"Burgess and Maclean fled from Britain at a time when the cold war had reached a peak, when the defection of international scientists from the shelter of Allied Powers had become a tragic commonplace."

The story arrived on a night when the newspaper's executives felt that the front page could hold no more.

The *Daily Express*, in common with other newspapers, was recording the exploits of a 19-year-old gunman named Poole. Poole had shot a policeman dead and was defying a force of 200 armed officers at his home in Chatham.

But within the hour the pulsating story of the Chatham siege had yielded place.

The Public Gets a Shock

The following morning the public, already alarmed that two atomic scientists—Nunn May and Fuchs and Pontecorvo—had given Britain's secrets to Russia, was shocked by the news that two diplomats had fled the country.

This was that first report in the *Daily Express*, omitting the names of the diplomats until the Foreign Office would confirm them:

"Scotland Yard officers and French detectives are hunting for two British Government employees, who are believed to have left London with the intention of getting to Moscow.

"According to a friend, they planned the journey to serve their idealistic purposes.

"One report says that the two men were employed by the Foreign Office and there is a possibility that they may have important papers with them.

"News of their plan was given to the authorities by the friend, who said they expected him to go with them. They were to go to France as if on holiday, and then make their way behind the Iron Curtain, the friend backed out.

"Several experts have flown from London to France, to work with the French police.

"All French airports and frontiers are being watched. Plain-clothes men are searching the Montemartre area of Paris, where it is easy for anyone to hide. It is understood the police are watching within 'of the Soviet Embassy in Paris.'"

In response to inquiries, the Foreign Office made a statement the same morning. It named the diplomats and said they had been missing from their homes for thirteen days. This was the Foreign Office statement:

"Two members of the Foreign Service have been missing from their homes since May 25. One is Mr. D. D. Maclean, the other Mr. G. F. de M. Burgess.

"All possible inquiries are being made. It is known that they went to France a few days ago.

"Mr. Maclean had a breakdown a year ago owing to overstrain, but was believed to have fully recovered.

"Owing to their being absent without leave, both have been suspended with effect from June 1."

All that day and night many of Britain's newspapers investigated the backgrounds, careers, and movements of the two men. Next morning the *Daily Express* published its findings:

"Two missing Foreign Office officials, 38-year-old Donald Duart Maclean, head of the American Department, and 40-year-old Guy Burgess, a former [illegible] Second Secretary, were traced to Paris yesterday. They are believed by the French police to have flown out of Paris.

"Telegrams signed with the name of Maclean and Burgess were received at their home in England last night. The wire received by Mrs. Melinda Maclean, who is expecting a child next week, was 32 words long.

"The telegram came from Paris. French detectives checked them and do not believe that Maclean and Burgess were the senders. And the Foreign Office cannot say whether the wires were authentic.

"Mr. Dean Acheson, U.S. Secretary of State, told Senators yesterday it would be a very serious matter if the two missing British Foreign Office officials proved to have Russian sympathies.

"And Senator Owen Brewster remarked that Mr. Maclean was believed to have a thorough knowledge of Anglo-American exchanges on such subjects as the North Atlantic Pact, the Korean war, and the Japanese Peace Treaty.

"Atlantic Pact discussions have covered all the strategic plans."

As the facts piled up day by day and were revealed in Britain's newspapers, all the world wondered.

Why should Donald Maclean, charming, cultured, successful, walk out of his important post at the Foreign Office, walk on on his young wife, expecting a baby, walk away, for sake, as it appeared, from a good career, leave behind the comfort of a £3,500 (-$15,200) home in fashionable Surrey, which he had not quite even paid for?

What possessed him to do that?

Something it became plain, had possessed Burgess. Burgess landed in Britain from nine months spent in America 18 days before their flight. Almost at once, he right to be in touch with Maclean.

What had Burgess learned in America? What had he further learned in London?

Despite the evidence of past disloyalty, the public appeared more to the mystery than any suspicion of neurotic and perverted personalities.

For Burgess and Maclean fled from Britain at a time when the cold war had reached a peak, when the defection of international scientists from the shelter of Allied Powers had become a tragic commonplace.

"Storehouse of Secrets"

Could it be that even in the most precious of all secrets, the Foreign Office, there were men who would betray their country?

The official answers did not come for four years and four months. They came—scantily—from the Foreign Office, suddenly, one Sunday.

And they came that Sunday, September 23, 1955, only because Vladimir Petrov, a former Russian diplomat in Australia, had published evidence about the diplomats' activities.

After a national outcry, more information about the Foreign Office on September 23 published a Report concerning the disappearance of two former Foreign Office officials.

Rebecca West, the novelist, who is an authority on [illegible]

"Burgess had managed to acquire the blueprints of the 25-million-dollar psychological warfare planned by Washington to reach behind the Iron Curtain"

subtleties of treason, had summed up this White Paper as a number of holes tied together with words and empty to the point of impudence. The main revelations were these:

1. Burgess and Maclean were long-term Soviet agents.

2. Maclean was suspected and was under surveillance before he fled. Burgess was under scrutiny on the general ground of his suitability.

3. Maclean vanished on the very day—May 25, 1951—that authority had been given to interrogate him.

In the light of these admissions we might look back to some typical questions and answers which emerged from the House of Commons during the Four Years' Silence.

Mr. Attlee, Socialist Government was in power when the diplomats vanished. Mr. Herbert Morrison, the Foreign Secretary, stated on June 11, 1951, that neither Maclean nor Burgess had been dismissed and that the question of their dismissal would depend on the result of inquiries.

Mr. (now Sir Anthony) Eden—with more ministerial experience of the Foreign Office than any other living man—spoke of "very wide anxiety outside the country" and asked Mr. Morrison to keep the House informed of developments.

A Link With Russia—

Asked if there was any evidence to connect the disappearance of the men with Soviet Russia, Mr. Morrison said: "We should all be wise not to prejudge anything one way or the other."

On a discussion about Maclean's breakdown in Cairo, Mr. Eden put in: "May I be allowed to say that Mr. Maclean was serving under me at the time in Egypt, that in all the reports I received the work he did there was very good indeed."

But throughout the period that Maclean was in Cairo—from November 7, 1948, to May 11, 1950—Anthony Eden was out of office. Mr. Ernest Bevin was the Foreign Secretary in that period.

In October 1951, Sir Winston (then Mr.) Churchill's Tory Government was in office. Mr. Eden succeeded Mr. Morrison as Foreign Secretary. The men who had asked the first awkward questions were now having to answer them.

On July 2, 1952, Mr. Anthony Nutting, Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, announced, in reply to a question that the appointments of Burgess and Maclean had at last been terminated on June 1, 1952.

These questions followed:

Lieut-Colonel Lipton: Can the hon. Gentleman explain the reason for this extraordinary delay of one year in finally deciding to dispense with the services of these two men?

Mr. Nutting: It is because the search for them was continuing. Indeed the search is still continuing. But, having been absent without leave for a year, my right hon. Friend has considered that any disciplinary measure their appointments should be terminated and that they should be dismissed the Service.

Lieut-Colonel Lipton: Is it to be understood that disciplinary measures can be applied to absconding Government civil servants only after they have absconded for 12 months? Is that an essential qualification which must be taken into account before people are given the sack?

Mr. Nutting: No, sir.

"the blueprints of the 25-million-dollar psychological warfare planned by Washington to reach behind the Iron Curtain"

Mr. Nally: Could the hon. Gentleman confirm that it is a fact that prior to the disappearance of these gentlemen they were in fact already considered by the Foreign Office as not quite suitable for the offices which each of them held?

Mr. Nutting: That is another question altogether. It happened at a period when the present Government were not responsible. Perhaps the hon. Gentleman could direct his question to his right hon. Friend the Member for Lewisham, South (Mr. H. Morrison).

The Foreign Office clearly evaded the issue by [illegible] the question of whether [illegible] the men [illegible]

On July 10, 1952, on a question [illegible] answer given:

Colonel Cyril Connolly Dunlop: [illegible] Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs [illegible] the appointment of a Royal Commission or some [illegible] able tribunal to inquire into the circumstances of Messrs. Burgess and Maclean and their associates, connections and antecedents.

Mr. Nutting: [illegible] the security authorities [illegible] the Department concerned [illegible] and Burgess and the investigations are still continuing. I am satisfied that nothing further would be gained by the appointment of a Royal Commission or other judicial body to inquire into the matter.

On October [illegible] Mr. Nutting [illegible] open inquiry could not be held without [illegible] confidential details and methods. Disclosure of such information would be prejudicial to the public interest.

But when [illegible] Government [illegible] was [illegible] to publish [illegible] diplomats [illegible] inquiry [illegible] was brushed aside so lightly.

Throughout the Four Years' Silence [illegible] the *Daily* [illegible] met with criticism from interested parties [illegible] from the best people [illegible] official displeasure.

In November, 1952, for example, the Foreign [illegible] pressed to say whether the official who [illegible] appointed Maclean and Burgess would suffer disciplinary action. The reply from Mr. Nutting was: No.

Question A Which Won't

Colonel Cyril Connolly Dunlop: [illegible] would not further to the disquiet in the public mind that somebody is being shielded.

Mr. Nutting: [illegible] When [illegible] *I am prepared to bring myself to the Bar of the House [illegible]*

But consider [illegible] Maclean [illegible] went over. Note the [illegible] Colonel [illegible]

On Burgess: Despite the Bohemian [illegible] he had managed to acquire the blueprints of the 25-million-dollar psychological warfare planned by Washington to reach behind the Iron Curtain.

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"Maclean was able to tell the Soviet regime how the western allies planned and worked together, and how best their relations could be damaged and suspicion replace goodwill."

Donald Maclean: "His hand lingered all the crucial inner wheels of the western alliance. He was able to tell the Soviet regime how the western allies planned and worked together, and how best their relations could be damaged and suspicion replace goodwill."

The *Daily Express* took the view that nobody should be shielded when the interests of British security were at stake. It would be better to reveal all weaknesses in the Foreign Office and end them than risk further disaster.

The *Daily Express* even offered £1,000 [$2,800] reward for evidence which would clear up the mystery—when it was still a mystery. And, in April 1953, when there was speculation on the role of the two men in the new Kremlin circle, the *Daily Express* renewed its £1,000 offer.

In these pages the story of Burgess and Maclean is told as it was unfolded by the reporters in Fleet Street.

It was unfolded in the face of repeated refusals to deny or confirm by the Foreign Office—which knew much of the truth all the time.

And, knowing much of the truth, the security authorities of that citadel of security bungled the job of detaining Burgess and Maclean.

How and why?

Those questions probe the essence of the Great Spy Scandal.

CHAPTER II

This Was Burgess

THE VANISHING TRICK of Burgess and Maclean was, from the start, a source of wonder and contradictory speculation. It became essential to explore what was known of their characters and histories.

Guy Francis de Moncy Burgess, a thick-set, handsome, blue-eyed bachelor, was born in Devonport, the son of Malcolm Kingsford de Moncy Burgess, a naval lieutenant.

He lost his father when young; his mother got married again to Lieut.-Colonel Jack Bassett, and this couple, now elderly, live in Arlington House, overlooking London's Green Park.

Burgess was intended for the Navy and from Eton—in January 1925—he went to the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth. He was found to have defective eyesight and he returned to Eton in July 1927.

His master, Mr. E. A. Dobbs, had written to him: "I am most awfully sorry to hear of the way your career in the Navy has been made impossible by your eyesight. I shall be delighted to have you back again."

Burgess passed on to Cambridge, where he eventually took a First in History at Trinity College. That was in 1933—but before then he had met Donald Duart Maclean.

Maclean, son of the Liberal leader, Sir Donald Maclean, fair and sandy-haired, flabby but imposing, was reading languages at Trinity Hall.

They became friends. They were both members of a Left Wing circle. And Maclean was to say later that Burgess had a strong influence on him at that time.

Burgess rolled Communism round his tongue and spouted it at anybody who would listen.

He goaded his friends with visions of the wrath to come when he and the Party had their way. But with enough liquor he would concede dispensations to a favoured few.

He drank anything, he was careless about his appearance to the point of grubbiness, he talked everlastingly, and—they say—brilliantly. And—they say—mockingly.

He was a destroyer of other men's faiths. His own was Marxism.

Mr. Herbert Morrison, who was Foreign Secretary at the time of the diplomats' defection, has said since the revelation that they were long-term agents:

"The fact that a person as a young man may have had Communist political opinion in the University and even active evidence that he is a Communist should not prejudice his future life."

True, the political climate of the thirties has to be considered. There was mass unemployment, there was poverty, there was leading hunger marchers, there was political ferment, there was rotting. Many ideals, the young men sought to satisfy in answer.

But nearly all tempered their views with moderation and patriotism. Not so Burgess and Maclean.

And the Foreign Office appears to have had knowledge of the men's proclaimed views. Documents mysteriously vanished. For the White Paper says:

"Investigation into Burgess's past has revealed that he, like Maclean, was an active member of Communist circles while at Cambridge. He later took no part in Communist activities, outwardly renounced his Marxist beliefs and began his subsequent career of direct participation in the activities of Left Wing organisation."

The last comment on this came in advance when Mr. Eden, who as Foreign Secretary in October 1952 was asked whether he was satisfied that the Foreign Office records and reports on the two men had been an accurate assessment.

Mr. Eden replied: "In view of information subsequently received from outside sources, I do not think that I possessed the full picture."

It was thus necessary to outside sources for the full picture.

Burgess did two years' post-graduate research in history and then joined the B.B.C. Talks Department. He announced that he was a Nazi and that he had attended the Nuremberg Rally of Hitler Youth.

Cyril Connolly, the author and critic, wrote an article on the diplomats in the *Sunday Times* which later expanded into *The Unburnt Prometheus* published by Catherine Press. He considered a possible explanation of the "Fascist" phase:

"Burgess and I were introduced at Cambridge by a young man with a talented and beautiful mother.

"One day Burgess [illegible]

"Guy had confided to a friend that he was not only a member but a secret agent of the Communist Party."

impressed. Guy had confided to him that he was not only a member but a secret agent of the Communist Party and he had then invited him to join in his work.

"His friend had refused with concern and the novelist felt that Burgess's reason was suddenly explained: as a secret agent he must have been told to investigate the British Fascists and he hoped to pass as one."

You would have thought that enough had been said *by* Burgess at this time to make him a doubtful recruit for Britain's inner bastions.

A "Secret" Job for Burgess

But not so. When war came Burgess walked straight into an off-shoot section of that secret department known as M.I.6 [British agency for counter-intelligence overseas]. He was given a civilian administrative job in what was known as the Special Organisation Executive.

This section dealt with sabotage in organised territories, dropping agents by parachute, linking up with the Maquis and other resistance forces and with providing weapons.

Burgess himself did nothing adventurous in this line; he was an organiser. The Special Organisation Executive got so big that it required a separate administration. It no longer exists—but its records are held by M.I.6.

While in Ministry Intelligence Burgess discussed his work with a close friend—thereby breaking the rules of his Department. He said he was also concerned with the flow of secret information through Swiss channels.

Further details of his wartime job were given in the *Sunday Chronicle* of June 17, 1951:

"His job called for frequent trips to the headquarters in Buckinghamshire of the Political Warfare Executive, which ran the underground movements on the Continent.

"He soon made a name as a keen young official, and became one of the few men able to contact the Political Warfare Executive without question.

"He had such a good knowledge of sabotage, propaganda and spying that important security men kept in close touch with him."

The knowledge that Burgess was on secret work was available at the time to any agent with eyes to read. For a report of a court case appeared in the London *Star* on September 10, 1940.

He was charged at Marlborough Street with being under the influence of drink while driving a War Office car. The charge was dismissed on payment of costs after the defence solicitor had said:

"I do not want to introduce too much hush-hush but the accused is doing rather confidential work which necessitates travelling to a station 30 miles out of London.

"He has been working 14 hours a day and he had just been in an air-raid."

In 1941, the following year, Burgess rejoined the B.B.C. and remained three years in European propaganda departments. Both before and during the war Burgess was frank with B.B.C. contacts about his Left Wing opinions.

This is how Lord Hailsham put it in the *Sunday Graphic* of June 17, 1951:

"I knew Burgess. I met him at the B.B.C. when I made several broadcasts in the [illegible] minister. He was the producer. I thought him [illegible] sensitive and civilised person.

"But he made no [illegible] opinions and frequently expressed his distaste of the Right Wing elements of the Labour Party.

"The last thing I should have suspected was disloyalty to his country. But surely it is the duty of security officers to make inquiries.

"Did not the Foreign Office know his political sympathies?"

The answer, clearly, was [illegible]

In his propaganda work [illegible] secret organisations. The [illegible] the job, for example, of removing [illegible] we were training for sabotage.

In connection with his [illegible] the Russians and the Poles. Burgess [illegible] Moscow. He started out with [illegible] expert on Russian affairs.

His companion [illegible] Moscow. Burgess [illegible] further than Washington on the [illegible]

And in 1944 he was [illegible] temporary basis. He joined the New [illegible] put on the Permanent Staff on [illegible] 1946.

GUY BURGESS
His Passport photograph

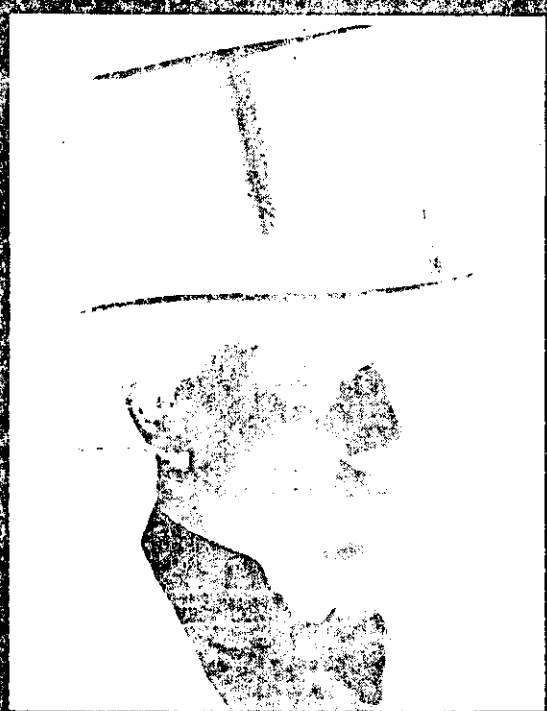
"Burgess had been guilty of indiscreet talk about secret matters of which he had official knowledge. For this he was severely reprimanded"

But *before* Burgess was put on the Permanent Staff of the Foreign Office he had been selected for a post that required possessence of discretion; in 1946 he became assistant private secretary to the Minister of State, the late Mr. Hector McNeil. When Mr. McNeil was No. 2 at the Foreign Office.

Mr. Morrison, questioned as Foreign Secretary about Burgess's professional association with Mr. McNeil, said on July 1951:

"Mr. Burgess was appointed to the office of the Minister of State on 31st December, 1946. He was transferred to the Far Eastern Department on 1st November, 1948.

"The transfer took place in the normal course of routine



Daily Express

BURGESS AT ETON: His eyesight wasn't good enough for a naval career

and was intended to give Mr. Burgess experience in a political department."

Mr. Morrison added, "At that time there was nothing adverse, as far as we were aware, against Mr. Burgess."

But four years later Mr. Morrison, in Opposition, was to say: "I am inclined to think that in a strictly limited number of cases—for as a whole our Civil Service is very fine, indeed excessive efforts are made to protect men against the natural consequences of incompetence or other faults.

"Quite apart from the question of improper imparting of official information, the conduct of these two men in the course of their duties warranted the requirement of their resignations or dismissal from the Service at an earlier stage."

Back in 1937 Burgess had formed a friendship with Jack Hewit, a pudgy, bespectacled clerk and former ballet dancer. For 14 years they shared various flats in London. The first flat they took was in New Bond Street, W.1., and this was Burgess's home when he disappeared.

They moved into this three-room flat early in 1949. A picture of life in the flat was given by a reporter who called on solicitors [lawyers] representing the owners of the *Sunday Dispatch* of July 15, 1951, the reporter quoted an official of the firm of solicitors:—

"Soon after Burgess moved in there were complaints from other tenants of rowdy parties, shouts, screams and fights throughout the night in the Burgess flat.

"He seemed to have a considerable number of parties and they were always all-male affairs. Whenever I saw him he seemed to have some part of his body in bandages. Sometimes it was his head, at other times his arm would be in a sling.

"I told him about the complaints and he promised to be quieter in future. He explained that in his [illegible] had to do a lot of entertaining, but would tell his visitors to make less noise.

"I had trouble with him, too, in other ways. He was a bad payer, and finally payments were made for him by a firm of Holborn solicitors.

"For a while things were quiet. Then one of our tenants in the flat above rang us in a panic. Early one Sunday morning she had been awakened by her baby girl, who was in tears and trembling.

"The noise from the flat below was almost indescribable. Soon afterwards an ambulance drew up and Burgess, with his head and arm bandaged, was taken to hospital on a stretcher.

"Quite obviously there had been a first-class fight.

"I rang the hospital and was told that he had a fractured skull, a broken jaw, and arm injuries, and was on the danger list."

Jack Hewit said later: "After a party at the flat that night Burgess was thrown down the stairs by a fellow diplomat. This was not Maclean."

Charges of Drunken Driving

After a spell in hospital Burgess went with his mother to Ireland, and appeared in the Dublin District Court, charged with driving a car while drunk. This is an account of the proceedings from the London *Evening Standard* of March 5, 1949:

"Charges of driving a car while drunk and driving without reasonable care against Guy Burgess, an official of the British Foreign Office, whose address was given as the Reform Club, Pall Mall, were dismissed in the Dublin District Court.

"Burgess in evidence said that he had an accident in England, and after some days in hospital he persuaded his mother to come to Ireland, and they went last weekend to Wicklow.

"Dismissing the charges, which arose out of a collision in Grafton Street on Wednesday night, the magistrate, Mr. O'Flynn, said that Burgess was a man of brilliance who appeared to be overwrought."

The White Paper records: "Early in 1950 the security authorities informed the Foreign Office that on late 1949 while on holiday abroad Burgess had been guilty of indiscreet talk about secret matters of which he had official knowledge. For this he was severely reprimanded."

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"In August 1950, Burgess was appointed Second Secretary in the British Embassy in Washington. He hated Americans. Before he went to Washington, Burgess often spoke of this."

If Burgess talked indiscreetly, he was plainly not the ordinary type of trained spy. And you might have expected that he would be regarded as pretty valueless to his Russian masters.

But Rebecca West has pointed out that Burgess may have played a clever role. *All* of secret matters, behave indiscreetly—and people will never suspect that you *are* a spy.

And what then? Why, in August 1950, Burgess was appointed Second Secretary in the British Embassy in Washington!

His views on America and the Americans are therefore pertinent. They come to light in this quotation from the Hon. (*now Sir*) Harold Nicolson, author and critic, former M.P. and former diplomat, in the *Daily Express* of June 14, 1951:

"He hated Americans. Before he went to Washington Burgess often spoke of this, and I told him he would change his mind when he met the Americans."

Burgess told his friend, Hewit, before he sailed: "If I don't like America I shall make a personal friend of Paul Robeson and get thrown out on two counts"—Robeson being both a Negro and a Communist sympathiser.

Burgess's Record in the U.S.

Burgess was almost as good as his word. In so far as a diplomat can be thrown out of a friendly country, he was thrown out of America.

Within six months his telegrams were suspect as biased. He was not popular. He drank heavily, and in March 1951 Governor John Battle of Virginia complained to the State Department that Burgess, in a coupé, had been stopped at 80 m.p.h.—three times in an hour.

The third time followed an accident. Burgess was not driving. A hitch-hiker he had picked up, a man without a car licence, was at the wheel.

An English visitor reported Burgess for anti-British talk. And then—as the White Paper relates—he was reprimanded for leaving confidential papers around.

The then Ambassador, Sir Oliver Franks, asked the Foreign Office to remove him. He was removed. He arrived back in London on May 7, 1951, a year after Maclean had returned from Cairo.

Two days after Burgess returned in the *Queen Mary* he met Cyril Connolly and told him that Washington was "absolutely frightful" because of Senator McCarthy.

"Terrible atmosphere," said Burgess, "all these purges."

Knowing that his Foreign Office days might be ending, Burgess applied for a job on a Fleet Street newspaper.

He was interviewed by the Foreign Office and asked to resign. The White Paper says that steps were being considered by the agent that he refused to resign.

While the steps were being considered—Burgess vanished with Maclean!

For a summing up of the character of Guy Burgess let us turn to that interview given by Harold Nicolson to the *Daily Express*:

"He publicly announced his sympathies with Communism and yet he heartily disliked the Russians. He thought they were cruel and stolid to a great deal.

"He was a most indiscreet talker. He said anything that came into his head, and cared nothing about who heard him.

"Of course he was a heavy drinker. He drank anything in any order, and when he had too much his eye [illegible] of focus.

"He cared nothing about clothes. He [illegible]

"Despite that, he was charming. And his mind [illegible] When he was with the B.B.C. talks department in the dictatorship Week in Westminster for them. He was his [illegible]

"That was how he met Hector McNeil, who later [illegible] ister of State, made him his private secretary.

"When Burgess was sober he [illegible] charming, [illegible] magnificent talker. When he was drunk he spoiled [illegible] nonsense. He was a kind man and despite his weaknesses I don't think he would do anything dishonourable—[illegible] But he was so terribly imperious.

Rebecca West summing up Burgess in the *Daily* [illegible] at once obviously very [illegible] and obviously [illegible] sure he had wakened up in some very [illegible]

She wrote of the flashing smile [illegible] secret delight in mischief and destruction [illegible] there and everywhere in her work [illegible]

She added: "Both Maclean and Burgess [illegible] Other homosexuals had come to their [illegible] But it made it still more difficult [illegible] tions.

Other views of Burgess have [illegible]

He was fond of luxury and display, of suits [illegible] and fast cars. He liked to breakfast in [illegible]

He had undisciplined talent of [illegible] diplomacy. He was an expert for [illegible] guages and especially knowledge [illegible] French [illegible]

His reading was voluminous [illegible] biography, whether of Napoleon, Elizabeth [illegible] of England [illegible]

"Talk of Lenin and Stalin"

He [illegible] would talk [illegible] Lenin and Stalin [illegible]

Mr. W. H. Auden, the poet, was [illegible] years. He [illegible] *Daily Express* [illegible] June 12 [illegible] Donald [illegible] 1930 [illegible] New York, where I spend [illegible] months [illegible] we met several times [illegible]

"While he was in the Embassy in Washington [illegible] pro-Communist [illegible]

We met last October this year. We talked [illegible] and Nuremberg. [illegible] *who was with him* [illegible] I asked him if he had been screened [illegible] of diplomatic immunity.

The Foreign Office asked to comment on [illegible] made by Burgess to Auden and Burgess [illegible] temporary people recruited during the war. Burgess [illegible] taken on the permanent staff in 1946 [illegible] usual routine of screening.

Not unnaturally there [illegible] Members [illegible] early opportunity [illegible] lean to ask [illegible] question to the Foreign [illegible] Morrison [illegible] the magnificent [illegible] *ard*, [illegible] parliamentary [illegible]

Mr. de Chair would [illegible] whether the [illegible]

"Despite Maclean's Leftish ideas he went forward with steady increases of stature in his diplomatic career"

...d the affiliations of members of the Foreign Service like ... Burgess, who joined the Service during the war when ... were fighting as allies of Soviet Russia? Has he consid... that aspect of the matter?

Mr. Morrison: Yes, Sir. Security checks are made on ...mbers of the Foreign Service on their appointment and ... proves necessary, from time to time.

Mr. Duncan Sandys: Can the right hon. Gentleman say ...ether, when the last security check-up of officials took ...e, the Foreign Office were satisfied that Mr. Burgess had ... Communist associations?

Mr. Morrison: I did not imply that there is a regular and ...ematic week-by-week check-up of all Foreign Office of...ials and I should not like it to have come to that. Indeed, ...o not think that the Department deserves such a check-...

... when, finally, the affair came right into the open Mr. ...son revealed that he had not been quite as complacent ...ll that.

...said in September, 1955, referring to the "excessively ...y job" of a Foreign Secretary: "I made a suggestion that ... should be a suitable form of inquiry into the work of the ...gn Secretary and the general organisation of the office." ...ght days after Mr. Sandys—who is now Minister of Housing—questioned Mr. Morrison he rose again to question Mr. Kenneth Younger, Socialist Minister of State.

He asked: Had the Government been aware of Burgess's associations with Communist circles?

Said Mr. Younger: "The Government were not aware of Mr. Burgess having associations with Communist circles of a kind which threw doubt on his reliability."

Question: There had recently been a Government purge of Civil Servants with Communist affiliations. How did Burgess escape the scrutiny? Was nobody in the Foreign Office subjected to the scrutiny?

Mr. Younger: "It would not be correct to assume that a security check was made on Mr. Burgess some time ago and it was negative in its result."

But, as we found, Guy Burgess was erratic and shiftless, a heavy drinker and a reckless driver, a rough and ... a rowdy, a pervert, a most emphatic pro-Communist and a friend of Communists, and—as he said and as is now known—a secret agent.

This was the man who, landing from America, was most anxious to get in touch with Donald Maclean. Whatever it was that he told Maclean precipitated their flight. What had they in common?

To estimate that vital factor, it is necessary to consider Donald Duart Maclean.

CHAPTER III / This Was Maclean

...NALD DUART MACLEAN was 38 years old on the day he ...vanished. He was a son of one of the most illustrious ...al houses in the country.

...father, Sir Donald Maclean, first entered Parliament as ... Liberal member for Bath in 1906. After the "coupon elec... of 1918, when Asquith and many of his lieutenants were ...ted, Sir Donald became chairman of the 18 Independent ...erals, later to be known as the "Wee Frees."

...hen Ramsay MacDonald formed the National Government ...931, Sir Donald became President of the Board of Educa... and, after the election that year, retained the post and ...given a seat in the Cabinet.

...his personal prestige was immense; so that when he died ...1932 King George V sent this telegram to his widow: "I ... not only the loss of one of my Ministers but also of one ... for a quarter of a century has been a distinguished and ...ected figure in the political life of this country."

...hus the defection of Donald Duart Maclean was a grief ...d misery not only to his family but to all those who admired ...Donald Maclean and his activities in public life.

• • •

The White Paper asserts: "Since Maclean's disappearance ...ose examination of his background has revealed that dur... his student days at Cambridge he had expressed Commu... sympathies. But there was no evidence that he had ever ... a member of the Communist Party and indeed, on leav... the University, he had outwardly renounced his earlier ...mmunist views."

And Lord Reading, Joint Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, stated boldly in October 1952: "Mr. Maclean performed his official duties satisfactorily up to the date of his disappearance."

We shall see.

Despite Maclean's Leftish ideas he went forward with steady increases of stature in his diplomatic career—until he was appointed Head of the American Department in the Foreign Office.

• • •

Maclean was posted to Paris in 1938. It was his first job abroad. He was regarded as a "golden boy" of the Foreign Service—but he drank. He said he needed his occasional "orgy."

In the routine of many young diplomats in Paris he spent his evenings on the Left Bank with arty character. At the Cafe de Flore he met Melinda Marling. She was 24 years old, smart, dark and attractive American living with her mother. She had a job with the American Embassy in Paris. She was out of the common. She smoked cigars. She had a background of solid comfort.

War came. And in 1940, with the Germans moving towards him, Donald Maclean married Melinda Marling.

Before they wed she wrote a letter to him which is revealed by Geoffrey Hoare, Paris Correspondent of the *News Chronicle*, in his book *The Missing Maclean*, published by Cassells.

She wrote: "If you do tell me urge to have a drinking orgy, why don't you have it at home—so at least you will be able to get safely to bed."

Maclean's friends hoped that the marriage would steady

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"Maclean was secretary of the Combined Policy Committee on Atomic Developments, with a pass which admitted him to the Atomic Energy Commission office at any time of the day or night"

him. It comforted him financially, but it didn't steady him.

Maclean's father had died in 1932, leaving £24,126 [$67,552.80], all his estate to his widow, Lady Maclean, for life and thence between his five children. Lady Maclean is still alive.

And Maclean was not earning more than £625 [$1,750] a year when he married.

Melinda's father, Francis Marling, was a Chicago oil man. She had been a legatee of her uncle, a Mr. Goodlet, and at the time of her marriage, had just drawn a portion of that inheritance.

In 1945, on the written request of Donald Maclean, his wife was given control of her affairs by her step-father, Mr. Charles Dunbar. Among the funds handed over was a parcel of securities worth £9,000 [$25,200].

And it was Mrs. Maclean who raised £2,000 [$5,600] on her American securities to pay the deposit for the house at Tatsfield.

In 1940, as the Germans took over Paris, Maclean and his wife travelled back to England in a collier, and from then until 1944, with a break of seven months when Mrs. Maclean visited her relatives in America, the Macleans lived in wartime London.

Maclean was a split personality, working hard, and drinking hard. He was popular—his wife was shy and retiring. And the marriage was proving unhappy.

Mrs. Maclean was doubly pleased when, in 1944, Maclean was promoted—and then posted to Washington. It was another chance to see her family who had yet to meet her husband.

Both boys of the Maclean marriage were born in New York. But the marriage was no happier. Maclean chose to live apart from his wife for much of the time. He had a bachelor flat in Washington; she lived with her family in New York. Maclean was drinking harder than ever.

Yet he was put into positions of responsibility calling—especially in wartime—for the utmost reliability.

Available: U.S. Atomic Secrets

He held one position of extraordinary responsibility; he was secretary of the Combined Policy Committee on Atomic Developments, with a pass which admitted him to the Atomic Energy Commission office at any time of the day or night.

Nevertheless—Cyril Connolly stated—he was several times reported for the careless handling of secret documents.

Now consider this report from the Washington correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, published on July 17, 1951:

"Mr. Donald Maclean, the missing British Diplomat, was a member of the committee which controlled the wartime exchange between the U.S. and its partners in the development of the atom bomb, the State Department said today."

The Washington correspondent of the *Daily Express* wrote:

"Donald Maclean was head of Chancery in Washington, the man who decides who sees the telegrams; and head of the American desk in London, the man who drafts and sees the telegrams as they go."

No wonder that when he disappeared behind the Iron Curtain the then U.S. Secretary of State Mr. Dean Acheson exclaimed: "My God, he knew everything!"

Maclean took his secret knowledge from Washington to Cairo where he was appointed Counsellor in 1948—at the usually early age of 35.

In January 1949—while Maclean was in Cairo, while Burgess was in the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office—the security authorities received a report that certain Foreign Office information had leaked to Russia some years earlier.

This was stated by the White Paper, which went on to say that the field of suspicion was narrowed to "two or three persons" *by mid-April 1951* and to Maclean *by the beginning of May 1951*.

As all the world now knows, on the day that Mr. Herbert Morrison, then Foreign Secretary, gave authority for Maclean to be interrogated—he vanished.

The inquiries—which missed Burgess altogether—were thus narrowing down to Maclean over a period of two years and four months.

We shall see how Maclean behaved in this period. And we shall wonder at the sheer tolerance of the Foreign Office and the security authorities.

In Cairo Maclean was invited to meetings of Left-Wing students. He had contact with elements viewed with suspicion and he had to be given police protection.

There were Soviet agents in Cairo at the time. These were based on an import-export company dealing with Germany. The police knew it—because the agents worked to some extent overground as company directors in order to entertain important guests.

Did Maclean attend receptions given by the directors of the commercial company? An Egyptian official told the *Daily Express*: "Occasionally."

And the chief director of the company was asked to leave Egypt in January 1951 because he was regarded as an agent of the *Razzedraup*—the Soviet Army Intelligence.

"Scandal" in Cairo

In Cairo, in 1950, there had come a [illegible] scandal. Geoffrey Hoare gave this authoritative account of what happened:

"At the beginning of March, Melinda Maclean had come out to Cairo to stay with them. One evening Melinda organised a kind of surprise party to go to call on some friends who had a house on the banks of the Nile at Helouan, some 15 miles from Cairo.

"She hired a felucca—one of the picturesque but sluggish wide-sailed Nile boats—in which eight of them plus the boatman set sail for Helouan. There was a little food on board, for they expected to have dinner with their friends, but quite a lot of drink.

"All might have gone well had it not been for the wind which dropped completely. Instead of taking about [illegible] hours, it eventually required nearly eight and by the time they reached Helouan Donald was dangerously drunk, indeed rather terrifyingly so.

"They landed once to see where they were and Donald in a fit of mad rage seized Melinda round the throat and might have strangled her had the others not intervened."

At 2 a.m. they landed at Helouan. They were challenged by an armed night watchman [illegible]. See how the British Counsellor in Cairo then behaved:

"Donald sprang at him, wrestled the rifle from his hands

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Maclean returned to the Foreign Office for duty—and was promptly appointed Head of the American Department!

and began to swing it wildly round his head—threatening, if only in a kind of drunken fun, to smash the ghaffir's skull.

"Another member of the party, also a Secretary at the Embassy, tried to restrain Donald and to take the weapon from him. Donald refused to give it up, and the two men struggled for it, slipped and fell down the bank on to the rudimentary wooden jetty where they landed with Donald on top and the rifle in between them—and the other man broke his leg.

"Transporting the injured man, who was in great pain, back to Cairo provided a difficult problem for the friends on whom they had intended to call refused to open the door to them."

Two months later Maclean exceeded even his own standards of riotous conduct.

A Cocktail Party—and What Followed

Geoffrey Hoare's account, to be quoted later in the House of Commons, was this:

"Donald had a writer friend of his earlier days staying with him, an uninvited and unwanted guest so far as Melinda was concerned, who became his drinking companion; neither really required encouragement.

"On the evening of Monday, May 8, the Macleans and their two guests were invited to a cocktail party and later to an evening party.

"All four went to the cocktail party but afterwards Melinda, who was feeling unwell—she was again pregnant and again to have a miscarriage—went back to bed, the friend went off to an engagement of his own, and Donald and Harriet went on to the other party.

"Around 2 a.m. he returned, woke up his friend, who had come in earlier and gone to bed, and they went off together in search of amusement.

"They visited a cabaret or two and then, just as dawn was breaking, knocked violently on the door of a flat occupied by another member of the Embassy in a large apartment house not far from the American Embassy.

"Much against his will, their friend let them in and they demanded drinks. Eventually, realising there was little more he could do, he found them a bottle of whisky and returned to bed.

"When he got up the next morning, they were still there, very drunk, so he left them and went off to the Embassy.

"Some time during the day they sobered up just sufficiently to remember that a girl who worked as librarian at the American Embassy and whom they had met at a party a few days before, had a flat in the same building.

"There was no drink left in the flat they were then occupying, so they staggered up the stairs, knocked at the door, pushed their way past the astonished *suffragi*, and took possession of the otherwise unoccupied apartment.

"They helped themselves to what liquor they could find and then proceeded to break up the furniture.

"Content with their work, they returned to Donald's colleague's flat, collapsed on to a bed and again fell asleep.

"It was there that Melinda found them in the early evening after various telephone calls had established where they had got to.

"With Harriet's help she half carried, half dragged a completely sodden Donald down the stairs and in a taxi [illegible] drove him home. Harriet then went back and with the help of the *suffragi*, removed the friend and took him home too."

Mrs. Maclean called next day on the Ambassador, Sir Ronald Campbell, and interceded for her husband. He was sent home at once on sick leave. And he returned to live for a while with his mother, Lady Maclean, in London.

His mother never ceased to believe in him. And in this connection Rebecca West has written: "Maclean was on the most affectionate terms with certain members of his family and these relatives were genuinely astonished when the first put to them after his departure that he had been a Soviet agent.

"Throughout 20 years he had kept up between them and himself an unbroken barrier of deceit."

MRS. MELINDA MACLEAN
she was American

DONALD MACLEAN
an early picture

While Maclean lived with his mother [illegible] he was described as looking as if he had [illegible] sitting up in a tunnel. He visited a woman psychiatrist to be treated for his "breakdown."

Geoffrey Hoare disclosed a letter from Mrs. Maclean to her sister, saying:

"Donald is still pretty confused and vague about himself and his desires, but I think when he gets settled he will find a new security and peace, I hope so. He has had [illegible] drinking bouts since he have been back, but I can see that the root of the trouble is still not cleared away.

"He is still going to R. (*the psychiatrist*) but [illegible] definitely better. She is still baffled about the [illegible] side which comes out when he is drunk and [illegible] think [illegible] hostility in general to women."

Then on November 6, 1950, after a heavy night's drinking, he returned to the Foreign Office for duty—and was promptly appointed Head of the American Department.

This appointment, under the circumstances, was the subject of comment in the House of Commons on June [illegible] Mr. Eden.

Following a statement by Mr. Morrison, then Foreign Secretary, Mr. Eden said: "Reference to Mr. Maclean's breakdown and then he remarks that when he recovered he was appointed head of the American Department."

"Maclean was now a Foreign Office chief. But he spoke bitterly to his friends about Britain's colonies in the Far East and said they should all be given up"

"The right hon. Gentleman knows that is perhaps the heaviest and most onerous post in the Foreign Office at the present time.

"Were his advisers absolutely satisfied that when they made their decision Mr. Maclean really had recovered?"

Mr. Morrison: "There was medical evidence that he had recovered. I would not quite accept the description of the American Department in the way the right hon. Gentleman gives it."

Maclean was now a Foreign Office chief. But he spoke bitterly to his friends about Britain's colonies in the Far East and said they should all be given up.

And then a friend called on Cyril Connolly and reported that Maclean had asked him: "What would you do if I told you I was a Communist agent?"

Maclean added: "Well, I am. Go on, report me." But the next day the incident seemed preposterous.

In April 1951, according to Connolly, Maclean knocked down a friend who was siding against Alger Hiss, the American State Department official who was unmasked as a Soviet agent. Muttered Maclean: "I am the English Hiss."

There were these two men, Burgess and Maclean, both neurotic perverts, both with a history of Communist sympathies, both boasting at some time of espionage.

And on May 26, 1951, they vanished together from the sight of the western world.

Was the Foreign Office bewildered at their motive? Did the Foreign Office know why they went? Where they went?

The Foreign Office would not say until September 1955. It is time, now, to see what the security authorities had been doing.

CHAPTER IV

Security in Action

ON FEBRUARY 2, 1950—while Maclean was still in Cairo, while Burgess was still in the Far Eastern Department of the Foreign Office, and a year after the Foreign Office had its first hint of a leakage—there came a momentous event in the history of British security.

Dr. Klaus Fuchs, atom spy, was arrested in London and charged at Bow Street. And now recall the date of Maclean's breakdown in Cairo—March 1950, the month Fuchs was sentenced to 14 years' jail.

Was Maclean "round the bend" with worry lest Fuchs talk—and incriminate him?

And is that so far fetched when it is remembered that Maclean was at Trinity Hall with that other atom spy, Nunn May, and that on W. H. Auden's evidence, Burgess, also at Cambridge at the time, stayed a close friend of Nunn May?

We shall examine these and other links. But first let us see how the security organisations approached the problem of a *known* leakage of information, a leakage which was to culminate in the open defection of the diplomats.

This is the relevant passage in the White Paper:

"In January 1949 the security authorities received a report that certain Foreign Office information had leaked to the Soviet authorities some years earlier. The report amounted to little more than a hint and it was at the time impossible to attribute the leak to any particular individual. Highly secret but widespread and protracted enquiries were begun by the security authorities and the field of suspicion had been narrowed by mid-April 1951 to two or three persons. From the beginning of May, Maclean had come to be regarded as the principal suspect.

"There was, however, even at that time, no legally admissible evidence to support a prosecution under the Official Secrets Acts. Arrangements were made to ensure that information of exceptional secrecy and importance should not come into his hands.

"In the meantime the security authorities arranged to investigate his activities and contacts in order to increase their background knowledge and if possible to obtain information which could be used as evidence in a prosecution.

"On May 25, the then Secretary of State, Mr. Herbert Morrison, sanctioned a proposal that the security authorities should question Maclean.

"In reaching this decision it had to be borne in mind that such questioning might produce no confession or voluntary statement from Maclean sufficient to support a prosecution but might serve only to alert him and to reveal the nature and extent of the suspicion against him.

"In that event he would have been free to make arrangements to leave the country and the authorities would have had no legal power to stop him.

"Everything therefore depended on the interview and the security authorities were anxious to be as fully prepared as was humanly possible.

"They were also anxious that Maclean's house at Tatsfield, Kent,* should be searched and this was an additional reason for delaying the proposed interview until mid-June when Mrs. Maclean who was then pregnant was expected to be away from home.

"It was now clear that in spite of the precautions taken by the authorities Maclean must have become aware at some time before his disappearance that he was under investigation.

"One explanation may be that he observed that he was no longer receiving certain types of secret papers. It is also possible that he detected that he was under observation. Or he may have been warned.

"Searching enquiries involving individual interrogations were made into this last possibility. Insufficient evidence was obtainable to form a definite conclusion or to warrant prosecution."

*Tatsfield is in Surrey.

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. . . Randolph Churchill: "A passport can be confiscated without any explanation. It is disingenuous of the Government to affect the contrary."

"Maclean's absence did not become known to the authorities until the morning of Monday, May 28.

"Burgess was on leave and under no obligation to report his movements."

Maclean then had become a "principal suspect." But what kind of surveillance was this, as practised by Britain's security authorities?

Randolph Churchill wrote in the London *Evening Standard*:

"Even when Mr. Morrison had agreed that Maclean should be questioned, the security authorities decided to take no immediate action as they wished to wait till Mrs. Maclean had left her house to have a baby before they searched it for incriminating evidence.

"Are M.I.5 [British agency for internal security] really incapable of searching anything except an empty house? Would it have been beyond their wit to have induced one of the Maclean servants to have quit their employment and to have introduced their own agent into the house?

"This would not only have achieved the object of the search but would have provided that surveillance at his country home which the White Paper professes could not have been undertaken without arousing Maclean's suspicions.

"Another point of crucial import arises in this connection. If there is danger of surveillance arousing a suspect's apprehensions and if it is thought that by withholding top-secret matter from him he may be prompted to flee, it is surely an elementary maxim of counter-espionage that the suspect's apprehensions be deliberately aroused at a moment when he, his friends and his haunts are all under the closest observation?

"If the suspect is guilty, he may well give himself away completely.

"To this the White Paper's answer is that there was no means of stopping Maclean from leaving the country. This is the most flagrantly misleading statement in the whole of the White Paper.

"A passport can be confiscated without any explanation. It is disingenuous of the Government to affect the contrary."

The Times found "many contradictions and obscurities" in the White Paper in regard to the security services.

"At one point it follows the previous official line that Maclean, after his riotous outburst in Cairo in May 1950, was given a not very important job in the Foreign Office. Although head of the American Department, he was not dealing with the major problems of Anglo-American relations.

"But, after this comforting suggestion that no harm could be done, there comes the statement that once Maclean was suspected, arrangements were made to ensure that information of exceptional secrecy and importance should not come into his hands.

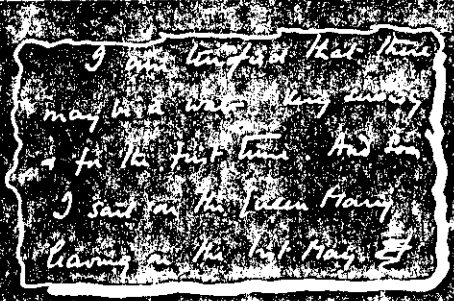
"The paper tries equally to have it both ways on the circumstances of the two men's departure from England.

"At one point it says that they had not sought sanction for going abroad, as though they had taken a mean advantage of the authorities who would have stopped them. At another point it declares that both men were free to go abroad at any time.

"Again, the paper contains no suggestion that Burgess was suspected of being a spy until he left the country, yet it goes on to say that the security authorities were on their track—of Burgess as well as Maclean. Which is correct?

CHAPTER V / They Vanish

THE FIRST HINT that Guy Burgess was in some sort of panic came in a letter to his friend Jack Hewit. Burgess wrote—as he was about to leave America for home:


I am terrified that there may be a war. Very seriously and for the first time. And soon I sail on the Queen Mary leaving on the 1st May.

"I am terrified that there may be a war. Very seriously and for the first time. And soon I sail on the Queen Mary leaving on the 1st May."

On May 7, 1951, Guy Burgess landed at Southampton. His friends learned that he had struck a new friendship in the *Queen Mary*—one that was to play a role in the disappearance of the diplomats less than three weeks later.

Burgess had met and befriended a young American student named Bernard Miller. And Burgess told other friends he intended to go with Miller to France for a holiday. The date of their sailing was arranged for midnight on May 25.

Miller meantime stayed at the Green Park Hotel in Piccadilly. Burgess stayed at his own flat in New Bond Street with Hewit.

Hewit said later that soon after Burgess arrived at the flat he spoke of a young married friend in trouble, that he telephoned Lady Maclean and asked her where he could get in touch with her son, Donald.

Significantly, Burgess did not ask the Foreign Office for this information. Nor did he attempt to telephone Maclean at the Foreign Office.

Burgess after contacting Maclean on through a telephone call to somebody in America, Hewit has said. The call cost £7 [$19.60]. Guy left the bill unpaid and I had to meet it. But Hewit did not know who in America received the call.

On the night of May 24, Burgess telephoned Stephen