



file to
c: Higham

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Principal Private Secretary

23 March 1990

The Prime Minister has asked me to reply to your letter of 13 March about the stage at which Lord Home was informed of the treason of Anthony Blunt.

I think that you may have misunderstood Lord Home's letter to you. Lord Home has confirmed that he did not know of Blunt's treason at the time when he was Prime Minister and first learned of it at the time of Mrs. Thatcher's statement to Parliament in November 1979. The cause of the misunderstanding may be that Lord Brooke wrote to Lord Home at that time, i.e., in November 1979, to explain the background.

Lord Home, to whom I am copying this letter with yours, has said that, if you are in any remaining doubt about this point, you should feel free to write to him again.

ANDREW TURNBULL

Mr. Charles Higham

From: LORD HOME OF THE HIRSEL K.T.



March 31st. 1990.

Jan L. Turnbull

Thank you for your letter.

My memory is pretty faulty, but I wasn't told about Blunt's activities before the knowledge was public property.

Andrew Turnbull

Andrew Turnbull Esq.
10 Downing Street. SW1A 2AA.

Home

SECURITY:

Blunt pt 2



(R)
file to
c: Lord

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Principal Private Secretary

23 March 1990

Sir Robin Butler spoke to you on the issue of when you learned of Anthony Blunt's confession and the offer of immunity from prosecution which was raised in a letter to the Prime Minister from Mr. Charles Higham. In case Mr. Higham contacts you further on this, you might like to have a copy both of his letter and the reply which has been sent from No.10.

ANDREW TURNBULL

The Rt. Hon. Lord Home of the Hirsel, KT.

Kew

Ref. AO90/743

MR TURNBULL

?
~~Sir Anthony Blunt~~

Thank you for your minute of 20 March.

2. The letter on your file is supported by our papers, which indicate that Sir Robert Armstrong spoke to Lord Home on 15 November 1979, when Lord Home said that he had no recollection of being told about Blunt's confession in 1964, and proposed to say that he had not been. Sir Robert Armstrong confirmed that there was no record of his being told either of the offer of immunity from prosecution or of Blunt's confession. The offer of immunity was authorised by the then Attorney General, Sir John Hobson, who would have been entitled to take the view that this was a decision made in his capacity as a law officer, which did not engage collective responsibility. As you know from a more recent case, the Prime Minister made arrangements, following the Blunt announcement, to ensure that she and the Home Secretary would be informed of such cases in the future.

3. I have spoken to Lord Home on the telephone and have confirmed with him that Mr Higham has misunderstood Lord Home's letter to him. Lord Home has repeated that he had never heard of Blunt until 1979. It was at that point that he was informed by Henry Brooke of what had happened - no doubt through the letter referred to on your file.

4. I attach a draft reply which you might send to Mr Higham: I suggest that you then copy the exchange to Lord Home.

R.B.

ROBIN BUTLER

22 March 1990

DRAFT LETTER FROM MR TURNBULL TO CHARLES HIGHAM ESQ

The Prime Minister has asked me to reply to your letter of 13 March about the stage at which Lord Home was informed of the treason of Anthony Blunt.

I think that you may have misunderstood Lord Home's letter to you. Lord Home has confirmed that he did not know of Blunt's treason at the time when he was Prime Minister and first learned of it at the time of Mrs Thatcher's statement to Parliament in November 1979. The cause of the misunderstanding may be that Lord Brooke wrote to Lord Home at that time ie in November 1979, to explain the background.

Lord Home, to whom I am copying this letter with yours, has said that, if you are in any remaining doubt about this point, you should feel free to write to him again.

Summary: Blank pt 2

CONFIDENTIAL



C-1 w/p does / pps / blunt
(man)

(ack)

10 DOWNING STREET

LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Principal Private Secretary

SIR ROBIN BUTLER

SIR ANTHONY BLUNT

The Prime Minister has received the attached letter from an American writing a book about The Queen seeking clarification on what Lord Home had been told about Blunt. As you will see, he claims that Lord Home has written to him stating that he was advised at the time by the Home Secretary, Mr. Brooke. This conflicts with a letter we have on our files from Lord Brooke to the Prime Minister, which was written shortly after her speech in the debate. In it he says:

"I have written to Alec to explain why in April 1964 I did not bring him in on what was happening about Blunt, and to say how sorry if in my well meant effort not to add to his burdens I may, with hindsight, have exercised my discretion wrongly."

BeH I would be grateful for any advice you can give on this paradox.

ANDREW TURNBULL

20 MARCH 1990

CONFIDENTIAL

Charles Higham
4027 Farmouth Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90027

2/20/3.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

March 13, 1990

The Right Honorable Margaret Thatcher, PC, MP
10 Downing Street
London, SW1
England

Dear Prime Minister:

I hesitate to write and ask you if you could spare me just a little of your valuable time with help that only you can give; how many times have you heard that?

I am presently engaged with a co-author in writing about Her Majesty's reign. The book entitled Elizabeth and Philip will be published in the United States by Doubleday and in Great Britain by Sidgwick and Jackson.

You may recall that in November 1979, in answer to a question concerning Professor Anthony Blunt, you stated that Lord Home did not recall that he had been informed of Professor Blunt's treason at the time that Lord Home was Prime Minister.

It was inaccurately reported in the press, based upon your statement, that Lord Home did not know about Professor Blunt at the time, when in fact you had only said that he did not recall the matter. Several books have repeated the error.

Would you be kind enough to advise me of the basis upon which your statement rested?

Lord Home has written to me stating that he was advised at the time, by the Home Secretary, Mr. Brooke.

I am, Prime Minister, with great respect and admiration,

Yours sincerely,

Charles Higham

Charles Higham

CH/vas