

Security
PRIME MINISTER
MS
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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

PA
(CF security file)
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4/3

23 February 1981

Dear Michael,

Sir Geoffrey Harrison

You will have seen the Sunday Times and other media stories of Sir Geoffrey Harrison's reported admission to having been withdrawn from Moscow in 1968 as the result of a KGB compromise. Sir Geoffrey has since told us that he gave no interview as such. But, as you know, he admitted the accuracy of the story to two Daily Mirror journalists in November 1979, and a contingency brief for the Prime Minister's use in answer to possible Questions in the House was prepared at that time.

I now enclose an updated version of that brief, with identical "Line to Take", for possible use by the Prime Minister at Question Time tomorrow.

I am sending a copy of this letter and its enclosure to David Wright (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

(F N Richards)
Private Secretary

M O'D B Alexander Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

BACKGROUND NOTE

1. The Sunday Times of 22 February reported that Sir Geoffrey Harrison had admitted to having been withdrawn as HM Ambassador Moscow in 1968, as the result of a KGB compromise. Sir Geoffrey has told the Foreign and Commonwealth Office that he gave no interview as such. But he admitted the general accuracy of the story to two Daily Mirror journalists in November 1979.

HISTORY OF THE INCIDENT

2. On 22 August 1968 Sir Geoffrey Harrison was withdrawn from Moscow a few days before he was due to leave on retirement. He had reported that KGB pressure had been put on him to provide information as a result of his affair with a Russian maid in his personal household.

3. He was formally reprimanded.

4. He was interviewed three times by the Security Service. It was finally concluded that he had given a true and complete account of the affair and that there had been no loss of classified information of any substance, though he might have revealed personality information about some British Embassy staff.

MINISTERIAL INVOLVEMENT

5. The Foreign Secretary (Mr Michael Stewart) and the Prime Minister were immediately informed (and were kept informed). When the investigations had been completed the American Secretary of State (Mr Rusk) and the Director of the CIA (Mr Helms) were informed.

INVOLVEMENT OF THE PALACE

6. Sir Geoffrey had been awarded the GCMG in the Birthday Honours 1968. Sr M Adeane was informed and arrangements made whereby the Insignia was delivered to Sir Geoffrey at home and he did not attend a ceremony at the Palace, nor did he have the customary farewell interview with The Queen.

SOURCE OF PUBLICATION OF THE INCIDENT

7. Sir Geoffrey Harrison told the FCO in November 1979 that the journalists who had approached him then claimed to have been told of the story by Lady Falkender and Mr Joe Haines.

FREQUENCY OF SUCH INCIDENTS

8. There have been a few cases over the years of members of the staff of the British Embassy in Moscow being compromised. The most noteworthy publicised case was that of Vassall who was arrested in 1962. He was Clerical Officer in the Naval Attaché's office and became the victim of homosexual compromise in 1955. (Whenever possible, compromise cases are dealt with

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by our own Security authorities without publicity, since the prospect of publicity could deter staff from coming forward.)

THE RUSSIAN CHAMBER-MAID

9. She was given notice by Sir Duncan Wilson, Sir Geoffrey Harrison's successor.

My KGB chambermaid, by British envoy

by Simon Freeman and Barrie Penrose

A FORMER British ambassador in Moscow has disclosed how the KGB lured him into having an affair with a chambermaid.

When he realised he had been trapped, Sir Geoffrey Harrison confessed to London what he had done. He was immediately summoned home — just days after Russian tanks rolled into Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Harrison, now 73, lives in retirement in Sussex. His account of events nearly 13 years ago follows on the heels of the disclosure that an American diplomat — victim of a similar classic KGB “dirty trick” — was forced to leave the Soviet Union.

In the latest case, the Russians have denied that the American assistant military attaché in Moscow, Major James Holbrook, was “set up.” They said that western reports alleging that Holbrook and another officer, Lieut-Col

Thomas Spencer, were victims of a KGB plot were part of a campaign to build up anti-Soviet feeling.

Harrison says he sympathises with Holbrook, who was recalled to Washington after a hotel party now thought to have been arranged by the KGB.

Harrison told *The Sunday Times* that, like Holbrook, he had “let his defences drop.” In 1968, after a lengthy and distinguished diplomatic career, he had had a short affair with a Russian chambermaid who worked at the embassy in Moscow.

He said: “She was a young, attractive girl. I did not ask whether she was working for the KGB but the assumption was that every Russian working in our embassy was a KGB employee. As a trained diplomat, it was an

aberration on my part. It was absolutely crazy, but it may now give added warning to western diplomats who might find themselves similarly tempted.”

Harrison's sudden departure from Moscow in August 1968, in the immediate aftermath of the Russian occupation of Czechoslovakia, was never officially explained by the Foreign Office. It was assumed he had been recalled to London because of the sudden Czech crisis. In fact, the opposite was the case. His enforced absence from Moscow at a critical moment caused consternation at Number 10 and the Foreign Office.

The incident was reported to the then prime minister, Harold Wilson, and his political secretary, Lady Falkender, but was handled personally by the foreign secre-

tary, Michael Stewart. There was considerable surprise that such a highly experienced diplomat had fallen for an obvious and well-tried KGB ploy.

Harrison—married, with three sons and a daughter—became ambassador to Moscow in 1965.

The chambermaid was working at the embassy when he arrived in Moscow. “She was apparently a trusted member of staff,” he said. “She didn't live within the embassy compound but came in in the morning and stayed behind afterwards. My flat was on the first floor of the embassy and the offices were below. It was quite separate and I had no reason to suppose that anyone knew about us.”

It was a growing realisation of the security implications of his relationship with the girl, and the sudden Czech crisis, that prompted him to inform the

Foreign Office in London. “Perhaps no one would really have known about it,” he said. “But I believed it would be wrong to keep quiet, so I reported what had been happening. I felt that, however unpleasant the consequences might be, I had to tell the Foreign Office. Otherwise the Russians might try something.”

After the information reached London, Harrison was immediately summoned to London.

The Holbrook incident in Moscow last month did not surprise Harrison. “There are many cases like this which go unreported,” he told *The Sunday Times*. “It is happening all the time to diplomats and journalists, even to politicians. Diplomats can be caught out by women, or something in their drinks. If you are on a long tour abroad then your defences can drop. It's unforgivable but it happens.”



Sir Geoffrey Harrison

Our Man in a KGB sex trap

A FORMER British Ambassador to Moscow claims he was tricked by the KGB into having an affair with a chambermaid.

When he realised he had been trapped, he owned up to the Foreign Office and was immediately recalled.

The diplomat, Sir Geoffrey Harrison, 72, makes his astonishing confession in a newspaper interview today.

He admits his affair with the Russian maid was "absolutely crazy."

She was young and attractive and he "let his defences drop," he says in the Sunday Times article.

Trusted

The incident happened in 1968, the time of the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia.

The maid worked at the British embassy in Moscow. She was an "apparently trusted member of staff," says Sir Geoffrey.

"I did not ask whether she was working for the KGB, but the assumption was that every Russian working in our embassy was a KGB employee.

"She didn't live within the embassy compound

Sunday Mirror Reporter

but came in the morning and stayed behind afterwards. My flat was on the first floor of the embassy and the offices were below.

"It was quite separate and I had no reason to suppose that anyone knew about us."

Sir Geoffrey, who is married with three sons and a daughter, became Our Man in Moscow in 1965.

He admitted the affair when he realised it made him a security risk, says the report.

Sir Geoffrey, who had a long and distinguished career in the Diplomatic Corps, is now retired and lives in Sussex.

America's former Assistant Military Attache in Moscow, Maj. James Holbrook, recently claimed he and another officer were victims of a similar KGB plot.

Our ex-man in Moscow confesses

BRITAIN'S former ambassador in Moscow told last night of his affair with a KGB agent.

Sir Geoffrey Harrison said he was "trapped" into a relationship with a young chambermaid. As soon as he realised the trap, he told the Foreign Office and was immediately brought home.

Sir Geoffrey said last night he was "very embarrassed" that the Sunday Times had revealed the story.

"It seems reasonable to think that after 13 years what happened would not be revealed."

The report says Sir Geoffrey called the affair "an aberration on my part . . . absolutely crazy."

Invasion

He "let his defences drop" after a long and distinguished career.

The "young and attractive" girl was an apparently trusted member of the embassy staff.

"I did not ask whether she was working for the KGB but the assumption was that every Russian working in the embassy was a KGB employee," he says.

The girl did not live at the embassy.

Sir Geoffrey's flat was above the offices and "I had no reason to suppose anyone knew about us," says Sir Geoffrey, now 73.

He confessed after Russia's invasion of



Sir Geoffrey Harrison

Czechoslovakia because he realised the security risk.

He says: "I believed it would be wrong to keep quiet about what had been happening."

"I felt that however unpleasant the consequences I had to tell the Foreign Office—otherwise the Russians might try something."

Prime Minister Harold Wilson was told and Foreign Secretary Michael Stewart ordered his recall.

Regret

Sir Geoffrey said at his home in Horsham, Sussex, last night: "At the time I made a full confession both to the Foreign Office and my wife."

"She has known all about it all these years and she is standing by me."

"Naturally I very much regret what happened. It's not very pleasant for me or my wife."

"And I very much regret that all this has come out."

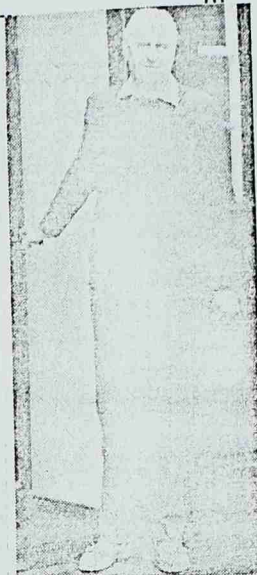
"I certainly didn't promote the disclosure. It has been forced upon me."

"I don't know exactly how the story has come out but I have a pretty good idea."

The disclosures follow the claim by America's former assistant military attache in Moscow, Major James Holbrook, that he and another officer were victims of a KGB blackmail attempt.

23 FEB 1961

cutting dated



Envoy's affair: There was no official comment from the Foreign Office on the disclosure yesterday that Sir Geoffrey Harrison, a former British Ambassador in Moscow, had been recalled to London after he had reported having an affair with a Russian chambermaid employed in the embassy (Our Diplomatic Correspondent writes).

The episode dates back to 1968, shortly before the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia but is echoed today by the return of a senior American diplomat to Washington from Moscow last month after being caught in a compromising situation.

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Love-affair envoy: I've been betrayed

By GUY RAIS

THE former British ambassador to Moscow, who admitted at the weekend that he had an affair 15 years ago with a Russian maid at the embassy, said yesterday: "I have been stabbed in the back."

Sir Geoffrey Harrison insisted that someone else had leaked the story of his involvement with the blonde, who was described yesterday by the wife of his successor as "a bit of a tart, certainly not in the first flush of youth."

Standing in the doorway of his home in Lower Beeding, near Horsham, Sussex, Sir Geoffrey said:

"People have asked me why I chose this moment to bring this matter out into the open."

"Let me be quite clear—and I feel quite strongly about this. I did not do so."

No disclosures

"I did not take any initiative in its timing. I made no disclosures whatsoever, but I do know who was responsible. Someone has stabbed me in the back."

Could the Russians have been responsible for the leak? "I am not prepared to say if this was so."

He also declined to say if the Russians tried to use the affair with the maid against him.

Sir Geoffrey's admission of the scandal followed last week's disclosure that American assistant military attaché Maj James Holbrook had been recalled from the Soviet Union after a "sex orgy" trap by KGB agents.

The former ambassador, silver-haired and looking considerably younger than his 72 years, said:

"Of course I have my regrets. It was a very silly thing to do. My wife knew what had occurred at the time, and she stood by me."

Lady Harrison remained inside the house during the interview. The couple have three sons and a daughter.

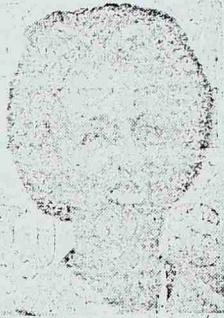
The Russian maid was already working at the embassy when Sir Geoffrey arrived in Moscow in 1965.

Daily visits

She lived outside the compound, and came in every day to work in his flat on the first floor.

He was quoted on Saturday as saying: "She was a young, attractive girl. I did not ask whether she was working for the KGB, but the assumption was that every Russian working in our embassy was a KGB employee. As a trained diplomat, it was an aberration on my part."

After informing London of his involvement with her, he



Lady Harrison

was immediately recalled by Mr Michael Stewart, the Foreign Minister, in August, 1968, a few days after the Russian intervention in Czechoslovakia to oust the Dubcek regime.

Sir Geoffrey was replaced a month later by Sir Duncan Wilson, who confirmed last night from his home in Scotland that he had been briefed about the Harrison affair before he took up the post.

"Sir Geoffrey was due to retire at the age of 60 anyway and I knew in the spring of 1968, when I was Ambassador in Belgrade, that I was taking over Moscow."

"It was my wife who had to fire the chambermaid."

Sir Duncan retired in 1971 to become Master of Corpus Christi, Cambridge, a position he held until last summer.

Asked why the embassy had kept the maid on after Sir Geoffrey's recall, Sir Duncan said: "The incident was known only to a few, and I can only presume that they did not want to talk about it, so she stayed on for a while, which I thought was highly improper."

Lady Wilson recalled: "We knew her as Galya, although her christian name in Russian was Galina. She was blonde, of ample proportions, and really looked a bit of a tart. She was not a young slip of a girl, and certainly not in the first flush of youth."

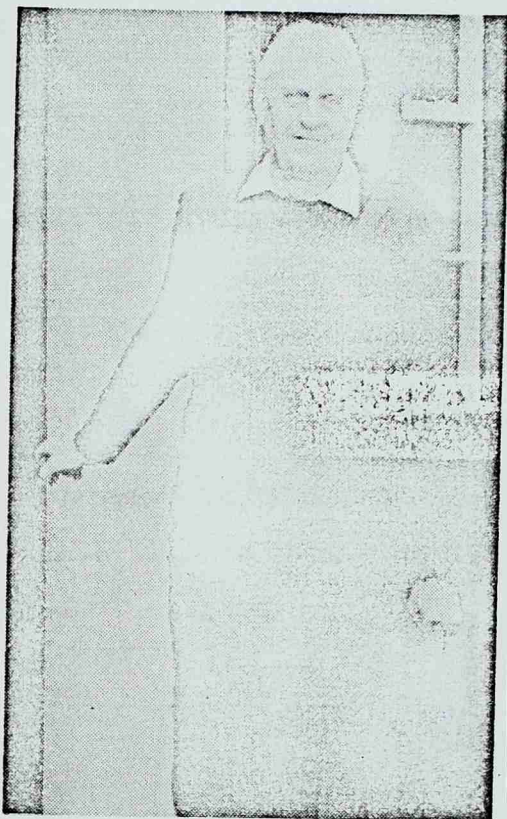
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THE GUARDIAN

23 FEB 1981

cutting dated 19



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Sir Geoffrey Harrison, the British Ambassador to Moscow at the time of the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, has said that he had an affair with a chambermaid who was probably working for the KGB. Becoming aware of the security risks, he informed London and was summoned home at once.

Sir Geoffrey (pictured here at his home at Handcross, Sussex, yesterday) told the story to the Sunday Times. He said:

"As a trained diplomat, it was an aberration on my part. It was absolutely crazy, but it may now give added warning to Western diplomats who might find themselves similarly tempted."

His admission comes after the disclosure of an alleged KGB set-up of the American assistant military attaché in Moscow, Major James Holbrook. He was also recalled after reports of a compromising hotel party.

23 FEB 1981

Love-trap envoy's KGB girl

BRITAIN'S former Ambassador in Moscow Sir Geoffrey Harrison, who has admitted an affair with a KGB chambermaid, said last night: "I prefer to let sleeping dogs lie."

Sir Geoffrey, 73, and married with three children, became ambassador in 1963 and was pulled out in 1968, soon after Russia invaded Czechoslovakia. This was after he had voluntarily owned up to MI6.

FCO

Attractive

He said: "She was a young attractive girl. I did not ask whether she was working for the KGB but the assumption was that every Russian working in our embassy was a KGB employee."

"As a trained diplomat it was an aberration on my part. It was absolutely crazy, but it may now give added warning to Western diplomats who might find themselves similarly tempted."

The disclosure, in yesterday's Sunday Times, follows an outcry over American military attaché in Moscow Major James Holbrook, victim of a similar "dirty tricks" set-up.

Envoy: My Moscow love affair

By JOHN PASSMORE, JOHN
DICKIE and RAYMOND
RODGERS

THE blonde Russian chambermaid who trapped Britain's Ambassador in Moscow into an affair tried to get a new job at the Australian Embassy as soon as she was sacked.

But the girl, a KGB agent named Galia, failed because the British revealed her background.

Nevertheless, it is believed that she went on to another embassy under a different name.

The Ambassador who fired Galia, Sir Duncan Wilson, recalled that she was clearly no ordinary chambermaid.

Class

He said last night: "There was no doubt that she was one of the Russians top-drawer girls."

"She was noticeably in a completely different class from the rest of the domestics they sent us."

Now the Foreign Office is facing pressure to tighten up security checks on local staff employed at British embassies around the world.

It was pointed out that while more than 70 per cent. of the people working at British diplomatic posts overseas are recruited from the local population, the Russians do not have a single non-Soviet person working in any of their embassies abroad. Nor do any other Communist countries.

The affair, which happened in 1963, ended the distinguished diplomatic career of Sir Geoffrey Harrison. He realised he had fallen into a KGB trap, confessed to the Foreign Office and was recalled to London.

Suspicious were not aroused

at the time because the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, so it appeared that Sir Geoffrey was being withdrawn as a sign of Britain's disapproval. He was also close to retiring age.

Yesterday he spoke of his regret over the relationship. At his rambling home near Horsham, Sussex, 73-year-old Sir Geoffrey said he had realised at the time that Galia was probably a Communist 'plant'.

He said: "I did not ask her if she worked for the KGB,

but the assumption was there. I regret it, of course I regret it. I was warned before I went to Moscow about this sort of thing—anyone going to the Iron Curtain countries is warned this can happen.

Referring to the disclosure of the affair in a Sunday newspaper Sir Geoffrey said: "I took no initiative in arranging or encouraging the publication.

"Somebody has stabbed me in the back quite deliberately. I know who it was, and I will not say any more about that."

Sir Geoffrey, wearing an Army-type sweater and slacks, was relaxed and courteous as

he stood at his front door.

The telephone inside rang frequently, and his wife Amy occasionally called to him. She did not come to the door.

My wife knew about this at the time and stood by me," said Sir Geoffrey. The couple married 43 years ago and have three sons and a daughter.

Had the Russians at any time tried to compromise him or blackmail him as a result of his liaison? "I am not prepared to say if the Russians tried to use it against me."

Sir Geoffrey said he volunteered information about the relationship to the Foreign Office after he became concerned about the security

"The girl was still working in the Embassy," he said. "My successor Sir Duncan Wilson fired her."

The diplomat who ran the Embassy until the new ambassador was appointed was instructed not to fire her.

Mr Peter Dalton, 66, who is now retired and living in Mayfield, Sussex, said: "If she had been dismissed at the time, immediately after Sir Geoffrey's departure, everyone would have been rushing about asking why she had been sacked."

Now retired and living in Port Charlotte, Scotland, Sir Duncan said:

"I have no idea how good she was at housework because I dismissed her a few days after I arrived."

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Bed-making

IT HAS now been revealed that one of our diplomats in Moscow back in 1968 had to be rapidly summoned home after he admitted sleeping with a Russian chambermaid who worked in the Embassy.

The Soviet Embassy in London employs no British staff. Our embassies in the Soviet Union and elsewhere always take on local men and women to cook, clean, bug, seduce and otherwise 'do' for them.

If we allow Reds—especially curvaceous ones—to make our diplomatic beds, it is not surprising that they sometimes get into them as well as under them!

23 FEB 1981

THE SUN SAYS

Man of honour

SIR Geoffrey Harrison, Britain's one-time Ambassador in Moscow, got caught in a tender trap—just like many another full-blooded man.

The story of how he fell for the charms of a KGB chambermaid at the British Embassy is astonishing but understandable.

At least he had the good sense and patriotism to confess to his bosses at the Foreign

Office—and thus foil the KGB's nefarious intentions.

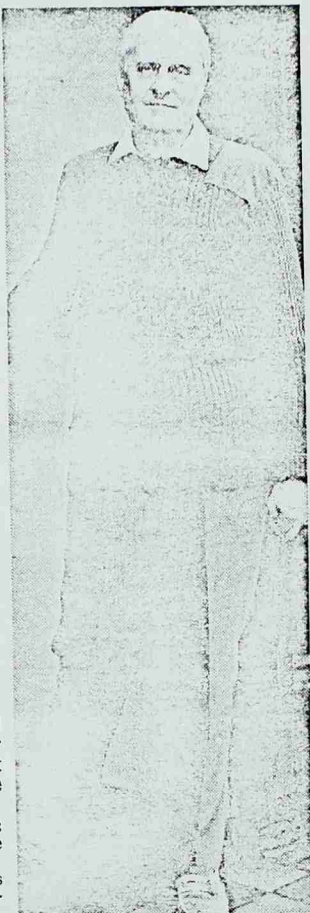
His action—revealed now more than 12 years after the event—is also an object lesson to other Western diplomats caught in similar doubtful circumstances.

However dotty his original indiscretion Sir Geoffrey is a man of honour. And we hope that all the hullabaloo will soon die down.

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23 FEB 1981

The sexy tricks of Galya, the KGB's spy trap girl



Sir Geoffrey yesterday . . . he fell for a Russian spy

THE RUSSIAN chambermaid who lured a British ambassador into a love trap was last night named as a stunning blonde called Galya.

She was revealed as a top KGB girl who used "every trick in the book" to make herself desirable.

The envoy who fell for her charms was Ambassador Sir Geoffrey Harrison, Britain's man in Moscow.

He was recalled in 1968 after confessing to his superiors that he had an affair with Galya.

The girl was named last night by Sir Duncan Wilson — the man who replaced Sir Geoffrey.

His revelation followed yesterday's startling disclosure of the incident in the Sunday Times.

Sir Duncan, now retired, said at his home in Port Charlotte, West Scotland:

"It was pretty obvious she was a top

By SHAN LANCASTER

KGB girl. She was attractive and intelligent.

When Sir Duncan arrived in Moscow his first priority was to sack Galya.

But he soon heard from her again.

Within weeks she had applied to the Australian embassy in Moscow for a job — and told them

to ask the British embassy for references.

"She had quite a nerve," recalled Sir Duncan.

"Of course I advised the Australians that she was not the most reliable or desirable of employees and they did not take her on.

"But I am sure that did not stop her career. I expect she simply changed her name and

went from strength to strength."

Sir Geoffrey, married with three sons, said last night at home near Horsham, Sussex, that he had been told by the Foreign Office to "say nothing."

Sir Geoffrey, now 73, confessed the affair when he thought he might be blackmailed.

His recall was thought to be part of the British protest at the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Warned

Sir Duncan said he believed that every Russian member of the embassy staff in Moscow was in the pay of the KGB.

He added: "But the young female staff were a special risk.

"All members of embassy staff from the most senior to the most junior are always warned to watch their Ps and Qs."

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23 FEB 1961

'Tender trap' of the KGB

By JOE CLANCY

A FORMER British ambassador to Russia spoke last night about the "tender trap" facing diplomatic staff in Moscow.

And he revealed that he knew the sexy chambermaid who brought about the downfall of his predecessor Sir Geoffrey Harrison.

Sir Duncan Wilson, who replaced Sir Geoffrey in 1968, said: "She was a blonde in her early 30s.

"She was rather outstanding to look at."

Sir Geoffrey was summoned home when he confessed to having an affair with the chambermaid.

He realised the implications after the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Sir Duncan, 69, speaking at his home in Fort Charlotte on the remote island of Islay, off West Scotland, said the trap was a "well-worn ploy."

★ Star comment—
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Make love, not war . . .

★ IF WESTERN diplomats carry on the way they are going, James Bond will be out of business. Film-makers will shoot spy thrillers based on official reports of the Foreign Office and the U.S. State Department.

★ First came revelations that an American military attache had to leave Moscow after being lured into a sex trap—with the paraphernalia of the bedroom door kicked in and the flashing camera bulbs.

★ Now comes a confession from Sir Geoffrey Harrison, a former British ambassador, that the KGB tricked him into an affair with a chambermaid.

He says it is happening all the time to diplomats and journalists. "Even to politicians," he adds, perhaps a little unkindly.

★ The Russians must be out of their tiny, ponderous minds. Don't they know that all the world loves a bit of spice? The shame that was attached to that sort of thing was left behind 20 years ago.

★ So why don't we play them at their own game?

★ Our men in Moscow—or Prague or Budapest for that matter—should join in . . . go along with their clumsy plots. Ridicule them. Exaggerate them, even.

★ "What do you mean I was in bed with a woman? I was in bed with TWO women. You do me less than justice, sir, and I demand a correction."

The diplomats and the generals could at last take up the peace slogan of "Make love, not war."

STAR COMMENT

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23 FEB 1981

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British Envoy Admits Tryst

LONDON (Reuters) — A former British ambassador to the Soviet Union has told The Sunday Times he was trapped by KGB security agents into having an affair with a young chambermaid at the embassy in Moscow.

Sir Geoffrey Harrison, now 73, said that when he realized the security implications of the affair, which took place just before the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, he told the British Foreign Office. He was immediately recalled to London.

Sir Geoffrey, married with four children, said: "She was a young, attractive girl. As a trained diplomat, it was an aberration on my part. It was absolutely crazy, but it may now give added warning to Western diplomats who might find themselves similarly tempted."

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