

TOP SECRET

2

Security

P.M. has seen
k.M.S.

3/12

Copy No. 1 of 3 Copies

Ref. A09648

PRIME MINISTER

Sir Anthony Blunt

At Annex 2 of my minute A09495 of 8th May I attached a paper about Sir Anthony Blunt who is likely to become more widely known as the Fourth Man during the course of this summer. I do not know whether you had time to study that Annex in any detail, but I feel I should draw it to your attention again for two reasons:-

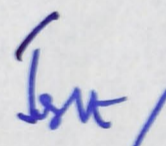
- (i) The article "The Apostles' Subversive Creed" on page 22 of this morning's Guardian, while not accusing Blunt of disloyalty, mentions his connection with Guy Burgess and his interest in Marxism: and also, having said that Blunt was in MI5, talks about secret members of the Apostles extending "into spheres of activity where vital intelligence could be gleaned". Although fear of libel may stop the Press from naming Blunt directly, at least for the present, I suspect that we shall now see more innuendos of this kind.
- (ii) I understand that you will be seeing Lord Rothschild this week and he could well mention Blunt to you. Paragraphs 28 and 29 (on pages 8 and 9) of the paper on Blunt referred to above show that it was Lord Rothschild who recommended Blunt to MI5 in the first place and that in 1940 Lord Rothschild sublet his flat to Blunt who shared it with, among others, Guy Burgess and Lady Rothschild. There have never been any grounds for security concern about Lord Rothschild but he has naturally been very concerned that his name may be linked with Blunt at some stage (indeed I think Lady Rothschild still sees Blunt from time to time). Lord Rothschild has therefore been very anxious to know what the Government would say if and when the Blunt story becomes public knowledge. He mentioned this to me as recently as 14th December when he said that he and his wife ought to be given a firm steer about what they

TOP SECRET

should say if publicity seemed imminent. I said that I could not then forecast how things would develop but that we had him very much in mind as someone to warn if the full story seemed about to come out or the Government contemplated a statement. He seemed quite content to leave things on this basis.

In the last sentence of my covering minute of 8th May I said that a possible statement, with notes for supplementaries, for use if and when the Blunt story becomes public knowledge was already in draft. You may like to see them in their present form. I should however like to emphasise that they have been prepared on a contingency basis only and that I think it would be unwise to volunteer any statement unless and until it becomes necessary. This is partly because there is still some doubt about what Andrew Boyle and others will publish. But it can also be argued that the Government, having offered Blunt immunity from prosecution if he would confess and collaborate, would be breaking its side of the bargain if it took the initiative in disclosing the story and that this would make it harder to obtain confessions of this kind in the future.

This is a subject which you may want to discuss with the Home Secretary, who is also in the picture, at some stage. The present Attorney General has not to date been briefed on the matter.


JOHN HUNT

29th May, 1979



TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

DRAFT

In view of the allegations which have now been publicly made about Sir Anthony Blunt I think it is right for me to make the following statement about the security considerations involved.

Sir Anthony Blunt was a member of the Security Service from 1940 to 1945. Inquiries were made before Blunt joined the Service, and he was judged a fit person. There was no reason during his service to doubt his loyalty to this country.

In 1951 however, shortly after the defection of Burgess and Maclean, Blunt came under suspicion. In the course of fresh inquiries the Security Service received an allegation that in 1937 Burgess had said that he was working for a secret branch of the Comintern and that Blunt was one of his sources. Blunt was confronted with this allegation, for which there was no supporting evidence, and denied it adding that he had understood Burgess was an agent of British intelligence and had given him assistance in that belief. Nevertheless the Security Service remained suspicious of him and began an intensive investigation of his activities. He was kept under surveillance and he was interviewed on no less than 11 occasions in order to try and clear up the matter. No evidence against him was however obtained.

In the early 1960s a Soviet defector provided evidence which suggested that the Soviet Union had penetrated British intelligence and that Burgess and Maclean had other associates. This evidence led to the reopening of the case against Philby but contained nothing which implicated Blunt. In 1964 however new information was received which directly implicated Blunt. But it did not provide a basis on which charges could be brought. Given the fact that Blunt had already been investigated for 13 years without obtaining evidence against him, the Attorney General of the day, in April 1964, following consultation with the Acting Director of Public Prosecutions, decided that the public



TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL

interest lay in trying to secure a confession from Blunt in order not only to arrive at a definite conclusion on his involvement but also to discover whether he knew of others in the intelligence services or in public positions whose loyalty could not be relied upon. Accordingly he authorised the offer of immunity from prosecution to Blunt if he confessed. Blunt then confessed to the authorities that, like his friends Burgess, Maclean and Philby, he had become an agent of Russian intelligence during the 1930s at Cambridge, where he talent-spotted for them, and had passed information regularly to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service. After leaving that Service in 1945 he no longer had access to classified information but had remained in touch with the Russians and had used those contacts to assist the defection of Burgess and Maclean.

In addition to making this confession Blunt co-operated with his interrogators and both in 1964 and subsequently provided much useful information about Russian intelligence activities and about his association with Burgess, Maclean and Philby.

[The original decision to offer Blunt immunity, if he collaborated was taken because an intensive investigation from 1951 to 1964, including 11 interrogations, had produced no evidence to support charges: and because it was felt more important to try to obtain information about others who might still be in a position to do damage to the national interest. As a result of his confession action was in fact taken to remove some possible security risks. The decision not to prosecute him was reviewed in 1972 and in June 1974 by the Attorneys General of the day; both agreed that, having regard to the immunity granted in order to obtain the confession which has always been the only firm evidence against him, there were no grounds on which criminal proceedings could be instituted.]

TOP SECRET

Note of Possible Supplementaries and Suggested Answers

- Q.1 Was Blunt protected by former colleagues in the Security Service?
- A.1 No. Colleagues of Blunt who were interrogated in the course of investigations to which I have referred co-operated fully.
- Q.2 Is it not the fact that Goronwy Rees informed the authorities in 1951 that Burgess had told him that Blunt was a Russian agent? Why was no action taken at the time?
- A.2 Mr. Rees was the source of the allegation made to the Security Service in 1951 that Burgess had said in 1951 that Blunt was one of the sources used by Burgess for his work for the Comintern. That allegation was thoroughly examined in the course of the prolonged investigation of Blunt from 1951 onwards, but, as I have said, no supporting evidence was obtained until Blunt confessed in 1964.
- Q.3 Was the Palace informed about Blunt's record?
- A.3 The Queen's Private Secretary was informed in 1964, * ~~~~~ *
- Q.4 Why was Blunt allowed to continue to hold a post in the Royal Household after his past relationship with the Russian Intelligence Service was known?
- A.4 Blunt's position in the Royal Household, which was unpaid, involved no access to classified information and no risk to security. Following a promise of immunity from prosecution he had confessed and co-operated with his interrogators. The security authorities felt that it was desirable to avoid taking any action which might have put at risk his willingness to continue to provide useful information.
- Q.5 Did Blunt confess to recruiting other spies for the Russians or did he name any others whom he knew to be Russian agents?
- A.5 As I have said in my statement, in addition to making his confession, Blunt has co-operated with subsequent interrogations and has provided much useful information, which has made it possible to take action to remove some possible security risks. It would not be in the public interest for me to go into detail on this.

* ~ * Passage deleted and
closed under FOI Exemption.

Wayland

11 March 2014

TOP SECRET

- Q.6 Was Blunt the "Fourth Man"?
- A.6 Let me put it this way: like Burgess, Maclean and Philby, he was a Russian spy.
- Q.7 Did Blunt help Burgess and Maclean to defect?
- A.7 Yes. He put Burgess in touch with Russians in the United Kingdom.
- Q.8 Did Blunt use information obtained from the Security Service to warn Burgess and Maclean?
- A.8 No. The evidence is that Burgess told Blunt that Maclean was under suspicion.
- Q.9 Did Blunt help Philby to defect?
- A.9 No.
- Q.10 When did Blunt cease to be a Russian spy?
- A.10 Blunt has said that he has had no contacts with the Russians since 1956. We have no information to the contrary.
- Q.11 Did Blunt occupy a flat with Lord Rothschild during the War?
- A.11 He lived during the war with others in a flat of which the lease was held by Lord Rothschild. Lord Rothschild was not himself living in the flat during that period.
- Q.12 Did Burgess, the present Lady Rothschild and Lady Llewelyn-Davies share this flat with Blunt?
- A.12 Yes. Both Lady Rothschild and Lady Llewelyn-Davies have given the security authorities an account of their acquaintance with Blunt and Burgess, and have co-operated fully in investigations.
- Q.13 Why was the case of Blunt never referred to the Security Commission?
- A.13 I cannot answer for previous Administrations. But a reference to the Commission would have been likely to frustrate the main objective of granting Blunt immunity and securing a confession: that of getting from him as much information as possible to assist other inquiries with which the Security Service was concerned. The overriding consideration was the need to discover as much as possible about the extent of RIS penetration. For this Blunt's co-operation was indispensable.

TOP SECRET

- Q.14 Why was Corporal Berry prosecuted and Blunt not?
- A.14 Decisions to prosecute are for the Attorney General. But I would remind the hon. Gentleman that there has never been any evidence which would sustain a charge against Blunt, other than his own confession which was obtained on a promise of immunity from prosecution.
- Q.15 Does the Government accept the identification of the "fifth man" suggested in Boyle's book?
- A.15 This suggestion is new to the security authorities. There is no evidence in their possession to support it. The suggestion is, however, being thoroughly investigated.
- Q.16 Is it true that a senior British Government official stationed in Washington, having spied for the Russians, was detected by the CIA and "turned" by them into a double agent for the CIA, without the knowledge of the British authorities?
- A.16 Answer to be supplied after discussions when paper on ~~xxx~~ is ready/
- Q.17 What criminal offences did Blunt commit?
- A.17 That is not for me to say. Only a Court of Law could decide; and the authorities are constrained from preferring any charges in view of the immunity which was granted.
- Q.18 Why has there been a "cover-up" of this matter until it was brought out into the open by publication of the book?
- A.18 I can only answer for the situation as I found it. But the Government gave immunity to Blunt and he has since been a source of useful information; the Government could hardly therefore take the initiative in exposing him. Others who knew or suspected were no doubt deterred by the risk of proceedings for libel.

* ~~xxx~~ * Name redacted and retained
under Section 3(4)

S. Gray

22/7/2016

JOHN HUNT

TOP SECRET

Security

3



Ref. A09786

Copy No. 1 of 3 Copies

MR. STOWE

JWS
Pv

Blunt

— Sir John Hunt's minute to the Prime Minister of 29th May (A09648) says that the present Attorney General has not been briefed on Sir Anthony Blunt. Sir Michael Havers has in fact now been briefed orally on the case. Perhaps you could note your papers accordingly.

MJV

M. J. VILE

15th June, 1979

SECRET

PA
MI

(Filed inside
front cover)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

<u>Year</u>	<u>Public Knowledge</u>	<u>Confidential Information</u>
1935/36	Blunt recruited by Burgess	
1937	Blunt joins Warburg Institute	
1939	Blunt becomes Reader in History of Art, Univ. of London and Dep. Director, Courtauld Inst.	
1939(Sept)	Blunt Commissioned in Intelligence Corps.	
1940(July)	Blunt joins MI5	
1945(Oct)	Blunt leaves MI5 and rejoins Courtauld Institute	
1945	Blunt becomes Surveyor of The King's Pictures	
1947	Blunt becomes Professor of Art, Univ. of London and Director of Courtauld Institute	
1951(May)	Defection of Burgess and Maclean Security Service informed [Conf. by Goronwy Rees] that Burgess had said that Blunt had been a Soviet Agent in the 1930s.	
1952	Blunt becomes Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures	
1956	Blunt made KCVO	
1963(Jan)	Defection of Philby	
1963(Aug)	Death of Burgess	
1964(Feb)		Whitney Straight revealed to MI5 that he had been recruited for the TRIS by Blunt
(2 Mar)		Home Secretary informed of Straight revelation
(13 Apr)		Hollis informed Cunningham of intention to interrogate Blunt in following week
(15 Apr)		Acting DPP (Crump) informed Legal Secretary that he had given authority for offer of immunity at interview of Blunt to take place in following week
(16 Apr)		Attorney General acquiesced in Crump's action

SECRET

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

(16 Apr) Sir Charles Cunningham and Sir Roger Hollis saw Sir Michael Adeane

(23 Apr) Blunt confessed

(17 June) Hollis informed Home Secretary and Cunningham of Blunt's confession

1972 Blunt retired as Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures.
Appointed Adviser for The Queen's Pictures and Drawings

Passage deleted and closed under FOI exemption, Wayland

1974 Blunt retires from Univ. of London and Courtauld Institute *11 March 2014*

1978(Nov) Blunt resigns as Adviser for The Queen's Pictures and Drawings

SECRET



PA
MS

Blunt: Consultation with Ministers

1967 Prime Minister (Wilson) and Home Secretary (Jenkins) informed.
1968 Home Secretary (Callaghan) informed.
1971 Home Secretary (Maudling) informed.
1972 Attorney General (Rawlinson) consulted.
1973 Prime Minister (Heath) and Home Secretary (Carr) informed in
detail against the likelihood of publicity in case of Blunt's death.
1974 (June) Attorney General (Silkin) consulted.
1974 (July) Prime Minister (Wilson), Lord Chancellor (Elwyn-Jones), Home
Secretary (Jenkins) and Attorney General (Silkin) fully informed.
1977 (June) Prime Minister (Callaghan) and Home Secretary (Rees) fully
informed.
1979 (May) Prime Minister (Thatcher) and Home Secretary (Whitelaw) fully
informed.

In addition, all Home Secretaries from March 1964 to date have signed interception warrants.

SECRET

SECRET

1. CLIVE ^{KW}
The PM was
interested in this

2. PA

MS

BACKGROUND

Following the defection of Burgess and Maclean in 1951 extensive enquiries were made about Civil Servants known or suspected to have had Communist affiliations. As a result of these enquiries Civil Service Departments made administrative arrangements to transfer a number of suspects away from posts in which they had access to classified information (the numbers are not readily available). In a smaller number of cases individual appeals were heard under the "purge procedure". These appeals resulted in the transfers from access to classified information of twenty-seven Civil Servants being upheld; in a further ten cases the appellants resigned and three were dismissed from Government service. In the vast majority of these cases there was neither suspicion nor evidence of espionage.

2. Following Blunt's confession in 1964 it became apparent that our records of student Communism in the 1930s and 1940s were deficient and incomplete. It was therefore decided to mount a major retrospective investigation of student Communism in the period 1929 to 1945. From 1967 a special unit of the Security Service spent six years studying in depth the student Communist movement from 1929-1945 at the major universities (primarily Oxford and Cambridge but also London, Bristol, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester, Southampton, Birmingham and the Scottish Universities). In the course of this study the records of some 8,000 individual cases were investigated. Over 400 people were interviewed, some several times. At the end of this lengthy investigation it was concluded that no major espionage lead relating to the pre-war period had been overlooked.

SECRET