



CONFIDENTIAL

Ref. A0707

MR. WHITMORE

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Seen by US P.M.

JWH

2081

Blunt

Sir Harold Wilson asked to come to see me this afternoon. He came to the Cabinet Office.

2. I had written to him to tell him that, though he was not told about Blunt when he was Leader of the Opposition in the spring and summer of 1964, he was told about him as Prime Minister in October 1967 and again in June 1974.

Sir Harold Wilson claimed to have forgotten that he was told about Blunt on these two occasions, and asked to see the papers which he had seen at the time. This was a perfectly proper request for a former Prime Minister to make, and I accordingly showed him the papers.

3. We had a rather desultory discussion, which ranged round the political circumstances which prevailed at the time when this was first referred to him by Mr. Roy Jenkins in October 1967 (a month before devaluation) and about the fact that The Queen had not been told until 1973 (a fact which was included in the papers submitted to him as Prime Minister in 1974). I thought it right to tell him that The Queen's Private Secretary had been told in 1964 and that what passed between The Queen and her Private Secretary was absolutely confidential, as was that which passed between The Queen and her Prime Ministers. I also reminded him that The Queen's Private Secretary had seen the Permanent Secretary at the Home Office and the Director General of the Security Service in April 1964 and had been told that, if as a result of the offer of immunity Blunt confessed, it would not be desirable to remove him from the Royal Household or strip him of his honour, since that would go far to nullify the value of his co-operation by alerting his former masters and other potential suspects to the fact that he had confessed (or been discovered) and might be talking.

4. Sir Harold Wilson asked whether he had been invited to take a decision on either occasion. I said that, as he would see from the papers, in both cases the case had been put to him as a matter of information; on the second occasion,



in 1974, he had been invited to approve the contingency planning undertaken in case of need to make a statement - e.g. in the event of Blunt's death - and he had given that approval.

*RAA*

(Robert Armstrong)

20th November, 1979