1930s.

Two ways to

18 JUL 1983

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PUS

MI5 wife denies passing secrets to Russia

By ALAN COPPS

MRS JENIFER HART, the wife of a former MI5 officer, who has admitted being recruited as a Soviet spy before going to work in the Home Office in the late 1930s, claims she never passed on secret information.

A former history don at St Anne's College, Oxford, Mrs Hart's part in the Soviet penetration of the British establishment has not been revealed until now.

She says she has made a statement to quell suspicions that she gave away secrets.

She admits that at the Home Office she had access to confidential documents about the British Communist party, but says she was never required to pass on the information.

Mrs Hart, now retired, has been married since 1941 to Prof. Herbert Hart, a former principal of Brasenose College, Oxford, and an internationally-respected authority on law.

During the 1939-45 War he was a senior MI5 officer and worked alongside Anthony Blunt, the Soviet agent who became Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, and who was stripped of his Knighthood in 1979.

Mrs Hart's confession is likely to renew the controversy over Soviet penetration of Oxford and Cambridge in the 1930s.

Her story will be broadcast in the BBC 2 programme "Timewatch" on Wednesday week. It does not make clear, however, whether her husband knew of her activities.

Rise of Fascism

At their home in Oxford yesterday, Prof Hart said: "As a matter of principle I don't speak to anyone from the Press." His wife was not at home, he said.

In the programme Mrs Hart, whose father, Sir John Fischer Williams, was also a distinguished international lawyer, says she was recruited as a secret member of the Communist party in the 1930s, when like many others she was "desperately concerned" about the rise of Fascism.

She was not given a party card and was told not to associate with other members. She was chosen as a "sleeper" —

Telephone tapping

At the Home Office she was assigned to a department dealing with telephone tapping and intercepted mail and met a lot of MI5 people involved in surveillance of political extremists including Communists.

Mrs Hart at one time had the same Soviet controller as Guy Burgess and Donald MacLean, the two diplomat members of Blunt's Cambridge spy ring who later defected to Moscow.

She claims she was recruited by Bernard Floud, who later became a Labour MP. He committed suicide in 1967 after being interrogated by MI5. It was then that Mrs Hart was eventually interrogated.

She says she broke off contact with her controls after becoming disillusioned with the Soviet Union because of the Stalinist show trials and the Nazi-Soviet pact.

SEE DEPT
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New spy questions for Thatcher

Mr Ted Leadbitter, Labour MP for Hartlepool, whose House of Commons question led to the exposure of Anthony Blunt, is planning more spy questions for the Prime Minister. He is convinced there are still Soviet "moles" active in the British Secret Service.

He is demanding more information about a former Oxford don who worked in intelligence during the Second World War and now admits to being a Russian spy.

He also says he has copies of "secret Cabinet documents" which were leaked to Germany and Japan in 1940.

Mr Leadbitter's moves follow an admission by Mrs Jenifer Hart, a former history don at St Anne's College, Oxford, that she was recruited by the Russians before joining the Home Office in the later 1930s.

Mrs Hart, whose husband, Professor Herbert Hart, worked

with Mr Blunt in MI5, says she passed no secrets to the Russians because "I was not required to".

She tells of her life as a Soviet spy in *Timewatch*, a BBC television programme, to be shown on July 27. In a statement released by the BBC she says: "Although, after a time, I did see very secret things about the British Communist Party. I was never tempted to give anything away and I did not ever give anything away because I was not required to."

Mrs Hart worked in the Home Office department handling tapping telephones and intercepting mail. At one point she had the same Soviet controller as the spies Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean.

Mr Leadbitter is not satisfied with Mrs Hart's statement and is pressing for a Government statement about her activities

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MP TO QUIZ MAGGIE ON NEW SPY REVELATIONS.

By STEWART PAYNE

THE MP who exposed traitor Anthony Blunt is to raise the issue of Soviet 'sleeper' Jenifer Hart in the Commons.

Mrs Hart, a retired Oxford history don whose husband worked with Blunt in MI5, has confessed that she was recruited to spy for Russia in the late 1930s.

She worked for a time in the Home Office department dealing with tapping telephones and intercepting mail and, at one point, had the same Soviet controller as spies Guy Burgess and Donald Maclean.

But she said she passed on no secrets because she was a 'sleeper' whom the Soviets wanted to reach high office before sending on information.

Last night Mr Ted Leadbitter, Labour MP for Hartlepool, said he was not satisfied with Mrs Hart's explanation, released by the BBC who are documenting her activities in a forthcoming edition of the Timewatch programme.

He said: 'I want to know for sure — would she have divulged information if asked and had she been doing it even though not asked? We have to be clear about the words she is using.' He said he would be tabling questions 'in the near future' as well as writing to the Prime Minister.

'Desperate'

He also plans to ask about claims that highly secret wartime Cabinet papers dealing with Britain's Naval tactics were leaked to the enemy in 1940.

He said that he was sent a copy of the documents a week ago by an informant who claimed that they had been leaked to Germany and Japan.

He added that his source was 'desperate that action should be taken.' The informant had brought the matter to the attention of Mrs Thatcher 'but had received no satisfaction.'

Mr Leadbitter said he could not link the two matters. 'I am still checking on the authenticity of the information I have been given', he said.

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cutting dated 19

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Whitehall 'knew secret facts about Communists'

RECRUITED to spy for the Soviet Union before the last war, former Home Office civil servant Jenifer Hart yesterday said that in Whitehall she had been privy to "very secret things about the British Communist Party."

Her statement, issued in a BBC briefing notice about a forthcoming televised interview with her, was immediately used by right-wing Labour MP Ted Leadbitter as an excuse for a further bout of Soviet spy mania.

Ever since his questions to Mrs. Thatcher led to the uproar over Anthony Blunt, the Hartlepool MP has been keen to get his teeth in again.

He would be putting down questions in the Commons this week, he said last night. He was convinced there were still moles in Whitehall.

"A source who is desperate that action should be taken" had given him secret Cabinet documents on naval deployment which had been leaked to "the enemy" and he wanted to know what was up.

Ms. Hart, a former history don at St. Anne's College in Oxford, says that she was recruited as a Soviet agent before starting to work at the Home Office in the late '30s. Her husband worked in MI5.

She worked in the department dealing with phone tapping and the interception of mail. "After a time I did see very secret things about the British Communist Party" but "I was never tempted to give anything away."

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New spy quiz for Maggie

PREMIER Margaret Thatcher is to be pressed to give full details about Russian spies in Britain's secret service.

Labour MP Ted Leadbitter, whose Commons questions led to the exposure of Buckingham Palace adviser Anthony Blunt, is convinced there are still Soviet moles active in MI5.

He says he wants a fresh Government statement about spying activities.

His move follows a confession by former Oxford history don and Home Office worker Jennifer Hart that she was recruited by the Russians in the late 1930s.

Mrs Hart, whose professor husband Albert worked with Blunt in MI5, reveals her spying role in a BBC-TV programme, Timewatch, to be shown on July 27.

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P. 11/17

NEW SPY SHOCKS

TO COME, SAYS MP

By RICHARD ELLIS

BRITAIN could soon be rocked by a new series of spy scandals, an MP warned last night.

Labour's Ted Leadbitter hit out after yet another Russian mole was unearthed. He said: "There are more skeletons left — and some still in high places. There has been a cover-up."

The MP claimed to have copies of secret documents which could expose another Red spy.

Mr Leadbitter's warning came after Jennifer Hart, the wife of a former top MI5 officer, confessed to being a Soviet agent in the Thirties.

Hart worked in a sensitive post at the Home Office during the war... but she denies passing secrets to the Russians.

The former Oxford don says she was a "sleeper" recruited to feed information to her Soviet spymasters when she reached a high position of trust.

Clear

But she claims she broke off the deal with her Kremlin bosses after becoming disillusioned with Russia.

In an interview to be screened by BBC 2's Time-watch programme on July 27, Hart says: "Although I did see various secret things I was never tempted to give anything away."

Hart, wife of senior MI5 officer Herbert Hart, was recruited by the Soviets while studying at University in the same era as spies Kim Philby and Guy Burgess.

During an interrogation by MI5, after which (for unconnected reasons) he committed suicide, Floud named another person whom, he claimed, he had himself approached to join the Soviet spy network—a young Communist sympathiser called Jenifer Fischer Williams. This was shortly before she obtained an appointment in the Home Office, where she worked in the department dealing with MI5 requests to the Home Secretary for permission to tap telephones and intercept mail.

As a result of this allegation, Miss Fischer Williams (now Mrs Herbert Hart, wife of the former Principal of Brasenose College, Oxford) was interviewed by MI5. She told her questioners that by the time she entered the Home Office department dealing with 'tapping' requests she had become totally disillusioned with the Soviet Union, and all its doings, and that she had committed no offence.

When I telephoned Mrs Hart in Oxford last week she told me, after 24 hours' reflection, that she was unable to help me with my inquiries into the matter. I have no evidence to suggest that she was anything other than the innocent victim of circumstance.

She did, however, furnish the MI5 interrogators with information about the friendship between Proctor and Burgess which eventually led to Proctor's being interviewed by the Service.

*Jenifer
Hart*

EXTRACT from: "A MATTER OF TRUST : MI5 1945-1972
by Nigel WEST published in December 1982

Another of those associated with Floud was Jenifer Hart, wife of Herbert Hart, the Professor of Jurisprudence at Oxford, and himself a wartime MI5 officer. Mrs Hart was one of the five daughters of a prominent international lawyer, Sir John Fischer Williams, and had worked in the Home Office. She in turn had come to MI5's attention after being denounced by Mrs Flora Solomon, the Marks & Spencer executive who had offered proof of Philby's duplicity in 1962.

Mrs Hart had never made any secret of her strong leftist sympathies and, when interviewed by MI5, denied ever having committed an offence. She did, however, confirm that she had been a member of a Fabian-style discussion group of civil servants. One of their number was Sir Dennis Proctor, the recently retired Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Power.

Furnival Jones had authorized an interview with Sir Dennis at his home in the South of France, but the results had been inconclusive. He admitted having been a member of The Apostles, the intellectual group of the Cambridge Left (which, incidentally, numbered Blunt, Burgess and Long amongst its members), while he was up at King's, and also agreed that he might have inadvertently provided Burgess with useful information, but he too categorically denied having committed an offence.

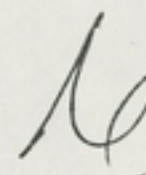
The dilemma facing the Director-General in 1967 was complex. Neither Mrs Hart nor Sir Dennis constituted a threat to security.

Ref. A083/2167

MR RICKETT

Mrs Jenifer Hart

In view of the conflicting press reports about what Mrs Jenifer Hart may --- or may not have admitted, I attach a revised line to take for the Prime Minister should this subject be raised this afternoon at Question Time.



R P HATFIELD

21 July 1983

I have not seen the text of the broadcast interview on which recent press reports appear to be based, but I can say that these reports contain no new information which has implications for national security.

[Since some reports suggest that the lady concerned may be contemplating legal action, I do not propose to add to what I have said.]

SPEAKING NOTE

Mrs Jenifer Hart

The reports which have appeared in the press recently of Mrs Hart's admission to having been a secret member of the Communist Party are consistent with what she said to the Security Service in a number of interviews, and we have no evidence to suggest that she was not telling the truth.

She was not an overt member of the Communist Party, but counted herself a Communist from 1935, having been recruited by Bernard Floud, later a Member of this House. She joined the Home Office as an Assistant Principal, having been guided to the Home Office as a Department where she would have access to information likely to be of value to the Communist Party. She was to be a "sleeper": in other words, she was not to pass information at once, but to develop her career in the expectation of being valuable later. In 1937 and 1938 she had a number of meetings with people she believed to be representatives of the Russian intelligence services, but she has always said that she did not pass any information to her contacts. In March 1939 she became Private Secretary to the Permanent Under Secretary of State at the Home Office, where she had access to a great deal of highly classified information [including Home Office warrants for the interception of communications]. She has said that later that year, in the light particularly of the Nazi-Soviet pact, she became disenchanted with Communism, and her contacts ceased.

Professor Hart, whom Mrs Hart married in 1941, was a member of the Security Service during the war. Mrs Hart was never a member of the Security Service.

As I say, there is no evidence which would suggest that Mrs Hart is not telling the truth about her contacts with foreign intelligence services.