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Copies of the booklet are being distributed to all Officers and Assistant Officers. Any member of the Service is at liberty to read it and Section Heads are asked to ensure that anyone who wishes to do so is given the opportunity.

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G. R. Mitchell

G.R. Mitchell.

D.D.G.
26.11.59.

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M. I. 5.
(1909—1959)

SECRET

This short history of the Security Service marks the fiftieth anniversary of its foundation. The records of the Service contain several detailed accounts of various aspects of its work and especially of its work during World War II; but hitherto there has been no general survey of its origin, development and achievements.

It is right that we should know the facts rather than the legends about the organisation to which we belong and it is primarily for this reason that this history has been compiled.

October 1959.

SECRET

M.I.5. (1909—1959)

The history of M.I.5 during its fifty years of existence can best be divided into three chapters.

In the first, from 1909 to 1914, it is seen as a very secret, very diminutive, almost private and personal entity, engaged solely in counter-espionage against the German Secret Service, and known (among the few to whom it was known) as "The Bureau."

In the second, from the outbreak of World War I in August 1914 till October 1931, it is "M.I.5"—a still secret (but not quite so secret) branch of the War Office Military Intelligence department, increased in numbers, its functions widened by war-time legislation, still primarily concerned with counter-espionage, but after 1917, as a consequence of the Russian Revolution, with the added responsibility of combating Communist subversion in the armed forces.

And finally, since 1931, when for the first time in its history it became responsible for civil as well as military Security, the "Security Service" of today.

"The Bureau."

As in the history of the tiny shop which grows eventually into a vast emporium, the earliest chapter is the story of a man, the final period the description of a highly organised machine.

This man, who in 1909 founded the Secret Service Bureau and retired in 1940 as head of the Security Service, was a certain Captain V. G. W. Kell of the South Staffordshire Regiment. How was it that, of all the officers in the British Army, he was chosen to create a counter-espionage service? His command of languages was no doubt helpful; for he had been an interpreter in German as well as Russian, French, Italian and colloquial Chinese, and had visited Russia, China and Japan. He had served in the China Expedition of 1900 and been awarded the "Military Order of the Golden Dragon." Taken all in all, this fits in well with the sort of career a writer of spy-stories would invent for his Secret Service Chief. But probably more influential was the fact that he had just spent two years

helping to compile a History of the Russo-Japanese War for the Committee of Imperial Defence which in 1909 recommended the creation of a special "Secret Service Bureau" to examine the whole problem of German espionage. This problem had recently been a cause of acute anxiety to the War Office. For one thing, Germany under Kaiser Wilhelm II was building a great navy which soon would threaten the supremacy of Britain on the seas, and a war between England and Germany, in the nearer rather than the more distant future, began to seem inevitable. For another, it had recently been learnt that the German Secret Service had established a new branch in Brussels whose special function was to spy on Britain, just as the Germans had spied in France before the Franco-Prussian war of 1870. Finally, a number of reports had been received indicating that German spies were already operating in the neighbourhood of our naval ports and dockyards.

The trouble was that the War Office had no adequate facilities for investigating these reports. Moreover the Law provided no effective powers to deal with spies if they were caught. Colonel J. E. Edmunds, of the Directorate of Military Operations, who at that time probably knew more about the German Secret Service than anybody else, prepared a memorandum dealing with the danger. The D.M.O. (Major-General Ewart) wrote a scathing minute, contrasting the inadequacy of our own Security with that of Continental countries. And in March 1909 the Prime Minister gave instructions that a sub-committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence should examine the whole problem of foreign espionage and make recommendations for improving our efficiency in combating it.

The immediate result was the creation of the Secret Service Bureau. The eventual result, some twenty-two years later, was the Security Service.

Their recommendation, after studying the recent evidence, and considering precedents dating back to the Spanish Armada and Napoleon's threatened invasion, was that one officer (true he was to be freed from all other work!) should be appointed to devote his whole attention to espionage problems.

In fact, however, to begin with there were two: Captain Kell to represent the War Office, and Captain Cumming, of the Royal Navy,

nominated by the Admiralty. And on October 1st, 1909, in a tiny office in Victoria Street, with a staff consisting of themselves, a clerk and a retired police detective, the "Secret Service Bureau" was opened for business.

For a month or two they laboured jointly on the double problem of espionage and counter-espionage. The interest of both was predominantly naval, since in any war involving Germany and England the role of England was expected to be largely on the seas. And just as Germany's spies were working in our ports and naval dockyards, so our Admiralty was in urgent need of information about the growing might of Germany's new navy. But very soon, to avoid overlapping, it was decided (as Captain Kell explained in an early report) "to define the dividing line between Captain Cumming's work and my own": and thenceforward "C" (as he came to be known for many years to come) had the duty of espionage abroad, while "K" was responsible for counter-espionage within the British Isles. Having taken this decision, the two men parted company, while remaining—as indeed have the two great organisations which developed from their early labours—in close liaison and sharing information of common interest to both. From this point Espionage Abroad is no longer a part of the history of M.I.5.

For the next twelve months or so the Secret Service Bureau (Counter-espionage) was virtually a one-man band. Kell had the elderly detective to help investigate the numerous spy-reports which poured on to his desk; and an elderly clerk to "hold the fort" when he himself was away from the office. But until in January 1911 he acquired an assistant officer and moved into new chambers in the Temple (3, Paper Buildings)—a move he decided on both for rental economy and greater secrecy—it is true to say that The Bureau was Kell and Kell was The Bureau.

What precisely were the tasks confronting him? What did The Bureau actually accomplish? What tunes, on what instruments, was this one-man band playing?

Perhaps least important, in the long run anyway, were the "current cases." There were plenty of them, since spies were active, the German menace was becoming widely recognised, and in those more "insular" days all foreigners were the object of public curiosity and suspicion. At the end of the first year, Kell reported that 200 cases of alleged espionage had been investigated. One spy (a German officer, Lieut. Helm) had been caught

red-handed in Portsmouth, though not by the Bureau. Charged under the (old) Official Secrets Act, he pleaded guilty and was bound over in the sum of £250 not to repeat the offence.

There were two things necessary for effective counter-espionage. One was a new Official Secrets Act; the other was willing co-operation by the civil police. The first was achieved by the Act of 1911; the second by the personal charm and dogged perseverance of the Bureau's Chief.

The Official Secrets Act of 1889 had proved completely ineffectual against foreign espionage. Before any suspected spy could be arrested and searched, the Attorney-General's fiat had to be obtained. This took time—especially if, as happened on occasion, the Attorney-General was away from London. Meanwhile, not surprisingly, the spy had decamped or at least got rid of all incriminating evidence. The new Act removed this delaying procedure and enabled any constable, or for that matter any member of the public, to detain, without a warrant, any person apparently engaged in spying.

A second reform, which aroused some criticism, threw the burden of proof on the accused. Under the old Act, if a spy was caught in a "prohibited place," the Crown had to prove that he was there for an unlawful purpose; failing this, the worst that could happen to him was a prosecution for trespass and a fine. Under the new Act, the spy so caught had to satisfy the Court that his inquisitiveness concerning battleships, for instance, or his uninvited presence in a naval dockyard, was due to quite innocent causes. Failing this, he was liable to penal servitude for espionage.

The co-operation of the civil police was required for two purposes. One was to ensure that every suspect, every suspicious incident, should be immediately reported to the Bureau. The other was for the compiling by the Bureau of a Register of every alien, more especially every German, Austrian and Hungarian, in the coastal regions, if not in the whole Kingdom. Until August 1914, when the Aliens Restriction Act was passed as part of the emergency wartime legislation, aliens in Britain did not have to register with the police; though as early as 1908 General Ewart had called attention to this careless hospitality of Britain, which, as he pointed out, was in such strong contrast with the close watch kept by Continental nations on visiting foreigners, who cannot, he wrote, "get a bed at an hotel without the police being informed."

Kell set out to amass, with the help of the police, an unofficial register of aliens. To do this, he spent months travelling the country, making friends with the Chief Constables, and inducing them to send details to the Bureau of every alien in their jurisdiction. The work was slow, but persistent. At the end of a year 40 Chief Constables had agreed to co operate, and 500 aliens had been recorded in the Bureau's books, either by Kell personally or by his solitary clerk. When war broke out in August 1914, this unofficial Register contained 30,000 names, 11,000 of whom were male enemy aliens. All this was accomplished without any legal powers, much of it, after 1912 when he joined the Bureau's staff, by Captain (subsequently Brigadier Sir Eric) Holt Wilson, who compared the task with "collecting rare postage stamps, one by one."

Between November 1909 and the outbreak of war, twelve spies were arrested, some German, some neutral, some British. But far and away the most important achievement was the detection of a network of 22 spies whom the German Secret Service had planted here for espionage in the event of war. It is a well-known story how all these spies, save one (who fled the country just in time), were rounded up on the outbreak of war, and the German Intelligence Service found themselves left without a single agent in the country, so that the British Expeditionary Force was fighting in Belgium before the enemy was aware that they had even crossed the Channel.

The story behind this *coup* is a complicated one, and today the details are obscure. But it seems that in August 1911, by one of these proverbial "stranger-than-fiction" coincidences, an officer, Captain Stanley Clarke, who had recently joined the Bureau as Kell's first assistant officer, happened to be sitting in a railway carriage in which a Leith hotel proprietor was discussing with a friend a mysterious letter he had just received from Germany, in which the writer, a man calling himself Reimers, who was quite unknown to him, asked for information as to the probable attitude of the British people in the event of a war between England and Germany. Enquiries elicited the name and address of the writer of the letter, who was eventually discovered through censorship checks to be none other than Gustav Steinhauer, head of the branch of the German Espionage Service operating against Britain, who can surely be excused for not foreseeing that his letter to Leith would be discussed in the presence of a member of the British Counter-espionage Service operating against Germany!

For the next three years his correspondence to and from his "post-box" agents in this country (nearly all of them Germans running barber's shops) was secretly intercepted, and the names of his twenty-two spies, and indeed the whole ramification of his espionage organisation, thus brought to light, without them or their masters in Germany suspecting anything was wrong.

Early in 1914 there was great excitement when an intercepted letter showed that Steinhauer planned to visit England, no doubt for the purpose of burnishing up his espionage organisation. He had been here already on one or two occasions, but then insufficient evidence had been obtained to justify a prosecution. Now the Bureau had, not merely the evidence, but a warrant for his arrest. The sequel throws an interesting light not only on the limited resources of our counter-espionage service at that time, but also on Steinhauer's appreciation of its efficiency. On the day he was due to arrive the entire staff was mobilized for the *coup*. What this meant in fact was that all its four officers, its two detectives, with a few police officers loaned by Special Branch, deserted their headquarters and, distributing themselves in the lobbies of the more likely London hotels, waited to pounce. Alas, in vain. Steinhauer failed to turn up. And later it was learnt that the intercepted letter was a trick by Steinhauer, designed to deceive the German Secret Service into thinking he was venturing heroically into the British lion's den, while in fact he was staying safely in Holland.

Among those lying in wait for Steinhauer was a man who knew him well. This was the Bureau's chief detective, William Melville. The two men had, so it happened, had parallel careers. Both had begun as humble policemen. Both had risen to the top. Both had ended their police careers as the guardian of Royalty, Steinhauer of the German Kaiser, Melville of Queen Victoria and later Edward VII. They had often met in the course of their Royal employment, but never more dramatically than at Queen Victoria's funeral, when the two of them pounced together on three foreign Nihilists who were waiting to assassinate the Kaiser as he passed in the procession. And now both were engaged, the one against the other, in Secret Service duties.

Strange, and indeed romantic, though the word "Nihilist" sounds today, it occurs not infrequently in M.I.5's old records. In the days of more or less autocratic regimes, before the Russian Revolution saw the rise of "Bolshevism" as the enemy of constitutional government, the targets were

monarchs, and a well directed bomb, hurled by a Nihilist, seemed all that was necessary to overthrow a regime. To guard against this danger, there were secret Counter-Nihilist Police Forces, whose duties, however, seem to have included a little quiet espionage as a side-line. From 1900 to 1904, Melville was keeping a watchful eye on the chiefs of the "Czarist Anti-Nihilist Police" (some of whom he had met at Balmoral when the Czar was visiting Queen Victoria) and reporting to the War Office about one of their suspected spies in London.

By 1914 the Bureau, with its tabs on the spies and its growing register of aliens, was a serious threat to Germany's espionage. That threat, however, was nearly removed, not by the German Intelligence Service, but by the British Government. Doubtless because it worked in secrecy and isolation, early in that year doubts were felt whether the Bureau was earning its keep. And in March 1914, five months before the outbreak of war, its Chief was summoned before the Committee of Imperial Defence to explain and justify his work, which he did, with the aid of his three assistant officers, by "a demonstration of the work and records of the Bureau," given in front of the Prime Minister, the Secretaries of State for War, Home Affairs and the Colonies, and the First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. (as he then was) Winston Churchill. Evidently the tray of index-cards and other exhibits impressed these influential gentlemen, for the Bureau survived, to become some five months later M.I.5 and eventually today's Security Service.

"M.I.5."

On 4th August 1914, war broke out and the Bureau (now housed in the Adelphi) struck. A coded telegram went out to the police and the spies so carefully planted by Steinhauer were arrested the same day.

The blow was completely unforeseen, and the German Secret Service had no trained agents ready to replace them. In October they established a makeshift organisation in Sweden under an elderly German merchant named Katsch, who sent some agents into England. But their value may be guessed from the fact that one of them - a Swede, whose sole qualification seems to have been that he was once a butler in England and had had a large family there by a lady's maid whom he had subsequently deserted—provided

Katsch with a mass of information, which he said was obtained from a British Army officer, who in fact at the time was serving in India.

The first spy to be caught was the German Naval officer, Carl Lody, whose career was as short as his courage was great. Armed with a stolen American passport, he arrived at the end of August 1914, was detected in September, arrested in October and executed in the Tower of London by a firing-squad in November. Meanwhile "The Bureau" had ceased to exist. On the outbreak of war it was "mobilized" as a branch of the War Office Directorate of Military Operations known as M.O.5.G. It was not until January 1916, when a new Directorate of Military Intelligence was created, that its official title became "M.I.5."

From August 1914, the responsibilities of M.I.5 were enormously increased by wartime legislation. These included the co-ordinating of Government policy concerning aliens; the military control of all civilian passenger traffic through the ports of Britain; the Military Permit Offices established in Paris, Rome and New York; and, in the later years of the war, the vetting and other security measures in connection with the employment of aliens in munition factories and other auxiliary war services. And it was almost exclusively on the recommendations of Colonel Kell, in his role of "Competent Military Authority Commanding M.I.5," that the Home Secretary relied when interning, or restricting in other ways the freedom of individuals who, although not enemy aliens, were dangerous to the national security.

It was, moreover, the war that enabled M.I.5—and indeed compelled it—to extend its counter-espionage services outside the British Isles, to which since 1909 its activities had specifically been limited. In 1915 it started to forge those links with what was then the British Empire, which in recent years have been one of its most remarkable developments. Prior to this, the only link between M.I.5 and the Colonies was through intelligence reports by the local police, which were sent by the Governors to the Colonial Office, which forwarded them, or some of them, to the Army Council, who might or might not re-forward them to M.I.5. A surviving example, dated 1910, satisfactory to all concerned though it was at that time, is a sad disappointment to historians: "Nothing to report as regards Agents or Spies."

The need for a closer and more reliable liaison had long been felt in M.I.5, and in 1915, when German battleships were dispersed throughout the

world and spies might be aiding them in unsuspected quarters, the Colonial Office was induced to circulate to all Colonial Governors a memorandum urging them to institute a close personal liaison with "Colonel Kell, of the Central Counter-Espionage Bureau" and to nominate an officer to undertake this special work. This was done, the Governors in almost every instance nominating themselves as what were called the local "correspondents." A year later, in 1916, a new section inside M.I.5 was created to co-ordinate counter-espionage measures throughout the Empire.

Counter-espionage – that was the sole purpose, the sole justification of the wartime power of M.I.5. To prevent spies coming here; to prevent them moving about freely if they did get here; to prevent them leaving; to prevent them obtaining information needed by the enemy; to prevent them sending back such information as they did get.

The problems of subversion simply didn't exist. In those simpler days, before rival revolutionary isms came to plague Security, it was a reasonable assumption that an Englishman was patriotic and, at least in wartime, backed "my country, right or wrong." It was similarly reasonable to assume that Germans were pro-German. M.I.5 was not troubled with "pro-Nazi" British subjects or "anti-Nazi" German subjects, people with "divided loyalties" whose actual loyalty was anybody's guess. Nor was there a Communist Party, siding, at the orders of a foreign government, first with and then against the German enemy.

Against this was the fact that in those days Englishmen were so unused to "aliens" in their midst that every harmless neutral Dane or allied Belgian was denounced as a "German," which was tantamount to "spy." And a number of new officers in M.I.5 found plenty of work for their prentice hands investigating these "spy" reports; while a group of experts, under Major Drake, pursued the investigation of the more serious cases.

To ensure the utmost speed in dealing with his cases, there was, in the room of the officer who first perused the daily correspondence, a blackboard bearing in big chalked letters the names of these known spies. It was with a grim satisfaction that a line was drawn through each of these names when sentence of death or life imprisonment had concluded M.I.5's responsibility. In all, some 35 spies were arrested, of whom 11 were executed either by a firing-party or the rope. In fact 19 were sentenced to death, but 8 had their sentences commuted to penal servitude for life. The first to be reprieved was a woman, Eva de Bournonville; and M.I.5 protested vehemently

against leniency towards women spies, arguing that the enemy would have no difficulty in flooding the country with them, once it was known that they wouldn't be shot. The protest was in vain; on the contrary, from January 1916 onwards, the death sentence for espionage was invariably commuted in the case of all spies, regardless of sex. This did not result in the expected flood—perhaps because the Germans learnt of the death sentences but not of the reprieves. In fact, the number diminished; and so far as is known Eva de Bournonville had no successor.

By and large, the spies who were sent here in World War I conformed to a pattern. They were citizens of some neutral country, or at least, like Lody, held passports indicating that they were. For "cover" purposes, they came for the most part as commercial travellers, though there was among them a sprinkling of journalists. They sent their reports, in commercial code or secret ink, to addresses abroad which, by one means or another, became known to M.I.5 as "spy addresses"; and Censorship, warned to look out for such letters, forwarded them to M.I.5. All that remained then—and it was not always easy—was to identify the writers and arrest them. They were then handed over to the civil police and subjected to interrogation at Scotland Yard by the Assistant Commissioner, Sir Basil Thomson, assisted by a representative of M.I.5.

In one case a spy, whose fate had been kept secret, was successfully impersonated (for some considerable time) after his execution, and his posthumous reports, by deluding the enemy into thinking he was still actively at work in England, no doubt dissuaded them from sending another over to replace him. It also had the additional advantage that, since the Germans continued to provide his pay, M.I.5 eventually amassed enough money to purchase a much-needed second motor-car. Twenty-five years later, when Britain was again at war with Germany, this "deception" was to be practised successfully on a far more comprehensive scale.

Another adventure in impersonation nearly ended fatally. In the hope of acquiring military information, Lieutenant (as he then was) Hinchley Cooke, whom in later years the Press regarded as the embodiment of M.I.5, dressed himself up in German uniform and spent some time in a hospital for wounded prisoners of war. It so happened that, while he was away, a newly recruited officer was installed in his room, and no one warned him what Hinchley was up to. Suddenly, while working studiously

at his desk, this officer saw the door of his room open and a tall young German officer confronting him. Instinctively he snatched up his revolver!

The additional wartime staff at M.I.5's headquarters (which, when it grew too large for its home in the Adelphi, was transferred to a building facing Her Majesty's Theatre in King Charles Street) was largely composed of young temporary Army officers who, as the result of wounds, were unfit for further active service. The senior officers were resplendent with red tabs, the captains and subalterns with the green ones which (perhaps not very happily) identified them as "Intelligence." There was even a brief disconcerting period when, on orders from the D.M.I., they were all compelled, as members of the staff of the C.I.G.S., to parade at the office in equestrian field-boots and spurs.

Once the war was over, the staff of M.I.5, which had risen to over 800 during the war, was soon reduced to a total of 12. The young temporary officers departed to civilian life and the axe of economy prevented the recruitment of new blood.

Indeed, once the German enemy had been defeated, there seemed little need for anything more than a skeleton counter-espionage department. Counter whose espionage? was a question to which at the time there was no answer. The mere existence of M.I.5. seems for a time to have been in danger. A letter written in 1921 by Colonel Kell to all the twenty-five Colonial Governors with whom he had so recently established a liaison throws a light on the plight of M.I.5 in the years immediately following the war. With what seems significant humility he assured them: "Though the work of the Bureau is considerably reduced, its functions still continue."

The fact was, of course, that unlike the sequel to World War II, the first was followed by a period of genuine peace. No hostile cloud had yet appeared on the horizon. "Today," the letter adds, "we do not know what nation or nations may be our future enemies".

It knew, through its contact with the British Army of Occupation in the Rhineland, that former officers of the German General Staff were engaged in circumventing the restrictions imposed on them by a subtle form of espionage, ostensibly concerned with reviving German export trade, but with a secondary interest in such things as Britain's aircraft industry, and with the long-term objective that it would, as soon as circumstances permitted, form the basis of a resurrected Military Intelligence Service.

Among those associated with this embryo espionage was the future Field Marshal Hermann Goering. Another organization, actually financed by Krupps, and used for propaganda on behalf of poor defeated Germany, was in later years to become a powerful weapon of strong Nazi Germany. But all this lay far ahead in an unsuspected future.

Nor in the immediately post-war period was M.I.5 very closely concerned with the consequences of the Russian Revolution of 1917, the formation of the Comintern two years later, and the establishment of revolutionary Communist Parties throughout the world, including, in 1920, Britain. At that date M.I.5 was still a military organization, concerned with counter-espionage; and Communism, except in so far as it might attempt to corrupt the loyalty of members of the armed forces, was outside its province and the responsibility of the civil police. Still, M.I.5 was studying the danger as well as its limited resources would allow, and indeed was producing a monthly report on "Revolutionary Propaganda and Labour Unrest" which dealt with the changing situation all over the world. This, however—since both derived their information from the same sources—more or less duplicated similar work being done by Sir Basil Thomson at Scotland Yard. And in 1919, when the Cabinet decided that a Civil Intelligence organization should be set up, the M.I.5 reports were discontinued and the study of Communism, apart from its military repercussions, became for the next twelve years the responsibility of a small, very secret group at Scotland Yard. At the end of this time, on October 15th, 1931, the staff and records of this group were transferred to M.I.5 and at that moment the Security Service of today was born.

Precisely how or why this revolutionary change came about is obscure. Perhaps it was felt that civil subversion and the measures taken to counter it were an embarrassing subject which had better not be handled by a body like the Police dependent for its efficiency on open and good relations with the public. And so the job was swept under the carpet and given to an organisation which had to be secret anyway. However that may be, even eighteen months afterwards the War Office was only aware "in a vague way" that this (as it must always have seemed to them) strangely privileged and undisciplined branch of its Military Intelligence Directorate had taken on civilian functions. True, Sir Vernon Kell had obtained the approval of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and the heads of the

Defence Services "by personal interview"; but there wasn't apparently so much as a single scrap of paper in the War Office to confirm this. One thing seems clear: from the day it took over these civilian duties M.I.5 ceased to be part of the War Office, and indeed, except as a useful cover-name, "M.I.5" ceased virtually to exist.

Security Service.

As though its normal task of counter-espionage and its new responsibility in regard to Communist subversion were not sufficient for the diminutive staff of the new Security Service, a fresh problem appeared in the early 1930's in the form of Nazi Germany.

Though the ultimate purpose of Hitler's Revolution of 1933 was the restoration of the military might of Germany, this was veiled behind many features—his denunciation of the Versailles Treaty and hostility to Communism were among them—which earned his Nazi Party sympathy among considerable sections of the British people. There was nothing ostensibly "subversive" in the propaganda which the Nazi machine poured into the country. It was rather its ultimate effect—of creating a pacifist, anti-militarist spirit in Britain, with groups of fanatically pro-German sympathisers who might side with the enemy in the event of a war—that caused anxiety to the Security Service, at least in the earlier years.

Later, as Germany grew stronger and Hitler's grip on the German people became complete, there were signs that those fore-runners of war, agents of the German espionage service, were at work. And at work in a new way: through the vast German industrial and commercial interests with which the British re-armament programme was enmeshed. An immense amount of information was an open book for all to read; and German "experts" in machine-tools and the like could penetrate inside all sorts of places where secret information could be learnt.

In the later 1930's there were over 2,000 Nazi Germans in Britain, quite apart from 70,000 refugees who poured into the country and presented a problem of their own. These Nazis were under supervision by the German Government's "Auslands" organization and were expected to do work of some sort for their Fatherland. All were propagandists on behalf of Nazi Germany and all, if opportunity arose, were at least potential spies in some degree. Small in numbers, with limited resources, the Security Service set to work to study this new danger.

Unfortunately, no doubt regarding it as a political problem with dangerous diplomatic currents, the authorities failed to support the Security Service with the tools to carry out investigation. Even when in 1936 the Committee of Imperial Defence recommended that the Service should continue to study the problem, work out detailed plans for dealing with the Nazi and Italian Fascist parties in the event of an emergency and undertake protective measures, no increase of its staff to enable it to carry out these obligations was sanctioned.

In spite of this, and largely through the pertinacity of Guy Liddell, the Security Service did to a very large extent fulfil the tasks set it by the Committee of Imperial Defence.

A close watch was kept on the activities of the Auslands organization, and its hundreds of good Nazi members throughout the country were "listed" for immediate internment, just as the good Germans had been before the first war. Reports and politely minatory "appreciations" were composed and submitted to the Home, War and Foreign Offices. Sir Eric Holt Wilson—who had done much the same before World War I—was busy compiling Regulations and other "emergency" measures in preparation for World War II. Some additional staff was enrolled to deal with the security of factories and other places of military importance. The total strength at the end of 1938 was 30 officers and 100 secretaries and Registry staff. Unfortunately—indeed, as events were to prove, very nearly disastrously—no funds were made available for the training of new officers in preparation for the now inevitable war.

Events were to show later that almost all German spying prior to the outbreak of the war was done under cover of industry and journalism, and that the German Intelligence Service had no organised espionage at work inside Britain. This was possibly due to the intense antipathy to the upstart Hitler and his Nazi regime felt by the German military caste, who were also opposed, for military reasons, to a war with Britain.

This was just as well, since, largely for reasons outside its control, the Security Service was without any real knowledge of the espionage service it had to counter. It had learnt at the time of the Munich crisis that branches had been established in Belgium and Holland with a view to operations against Britain, just as it had learnt before World War I of the new headquarters established in Holland. But that was about all its knowledge. And perhaps the truth was that the German Service was itself

so embryonic at that date that there was little to be learnt. During the six years prior to the war some 30 German agents (of whom 21 were British subjects) came to the notice of M.I.5 ; but nearly all were of a very low grade type.

By far the most notorious of the British-subject spies was Norman Baillie-Stewart, who was sentenced to five years penal servitude in 1933, and some twelve years later was to receive another similar sentence for broadcasting for the enemy during World War II. His case was chiefly remarkable for the fact that he was not recruited, but, while an officer serving in the British Army, went to Berlin and volunteered his services to the German Intelligence department there. His motives appear to have been mixed and confused, but a bitter sense of personal grievance seems to have started him along the path of treason. Despite the almost delirious excitement of the newspapers, which for weeks on end glamourized him as "The Officer in the Tower", he provided the Germans with no information of real value ; but M.I.5 had a chance to practise its skill in counter-espionage which it did with gratifying success. The Germans did, however, ensure for Baillie-Stewart a lasting notoriety, second only to that of Mata Hari, by using the name of a fictitious "Marie Louise" as the cover-name for his paymaster in Berlin. Nothing would persuade the British press and public that "Marie Louise" was a fat, middle-aged officer of the German Military Intelligence department, and not the glamorous blonde spy of Secret Service fiction!

The attitude of the British Fascist parties was equivocal and consequently puzzling. On the one hand, despite their advocacy of a Fascist regime modelled on those in Italy or Germany and their sympathy with Hitler's persecution of the Jews, most of their members were fundamentally patriotic and their political aim was a stronger Britain, allied to Nazi Germany against Communist Russia. On the other hand, among their leaders were fanatics so indoctrinated with Nazi anti-semitism and contempt for democratic government, and so convinced that a mighty Germany under Adolf Hitler was the only bulwark between Britain and Russia, that they not only opposed a war which would weaken if not indeed destroy this bulwark, but were prepared to commit treason in the interests of ideology, and to preserve a strong Germany rather than what they thought of as a weak-kneed, Jew-controlled Britain. Only one of the prominent British

Fascists found the opportunity to do this: William Joyce, who went deliberately to Germany a few days before war broke out, where during the next five years he won world-wide notoriety as the broadcasting "Lord Haw-Haw."

On these Fascist parties, and especially their leaders, the Security Service did its best to keep a watchful eye.

But here again its investigations were discouraged. It was treading on forbidden "political" ground. Even after it provided proof that Sir Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists had been financed to the tune of some £100,000 by Mussolini, and that prominent pro-Nazis were in contact with the German Government, it met with no greater encouragement. Deprived of the special warrants for which Home Office authority was necessary, the Security Service continued its investigations with the slender means at its disposal. Again, as in the case of German espionage, events would show that the British Fascists and pro-Nazis who might well have provided a dangerous "Fifth Column" in time of war had not in fact been organized as a secret weapon by the Germans.

Meanwhile, through a contact high up in the German Embassy in London—an old-school diplomat who detested Hitler and his Nazi Party—the Security Service was obtaining regular reports of the plans and policies—at first friendly and disarming: later, as war became inevitable, threatening and bellicose—which fluctuated through the mind of the German *Fuehrer*. These reports the Security Service passed on to the Foreign Office, in the hope that they would warn the Government not only of the ever-growing threat from Nazi Germany, but perhaps at the same time of the danger of neglecting the nation's security.

Communism, and more particularly British Communism, was the third of its anxieties. Russia, through the Comintern which it controlled, and the Communist Party of Great Britain which the Comintern controlled, was engaging not only in attempts at subversion among the armed forces of the Crown, but in espionage. Much of this was done through the medium of open, legitimate agencies such as the Russian Trade Delegation in London. But in 1938, after months of patient investigation, a "secret agent" of the Security Service penetrated to the heart of an elaborate spy plot, which exposed the sinister role played by the Communist Party in Russian espionage. Percy Glading, one of the leading members of the Communist Party of Great Britain, was caught red-handed, photographing

blue-prints and other secret documents, taken from Woolwich Arsenal by members of the Party working there, and doing this under the direction of two members of the Soviet Military Intelligence. For this he was sentenced to six years penal servitude.

To sum up the work of the Security Service during the years immediately prior to the war, it did somehow manage, despite its small numbers and without encouragement or the necessary finance, to continue the M.I.5 work of counter-espionage by catching spies, and at the same time to fulfil its obligations as a Security Service by keeping watch on the various subversive organizations working on behalf of Germany and Russia and by preparing plans for drastic action in the event of war.

Whether the Government would implement these plans with necessary action remained to be seen.

In 1939, before the days of guidance by radio "beam," it was hopefully supposed that the German Air Force would have to use the light reflected from the Thames as a guide to the heart of a blacked-out London. With this in mind, at the end of August, when no doubt was left that the war was imminent, the Security Service moved from its solid but riparian offices in Westminster to cells in two blocks of the famous Wormwood Scrubs prison. These unfortunately, however secure against escaping criminals, were decidedly vulnerable to descending bombs; and the work there was frequently interrupted by the necessity of taking shelter during air-raid warnings.

This was one of the contributory causes which led to the worst crisis in the history of M.I.5. There were many others.

It had not, for one thing, been adequately equipped for the vastly heavier tasks which inevitably would fall on its shoulders the moment war broke out. It had only a handful of trained officers ready to supplement its peacetime staff; and in some respects its machinery was out-of-date.

The country had neglected war preparations generally up to the last possible moment; and the Security Service had suffered more than the other Defence departments, due to its lack of a ministerial representative to press its demands. Indeed, despite its change of name and the increased responsibilities involved, it was still in 1939 in many ways the independent secret Bureau of thirty years before. It was even worse off in one respect at least than it had been as M.I.5. For it had lost the War Office as the spokesman of its needs and had acquired no powerful champion in its stead.

In 1938 and 1939 and indeed until the fall of France in the summer of 1940 and the sudden fear of invasion gave security a new importance—the Government was disinclined to heed the recommendations of the Security Service. No doubt both political considerations and the size of the alien population made it difficult to carry out a clear-cut policy. But whatever the causes, the result inevitably was to prevent the Security Service from doing its work calmly and methodically.

In May 1939, against the advice of M.I.5, the Home Office decided on an immediate general internment of all enemy aliens on the outbreak of war. This decision was not taken as a measure of national security, but in the interest of the enemy aliens themselves who, it was thought, might otherwise be subjected to mob violence. Then, two days before the outbreak of war, the Home Office notified the Security Service that it had abandoned this general internment, and that instead local Tribunals would be set up to decide each case individually.

An exception was made in favour of the special M.I.5 List of dangerous Nazis, and (as in World War I) a coded telegram went out to the police ordering their immediate arrest. In fact only 220 on this list were arrested and interned; the rest, as soon as they saw that war was imminent, left the country. In the London area 127 were arrested and 383 fled, and in all some 2000 enemy aliens had departed by September 9th.

The 120 Tribunals added to the confusion, since they decided the fate of over 73,000 individuals without any reliable information, without any consistent policy and with little concern for the interests of security. The result was that, although they ordered some 570 additional internments, the Security Service was burdened by a heavy load of work, of which it had had neither warning nor an opportunity to prepare itself, and yet still at the end of it had no reason to feel satisfied that all the thousands of enemy aliens still at liberty were friendly and harmless.

At the same time it was harassed by urgent demands for "vetting" by Government departments which had been blissfully indifferent to the need for security in peacetime, but had become acutely and embarrassingly security-minded as soon as war broke out. The so-called "phoney war"—that surprising nine months of German inactivity (so far at least as France and Britain were concerned) which preceded the blitzkrieg of 1940 threw a completely unexpected spanner into the machinery. With no signs of

war nearer than Poland, the British public saw no reason why it should not "holiday abroad" as usual, and the Government did nothing to discourage them. The result was a flood of applications for the necessary exit permits, all of which had to be examined and approved by the Security Service. By June 1940, some 25,000 names a month were being submitted from one source or another for checking against Security Service records; and these too helped to clog the already overworked machinery.

No sooner were the enemy aliens interned (and the same was true a little later of the Fascists detained under Defence Regulation 18B) than they appealed to the Home Secretary for release; and the Security Service had to spend a great deal of time and effort arguing in favour of continued internment with the Advisory Committee, composed of distinguished and conscientious gentlemen who viewed the problem from a more strictly legal and humanitarian point of view than the Security Service thought desirable.

Among other contributory causes to the chaos were the hundreds of "suspects" reported by well-meaning but spy-conscious members of the public, who imagined every private typewriter was a secret wireless set in touch with Germany, and read signalling messages in every chink of light shining through some inadequately blacked-out window. In the summer of 1940, with the fear of invasion, these warnings multiplied and every political or social crank was denounced as a "fifth-columnist."

But it was not only the enemy aliens who gave anxiety. If they, for the most part, were paradoxically our loyal friends, there were those among the British-born population who were known to be our enemies. There were, on the one hand, the more or less openly pro-Nazi Fascists opposing the war by propaganda; and there were, on the other hand, the Communists. They had long been taught that Hitler was the deadly enemy of Communism and Russia; but now, to the bewilderment of some of them, Russia had a pact of non-aggression with Nazi Germany. To the Fascists the war was a "Jewish" war: to the Communist Party, taking their line from Moscow, it was an "Imperialist" war. Here, then, were two by no means negligible elements inside the country both able and perhaps willing to do considerable damage by subversion and sabotage, and the Security Service had the responsibility of seeing they did neither. And their ranks had been swollen by a large number of active foreign Communists, mostly from Czechoslovakia, refugees from Hitler, to whom the country had given sanctuary before, at and after the time of the Munich crisis.

It was a matter of great good fortune that the German Intelligence Service had no organized espionage at work in Britain. Nor during the first year of war did they in fact attempt to send in anything more than a handful of ill-equipped and ill-prepared spies, who either were captured or gave themselves up within an hour or two of their arrival. Nor was there any organized "fifth column" in the country. But neither of these facts was known at the time; and to have assumed in 1939 that neither German espionage nor treasonable activities was a serious danger would have been not merely insanely optimistic, but a criminal neglect of the duty of a Security Service.

Indeed, though the disloyal element in Britain was content for the most part to confine its activities to ineffectual propaganda, in 1940 the case of Tyler Kent and Anna Wolkoff showed the lengths to which it was prepared to go. It also proved that the Security Service was vigilant. Here were a cypher clerk in the American Embassy in London and the Russian-born daughter of a Czarist admiral plotting to betray to the Germans highly secret information which the former had obtained in the course of his duties. Once again, as in the Glading case, the conspirators discovered to their cost that a trusted confidant was in fact a secret agent of the Security Service. Tyler Kent got seven years penal servitude and Miss Wolkoff ten; and a plot, which might well have had disastrous consequences for the Allies, was nipped in the bud.

Other agents penetrated all the many organizations suspected of pro-German sympathies. One agent alone was a member of over forty! Fortunately for the war effort these, with one or two exceptions, attracted more woolly-minded cranks than desperados, and reports of their quarrelsome gatherings provided more amusement than alarm.

With the country permeated with thousands of individuals, British as well as foreign, whose loyalty for various reasons, mostly ideological, was highly questionable, and with no consistent, comprehensive—or even sympathetic—government policy supporting it, the burden on the shoulders of an understaffed Security Service gradually became intolerable. By the summer of 1940 the machinery was near breakdown.

To restore order out of near-chaos, to reorganise the Service so that it could cope with its multitudinous new problems, new machinery and a new inspiration were needed. In terms of cliché, a new broom to sweep clean.

In June 1940, after 31 years as Director of M.I.5, its creator, Sir Vernon Kell, retired. With him went that great architect of protective security, Sir Eric Holt Wilson. As a stop-gap measure, Lord Swinton was appointed Ministerial head of the Security Service and also chairman of a newly-created "Security Executive," the purpose of which was to co-ordinate all the security activities of the various government departments. This interregnum lasted until March 1941, when Sir David Petrie, who had been recalled from Egypt to study and report on the Security Service, was appointed its first Director General.

A critical situation was not helped when, in September 1940, an oil-bomb dropped by an enemy aircraft fell on Wormwood Scrubs and set fire to an out-building where the Registry was housed, destroying a large proportion of its precious records. Shortly after this, in October 1940, as a measure of its own security, the surviving records and the bulk of the staff of the Security Service were evacuated from the danger-zone of London to the depths of the peaceful countryside in Blenheim Palace, though the then Director, with the counter-espionage section, remained in London throughout the war in an office which mercifully escaped the dreaded "direct hit."

Lord Swinton, energetic and inventive, but imperfectly familiar with the difficulties of the Service, found himself at times in conflict with its senior and more experienced officers, and his interregnum was not perhaps as amicable or productive of the necessary reforms as had been hoped. Nevertheless, it was thanks to him that the Registry was eventually re-organized on a new and far more practicable system. And it was moreover due to his influential support that the Security Service acquired, for the first time in its history, that continuing control over all captured German agents which contributed so much to a full understanding, and thereby countering, of the enemy's espionage system. It was also through the Security Executive, of which Lord Swinton was the first Chairman, that the Security Service was brought into a closer working relationship with the Defence departments.

Gradually, with the help of a belated generosity as regards both manpower and finance, and the increased authority that comes from both, the Security Service built up and eventually perfected a vast organization

capable of mastering its enemy. To catch any agent arriving from abroad, it contrived a system of three nets. At the ports Security Control was exercised by a staff of nearly 1,000 military officers and other ranks, through whose hands every individual arriving from abroad had to pass. Every alien escaping from Occupied Europe was sent to the London Reception Centre, for a friendly but thorough questioning, his story being tested by the patiently accumulated and meticulously indexed Information Records which made possible the spotting of the goats among the sheep. And the goats were despatched to the special Camp for more vigorous examination by a group of picked interrogators. By the end of the war, no fewer than 33,000 wartime refugees had passed through the L.R.C., and some 440 suspected agents had been interrogated at the Camp. Of these 14 were executed; the rest, apart from a handful who were "cleared" of suspicion, were kept in detention there till the end of the war.

Among the more "offensive" methods was the use of captured enemy agents who, while purporting still to be working for their German masters, were in fact "controlled" and working for their captors. The value of this from the counter-espionage point of view was that the German Intelligence Service, convinced that they had agents operating freely in Britain, felt no necessity to send in others—who might, for a time at any rate, have evaded capture. But it also proved of great "operational" value, since not only did messages sent by these agents deceive the Germans about our military plans, but specific questions they were called upon to answer often gave a valuable clue to the military intentions of the enemy. The success of this delicate and skilful operation was proved, not only by the fact that two of these agents were recommended for the Iron Cross; not only by the sums of money amounting to no less than £85,000 which the enemy paid them for their services; but by the unbounded faith which German Intelligence continued to show in their deceptive information right up to and even after the invasion of France in 1944.

It was only after the defeat of Germany and when the German Intelligence records had been studied, that the full success of all these counter-espionage activities could be assessed. One fact which emerged from them was that, from the fall of France in 1940 until the liberation of 1944, not a single German agent, other than those "controlled" by the Security Service, was at work in Britain.

No brief history could possibly do justice to all the numerous and varied tasks undertaken during the war. Mention should be made, however, of the contribution during 1945 to what was known as the "War Room"—an organization composed of British, French and American personnel specially created to provide the counter-intelligence staff of the Allied Expeditionary Force in Germany with detailed information about the enemy's Intelligence Service, its methods and its personalities. At one time no fewer than 41 members of the Security Service were on loan to this organization; and indeed one of its officers was its Director. In this way the records which M.I.5 had acquired patiently and methodically over the years contributed to the security of the armies in the field against German espionage and sabotage, and resulted also in the arrest of many of the leading figures of the German Intelligence Service, who were sent back to London for expert interrogation.

In the field of protective security, officers "from M.I.5" travelled the country, visiting and inspecting every firm engaged on secret war-work, advising them how best to guard themselves not only against spies and sabotage, but also the human tendency to carelessness in both conversation and the custody of secret blue-prints.

Another group was responsible for organizing the secrecy surrounding every military operation and thus contributed no little to the enemy's surprise when the Allied forces landed in North Africa in 1942, and later on D Day 1944 invaded Europe on the coast of Normandy.

Who were the men and women who composed the team that achieved this success? There were, on the one hand, the professionals—men like Guy Liddell whose life-long study of Security in all its aspects gave the guiding and controlling brain to all the many counter-espionage activities. And there were the brilliant amateurs. Perhaps in the long run the failure to expand in peace-time paid a worthwhile dividend. No government department could hope to recruit for its permanent staff such a team of variegated first-class brains as those who were willing to throw up their normal occupations and serve in M.I.5 throughout the war. For the most part they came from the "learned" professions—from the Law, the Universities, from the world of Science, even the museums: young, keen and mercifully untroubled by anxieties about professional career or bureaucratic orthodoxies. Today you will find their names among the High Court Judges, eminent Q.C.s, Heads of Colleges, men distinguished in their various

professions. The nation, as well as M.I.5, has reason to be grateful to them for the services they rendered and for which they can never receive public thanks or credit.

No respite followed World War II. Before it was over, another war was threatening. The Reluctant Alliance had only masked and temporarily modified Communist Russia's hostility towards the West. Thus "peace" opened a new chapter in the history of M.I.5.

The lawyers returned to their Inns of Court, the dons to their colleges. But this time the Security Service did not have to send out letters saying it "still functioned, even though there was no known enemy." And not only was its continuance in peacetime recognised as necessary, but its status, as part of the Defence Forces of the Realm, required a constitutional definition which had hitherto been lacking. The result was a directive issued to the Director General by the then Prime Minister, Mr. Clement Attlee, on 20th April 1946.

This directive, which came to be known as its first Charter, was a landmark in the history of the Security Service. Ever since its sudden and strangely informal creation in 1931, it had been in an anomalous position. Until then M.I.5 (and The Bureau before it) had, for all their secrecy and operational independence, been a part of and responsible to the War Office. So too the Civil Intelligence department at Scotland Yard, which in 1931 was incorporated in M.I.5, had been directly under and responsible to the Home Secretary. Yet when the union of these two took place, it had been, one might almost call it, a Common Law marriage, without formal registration, legal sanction, or the blessing of the State, and had left the new Security Service like a "stateless person" without a national passport, owing allegiance to no Minister and also without the protection of a Government department. It had been this lack of an interested and influential ministerial patron which had, at least to some extent, deprived it, in the days before the war, of the funds and manpower necessary to do its work.

That this anomalous and unsatisfactory situation continued for so long was no doubt due to the tradition that "M.I.5" was a purely spy-catching organisation — a sort of "private army" run by a mysterious Colonel Kell — about which the less other people knew the better. Now at long last, in the Prime Minister's directive, the need for the Security Service to have both a formal Charter and a ministerial head was recognised; and in its

very first paragraph the Director General was made responsible to the Prime Minister himself and given the right of direct access to him.

With the enemy known to be plotting in our midst, and not only in Britain but throughout the Commonwealth, the work of the Security Service was as urgently needed as at any time throughout its history. Already in 1945 the threat from Moscow had been made alarmingly manifest when Gouzenko, a cypher clerk in the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa, defected and exposed, not only a vast web of Russian espionage in Canada directed at penetrating the wall of security built round the all-important secret of the atom bomb, but also the treasonable part played in it by, among other Communists, an English nuclear physicist, Nunn May who was later sentenced to ten years penal servitude at the Old Bailey.

Other equally unpleasant shocks were to follow during the next few years. Of these the most sensational were the trial in March 1950 of the nuclear physicist Klaus Fuchs; the defection to Russia five months later of the Harwell scientist Bruno Pontecorvo; and in May 1951 the disappearance of Burgess and Maclean in precisely the "mysterious circumstances" guaranteed to arouse pleasurable excitement and righteous indignation in the British press and public.

Meanwhile an event had occurred which not only emphasised the danger, but served to clarify the situation. In October 1947 the newly constituted Cominform issued a manifesto which divided the world into two opposing camps of Communist "democracies" and anti-Communist "imperialist" nations and was virtually a declaration of open hostility by World Communism against the West. And the danger was intensified when, in February 1948, the Communists seized power in Czechoslovakia, thus adding a new satellite to the hostile camp.

These alarming events forced Mr. Attlee's government to face the embarrassing fact that it was not enough to prevent Communists from entering employment where they would learn vital secrets. There were those who were already in it, and these had somehow to be removed. The result—in March 1948—was the famous Civil Service "purge," for which from its records, carefully accumulated during the past years, the Security Service was able to provide the necessary factual evidence, so that the purge could be carried out without the inquisitorial investigations and widespread reputation-smearings of McCarthyism.

In 1950 the Security Service became the target of public criticism as a result of the Fuchs case. His trial at the Old Bailey, where he was sentenced to the maximum penalty of fourteen years imprisonment under the Official Secrets Act, disclosed that for several years he had been supplying the Russians with vital secret information while employed on atomic research, both in Britain and as a British member of the team of scientists working at Los Alamos in the U.S.A. The critics complained, not merely that his crimes had remained undetected, but that the Security Service ought to have prevented the employment of a man, known to them as a former German Communist, on work where he would have access to such vital secrets. As a result of this criticism, the Prime Minister made a statement in the House of Commons in March 1950 in which, explaining the true facts of the case, he declared: "I do not think there is anything that can cast the slightest slur on the Security Service. Indeed, I think they acted promptly and effectively as soon as there was any line which they could follow." The fact was, Fuchs had never been "known" to be a Communist, but had merely been denounced as such by the Nazi Police before the war: and that in any case the decision to employ him on atomic work was not a decision for which the Security Service could be held in any way responsible.

In 1951, when Burgess and Maclean defected to Russia, the Security Service had again to endure as patiently as it could a prolonged attack by the press, which was eventually answered by the Government in a White Paper bearing the title—so appropriately suggestive of a Sherlock Holmes adventure—"The Disappearance of Two Former Foreign Office Officials." This emphasised the point, which the press had disingenuously overlooked, that the powers of the British Security Service are limited by the Law, and that against neither Burgess nor Maclean was there at the time of their defection sufficient evidence available to justify a prosecution or entitle the authorities to prevent them leaving the country and going anywhere they chose.

Next year (1952) came the trial of William Martin Marshall, convicted under the Official Secrets Act and sentenced to five years imprisonment. Though of no great importance so far as the nation's security was concerned, the case had its dramatic excitement for the press and public as this young Civil Servant was arrested when leaving Wandsworth Park in the

compromising company of no less sinister a personage than the Second Secretary of the Soviet Embassy, Kuznetsov. And it had a particular significance for the Security Service, since Marshall was not a Communist with an ideological excuse for his offence, but a normal young man, employed in the Diplomatic Wireless Service, who succumbed to a subtle process of corruption. Here was an indication of a change in the technique of Iron Curtain espionage, of which another and more serious example was to come to light a few years later with the Linney case.

This same year saw an important change in the constitutional status of the Security Service, when the Prime Minister decided to depute his personal responsibility. By a new directive dated the 24th September 1952, the Director General was made responsible in future to the Home Secretary. But the Service did not thereby become a part of the Home Office, and its Director General retained his right on appropriate occasions of direct access to the Prime Minister himself.

This change provided a convenient opportunity for revising the 1946 Charter in the light of changed circumstances; and the directive enlarged the Service's overseas responsibilities, stressing the duty of assisting and advising the Colonial administrations and of meeting requests, not only from the Commonwealth, but from Allied foreign governments, for advice and assistance in their own security programmes. Since then the development of its overseas liaison has been one of the most impressive features of its recent history. The espionage threat, so dramatically exposed in Canada by Gouzenko and in Australia in 1954 by Petrov, and the insidious subversion, inspired from behind the Iron Curtain, which might have found much fruitful soil in our overseas territories and in Commonwealth countries, required a common and united front if they were to be successfully countered. To effect this the Security Service has constructed and gradually perfected a complicated, but at the same time comprehensive, organisation which ensures, through its Liaison Officers and its day-to-day contact with local Security authorities, that the whole of this common front is alive to the danger and equipped with every weapon in the way of information and technique in the armoury of Security.

A vitally important part of this work is that concerned with the defensive measures comprised in the term "Protective Security," and by an odd coincidence the branch of the Security Service responsible for this work is

housed today in the very same building in Cork Street where, just over 40 years ago towards the end of World War I, a section of M.I.5 was doing, on an infinitely smaller scale and as a purely wartime measure, work with a similar purpose—the protection of the munitions industry from alien espionage and sabotage.

In 1937, when once again the threat of war led to a sudden great re-armament, the Security Service created a new and permanent Protective Security section, which sent out representatives to inspect the industrial factories where secret weapons were being made and to advise their managements how best to guard them against German spies and saboteurs.

Since the end of World War II, Britain has been forced by yet a new threat to prepare its defences for a third war: preparations which involve a vast amount of secret planning, secret research and secret development. The measures taken to protect these secrets form a vital part of the work of counter-espionage, since a spy, however cleverly he may evade detection, is of no use to his masters if he does not contribute in some way to the discovery of secret information.

The secrets are scattered wide: in industry and Government establishments, and in Government departments where also there are secrets of policy and planning needing to be safeguarded. Most of these now have their own responsible Security Officers, but it is to the special protective security sections of the Security Service itself—with its records, its assessment of the threat, its study of the principles and practice of protective security, indeed to what perhaps may not immodestly be called its accumulated wisdom—that they look for expert advice and the latest things in technical equipment. Nor is this work confined to Britain. In addition to sending experts to the Colonies and Commonwealth in answer to frequent requests for training and advice, it contributes through its representatives to the protective security of N.A.T.O. and the other International Treaty Organisations.

In 1958 the Linney case confirmed what the Marshall case had already indicated, that the Russians and Czechs had adopted a new technique in their espionage, or more accurately had reverted to an old one. Perhaps because they realised that Communists were now excluded from secret employment and were in any case too "hot" to handle safely, they were using corruption to recruit non-Communists as a source of information.

Marshall, during a brief tour of duty in the Embassy in Moscow, had been courted by hospitality; in London flattery had been added when a Secretary of the Soviet Embassy had entertained him at expensive restaurants. Linney succumbed at the end of a long social friendship, when the Czech Military Attache learnt that the support of a mistress as well as a wife and family was involving Linney in expenses which the sale of secret information might help to pay.

To counter this new threat presented a new problem. One answer lay in the simple fact that corruption involves a corrupter. And the possible corrupters are marked men. Their movements can be watched, their contacts noted. It is here that the Surveillance section comes into the picture.

If there is one activity of the Security Service of which the public imagination has a vivid, if fortunately not entirely accurate picture, it is that which is technically called "surveillance"—the Secret Agent, heavily disguised, keeping watch on the unsuspecting foreign spy. And indeed, from the very earliest days of M.I.5, this work has been an essential part of counter-espionage. Fifty years ago, when some suspect German needed watching, M.I.5 had only one elderly detective, whose reluctance to "perform such work as shadowing by day and night" was sympathetically recorded by Sir Vernon Kell in 1910. Since then, like every other security activity, the work has had inevitable ups and downs: growing in strength and numbers when some national crisis has inspired the government to generosity, dwindling and withering when a lull encouraged parsimony. At the end of World War II and until the cases of Fuchs and Burgess and Maclean highlighted the danger, the Surveillance group was small in numbers and mechanically ill-equipped for the work it had to do. Then in 1953 it was decided to enlarge the section and equip it with every aid that science could provide. To-day its "resources," to use a comprehensive term, are such as would not merely astonish the most imaginative writer of spy stories, but must at the very least make espionage a more hazardous occupation for the Russian and Satellite Intelligence Services.

In the Linney case suspicion was first aroused through other means; but once the hunt was up, a team from the Security Service's Surveillance Section moved to Worthing and for nearly three months lived there unsuspected, watching his every movement. Their patience and skill were no

doubt adequately rewarded when a judge at the Lewes Assizes sentenced him to fourteen years imprisonment.

In its difficult task of keeping watch on suspects who are well aware that they are likely to be under observation, the Surveillance group is immensely helped by the Scientific Section, whose role in the investigation of espionage and subversion has grown out of recognition with the passing years. The earliest existing record of the use of scientific equipment in the history of M.I.5 is the purchase in 1910 of a camera ("indispensable for our work") priced £3 10s. Then, during World War I, came those scientific pioneers who, in a tiny laboratory, sought reagents for the invisible inks of the German spy-letters. Twenty years ago, at the time of "Munich," the world heard tales of strange listening-in devices planted, it was rumoured, by Hitler's agents in the hotel room at Godesberg, where Britain's Prime Minister was engaged in secret conversation with his colleagues. Today those German tricks would seem primitive by contrast with the secret scientific aids employed—and many of them invented and perfected—by the technical experts of the Security Service, to give it eyes and ears with which to penetrate within the enemy's camp and the means to defend itself against a counter-penetration.

From a 70/- camera to a group of expert scientists; from one elderly retired detective to a scientifically equipped Surveillance section; from a single clerk with a manuscript diary to today's busy secretaries and a Registry housing a myriad records—these are but some of the more picturesque changes since the days of the Bureau in Victoria Street.

But indeed, since the end of World War II especially, the whole character of the Security Service has changed almost out of recognition. When, instead of dwindling to a penniless skeleton as happened after World War I, it survived as a vital and extremely busy organisation, with as much and as important, if not more important, work to do in peacetime as in war, it required a new staff to replace the departing war-time officers. Hitherto there had always been something vaguely "amateur" about it. The Head of the very secret Secret Service Bureau had had to recruit from among trustworthy acquaintances. (When, for example, in 1910 he needed a second clerk to assist old Mr. Westmacott, he enrolled Mr. Westmacott's daughter, and a year or so later Mr. Westmacott's two nephews!). As head of M.I.5, with little pecuniary reward to offer, he found his officers among old friends:

Army officers and retired Civil Servants with Intelligence experience gained in India or Egypt, who already had pensions to supplement their pay.

Today the Security Service is essentially professional. Its officers, most of them recruited young, can regard it as their life's career, and a special Training Section organises courses of instruction to equip them to do work of which, so hidden is it from the outside world, they have hitherto known nothing.

Their predecessors, in the days when M.I.5 was starved for money, had to learn their job "the hard way." Untrained, they were thrust into the forefront of the battle, clutching a fountain-pen in one hand with a sheaf of largely unintelligible papers in the other, and with only such innate intelligence as they might have to guide them. There are officers still serving who remember all too vividly their feelings of mingled excitement and impotent embarrassment when, in their very first week in Wormwood Scrubs, they found themselves called on to write letters, in the name of M.I.5, about matters of which they knew almost literally nothing except what little they had chanced to read in the newspapers. This did, inevitably, damage the reputation of the Security Service by giving the impression of amateurism and inefficiency, which it took time—and a good deal of subsequent efficiency—to undo. In the professional Security Service of today, the new recruit is trained to understand his weapons before being called upon to use them against spies and saboteurs and agents of subversion.

What then, in brief, is the story of these fifty years? The obscure little shop that becomes a famous store? The grain of mustard-seed—"which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof"?

Such similes are apt enough; yet the story is also a mirror of world history. Had the world remained as it was in 1909—a clear-cut conflict between two rival Empires—instead of the Security Service of today we might still have a tiny, penurious, secret Bureau engaged solely on counter-espionage within Great Britain.

Instead, ever since the Russian Revolution of 1917 and far more dangerously since 1948, the conflict has grown world-wide, in a world

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divided by what is almost a religious creed, with forces of the enemy within our gates, spying and subverting loyalty, under secret orders from the enemy's headquarters. It is to counter this widespread conspiracy that M.I.5 has grown into the widespread Security Service of today. And if for some its present title sounds perhaps a trifle dull, a trifle bureaucratic, they can at least be grateful to a sensation-loving Press, which still in its headlines nourishes the popular romantic mystery surrounding "M.I.5."

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