

British and Bolsheviks: the romance of the century

by Allen and Rachel Douglas

The Secrets of the Service: A Story of Soviet Subversion of Western Intelligence

by Anthony Glees

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A more appropriate subtitle for British author Anthony Glees's book were, "A *Defense* of Soviet Subversion of Western Intelligence." That is the gist of this factional intervention into the debates over the penetration of British intelligence by Soviet "moles" such as Kim Philby, Anthony Blunt, Guy Burgess, et al.—in particular, the battle raging since the 1970s over former MI5 Chief Roger Hollis. Was Roger Hollis a mole? Glees weighs in with this judgment: "There seems absolutely no reason to believe that Roger Hollis himself was in any way guilty of treachery, although he clearly made mistakes."

Glees's verdict on the Hollis case is not surprising. He argues that, even if moles do exist, they really do little harm, and perhaps there is no such thing as "subversion" in the first place. The odds and ends of historical material in his book, some of them interesting, are subordinated to its purpose as an apology for the powerful factions of the British Establishment, that have indulged in a 70-year love affair with the Soviet dictatorship. Glees acknowledges the aid of members of such senior Establishment families as the Cecils, Astors, and Balfours.

In defense of treason

Before his recent death, a rising chorus of voices in the

United Kingdom was claiming that former MI6 executive Kim Philby, though he was a general in the KGB, was either a British "triple" agent, or, at the least, never really did Britain much injury. In either case, since he was now working for the great reformer Gorbachov, they would add, it was even more clear that Philby was "on our side." (See *EIR*, May 13, 1988.)

Most vocal in this chorus has been a group of Philby's former associates in MI6, who profess to still believe in his innocence of the crime of treason. Glees comes down on their side, with his comment (p. 208) on a Foreign Office memo which praised Philby: "This sort of statement has led some authors to believe that Philby did in fact do some good work for MI6 while also working flat out for the Russians."

Glees's apologies go deeper, as when he previews his findings (p. 16): "We shall see that in general terms the amount of damage that the moles caused has been grossly exaggerated. Their activities were serious, but there is no evidence to suggest that, except in very detailed areas, matters would have been very different had the moles loyally served the Crown rather than Stalin. . . . If it can be shown that the moles were ignorant of the true nature of Stalinism and the role that Soviet-inspired Communism was set to play in postwar Europe, then it becomes difficult to condemn Stalin's Englishmen and women as evil and sinister subversives. Indeed, subversion itself becomes a questionable term. . . . It would not be easy to convict them of treason if they could prove they had not known that Stalin and the Crown were incompatible masters and that, in serving the former, they could not, at the same time, have been serving the latter. . . . Did not Anthony Blunt argue that during his

period of service for Stalin he was wholeheartedly committed to Britain's cause?"

The question of grand policy

The moles did no harm, in the view of Glees, because "it was only at the fringes of high policy," that changes would have altered the overall course of events. "High policy" was anchored on an Anglo-Soviet Alliance, codified by treaty in May 1942, which was expected to last 20 years, so the moles were merely "knocking on doors that were already open." With respect to Hollis, Glees says, "a cover-up would have only two aims: to protect the British Establishment or to hide a deep and widespread Communist conspiracy in Britain. Of the latter there is not a shred of evidence."

So, we come to the heart of the matter—the role of factions of the British Establishment in decades of espionage and treason against the nation-state of Britain itself.

The real issue, Glees quite rightly insists, is grand policy—who set it and what were their motives and knowledge? Did the extensive assistance offered to Stalin by British Prime Minister Churchill, the Foreign Office, and others at the top of the Establishment, result only from the exigencies of war? Where that help was truly egregious, as in the Yalta concession to Stalin of Eastern Europe, was it because of a "lack of knowledge" about Stalin's intent?

"There will be many," anticipates Glees, "who will assume the very worst straight away. 'Ah, yes,' they will say, 'the whole of British foreign policy towards Russia was subverted.' They might even assume that everyone from Roger Hollis in MI5 to Winston Churchill in Downing Street was a Soviet agent." (The Churchill-Hollis "link"—only through grand policy, mind you—is much on Glees's mind, as his repeated juxtaposition of the two names underscores.)

One of the most notorious such "lapses" in grand policy was Churchill's decision not to support the anti-Hitler German opposition, when he was approached before the war by German General staff representative Ewald von Kleist-Schmenzin, for British approval of a military coup against Hitler, and again in 1942, when circles around German resistance leader Pastor Dietrich Bonhöffer approached London. The former contacts, which involved Sir Robert Vansittart and Lord Lloyd, as well as Churchill, could have stopped the war before it started, had the British given the go-ahead for a coup; Churchill acknowledged, "There was no possibility of a hitch. All that was required for a completely successful coup was Hitler's presence in Berlin." The second approach, by Bonhöffer, could have ended the war in 1942-43, in which case Stalin's army would never have reached Germany, and the postwar map of Europe would have been very different.

Glees turns somersaults to defend Churchill's decision. One excuse he invokes is that Kim Philby downplayed the importance of the German opposition! Here, Glees rather refutes his own claim, that the Soviet moles in Britain made no major difference.

Glees skirts other instances that would damn the Estab-

lishment factions he is defending, such as the militarily insane decision to open a front in North Africa instead of continental Europe. This also helped prolong the war to Stalin's benefit. Having ignored or glossed over these momentous decisions of grand policy, Glees has the gall to state that the Yalta accords of February 1945, which legitimized Stalin's presence in Eastern Europe and half of Germany, were no sellout, because the Red Army took half of Europe and, besides, the West "genuinely did not know" about Stalin's plans for dictatorships in the territory ceded to him.

A different analytical method

Retired MI5 counterintelligence officer Peter Wright and others have dedicated years to tracing out the network of "moles," of Philby's circle and its protectors. Wright's memoir, *Spycatcher* (Viking, 1987, \$19.95, 392pp. hardbound), however, makes clear that even dedicated and gifted counterespionage experts like Wright and his associates could never in a hundred years catch all the moles who riddle the British intelligence Establishment. The problem is not the numbers, but the method.

Wright and others have started with the evidence from Soviet defectors, British signals intelligence, and other sources, that state secrets have constantly shown up in the hands of the Soviets. From that observation, they make three deductions, Sherlock Holmes-style, which have circumscribed their investigations since the 1951 flight of Burgess and Maclean to Moscow: 1) A number of individual moles are responsible for this activity, and there may exist one or more "supermoles," whose job is not to steal secrets, but to provide cover for those who do; 2) since a preponderance of those caught so far began to work for Moscow during the 1930s (largely at Oxford and Cambridge), that time-period is the earliest relevant starting point for investigations; 3) since the enemy is the U.S.S.R., which professes "communism," "communism"—attractive as it was to youth at the time of the depression and the rise of fascism—is the "marker" for treason, the chief ideological factor to be looked for.

From this flawed set of axioms has unfolded a "bad infinity," the search for the "fifth man," the "twentieth man," the "one hundred and twenty-fifth man," and so on, each of whom should be a practicing or closet communist.

If Wright and his co-thinkers employ only this sort of "from-the-bottom-up" approach, they will always fall short of cleaning out Soviet subversion. But if we proceed, like Edgar Allan Poe's C. Auguste Dupin, "top-down" from the question of grand policy, so emphasized by Glees for his own devious reasons, we begin to succeed. Because he set out to apologize not for individual moles, but for the grand policy of the Establishment faction that protected them, Glees pays a good deal of attention to policymakers in the upper echelons of the Establishment, who, in fact, provide a key to unlock the mystery of the moles.

Of Whitehall and the intelligence community, Glees says (p. 263), "There were, it would appear, about half a dozen

leading figures in British Intelligence concerned with Russian affairs. The most senior was probably Robert Bruce Lockhart who had the rank of a Deputy Undersecretary of State at the Foreign Office and was Director General of the Political Warfare Executive from Dalton's departure in 1942 until February 1944, when he became Ambassador to the Czechoslovak Exile Government. But he remained a policy adviser to the Foreign Secretary on PWE [Political Warfare Executive] and a member of it until the end of the war. Next in importance, perhaps, came Brigadier George 'Pop' Hill, a veteran British agent who had been sent to Moscow in 1941." He later adds (p. 272), "It seems that the keynote of Anglo-Soviet cooperation in Britain was struck by Bruce Lockhart, the most senior Russian specialist."

Glees admits that both Lockhart and Hill were decidedly pro-Bolshevik, but attributes their posture to Britain's World War II alliance with Stalin. If it can be shown that the pattern of Lockhart's and Hill's pro-Bolshevism antedates the war by far, and that their earlier pro-Bolshevism also faithfully reflected Establishment policy, then the entire argument of Glees's book crumbles, and we shall also have established certain benchmarks for a competent British counterintelligence policy. The investigation, we emphasize, must reach back well before the 1930s and before 1917, the year when a faction of the British Establishment helped pave the way for the Bolsheviks to take power.

The Round Table

In the early careers of both Lockhart and Hill, we run smack up against what is acknowledged as the most successful Soviet intelligence operation of all time, the "Trust" organization run by Soviet secret police (Cheka) chief Feliks Dzerzhinsky in the 1920s. Those associated with it, such as Lockhart, Hill, their close friend Sidney Reilly, and a score of lesser-known spies, were agents of British SIS or the Cheka or—most definitely in the case of Reilly—both.

Lockhart came from the heart of the Establishment responsible for British grand policy. During World War I, he was an intelligence officer assigned to Russia, under commercial cover in the British consulate. His job was to maintain contact with the anti-Czarist opposition, centered upon a section of Russia's old nobility which had always hated the Petrine state and its Romanov dynasty. In alliance with that nobility was the powerful Old Believer (raskolnik) community, which viewed the state as the Antichrist. Old Believer merchant circles in Moscow were headed by A.I. Guchkov, scion of a leading family of the most radical, "priestless" raskolniks. During the hardship and devastation of World War I, this opposition marshalled its forces for a coup.

Lockhart shared the revolutionary sentiments of these two groups, both by personal inclination and because that was his job. In January 1917, Lord Milner, the leader of the Round Table group and the chief figure in Lloyd George's wartime cabinet, traveled to Russia. Lockhart arranged meet-

ings for Milner with opposition leaders including Prince Lvov, and Chelnokov, the Mayor of Moscow. Both these men declared openly for revolution that very month, and in February 1917, Prince Lvov became head of the first Provisional Government. Milner gave the British go-ahead for the coup; as his biographer put it, "He made clear that his sympathies were entirely with Prince Lvov and the Mayor."

The British ties to the conspirators were manifold. Sir Bernard Pares, known as the father of Russian studies in Britain, would exclaim upon the announcement of the Provisional Government, that "of the twelve new Ministers, seven were actually collaborators of my *Russian Review* in Liverpool. . . . Frankly, it was one of the greatest gratifications of my life."

The most informed circles, both in Russia and in Britain, were well aware that the "liberal" coup of February was but a passing phase, and that the elimination of the Czar would almost certainly propel a revolution to its logical conclusion, the triumph of the most radical wing of the insurrectionists, the Bolsheviks.

Milner was the chief executive officer of the Round Table group, which was pulled together in the 1890s around the fortune of South African gold and diamonds magnate Cecil Rhodes. Behind Milner stood even greater power. One of his close associates was a political operative of the Royal Household, the man historian Carroll Quigley called "the most important adviser on political matters to Queen Victoria, King Edward VII, and King George V," and Lord Esher (Reginald Baliol Brett).

Besides the Cecil family, the Round Table grew to encompass many other great names of the British Establishment—Astor, Rothschild, Balfour, and others—which names recur again and again in the stories of Kim Philby, Burgess, Blunt, and the other moles.

The strategic perspective of the Round Table, elaborated from the writings and teachings of John Ruskin, was that the world should be brought into a "New Middle Ages." In Round Table thinking, "socialism" or "communism" were synonyms for anti-industrial, totalitarian feudalism. Thus, Round Table figures gave enormous support to Fabian socialism, which in turn gave birth to the Communist Party of Great Britain. Milner himself penned a 1923 paean to Fabian Sidney and Beatrice Webb's "A Constitution for a Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain." His collaborator, Lord Lothian (Philip Kerr), founder and editor of the Round Table's magazine, was Lloyd George's private secretary during World War I, and himself a notorious pro-Bolshevik. The pathway to this New Middle Ages ran through World War I and the smash-up of the political, industrial, and cultural power of Germany. It also ran through a revolution in Russia.

The Trust

Following the Bolshevik Revolution, Lord Milner sent Lockhart back to Russia as his personal emissary to establish

ties with the Bolshevik regime and, if possible, to draw the Soviets back into the war to reopen the Eastern Front against Germany. While Lockhart met daily with one or another high-ranking Soviet leader, Captain George Hill of the British SIS was serving as an aide to War Commissar Leon Trotsky. Hill helped Trotsky to establish Soviet Military Intelligence, the GRU. He also trained the kernel of the Cheka's future counterintelligence unit, the KRO, which was soon to be running the Trust spy organization.

In the summer of 1918, the collaboration with the Bolsheviks of these two and their friend, Sidney Reilly, reached a peak in the so-called "Lockhart Plot." At that time, the Bolshevik regime faced a multitude of internal enemies who, with the appropriate support from outside, had a chance to overthrow the new regime. Lockhart, Hill, and Reilly (the latter had secured a job with the Cheka), supposedly set out to accomplish that end, but they achieved very different results. (See *EIR*, June 5 and Oct. 2, 1987.)

When the smoke had cleared, the uprising was brutally crushed; the American secret service network under Xenophon Kalamatiano was smashed and Kalamatiano imprisoned; Lenin, who had opposed reentering the war, lay wounded from an assassin's bullet; and Trotsky and Dzerzhinsky, who favored the British position of reentering the war, were vastly strengthened. Lockhart was briefly "interrogated" by the vice chief of the Cheka, Jacob Peters, a longtime resident of London who was keeping in touch with his wife and child there by means of letters couriered by Captain George Hill. Lockhart was soon released.

Reilly and Hill, the supposed ringleaders of the great anti-Bolshevik plot, eluded capture despite a massive manhunt by the Cheka—during which, it is recalled, the two quite openly would dine in Moscow restaurants. Kalamatiano and U.S. Consul Dewitt C. Poole were among those who charged, with ample evidence in hand, that Reilly had acted as a witting provocateur for the Cheka, charges which Lockhart vehemently protested.

These widespread suspicions had curiously little impact on Reilly's SIS career. Throughout the early 1920s, he was the chief adviser on Russian affairs to the first head of British SIS, Mansfield Cumming ("C"), and was present in almost all SIS discussions of "anti-Soviet" operations. Robin Bruce Lockhart, son of Robert and cover-story crafter for Reilly, revealed in *Reilly: The First Man*, that Reilly survived after his 1925 disappearance into the Soviet Union and became a top Cheka adviser on the penetration of Western intelligence. Walter Krivitsky, Stalin's GRU head for Western Europe who defected in 1938, said before his murder, "You know the agent Reilly? It was his information which enabled us to penetrate the British network."

Some three years after the Lockhart Plot of 1918, many of its personnel regrouped for the much larger provocation known as the Trust.

Glees prominently mentions George Hill in his book, a

break with the usual practice in British and Russian intelligence writing of the last seven decades, which has been virtually to ignore his existence. But, Glees attempts to put some distance between Hill and Reilly. He writes (p. 267), "Hill was rather scornful of his notorious colleague Sidney Reilly; in particular he disliked Reilly's plan to arrest the Bolshevik leaders and march them through the streets of Moscow 'bereft of their lower garments in order to kill them by ridicule.'" Hill's own memoir, *Go Spy the Land* (1937), tells a different tale, "I was seeing Reilly daily, and he kept me informed of what he was doing and of his plans for a coup d'état against the Bolsheviks. Reilly's plan was bold and masterfully conceived."

Glees disingenuously records that George Hill "knew that 'The Bolsheviks together with the Third International have built up a new and powerful secret service organisation which plays a prominent part in international intrigues and which calls for the most brilliant counter-espionage work on the part of the countries they attack.'" Hill would know, of course, since he himself did much to get those intelligence services off the ground! Clearly it was this, rather than the alleged anti-Bolshevik activities of Hill, that the Soviets recalled during World War II, when they specifically requested that the Moscow liaison from the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) to their own secret police, the NKVD, be none other than Brigadier George Hill!

Thus, the pattern of British-Bolshevik collaboration greatly predates the usual 1930s starting point for examination of the Philby circle. The ties were not based on fashionable "communism" and existed not chiefly at the level of "moles," but through figures such as Hill and Lockhart, on official assignment from the highest policy circles in Britain.

This Anglo-Soviet collaboration, from early on, is not entirely unknown. As one British intelligence figure recently put it, there are to this day, "joint KGB-SIS operations. There is a unit in SIS called the 'Soviet Liaison Unit,' the 'SL Unit,' in SIS. There has been one for decades."

From the standpoint of this decades-long British-Bolshevik collaboration, all of the empirical data assembled by Peter Wright and others, and certain other singular occurrences, must be reevaluated.

What of the extraordinary pattern of assistance to the moles, even after they were suspected as Soviet agents? In this category falls the appointment of the notoriously anti-American Donald Maclean to head the Foreign Office's most important desk, the American Department, when he was already under suspicion as a Soviet agent. Or Philby's appointment, in summer 1944, to head the just-established Section IX, the Soviet counterespionage unit of SIS?

Even Glees has to ask, "Why, precisely, did MI6 decide at that particular juncture to revitalize its anti-Soviet output, and unintentionally, put a Communist mole in charge of its efforts?" Curiously, once Philby's Section IX was established, it was Robert Cecil, of the Round Table's Cecil fam-

ily, who authorized its massive expansion across Europe, under diplomatic cover.

And why and on whose authority, in 1947, was Philby, then the chief of perhaps the largest and most important MI6 section, sent out to head up a mere field post, in Istanbul? Did MI6 chief Sir Stewart Menzies authorize Philby to act as a Soviet agent in that post, since, as Philip Knightley wrote in 1968, "Philby had been given permission to play the full double game with the Russians—to pretend to them that he was a British agent willing to work for them." Might that go-ahead be related to Menzies' own role, recently documented by Anthony Cave Brown in "*C*": *The Secret Life of Sir Stewart Graham Menzies* (Macmillan, 1987, 830pp., hard-bound), in financing the Trust in the 1920s and 1930s, and its remnants right up into the 1950s?

Another question mark, upon which Glees spends a whole chapter, is the notorious case of the Special Operations Executive, established by Churchill in 1940 as a sabotage and irregular warfare unit with the assignment to "set Europe ablaze." The SOE, whose Moscow liaison to the NKVD was *George Hill*, did its job—but with major gains accruing to Stalin. Glees is hard put to apologize for the SOE (p. 100): "As is commonly known, there were a whole host of incidents, all involving SOE and its interest in the future political map of Europe, which went drastically wrong both before and after Hitler's attack on the U.S.S.R. As far as we can tell, all the incidents had the same two things in common: They had to do with the creation, by means of the resistance, of potential political leadership elites in postwar Europe and they produced a situation that was bad for British interests but good, or at any rate, not bad, for the Kremlin."

Winston Churchill

Lastly, on the question of grand policy, what about its chief executive, wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill? The final story has not been written on Churchill's motivations, but it will require consideration of the following.

Glees records several critical services performed by Sir Winston for the Stalin dictatorship: his refusal to support the anti-Hitler opposition; his signing of the Yalta accords which ceded this occupied territory to Stalin; and his June 1941 order, which effectively eliminated all British intelligence monitoring of the Soviets, by stipulating that no Soviet radio transmission intercepts were to be decrypted!

Glees says about this extraordinary decision (p. 248ff.), "Churchill's interest in signals intelligence, most recently confirmed by Sir Jock Colville, and his interest in intelligence about the U.S.S.R., also recently confirmed by Christopher Andrew, make it all the more curious that on 22 June 1941 it was decided that Russian wireless traffic was no longer to be used as an intelligence resource. Why? . . . At any rate, the decision affecting wireless traffic was bound to have momentous consequences, of which the most critical was that the best source for discovering Soviet secret plans during the war

and, indeed, for unmasking Soviet subversion as a whole was denied to British Intelligence. It was a decision which was, of course, the corollary of Churchill's high policy towards the Soviet Union. But was it a foolish decision?"

Once again, Glees turns acrobat to defend the decision. Yet, these matters of "grand policy" become less inexplicable, if gridded against certain lesser known facts:

1) Churchill was the single most influential sponsor of Sidney Reilly and of Reilly's fellow Cheka operative, Boris Savinkov, throughout the early 1920s. Reilly biographer Edward Van Der Rhoer noted, "Reilly was able to obtain from Churchill the knowledge of high level official contacts that was essential in order to win financial and logistical support in Europe." And this long after the rumor was afoot that Reilly was a Soviet agent! About Savinkov, even after Savinkov openly went over to the Soviets, Churchill wrote, "Yet when all is said and done . . . few men tried more, gave more, dared more and suffered more for the Russian people."

2) Churchill, about whom there were substantial rumors of "Oscar Wilde tendencies" in his youth, kept as his long-time personal secretary, Sir Edward Marsh, a notorious homosexual and member of the Cambridge Apostles secret society, which produced Blunt, Burgess, Victor Rothschild, and many other known or suspected Soviet agents. For decades, Apostles entered leading university, artistic, and civil service positions thanks to Marsh's influence. And, according to author Richard Deacon, "In securing Churchill's ear and confidences, his [Sidney Reilly's] intermediary was Churchill's private secretary, Eddie Marsh."

3) Marsh opened the door to Churchill for other Soviet agents. One of Reilly's closest collaborators in the Trust was the above-cited Old Believer leader, Alexander I. Guchkov, who, together with his daughter and son-in-law, had become a kingpin of the Cheka's "Eurasian" component of the Trust. Said Deacon about Guchkov, "It was the Guchkov circle which led directly to many of Churchill's misconceptions of Soviet Russia's policies."

The correspondence of Guchkov with Anatoli Baikalov, a leading Soviet agent in Britain between the wars, kept in the Bakhmetev Archive in New York City, includes the Dec. 6, 1932 letter of Guchkov to Baikalov: "I know that Churchill related to me always with great trust and favor." On May 25, 1933, Guchkov wrote to Baikalov, "There are rumors in the papers that Churchill might take over [as Prime Minister]. This would be too good to be true."

As Glees has recounted the evidence, there is little reason to think that Trust operative Guchkov, who died before Churchill's appointment as Prime Minister, would have been disappointed.

Glossary

MI5—British counter-espionage.

MI6—British foreign intelligence.

SIS—British Secret Intelligence Service.