



CONFIDENTIAL

Prime Minister.

Mr Leadbitter spoke to me this morning and said that now that he had thought further about the matter, he proposed to put down a Question for Written Answer tonight. I told him that if he did so, you would reply to it later this week.

Are you content with the draft Answer?

AWL
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Ref. A0635

MR. WHITMORE

Sir Anthony Blunt

The Prime Minister discussed the next steps with the Home Secretary and you and me this morning.

2. The Prime Minister and Home Secretary agreed that the intervention of Mr. Leadbitter made a statement in the fairly near future inevitable. They agreed that it would be preferable to make the statement by way of Written Answer to an arranged Question on Thursday, 15th November. It would be desirable to get the Question on to the Order Paper tomorrow, so that the Prime Minister could deal with any supplementaries on this subject tomorrow by saying that there was a Question down on the Order Paper, which she expected to be able to answer later in the week.

3. The Prime Minister and the Home Secretary agreed that, when Mr. Leadbitter came back to Mr. Chilcot, Mr. Chilcot should say that the Government had of course noticed the reports and allegations that had been published; that there were a number of things to be cleared up; and that the Government hoped to be able to say something later in the week. It was agreed that Mr. Leadbitter could be invited to put down a Question to the Prime Minister for Written Answer later in the week. The form of words already prepared should be suggested to Mr. Leadbitter.

4. This afternoon you and I discussed the draft Answer with the Permanent Under Secretary of State, Home Office, the Legal Secretary to the Law Officers, the Director General of the Security Service and The Queen's Private Secretary. I attach the draft as agreed at that meeting, for the Prime Minister's approval.

5. We agreed that the general objective should be to stand on the statement and not be drawn into answering further questions from the Press. We recognised that in practice there would be some questions, in the House of Commons if not in the Press, to which answers should be given. I shall be sending you later revised notes for supplementaries on this basis.

Passages deleted and closed under
FOI Exemption.

Wayland

11 March 2014

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re warned
until we
see MI
advisers
question on
the Order
page.

7. The meeting discussed the list of people who should be warned in advance of the Prime Minister's statement. You and I between us were to warn previous Prime Ministers. Sir Brian Cubbon would warn previous Home Secretaries and (as necessary) his own predecessors. Mr. Beckett, the Legal Secretary to the Law Officers, would warn previous Attorneys General.

The Security

Service would forewarn Washington. It was agreed that I should speak to Sir Anthony Blunt's solicitor, Mr. Michael Rubinstein, and to Lord Rothschild.

RA

(Robert Armstrong)

12th November, 1979



To ask the Prime Minister, whether she will make a statement on recent reports that Sir Anthony Blunt was an agent of the Russian Intelligence Service?

DRAFT ANSWER

In April 1964, on being given an undertaking that he would not be prosecuted if he made a confession, Sir Anthony Blunt admitted to the security authorities that he had been recruited by and had acted as a talent-spotter for Russian intelligence before the war, when he was a don at Cambridge, and had passed information regularly to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service between 1940 and 1945.

2. Inquiries were (of course) made before Blunt joined the Security Service in 1940, and he was judged a fit person. He was known to have held Marxist views at Cambridge, but the security authorities had no reason either in 1940 or at any time during his service to doubt his loyalty to his country.

3. On leaving the Security Service in 1945 Blunt reverted to his profession as an art historian. He held a number of academic appointments. He was also appointed as Surveyor of The King's Pictures in 1945, and as Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures in 1952. He was given a KCVO in 1956. On his retirement as Surveyor, he was appointed as an Adviser for The Queen's Pictures and Drawings in 1972, and he resigned this appointment in 1978.

4. He first came under suspicion in the course of the inquiries which followed the defection of Burgess and Maclean in 1951, when the Security Service was told that Burgess had said in 1937 that he was working for a secret branch of the Comintern and that Blunt was one of his sources. There was no supporting evidence for this. When confronted with it, Blunt denied it. Nevertheless the Security Service remained suspicious of him, and began an intensive and prolonged investigation of his activities. During the course of this investigation he was interviewed on eleven occasions. He persisted in his denial, and no evidence against him was obtained.

5. The inquiries which preceded the exposure and defection of Philby in January 1963 produced nothing which implicated Blunt. Early in 1964, new information was received which directly implicated Blunt. It did not, however, provide a basis on which charges could be brought. The then Attorney General



decided in April 1964, after consultation with the Acting Director of Public Prosecutions, that the public 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 obtain his co-operation in the continuing investigations by the security authorities, following the defections of Burgess, Maclean and Philby, into Soviet penetration of the security and intelligence services and other public services during and after the war. Accordingly the Attorney General authorised the offer of immunity from prosecution to Blunt if he confessed. Blunt then admitted to the security authorities that, like his friends Burgess, Maclean and Philby, he had become an agent of Russian Intelligence and had talent-spotted for them at Cambridge during the 1930s; that he had regularly passed information to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service; and that, although after 1945 he was no longer in a position to supply the Russians with classified information, in 1951 he used his old contact with the Russian Intelligence Service to assist in the arrangements for the defection of Burgess and Maclean. Both at the time of his confession and subsequently Blunt provided useful information about Russian intelligence activities and about his association with Burgess, Maclean and Philby.

6. The Queen's Private Secretary was informed in April 1964 both of Blunt's confession and of the immunity from prosecution on the basis of which it had been made. Blunt was not required to resign his appointment in the Royal Household, which was unpaid. It carried with it no access to classified information and no risk to security, and the security authorities thought it desirable not to put at risk his co-operation in their continuing investigations.

7. The decision to offer immunity from prosecution was taken because intensive investigation from 1951 to 1964 had produced no evidence to support charges. Successive Attorneys General in 1972, in June 1974 and in June 1979 have agreed that, having regard to the immunity granted in order to obtain the confession which has always been and still is the only firm evidence against Blunt, there are no grounds on which criminal proceedings could be instituted.

CONFIDENTIAL

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Ref. A0629

9th November, 1979

When we met this morning we discussed the implications of Mr. Ted Leadbitter's telephone call to the Home Secretary's Private Office, asking to know what action or notice the Home Secretary proposed to take in respect of Press reports that Anthony Blunt was the "Fourth Man". Mr. Leadbitter had declared his intention of tabling a Parliamentary Question if the answer was unsatisfactory. We agreed that the Home Secretary's Private Secretary should persuade Mr. Leadbitter to wait until Monday, 12th November, for his answer.

This development obviously brings much closer the prospect of the Prime Minister having to make a statement. I do not yet know when she will want to do so, and what form she will want it to take. I have, however, thought it worth while reviewing the draft statement we already have, and bringing it up to date in case we need it quickly.

I attach a copy of the draft herewith. You and I, and Bill Beckett and Howard Smith, to whom I am copying this letter and the draft, are to meet on 12th November at 3.00 pm to discuss the draft. We could perhaps look again at the supplementary material, though my impression is that that can stand more or less as it is, subject to one change in the answer to the supplementary question about the Fifth Man.

Sir Brian Cubbon, KCB

To ask the Prime Minister, whether she will make a statement on recent ^{press} reports ^{concerning} that Sir Anthony Blunt ~~was an agent of the Russian Intelligence Service?~~

DRAFT ANSWER

In April 1964, on being given an undertaking that he would not be prosecuted ^{if he makes a confession,} ~~on the basis of what he said,~~ Sir Anthony Blunt admitted to the security authorities that he had been recruited by and had acted as a talent-spotter for Russian intelligence before the war, when he was a don at Cambridge, and had passed information regularly to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service between 1940 and 1945.

2. Inquiries were of course made before Blunt joined the Security Service in 1940, and he was judged a fit person. He was known ^{have held} to hold Marxist views at Cambridge, but ^{the security authorities have} ~~there was~~ no reason either ^{in 1940} then or at any time during his service to doubt his loyalty to his country.

3. On leaving the Security Service in 1945 Blunt reverted to his profession as an art historian. He held a number of academic appointments. He was also appointed as Surveyor of The King's Pictures in 1945, and as Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures in 1952. He was given a KCVO in 1956. On his retirement as Surveyor, he was appointed as an honorary Adviser for The Queen's Pictures and Drawings in 1972, and he resigned this appointment in 1978.

4. He first came under suspicion in the course of the inquiries which followed the defection of Burgess and Maclean in 1957, when the Security Service ^{was told} ~~received an allegation~~ that Burgess had said in 1937 that he was working for a secret branch of the Comintern and that Blunt was one of his sources. There was no supporting evidence for this ~~allegation~~. When confronted with it, Blunt denied it, ~~adding that he had understood that 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 and prolonged investigation of his activities. During the course of this investigation he was interviewed on eleven occasions. He persisted in his denial, and no evidence against him was obtained.

5. The inquiries which preceded the exposure and defection of Philby in January 1963 produced nothing which implicated Blunt. Early in 1964, ~~however~~ new information was received which directly implicated Blunt. It did not, however, provide a basis on which charges could be brought. The then Attorney General decided in April 1964, after consultation with the Acting Director of Public Prosecutions, that the public 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 security and intelligence Services or in public positions whose loyalty could not be relied upon.~~ Accordingly the Attorney General authorised the offer of immunity from prosecution to Blunt if he confessed. Blunt then admitted to the Security authorities that, like his friends Burgess, Maclean and Philby, he had become an agent of Russian Intelligence and had talent-spotted for them at Cambridge during the 1930s; that he had regularly passed information to the Russians while he was a member of the Security Service; and that, although after 1945 he ^{was} no longer had access to classified information, ^{in 1951 he} he had remained in touch with the Russian Intelligence Service and had used ^{his old} these contacts ^{with the arrangements for} to assist the defection of Burgess and Maclean. Both at the time of his confession and subsequently Blunt provided useful information about Russian intelligence activities and about his association with Burgess, Maclean and Philby. ~~His confession did not implicate anyone else, but it enabled action to be taken to remove some possible security risks.~~

Blunt has
continued in the
intelligence by
the security authorities
following the defection
of Philby & Maclean
since publication of
his work on the
subject of the
intelligence service
during & after the
war.

to the AG)

through the
intelligence
authorities
as a basis for
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6. The Queen's Private Secretary was informed in April 1964 both of Blunt's confession and of the immunity from prosecution on the basis of which it had been made.

7. The decision to offer ~~that~~ ^{from previous} immunity was taken because intensive investigation from 1951 to 1964 had produced no evidence to support charges.

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I'm not



KIM PHILBY

AN ATOM SPY? NOT ME SAYS DOCTOR WILFRID



GUY BURGESS

the Fifth Man

BRILLIANT British-born physicist Dr Wilfrid Basil Mann protested yesterday that he was not the Fifth Man in the Kim Philby affair.

Dr Mann, who knew Philby and Guy Burgess, both Soviet spies, poured scorn on the suggestion that he was the mysterious man known as 'Basil'.

'Basil', according to author Andrew Boyle, helped Donald Maclean to steal atomic secrets while the diplomat was First Secretary at the British Embassy in Washington 30 years ago.

'You really must believe me when I tell you on my word of honour that I never even knew Maclean,' said 71-year-old Dr Mann.

But as the balding scientist poured me a sherry in the elegant lounge of his £100,000 Tudor-style house in Washington, he seemed under no illusion as to who had tried to brand him a traitor.

From FRANK THOMPSON in Washington

The source 'of this lie' is, he suspects, none other than Kim Philby, the Soviet agent who rose high in the ranks of the British Secret Service and followed Burgess and Maclean into exile in Moscow after his cover was blown.

'As I am still restricted by the Official Secrets Act, I prefer not to go into any details,' said Dr Mann, who was born in Surrey but became an American citizen 20 years ago.

Brilliant

'Suffice to say Philby has no reason whatever to like me. I am pretty certain that, safe in the Soviet Union, he is trying mischievously to link me to the affair.'

The theory of 'Basil' the Fifth Man rests upon the premise that Maclean, who was not a scientist, needed someone to guide him through the material he was able to read at the American Atomic Energy Commission — to which he, almost uniquely, had a 'non-escort access' pass.

In Mr Boyle's book, *A Climate of Treason*, he does

not identify the Fifth Man but refers to him only as 'Basil'.

'Basil,' he says, was a pleasant Englishman who was uncovered by a Jewish Intelligence agency working in London.

They passed on the information to Jim Angleton, brilliant American counter Intelligence chief, who quickly broke 'Basil'.

'Basil', the book claims, was turned into a double agent.

U.S. Intelligence were then able to control and manipulate every scrap of information that Maclean — in later years drink-prone and nervous — fed to his insatiable Soviet spymasters.

In return for his co-operation 'Basil' was apparently given immunity—and American citizenship.

Dr Mann remembers Jim Angleton from those far off days, and admits to still being in touch with him.

He refused to elaborate on his exact relationship with Mr Angleton, implying it was through his work and explaining again that the Official Secrets Act is involved.

But the relationship is such

that after my first meeting with Dr Mann last week, he contacted Angleton.

'We discussed the inference that I was being linked with "Basil" and we agreed it was ridiculous,' Dr Mann volunteered yesterday.

Mr Angleton would say only: 'I have nothing to say — nothing at all.'

Dr Mann, his black Labrador at his heels, repeatedly denied during talks at his home that he was the Fifth Man. He also denies knowing or having met Maclean.

He did, however, know Philby. They were based in the Embassy and sometimes had dinner together. He also knew Burgess, and the brilliant but scruffy and often drunken diplomat gave him a cartoon he had drawn.

Nuclear

The doctor laughed as he produced it, signed by Burgess to him and showing Russian dictator Joe Stalin eating a coffee table.

'It was inevitable that I knew these two characters because they were both in Washington while I was there,' he said. 'But Maclean . . . never. Never.'

At one stage Dr Mann produced a statement which he said had been drafted with the help of his lawyer after my first visit to him.

It said: 'I understand that the publication (of Boyle's book) has prompted efforts to identify me as the nuclear physicist who functioned as a Soviet spy.'

'I deplore these efforts. The attempted identification is completely unwarranted by the facts.' Dr Mann had deleted the word 'false' from the typed statement to insert the words 'unwarranted by the facts.'

The statement went on: Between 1949 and 1951 I was attached to the British Embassy in Washington as a nuclear physicist.

'I was not engaged in joint nuclear research in Washington during 1947.'

Puzzled

'I was stationed in Canada at that time at the National Research Council laboratories at Chalk River, and also represented the United Kingdom on the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission's scientific and technical committee.'

'I was not given American citizenship in exchange for spying. As an employee of the National Bureau of Standards, I decided of my own volition to apply for citizenship in 1959.'

'I might add that I was awarded the United States Medal of Freedom in 1948 when I was still working in Canada.'

'It also happens that my middle name is Basil. It would seem, therefore, to be a little unusual to say the least to use such a naively revealing code name.'

The quiet, almost shy Dr

the Fifth Man

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The quiet, almost shy, Dr Mann still works in the radio activity unit at the U.S. Bureau of Standards outside Washington.

He insists that he is not too angry about his name being linked to that of 'Basil'—'just very very puzzled, completely at a loss to understand it'.