

Norman seems never to have met Donald Maclean, Burgess' partner in treason. Barros "finds it difficult to believe" that they failed to communicate when they headed the American divisions in their respective ministries. This is easy to believe, however, if you know that "American" divisions operate bilaterally with the US, not multilaterally.

Kim Philby

Philby, the son of a famous Arabist, became one of the most successful Soviet double agents. He had left Cambridge for Austria months before Norman's arrival. Returning to London in 1934, he set about developing the cover of a German-sympathising, right-wing journalist. He is reported as having given a talk in Cambridge, and it is conceivable that he met Norman. With no evidence whatever, Barros expresses certainty that they did meet and added: "Burgess knew Norman and undoubtedly introduced him to Philby." (Letter) Lots of doubt, as it happens.

Shortly before fleeing to the Soviet Union, Philby told Canadian journalist Eric Downton that he had known Norman "vaguely" at Cambridge. Far more exciting was his assertion: "I had a chat with [Norman] in Cairo, not long before his death."

On this foundation, Barros has built the Philby link into one of the five with celebrated agents that render Norman, in his eyes, thoroughly suspect (IP:24). (The others were Guy Burgess, V. Frank Coe, Chi Ch'ao-tung, and Richard Sorge.) He maintains that Philby could not have been in Cairo on assignment from either of his papers, The Economist and The Observer, because he could not find his byline during the relevant period. Therefore, Barros reasons, the order to go to Cairo must have come from the Kremlin. And the matter must have been critical if a cherished KGB agent like Philby was to run the risk of visiting Norman while he was under investigation by Congress. What could be that important? Barros thinks it was a warning to Norman that he could soon be under irresistible pressure to expose Pearson, an even more precious asset than Norman to the Soviet Union. And what did Norman do shortly thereafter? And had he not said several times before the tragedy that he had to "protect Pearson"? In his letter in International Perspectives, in another to me, and more concretely in a long phone call, Barros never quite dotted the i's, but he promoted the idea that Philby had delivered the order that Norman must eliminate himself.

As Downton observes, however, The Economist never does give bylines, and both papers frequently attribute to "Our Diplomatic Correspondent" reports from correspondents operating