

“Quite a Good Spy”¹: The Emergent Graham Greene

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Introduction

While Graham Greene wrote about his wartime service for Britain’s Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), more commonly called MI6, he never publicly admitted or denied whether he continued to act for British intelligence after he left the service, and it will be years before the relevant government records are opened to the public. As meticulous as he was, Greene did not always succeed in covering his tracks. I will show that there is a great deal of circumstantial evidence that Greene was contributing to MI6 in many of his frequent journeys. I discuss the personal issues that led to his reengagement with the agency and some of the dimensions of his work. I further propose a hypothesis concerning Greene’s involvement in 1967 with the Cold War in the Middle East.

At the close of the Second World War, Greene returned to civilian life with no thought about continuing his association with MI6. He became a director at the publishing house of Eyre and Spottiswood and pursued his interest in film by writing screenplays and even producing. I show that his return to the MI6 fold, as with everything in Greene’s life, was motivated by very personal needs—

mainly as an escape from the emotional strain of his love affair with Catherine Walston.

Greene’s interest in conflicts across the globe were at first not primarily political. The Catholic aspects of these conflicts were what drew his attention: the Church as martyr (in Mexico) or participant in conflict (Viet Nam, Poland) and spiritual release (Kenya). The role of the Church in political conflicts remained a primary interest throughout his life. With the start of the Cold War, Greene found himself acting on the world stage. It has been shown that his efforts on behalf of Castro helped to change British policy and contributed to the downfall of Batista. I argue that Greene also played a role in Britain’s jockeying for influence in the Middle East vis-à-vis the United States and Russia in 1967.

Greene’s fiction has served to document many international struggles thanks to his passion for accuracy and research. His fiction will therefore always be a kind of record of the real events captured therein. The knowledge he gained from his MI6 experience makes *The Quiet American* assigned reading in many American history courses for the background of America’s military intervention in Viet Nam. But even Greene’s comic work was influential. *Our Man in Havana*, which added only slight exaggeration to some of the more bizarre practices of espionage, was probably English literature’s first Cold War black comedy, a genre that became popular as people coped with the unfathomable risks and

¹ “I was actually quite a good spy. Once, when I was going to stay at the embassy in Poland, a silly man had asked me to take in a tape recorder disguised as a wristwatch, and the ass produced some huge thing as big as a wireless. I left him to

it” (Donaghy 145). Donaghy quoted Penelope Gilliatt in a 1979 article on Greene in *The New Yorker*, which Greene strongly criticized for accuracy, leading to her resignation from the magazine.

consequences of the nascent nuclear age.

The full story of Greene's involvement in espionage has yet to be written. The outlines of this story give us a better grasp of some of the hidden dimensions of Graham Greene, a quintessential twentieth-century visionary.

Greene's MI6 Background

Greene's original interest in joining MI6 during the war, as with his return in 1950, arose out of emotional distress. Early in the war, after his wife Vivien and his two very young children were evacuated from London, Greene was living with his lover Dorothy Glover in the center of the city. Both worked as volunteer air raid wardens during many nights of the blitz. His extramarital relationship caused him a good deal of stress, which he later described to his sister Elizabeth: "Things can be hell I know. The peculiar form it's taken with me the last four years has been in loving two people as equally as makes no difference, the awful struggle to have your cake and eat it, the inability to throw over one for the sake of the other."²

Greene's solution was escape. Elizabeth worked for MI6 and recommended that he be recruited. In March 1942 (after training) agent 59200 was sent to the busy port of Freetown, Sierra Leone, where he was to curb shipments of industrial diamonds to the Axis powers and obtain intelligence on nearby Vichy French movements. In his spare time he managed to write a

suspense novel set in England and peopled with Nazi spies—*The Ministry of Fear*. He reported to his superior 2,000 miles away in Lagos, who in turn was managed out of London by Kim Philby. Philby headed a subsection of Section V, which was responsible for counterespionage in the Iberian Peninsula. Bored with his work at Freetown and disappointed with what he saw as the ineptitude of his superior in Lagos, Greene was reassigned to work under Kim Philby with five other agents at MI6 offices in St. Albans in February 1943.³ Their offices moved to London in July.

Spain and Portugal were ostensibly neutral in the war, but their ports were teeming with German and British spies. Greene was in charge of the Portugal desk. Spies working for German Intelligence, the *Abwehr*, were often sent to England via Portugal, and Greene's duties included identifying them so they could be detained upon entering England as well as running some double agents. Greene and the others used information from the top-secret codebreakers at Bletchley Park.⁴ According to Nigel West, Greene was a senior and highly trusted member of the very few who were entrusted with the most important secret of the war—that the British had broken the "Enigma" cypher used by Germany for virtually all its military and diplomatic communications, a breakthrough that allowed Britain to anticipate many German operations.⁵ Later in the war Philby's team would succeed in contacting German members of the

² Norman Sherry, *The Life of Graham Greene*, vol. II (New York: Viking, 1994) 145.

³ Sherry, Vol. II, 167.

⁴ Richard Greene, *Russian Roulette: The Life and Times of Graham Greene* (London: Little, Brown, 2020), 149-50.

⁵ "Graham Greene and the Secret Service" (2002) and remarks made at West's speech to the Graham Greene Birthplace Trust.

Abwehr, including Wilhelm Canaris, who were attempting to assassinate Hitler. The attempt by Wilhelm Canaris on Hitler's life has become one of the great stories of the Second World War.

The level of Greene's assignment is not unexpected, given his family history. He was the nephew of Sir William Graham Greene, a founder of the Admiralty's William Greene Naval Intelligence Department, who was still active during World War II. During the First World War, Sir William was one of the inner circle of advisors of First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill. Young Graham Greene spent his summers at his bachelor uncle's home, Harston House, although his uncle was often away. Greene was greatly impressed by him. He modeled the imposing commissioner in *It's a Battlefield* on his uncle, while he made Harston House the setting of scenes from *The Ministry of Fear* and the short story "Under the Garden."

In 1963 Kim Philby was revealed to be a Soviet spy, one of the infamous "Cambridge Five." He had worked his way into positions of grave importance. With regard to the team's involvement in the German plan to assassinate Hitler, there is evidence that Kim Philby worked to undermine the plan in order to prolong the war because the Soviets did not want Britain to make a separate peace with Germany. Once the assassination attempt of 20 July 1944 failed and the participants were executed, Philby is believed to have kept Britain in the dark about the remaining Germans who continued assassination efforts.⁶

Toward the end of the war, Philby used every means possible to get himself appointed to head the newly created Section IX charged with leading Britain's anti-communist operations—a dream position for a Soviet spy if ever there was one. He offered Greene a promotion if he came to work for him. Instead, Greene left SIS for a job at the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office in May 1944, just a few weeks before the German assassination attempt. One would expect that Greene would have wanted to see how the assassination plans unfolded. Was the resignation motivated by Greene's suspicions of Philby's treachery? Did Philby expose his leanings during their many conversations over lager in pubs at lunchtime and after work? He once blurted out to Hugh Trevor-Roper: "Of course, every attempt at historical analysis is nothing once you compare it to Marx's *Eighteenth Brumaire!*"⁷ Nonetheless, Philby was enormously careful to not let slip anything of real importance, and Greene probably did not know that Philby was employed by the NKVD (renamed KGB in 1954; called KGB hereafter.) When asked about his resignation, Greene was vague, as he always was in discussing his work for MI6. He claimed that he "didn't want to be promoted" and that, bored with the routine of his office job, he had transferred to the Foreign Office because they offered to send him to France after the invasion (which they didn't do.) Greene also attributed his resignation to his dislike of the underhanded way Philby had obtained his advancement, saying "I thought he was thinking of moving up his friends to

⁶ Bruce Page, David Leitch, and Phillip Knightley, *The Philby Conspiracy* (Garden City: Doubleday & Co., 1968), 158-59.

⁷ Page, et.al, 157.

guard his flanks as it were, for personal reasons. One knows now that they were not personal reasons.”⁸

Greene was at the Foreign Office less than a month when he was released to half-time work, and he immediately joined the publishing house of Eyre and Spottiswoode as a company director. The family took an apartment in Oxford, but his visits home were “infrequent.”⁹ For the most part, Greene stayed with Dorothy in London although his emotions for her had cooled. He had long wanted to learn the publishing business and even thought about laying down roots at the publishing house that might provide a prospect for his four-year-old son Francis.¹⁰ Moreover, he liked the idea of a steady salary as he had worried that he was losing his ability to write fiction.¹¹ Nevertheless, he began work on *The Heart of the Matter*, did book reviews for publications, and became involved with the film industry—a lifelong interest.

Greene and Catherine Walston

Greene was now on the verge of forging two important relationships that would influence his return to espionage: his friendship with the producer Alexander Korda and his love affair with an extraordinarily beautiful, wealthy, married socialite from Cambridge, Catherine Walston. Greene had met Walston at party given by John and Elizabeth Rothenstein, who were Catholic, in the autumn of 1945. John was director of the Tate Gallery. The following Good Friday the Rothensteins and Catherine visited the Greenses at Oxford. Elizabeth had piqued Catherine’s interest in Catholicism and

had introduced her to Greene’s writing. Catherine took instruction and when she was ready to convert in September 1946, Elizabeth wrote to Greene to ask him to be Catherine’s godfather. He agreed. Vivien attended the baptism and first communion alone. In November Catherine paid another visit to the Greenses and in February 1947 urged Greene to see a house for sale near her, in the village of Linton. To save him the journey home, she offered to have a pilot collect Greene and fly him back to Oxford. Catherine came along.¹²

In a letter to Catherine, Greene recalled how he fell in love with her on the flight back home: “A lock of hair touches one’s eyes in a plane with East Anglia under snow and one is in love.” He had suddenly experienced “an extraordinary happiness” and their affair soon began.¹³ The house at Linton, which was fewer than ten miles from Catherine’s home, was obviously unsuitable for a family with small children—it was decrepit, drafty, and had steep staircases. Moreover, as Vivien did not drive she would be isolated in the tiny town. Greene went ahead and bought the house anyway. Unhappily, Vivien prepared to move, but just as suddenly Greene sold it.¹⁴

Nine months after the flight with Catherine, Greene and Vivien separated. Vivien had become aware of the affair when she opened a returned love letter to Catherine. At first, Greene denied that the love letter meant anything. When Vivien replied that she could tell that his feelings for Catherine were real, he gave up the act and told her he was going to leave her. According to Vivien, he said “I am going to leave you. We’ll be going

⁸ Sherry, vol. II, 181.

⁹ R. Greene, 163.

¹⁰ Sherry, vol. II, 187.

¹¹ Sherry, vol. II, 188.

¹² R. Greene, 169-70.

¹³ Sherry, vol. II, 228.

¹⁴ Sherry, vol. II, 229-30.

away together—leaving here.”¹⁵ But Greene’s dream of starting a new life with Catherine was at best a chancy proposition. From that time until the middle of 1950, Greene would continually, but unsuccessfully, pressure Catherine to marry him.

Greene and Alexander Korda

Two months before separating from Vivien, and just after completing *The Heart of the Matter*, Greene was hired by Alexander Korda to write a script for a film to take place in Vienna. Soon Greene was residing at Vienna’s Sacher Hotel and working on *The Third Man*.

Greene first met Alexander Korda in 1936 when he was the film reviewer for *The Spectator*, a post he held from July 1935 until he left for Freetown. During that time Greene established himself as a preeminent film critic.¹⁶ After reading Greene’s withering review of Korda’s adaptation of the H. G. Wells’s novel *The Man Who Could Work Miracles*, Wells wrote to him to invite him to his home for lunch.¹⁷ Speaking of the movie Wells wrote: “We’ll say no more about the damned disgraceful thing. I’d like to meet you. You’d be good for me ... Yours ever, H. G. Wells.”¹⁸ Wells then introduced Greene to his friend Korda who, despite the fact that Greene had called him “a publicity man of genius ... [who] has not yet revealed a talent for

films,” immediately hired Greene to try his hand at scriptwriting. (Greene continued to write scathing reviews of Korda’s films, even the one he had himself scripted.)¹⁹

Very early in his career, Korda had connected with British intelligence. He had been a leading filmmaker in his native Hungary under a communist government but was condemned to death when rightwing conservative groups came to power in 1919. He “was rescued through the intervention of Brigadier ... Maurice, a British intelligence agent.”²⁰ Thereafter he directed films in Germany, Austria, France, and Hollywood between 1927 and 1931. He relocated to Britain in 1932 where he started London Film Productions “with the quiet assistance and support of both Colonel Claude Dansey and the Special Intelligence Service, and Robert Vansittart of the Foreign Office. With their secret funding and support, he was able to build the only British film studio to successfully compete in the international market, producing films equal in quality and appeal to those made by Hollywood itself.”²¹

As Nazi Germany’s aggressions were threatening to embroil Great Britain in war, Greene’s newfound friends Korda and Wells supported their friend Winston Churchill in his battle against

¹⁵ Sherry, Vvl. II, 276.

¹⁶ Wikipedia article on Kael relies on Mark Feeney (9 June 2005). “Viewing the parcels of Pauline.” *Boston Globe*, (http://www.boston.com/ae/books/articles/2005/09/06/viewing_the_parcel_of_pau-line/).

¹⁷ Greene wrote that Wells’s message was a “muddle, a rather too Wellsian muddle.” David Parkinson, *The Graham Greene Film Reader*, (New York: Applause, 1993), 135-36.

¹⁸ David C. Smith, *Correspondence of H. G. Wells*, Vol. 4 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1998), 92.

¹⁹ Greene scripted *Twenty-One Days*, a film based on a story by John Galsworthy. *Spectator* (4 September 1936).

²⁰ Merle Kenneth Peirce, “British Cinema and the Manipulation of Public Opinion During the Inter-war Years” (master’s thesis, Rhode Island College, 2010), 67, <https://digitalcommons.ric.edu/etd/67>.

²¹ Peirce indicates that by the time Korda arrived in England in 1932, Dansey had already begun to construct a shadow intelligence network named “the Z organization,” beginning with the film industry for cover and expanding to other areas.

the appeasers. For this rebellion, Churchill was all but shut out of the Tory party.²² When the war began, Korda released *The Lion Has Wings*, a stirring propaganda documentary film that extolled the Royal Air Force. In response, the Germans threatened to “bomb Denham,” Korda’s film studio.”²³ Once in power, Churchill sent Korda back to Hollywood to make propaganda films in order to engage an isolationist America in England’s struggle. There, Korda recruited Lawrence Olivier among other British nationals and produced films about England that were so inspiring that a congressional committee questioned whether he was an unregistered British agent, which, of course, he was. Korda was awarded an OBE for his work in Hollywood.

The Cold War and the making of *The Third Man* in Vienna

Korda’s decision to locate *The Third Man* in Vienna was probably a function of his SIS activity. Vienna was the heart of post-war anti-Soviet SIS operations.²⁴ SIS historian Nigel West writes that the frontline of SIS’s world-wide network, now committed to fighting Communism, was in the two zones of occupation shared with the Soviets; “the most dramatic post-war intelligence battles were fought in (and under) the Allied sectors of Germany and Austria.”²⁵

At Churchill’s directive, MI6 Chief Stewart Menzies launched Britain’s Cold War anti-Soviet counter-espionage initiative in Vienna and Berlin even before the war ended: “As early as the summer of 1945, a number of MI6’s most experienced officers and Balkan experts were already well established in the British Zone in Austria posing as the British ‘Civil Liaison Office’.”²⁶ By the summer of 1948, Senior British officers with the Special Operations Executive (SOE) were boarded at the Sacher Hotel where Greene stayed for five weeks. One of them claimed that Greene “usually breakfasted in his room on pink champagne.”²⁷

Korda’s close friend Brendan Bracken, who had served as the head of Ministry of Information during the war and had been, like Korda, a member of “Churchill’s gang,” suggested that Korda get some background on Vienna by contacting an Austrian who had produced some outstanding pro-Soviet propaganda for Bracken at the Ministry when the Soviets were England’s ally.²⁸ Peter Smollett, whose given name was Hans Peter Smolska, had returned to Austria from England after the war. At their invitation, Smollett flew to London to discuss the film project over dinner with Bracken and Korda at Korda’s suite at the Claridge Hotel. Smollett’s contribution to the plot included details of the tainted penicillin that had actually

²² During this time Churchill worked on a script for Korda.

²³ Paul Tabori, *Alexander Korda* (London: Oldbourne Book Co. Ltd., 1959), 216.

²⁴ Korda stated that he chose Vienna for the simple reason that he had accumulated royalties there which could not be moved abroad, but it certainly wasn’t the only place where Korda had frozen royalties.

²⁵ Nigel West, *The Friends: Britain’s Post-war Secret Intelligence Operations* (London: Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1988), 18.

²⁶ Stephen Dorril, *MI6: Inside the FCovert World of Her Majesty’s Secret Intelligence Service* (New York: Touchstone, Simon & Schuster, 2000), 169-70.

²⁷ Dorril, 120.

²⁸ Tabori, 221. “He was one of Alex’s closest friends—according to some people the closest.” Churchill saw that Alex received his knighthood in the middle of the war “after he had gone to the States and before he returned to London to settle.”

been administered to Austrian children with catastrophic results, and his personal anecdote of smuggling his anti-fascist comrades out of Vienna through the sewers in February 1934. One of these comrades had been Kim Philby.²⁹

What Greene and his colleagues did not know at the time was that Smollett happened to be a Soviet spy. Unknowingly, Brendan Bracken had placed Korda and his group under direct observation of a KGB operative whose double identity was exposed only after KGB files were made public with the collapse of the Soviet Union and Smollett was long in his grave. Based on an account by Smollett's godson, Peter Foges (a film and television producer), Smollett began working for the Soviets at about the time he fled to England in 1934.³⁰

On his way to Austria to work on the story of *The Third Man* in February 1948, Greene had stopped in Prague

then in the throes of anti-communist demonstrations. Soon thereafter, the Cold War "officially" began when the Communist Party crushed the Czech rebellion and took control of the Republic. With this coup, the Soviet Union manifested itself as the menace about which Churchill had famously warned in his Fulton, Missouri speech of 5 March 1946, when he coined the expression "iron curtain" and spoke of the need to guard against "communist fifth columns" imbedded throughout the West.³¹

The Third Man has, of course, become a film classic. It won the Grand Prix for best feature film at the 1949 Cannes Film Festival.

The End of Their Affair, and the Re-emergence of a Spy

In early March 1950 Greene and Walston confronted her husband Harry with their desire to marry. As Harry

²⁹ Peter Foges, "My Spy" (2016), <https://www.laphamsquarterly.org/roundtable/my-spy>. Foges relates that their anti-fascist work in Austria in 1933, resisting the Dohlfuss government's brutal attacks on union workers and leftists, had influenced both Smollett and Philby to join the NKVD. Philby arrived in Austria fresh out of Cambridge. These activities brought him in contact with Smollett and his friend Litzzi Friedmann, whom Philby married and brought to safety in England. Smollett soon followed. In England, Smollett worked as a correspondent for several European papers and for a time went into business with Philby, running a small news agency. He succeeded in making a name for himself with his journalism and came to the attention of Brendan Bracken. In 1941, with Russia suddenly Britain's ally, Bracken asked Smollett to create pro-Soviet propaganda, which he did lavishly, with hundreds of programs on BBC radio (with the help of fellow spy Guy Burgess a senior BBC producer) including the movie *USSR at War*, and even a spectacle for ten thousand people at the Royal Albert Hall which included readings by Laurence Olivier and John Gildud.

Greene and Smollett shared another mutual friend, H. G. Wells's lover Moura Budberg, who had worked for a time with Smollett and also worked for Korda.

³⁰ In recognition of his espionage work in London, the Soviets had returned the Smolska ski binding factory in the Soviet sector to him after the war, allowing Smollett to live quite comfortably in Austria. Foges speculates that "Harry Lime—the movie's charismatic, morally squalid central character, played memorably by Orson Welles—was partly based on the British double agent [Philby] but also at least partly on the sinister Smolka." Certainly not. The prototype, if there was one, has been the subject of much debate. It makes little sense that either Philby or Smollett would have inspired the malevolent Lime at this point in time, as Philby was not known to be under suspicion until he was asked to resign in July 1951, and even then he maintained his innocence and seems to have continued working in some capacity for SIS, while Smollett's double identity was not exposed until after his death.

³¹ Two months later the Soviet Union would begin its blockade of Berlin.

would not capitulate, they agreed to a temporary compromise in which they would stay away from each other for a while, but then take two holidays together, including one to Italy. Greene prayed that their love might find favor with God because “I literally can’t contemplate life without you.”³²

During the six-week separation prior to their trip to Italy, Greene wisely turned to his brother Dr. Raymond Greene who had helped Graham when he was a suicidal teenager. Greene asked Raymond to talk with Catherine to assess the probability of her leaving Harry and marrying him. Catherine admitted to Raymond that her life would be more peaceful if she broke with Graham, that she felt “responsible for him,” and that his “sexual energy” was “rather a nuisance.” In Raymond’s opinion, Catherine would never leave Harry. He told his brother that Catherine was unconsciously putting on an act with Graham and not telling the truth about a great many things.³³

Catherine herself confirmed some of Raymond’s opinions. She told Greene that she doubted that she could start a new life if she abandoned her family. She pointed out that Greene had tried it and failed.³⁴ The irony of her saying this could not have eluded Greene, since he had left Vivien and his children for her. Greene pleaded with her to stay in his life (“If we crash there’s only tarting & self disgust & three women a week”). With the illusion of marriage to Catherine gone and his marriage over, Greene sought distraction elsewhere.³⁵

Actually, *Elsewhere* was Korda’s yacht, and Korda invited Greene to join him on a Mediterranean voyage. It was on this particular voyage that Greene apparently decided to work once again for SIS.

In August 1950 Catherine joined Greene briefly on the *Elsewhere*, which hosted other MI6 fellow travelers including Vivien Leigh, the wife of Laurence Olivier, who had kept his ears to the ground for Korda in Hollywood and Pamela Churchill, the wife of Winston Churchill’s son Randolph. Photographs of Catherine and Greene taken on board the yacht show Greene looking like the happy schoolboy he had never been. Catherine disembarked at Nice, and Greene remained on the ship, ironically working on the completion of *The End of the Affair*.³⁶

At Antibes, the *Elsewhere* picked up Korda’s sixteen-year-old nephew, future writer and editor Michael Korda, on holiday from school. Michael was in awe of Greene, who took the budding writer under his wing. In Michael’s view, the writer he observed as he completed *The End of the Affair* was not pining for his mistress. Rather, he recalled Greene as almost boyish and talking eagerly about espionage. As they breakfasted together at a small dockside café, Greene “from time to time ... looked suspiciously at the people passing by, or at the fellow-patrons who sat down and ordered coffee and a croissant. Spies and informers were on his mind. He talked about his wartime espionage experience, and about international politics.”³⁷

³² Sherry, vol. II, 329.

³³ Sherry, vol. II, 330.

³⁴ Sherry, vol. II, 331.

³⁵ Sherry, vol. II, 330.

³⁶ Even the yacht would be employed by MI6. In the summer of 1954 Greene and Korda took it on

an MI6 mission to photograph the coastline of Yugoslavia, then under Tito’s communist dictatorship. Being a film producer who was siting locations was a good cover for such photography. See R. Greene, 229.

³⁷ Michael Korda, “The Third Man,” *The New Yorker* (25 March 1996).

Greene, playing at spying, seemed curiously ebullient to young Michael Korda. His high spirits were undoubtedly due to a proposition he'd just received from his younger brother Hugh, then the head of the Emergency Information Services in the Malay peninsula which acted as cover for the British Secret Service. Hugh was urging Graham to join him as he worked on what was dubbed the "emergency"—the terrorization of British colonials by Chinese communists.³⁸ Hugh's job was to counteract Russian propaganda by using "intelligence from the secret agencies, principally SIS ... against the Russians and their surrogates." According to Nigel West, Hugh was proving "highly effective" in using "radio and pamphlets to undermine the Chinese Communist insurgents."³⁹

Hugh's proposal offered the danger and distraction Greene craved plus a chance to see his closest brother and reconnect with his old friend Maurice Oldfield who, as SIS Station head in Singapore, was responsible for Malaya. Greene had got to know Oldfield through his sister Elizabeth. During the war Oldfield had worked for Security Intelligence Middle East (SIME) which shared the same station house in Cairo as SIS where Elizabeth and her soon-to-be husband Rodney Dennys worked. Oldfield would become Chief of MI6 in 1973 and was the person to whom Greene would give his information, whether from assignment or otherwise gathered during his travels.⁴⁰ But at this time, it appears that Korda was Greene's

acting MI6 contact, as Greene revealed in a 1951 letter to Catherine: "The old firm has asked Korda if I'd do a job for them. I don't know what. K's arranging meeting when I get back from Evelyn [Waugh's]."⁴¹

Greene flew to London to prepare for the journey to Malaya. He visited with Vivien and the children and even considered a reconciliation if Catherine absolutely refused to marry him, but he concluded that there was no going back.⁴² Separated from wife, family, and lover, Greene was intensely lonely, untethered and despairing. His travels to areas of conflict to obtain information for MI6 became an antidote. Danger had always rekindled his spirits and his will to live.

A year later, when *The End of the Affair* proved to be so successful that Greene's portrait graced the cover of the 29 October 1951, issue of *Time Magazine*, the accompanying article expounded: "He simply writes, and between times travels—to get away. Last year he flew to Malaya to get a look at the life of English rubber planters in a peninsula overrun with Communist guerrillas—and while he was about ... spent 2½ days in the jungle with Gurkha troops, tracking guerrillas. ... Last week he was back in London—packing his bags for Indo-China."⁴³

The Gentleman Amateur

Prior to the greatest scandal to rock MI6—the "Cambridge Five" double agents who passed enormously important information to Russia—MI6

³⁸ Sherry, vol. II, 95-96.

³⁹ West, 95-96.

⁴⁰ Nigel West confirms that "even after the war ... Greene retained a connection with the intelligence services, [sending] reports to Sir Maurice Oldfield following his many travels and meetings with powerful people." Qtd. in Yan

Christiansen, ed., "Graham Greene and the Secret Service," *A Sort of Newsletter. The Newsletter of the Graham Greene Birthplace Trust* (Autumn 2002), 9.

⁴¹ Sherry, vol. II, 487.

⁴² Sherry, vol. II, 335.

⁴³ "Shocker," *Time Magazine* (1951).

had been less than scrupulous in vetting recruits. As Nigel West put it, the “friends,” (another sobriquet for MI6) bore the “time-honoured image of cosmopolitan gentleman amateurs.”⁴⁴ Typically they had completed “Oxbridge” and came from the upper classes or had ancestors who’d served in the military or government. The fact that they may have been leftists or communists at university was discounted as being fairly typical of students in the thirties. The spy ring only came to light with the disappearance of MI6 agents Donald Maclean and Guy Burgess in 1951.

Greene, a Balliol, Oxford man, was of an earlier generation. Although he had joined a communist group for a week or two in order to take advantage of a travel offer, he was basically a conservative liberal who hailed from a distinguished family that served in government. With this background he had the “right stuff.” In addition, he had demonstrated an acute ability to observe and analyze events, players, and the ever-questionable reliability of informants during his wartime intelligence work. He was personable, amusing, and if he was a bit eccentric, that merely underscored his essential Britishness. During the war Greene had considered himself an “officer” of the agency—in a different category from agents who work abroad at risk to themselves because of their deception. In a letter to Auberon Waugh he wrote: “I was never an MI6 *agent*. You should know the difference between an officer

who lives in perfect safety and an agent who leads a dangerous career. I was always in perfect safety.”⁴⁵ Perhaps in the field and exposed to danger, as he would be in Viet Nam, he felt more of a spy, which he now called himself on several occasions.⁴⁶

It is likely that Greene was too independent minded to ever accept an assignment that conflicted with his own beliefs. Although he was anti-American with regard to U.S. foreign policy, he was as yet accepting of British policy. He was critical of the Soviet Union. In an interview in 1950, Greene was asked his opinion of prelates who might wish to prescribe how far a Catholic writer should stray from church doctrine. In response, Greene compared the Soviet Union to Nazi Germany: “You can’t prescribe for them without imitating Moscow. Do you know what happens,’ he said pointedly, ‘when you wish the world to be neat and orderly and precise, a closed untroubled place? You try to make it that way. And when people don’t respond (and they don’t), you end up with Belsen.”⁴⁷ Greene’s post-war MI6 assignments involved assessing events on the ground for a realm now shorn of much of its influence and power in the cold war standoff between the superpowers America and Russia and wary of the new communist People’s Republic of China. As Britain was very invested in China,

⁴⁴ West, 119.

⁴⁵ Jeremy Lewis, *Shades of Greene*, Letter of September 12, 1982 (London: Jonathon Cape, 2010), 452.

⁴⁶ See for example Yvonne Cloetta and Marie-Francoise Allain, *In Search of a Beginning: My Life with Graham Greene* (London:

Bloomsbury, 2004), 138; Marie Francoise Allain states Greene made the following inscription in a book to her parents: “from Graham, the aged spy from Indochina.”

⁴⁷ Henry J. Donaghy, *Conversations with Graham Greene* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1992), 27.

because of Hong Kong, its policy towards China was cautious.⁴⁸

Greene's renown allowed him to be in the enviable position of doing what intellectuals of the time most coveted— influencing world opinion and politics.⁴⁹ As early as 1944, Mary McCarthy sniffed out his growing influence and tried to squelch it. Writing for *The Partisan Review*, the premier outlet for the newly gelled postwar American intelligentsia, i.e., the "left," she decreed in an essay entitled "Graham Greene and Intelligentsia" that Greene was not a true intellectual—he simply used the "rhetoric" of one.⁵⁰ However, Mary McCarthy's club of intellectuals was not one he aspired to join. "I wouldn't want to belong to an intellectual elite," he told interviewer Marie Françoise Allain; "I don't dislike intellectuals. I have friends who could be called intellectual. But to my mind the intellectual is often academic and sometimes a shade pretentious."⁵¹

If he had a political philosophy, it was the simple yet moral liberal democracy he was raised with: "I find it hard to be 100 percent behind someone or 100 per cent against him; If there is one moral principle clearly in the forefront of my mind it's Tom Paine's assertion that 'we must guard even our enemies against injustice,' whether it's perpetrated by a democratic government

or by a dictatorship."⁵² To this kernel of political belief he added ideas that reflected his native emotional inclinations, which had been given shape by his personal interpretations of Catholicism. Greene's strength as a novelist was, in my opinion, his ability to unite a keen rationalism and realism with the sense of the vagaries of the emotional side of a situation, and the charity for which he admired the saints. He rejected what he called Philby's "chilling certainty," the certainty of the Marxist.⁵³

In and out of Malaya and Viet Nam, 1950-1954

Greene's cover during his assignment in Malaya was that of *Life Magazine* journalist. During his three-month visit, he interviewed British farmers and British and Vietnamese railroad men who struggled to keep the lines working under the threat of saboteurs. His article for *Life* sympathizes completely with the hardworking colonials. To Greene, the communists in Malaya were "the enemy"—destructive, ideological patsies who had no real roots in the country, and his opinions were completely in line with those of the Foreign Office, as one would expect if he was on an intelligence assignment. From his comment to Marie-Françoise Allain that "my

⁴⁸ Andrew Lownie, *Stalin's Englishman Guy Burgess, The Cold War, and the Cambridge Spy Ring* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015), 183.

⁴⁹ The five novels are *The Quiet American* (1955—set at a time of insurgency against French rule in Viet Nam), *Our Man in Havana* (1958—a comedy about espionage at the time of an insurgency against a dictator in Cuba), *The Comedians* (1966—taking place during the murderous dictatorship of Papa Doc in Haiti), *The Honorary Consul* (1973—set in the right-wing dictatorship in Paraguay with terrible human rights abuses), and *The Human Factor*

(1978—set in England with flash backs to South Africa concerns about espionage during the cold war).

⁵⁰ Mary McCarthy, "Graham Greene and the Intelligentsia" (*Partisan Review* Spring 1944), 228.

⁵¹ Marie Françoise Allain, *The Other Man: Conversations with Graham Greene* (Toronto: Penguin, 1984), 139.

⁵² Allain, 106.

⁵³ Kim Philby, *My Secret War* (London: Mackibbon and Kee, 1968), vii.

younger brother Hugh was in charge of psychological warfare, so I had all the easier access to the documents the Communists left behind them," he appears to have dug rather more deeply than required by a popular magazine.⁵⁴

From the Malay peninsula, Greene prepared to move on to the much more dangerous situation in French-controlled Viet Nam by meeting with the Director of Intelligence Services in Malaya and possibly his superiors stationed in Singapore.⁵⁵ Viet Nam concerned the British because the then prevalent "domino theory" held that once the communists won the fight against the French in Viet Nam, the British protectorate of Malaya could be toppled next. The British "were looking for a non-communist path for Vietnam, giving special attention to the Catholic leadership of the country," a project that "had the potential to outrage the French."⁵⁶ Indigenous Catholics were more supportive of independence than allying with the French.⁵⁷

In *A Sort of Life*, Greene insouciantly wrote that he went to Viet Nam to "drop in on an old friend from his war days."⁵⁸ His MI6 contact was Trevor Wilson, working undercover as the British consul in Hanoi.⁵⁹ Consular assignment was a typical cover for MI6 agents, as was journalism.

At the time of Greene's arrival, the newly appointed French High Commissioner of Viet Nam was General de Lattre, a war hero of the first order. Many honors and numerous streets in French cities consecrate his memory. De Lattre was suspicious of Wilson whom he rightly believed to be encouraging a

Catholic, anti-French, non-Communist "third force" at Phat Diem. It is possible that MI6 sent Greene to Viet Nam to check up on Wilson, or to step in if Wilson was prevented from operating effectively.

Greene arrived in Saigon on 25 January 1951. During his ten-day visit, Greene and General de Lattre became friendly. De Lattre recognized that Greene the writer could help his cause. He lent him a car and driver, flew with him to Hanoi from Saigon, and even put an airplane at his disposal which Greene used to investigate various Catholic military centers.

In October 1951 Greene returned to Viet Nam again under cover as a journalist for *Life*, but he received a less cordial reception from de Lattre than previously. The general now suspected that Greene, like Wilson, was a spy as reported by French intelligence and had him followed. Finally, at a cocktail party the general asked him outright if he was spying for the British.⁶⁰ In response to Greene's denial, the General correctly said: "I understand that no one ever leaves the British Secret Service." Greene was later remorseful about his interaction with the revered de Lattre, who soon left for Paris and died of cancer within a few months. In *Ways of Escape* he wrote, "I felt a meanness in myself. He deserved better company." The general chose to believe "my friend" Graham Greene rather than his intelligence service until French intelligence misidentified an innocent telegram to Greene as a coded message.⁶¹ De Lattre's replacement, Commander-in-Chief Raoul Salan,

⁵⁴ Allain, 106-07.

⁵⁵ R. Greene, 205.

⁵⁶ R. Greene, 208.

⁵⁷ R. Greene, 215.

⁵⁸ G. Greene, 136.

⁵⁹ Sherry, vol. II, 482

⁶⁰ G. Greene, 142.

⁶¹ R. Greene, 219-20.

allowed Greene greater leeway. Wilson left Viet Nam at Christmas, while Greene remained until February keeping company with American journalist Leo Hochstetter who was thought to have CIA connections and is believed to have been the inspiration for Arlen Pyle.

During another trip to Vietnam in January 1954, Trevor Wilson was back, posing as a leather goods dealer and working under Greene's authority. Both were watched by the French security, who knew exactly what they were doing.⁶² Greene witnessed fighting in the decisive battle of Dien Bien Phu and presciently concluded that the French loss "marked virtually the end of any hope the Western powers entertained that they could dominate the East. The French with Cartesian clarity accepted the verdict. So too, to a lesser extent, did the British" (regarding Malaya.)⁶³ Greene soon worked his knowledge of the situation into *The Quiet American* (1955) which suggested the inevitable failure of American involvement in Viet Nam.

Greene wrote analyses of the Viet Nam situation for a number of publications in Britain, France, and America. In his opinion, war against Ho Chi Minh's forces would be drawn out, perhaps indefinitely, and would necessarily result in independence. The West had missed an opportunity with Ho Chi Minh, who had attempted to work with the French before joining with communist forces. Greene predicted that the United States would take a lead military role in Viet Nam, which would be a mistake. He cautioned against an insistence that Western democratic institutions should be

imposed on Viet Nam: "We in the West are dominated by the idea of adult suffrage, but adult suffrage means chaos or corruption in a country like Vietnam with no political traditions, a majority of illiterate peasants and no political parties, as we know the term. Political parties in Vietnam, apart from the religious sects ... have no platforms, no records of membership, no contact with the working class."⁶⁴

To Marie-Françoise Allain, Greene admitted that "he had played a sort of 'go-between' role 'on a mission to contact Ho Chi Minh in Hanoi, once the French had pulled out.'" Greene could hardly dissemble to Allain. She had a copy of the French translation of *The Quiet American*, inscribed by Greene to her parents on 16 September 1959 as follows: "from Graham, the aged spy from Indochina."

Kenya, 1953

We do not know whether Greene visited Nairobi in late August 1953 as a "gentleman amateur" or pursuant to an official request. The situation had some of the hallmarks of the Malay emergency although without communist insurgents. In any case, Greene's writing about the conflict reveals the personal moral beliefs which underlay his political opinions. The Mau Mau were attacking British rule by terrorizing both British farmers and their fellow tribesmen. Entire families of British farmers had been hacked to death with machetes. Greene rejected the lenient views of some leftists who argued that the terrorists had been "excluded from effective political power."⁶⁵ In his eyes, intolerable atrocities against hard

⁶² Sherry, vol. II, 486-87.

⁶³ G. Greene, 159.

⁶⁴ Among them, *Paris Match*, 12 July 1952, *The Sunday Times*, 21 and 28 March 1954,

Spectator, 16 April 1954, *Tablet*, 17 April 1954, and *Listener*, 15 September 1955.

⁶⁵ G. Greene, 166.

working ordinary people who loved Africa and had no other home was inexcusable. He reported that many of the farmers espoused hopes that their unused land would be distributed to their black neighbors. The killers were not heroes. “Heroes should behave like heroes,” he wrote.⁶⁶ In fact, Greene compared the Mau Mau and their terrorist tactics to the Nazis. After attending the criminal trials of perpetrators, he took a harder line than the government regarding one defendant who was acquitted. This Mau Mau leader had terrorized his own people as well as the colonists, and Greene wrote that regardless of the acquittal, it would be best if he were exiled from Kenya.

As with Viet Nam, Greene saw Catholicism as a sort of solution. Noting that some of the Mau Mau had accepted Catholicism prior to their execution, he thought that the certainties of religion could prove more helpful than “the indiscipline and indecision of British justice and government. ... We have lost the power of clear action because we have lost the ability to believe,” Greene wrote.⁶⁷ The convicted Kikuyu tribesmen had turned to Catholicism to replace their “lost tribal discipline” and willingly accepted the Catholic sacraments in place of their own tribal sacrifices: “For good or ill, the future of the Kikuyu seemed to me to depend on religion.”⁶⁸

Two Weeks in Poland, November 1955

Although Greene was highly professional in concealing his work for MI6, at times the alert reader may pick up the trail, as Greene’s bibliographers

Jon Wise and Mike Hill did regarding Greene’s visit to Poland in late 1955. In a file marked “Kim Philby” at the Greene Archive in the Burns Library in Boston, they found what appears to be a copy of a report written by Greene to his contact at SIS about his trip to Poland. Wise and Hill conclude that the specificity of detail as well as the tone of the document mark it as written for a governmental agency like MI6.⁶⁹

Ostensibly, his purpose was to gather information about the country under communist rule and particularly the Pax movement, the government-sponsored secular “Catholic” organization. The organization was mistrusted by many Polish Catholics who were deeply suspicious of the true motives. Taken together, [documents in two different files] add weight to the long-held theory that Greene continued to work for British intelligence after he officially left the service toward the end of the Second World War.

.... The Kim Philby file contains an eight page concisely written document about the visit. It is carefully cross referenced and ends with a series of pen portraits of various people Greene encountered in Poland, including various people opposed to the Pax movement and those who appeared to be working for the government. The writer suggests that his [179] notes might be worth retaining ‘in case the names crop up at any time on visa applications.’

Clearly the tone of this document suggests it is not intended as preliminary work for the future newspaper articles. It is not

⁶⁶ G. Greene, 175.

⁶⁷ G. Greene, 178.

⁶⁸ G. Greene, 181.

⁶⁹ Email conversation with Jon Wise.

surprising that Greene should continue to be used by MI6 for intelligence gathering of this kind. The professional manner in which the document is composed suggests an experienced hand at work.

However, it leaves one to conjecture why this report should be included in a separate file marked Kim Philby.⁷⁰

The fact that the writer included names "in case they show up on any visa applications" seems to cinch the conclusion that the Poland document was for government use.

Greene gave further details of this trip to Marie-Françoise Allain in 1979. He told her that the confrontation between the Catholics and the communists was "serious," and that the Communists were considering "seeking a way to infiltrate the Church and set up a "Polish National Catholic Church." This must have been anathema to Greene, believing Catholics would be unable to voice their criticism. The dilemma reappears today as the current Pope has decided to allow Communist China to appoint its Bishops.

The second half of the fifties brought changes to the gentleman spy.

Alexander Korda died in January 1956, and Greene would contribute intelligence directly to Maurice Oldfield. (He would also share the information with his sister Elizabeth and brother-in-law Rodney Dennys, who retired from the service in 1958.) He hired a new secretary in 1959 who had a Foreign Office background and the necessary commitment to confidentiality.⁷¹ His relationship with Catherine had cooled, more to her chagrin than his. And most

importantly, at the close of the decade he met Yvonne Cloetta, the woman to whom he would commit the rest of his life.

Cuba, 1957-1958

Greene had visited Batista's Cuba several times in the early fifties enjoying the exotic bar and casino life for which it was famous. "I enjoyed the louche atmosphere of Batista's city and I never stayed long enough to be aware of the sad political background of arbitrary imprisonment and torture," he wrote.⁷² Greene's dislike of Batista's dictatorship was sharpened by his role as an American prop. On the other hand, Greene was not a particularly great fan of Fidel Castro and his rebellion, even before Castro turned to communism.⁷³

Greene began to write his spy comedy *Our Man in Havana* during a three-week trip to Cuba in November 1957. By this time the United States had soured on Batista and discontinued arming him. Seeing an opportunity for profit, and erroneously believing Batista's government to be stronger than it was, the British secretly allowed fighter planes to be sold to Batista.

Carrying a suitcase full of warm clothes for the rebels and hoping for an interview, Greene flew to Santiago with someone who might put him in contact with Castro, who was ensconced in the nearby mountains.⁷⁴ He told his companion that he was travelling to Santiago because he planned to write a book set in that city, but this seems to have been a cover for intelligence gathering. Norman Sherry reports that MI6 knew about this visit, as well as his

⁷⁰ Jon Wise and Mike Hill, *The Works of Graham Greene*, vol. 2 (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 178-79.

⁷¹ R. Greene, 325.

⁷² Graham Greene, *Ways of Escape* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1982), 214.

⁷³ Greene did not strike up a friendship with Castro until 1966. See R. Greene, 373.

⁷⁴ R. Greene, 293.

trip to Cuba the following year to film the novel, and that he had met with a representative of the Foreign Office prior to his departure.⁷⁵ Sidestepping Batista's spies and henchmen, Greene managed to meet with friends of the rebels, but he was unable to meet with the fighters themselves since it was too dangerous for them to leave their strongholds. They informed Greene that the government was secretly buying fighter planes from Britain and asked Greene to help the rebels' cause by doing what he could to dissuade Britain from allowing these sales.⁷⁶

On his return to England, Greene discussed the secret private arm sales with his friend Hugh Delargy, a Labor MP. Delargy pursued the matter in the House of Commons in March 1958 but was stonewalled. When Greene returned to Cuba in October 1958 to shoot *Our Man in Havana*, he probably acquired more information about the sales because two months later Delargy was able to batter the British government with details of a planned shipment of a hundred tons of rockets, calling it "a dirty deal done behind the backs of the British people and of Parliament." The government stopped the sales, and Batista fled to the Dominican Republic less than a month later.⁷⁷ Was Greene operating independently of the Foreign Office in gathering this information for Delargy? The FO does not always have the same opinion as the ruling party. Richard Greene cites historian Christopher Hull "that Greene and Delargy may have contributed modestly to Batista's downfall by adding, at the last moment, to his international

isolation—a straw for the camel's back."⁷⁸

It should be noted that in the early days of Castro's regime (when Castro still had diplomatic relations with the United States and before his attraction to the Soviets) Greene's celebrated prescience could not have been less perceptible when he suggested in a letter to *The Times* of 19 October 1959 that the British government should sell jet fighters to Castro. "Surely your Washington Correspondent's suggestion that Castro might employ his jet fighters against Miami, that is to say, the United States, shows a certain sense of unreality," he wrote.⁷⁹

After the failed Bay of Pigs "invasion" of Cuba by the United States in 1961, Soviet Premier Khrushchev began to install surface-to-air missile sites on the island, which initiated what came to be called the Cuban Missile Crisis. CBS News journalist Roger Mudd, among others, reported on President Kennedy's speech announcing an American naval quarantine of Cuba to prevent the landing of a Russian flotilla headed to Cuba with missiles. Mudd then described an announcement by a Defense Department spokesperson who held up a series of "enlarged aerial photographs, proof," he said, "of the presence in Cuba of operational medium range missiles. If one of the missiles is launched it would probably carry a nuclear warhead. It could hit any spot in the Southeast United States south of Washington and that we would have no way of intercepting it or issuing a warning about it. When the spokesman was asked what was being done to prepare the people, his words

⁷⁵ Norman Sherry, *The Life of Graham Greene*, vol. III (New York: Penguin, 2005), 135.

⁷⁶ R. Greene, 295.

⁷⁷ R. Greene, 297-99.

⁷⁸ R. Greene, 298 citing Hull 156-58.

⁷⁹ G. Greene, *Yours, Etc.* (1989) 95.

“civil defense” were interrupted by a roar of laughter.”⁸⁰

Greene would have appreciated the journalists’ sense of humor. But the situation at the time was gravely frightening: the crisis was the first generally regarded as having the potential to start a nuclear war between the Soviet Union and the United States.

The Cold War in The Middle East

In 1951 highly secret information decrypted from certain KGB messages by a super-secret American intelligence operation dubbed “Venona” indisputably fingered Donald Maclean, a Foreign Office friend of Kim Philby, as a spy. Within days, Maclean and another Foreign Office friend of Philby, Guy Burgess, suddenly disappeared. They could only have been tipped off from someone very highly placed with respect to American intelligence. Soon the press and the government were searching for a person aptly dubbed “The Third Man” in reference to a plot twist from Greene’s hugely successful 1949 movie. Suspicion immediately fell on Philby, who was at the time MI6 chief in Washington. Philby was in the news for quite some time, bantering with the press after an accusation from an MP, but there was a dearth of direct evidence. Harold Macmillan, then Foreign Secretary, when pushed to give a public statement said: “I have no reason to conclude that Mr. Philby has at any time betrayed the interests of this country, or to identify him with the so-called ‘third man’ if, indeed, there was one.” However the Americans, like MI5, believed in his

guilt, and Philby was sacked in order to protect Britain’s “special relationship” with U.S. intelligence.⁸¹

Yet Philby still enjoyed a loyal following among his high-level close associates at MI6 who continued to believe in his innocence, including his close friend Nicholas Elliott. In 1962 Elliott arranged for Philby to work in Beirut as a stringer for the *Observer* and the *Economist* and, incredibly, to be put on the MI6 payroll. Philby, once again, dutifully began sharing information he skillfully obtained from British intelligence with the KGB until an influential woman named Flora Solomon stepped forward to give MI5 direct evidence of Philby’s KGB ties. She reported that many years earlier he had attempted to recruit her as a spy. At long last, the jig was up. Elliott volunteered to interrogate him and flew to Beirut on 10 January 1963. Philby confessed to spying, but he skipped out on the opportunity to make a full confession in return for immunity from prosecution by escaping, or being allowed to make his escape, to Russia during a pause in the interrogation.⁸²

A few years later, on 4 September 1967, Graham Greene published an open letter in *The Times* in which he objected to the conviction and sentencing of two Russian writers, Andrei Sinyavsky and Yuli Daniel. As their sentences had been handed down nineteen months earlier, the story was hardly news at the time of Greene’s letter. Greene went on to complain that Russia continued to refuse his request to donate his Russian royalties to the families of the writers,

⁸⁰ Ken Foote and Douglas Edwards, “The Foote Files: Media and The Cuban Missile Crisis” (*CBS News*, 22 October 1962).

⁸¹ Macintyre gives a full description of the events leading up to Philby’s exposure. See Ben Macintyre, *A Spy among Friends: Kim Philby*

and the Great Betrayal (New York: Crown Publishing Group, 2014).

⁸² Macintyre details the interrogation and “fade” of Philby, 252-78.

and he pledged not to visit the country until they did. This was also not a recent matter. The strangest thing about the letter was its conclusion, for which Greene was widely criticized. With unusual hyperbole he made the following unrelated observation: “If I had to choose between life in the Soviet Union and life in the United States of America, I would certainly choose the Soviet Union, just as I would choose life in Cuba to life in those southern American republics like Bolivia, dominated by their northern neighbor, or life in North Viet Nam to life in South Viet Nam. But the greater the affection one feels for any country the more one is driven to protest against any failure of justice there.”⁸³ Greene’s statement can hardly be said to be consistent with his previously expressed sentiments. The comments certainly seemed foreign to Greene when he was asked to explain them by Marie Allain, more a friend than journalist, in a 1980 interview. Greene retorted: “That’s not what I said. Besides, it was an ironic remark.”⁸⁴ His distancing himself from these opinions suggests that he had been asked to write *The Times* piece rather than having done so spontaneously.

Given the timing of this letter, as discussed below, I believe it was meant to be an opener to Russian officials. The

next thing to happen was that Greene received a letter from Moscow written by none other than Kim Philby, with whom he probably had not been in touch since the war. Unlike Elliot and numerous others, Greene had not been a close friend of Philby’s. Philby praised Greene’s comments and expressed the hope that conditions might change and allow Greene to visit with him “when we could talk like in old times.”⁸⁵ Philby’s letter, which could not have been sent independent of the KGB which was, in fact, his employer, appears to have been the KGB’s response to Greene’s opener. Why had the KGB taken this opportunity “to pass notes to MI6,” in a phrase used by Richard Greene?⁸⁶

Greene’s letter was published on the eve of a journey he had planned to Israel just three months after the 1967 “Six Day War”—six days that completely shifted the balance of power in the Middle East. I believe a British gesture to Russia through Greene was part of a plan to strengthen Britain’s diplomatic position in the Middle East when Russia’s credibility in the region was at an all-time low due to its role in the Arab losses of the 1967 war. As Philby put it in his 1968 memoir, with understatement, the Soviet Union was “interested in a very wide range of Middle Eastern phenomena. Enjoying a

⁸³ Sherry, vol. II, 461. “September 4, 1967, “Sir— This letter should more properly be addressed to Pravda or Izvestia but their failure to publish protests by Soviet citizens at the time of the Daniel-Sinyavsky trial makes it doubtful that mine would ever appear. Like many other English writers, I have royalties awaiting me in the Soviet Union, where most of my books have been published. I have written to the secretary of the Union of Writers in Moscow that all sums due to me on these books should be paid over to Mrs. Sinyavsky and Mrs. Daniel to help in a small way their support during the imprisonment of their husbands.

“If I had to choose between life in the Soviet Union and life in the United States of America, I would certainly choose the Soviet Union, just as I would choose life in Cuba to life in those southern American republics like Bolivia, dominated by their northern neighbor, or life in North Viet Nam to life in South Viet Nam. But the greater the affection one feels for any country the more one is driven to protest against any failure of justice there.”

⁸⁴ Allain, 91.

⁸⁵ Sherry, vol. III, 744.

⁸⁶ R. Greene, 489.

wide margin of priority at the top of the list are the intentions of the United States and British governments in the area."⁸⁷ The British knew that they had something to offer the Russians in the Middle East that was very valuable at this time: diplomatic access and credibility.

As a result of the Six Day War, the British were far better placed for diplomacy than the Soviets. While the Arab League had imposed an oil embargo against Britain immediately after the Six Day War, this was reversed within a couple of months because Britain was buying oil from other countries.⁸⁸ Meanwhile, Russia's political standing in the Arab world was now grave. The Soviet Union had lured her two client states Egypt and Syria into a war against Israel that turned into a military debacle, as shown by the investigative work of Isabella Ginor and Gideon Remez in *Foxbats Over Dimona* ("Foxbats" were Soviet MiG-25 supersonic interceptor and reconnaissance aircraft.)

Soviet influence over Egypt had grown steadily since 1955 when Egypt's President Nasser turned to Russia for huge purchases of arms because the West had placed an arms embargo on the region. The Soviets also sold Czech arms to Israel. According to the authors, the Soviets' attitude toward Israel dramatically changed for the worse in December 1965, when Israel leaked information that it now had military nuclear capability, developed at its reactor in Dimona. The Israelis did not

anticipate that this information would spur the Soviet Union to do everything in its power to undermine Israel's nuclear capability, including military aggression against Israel. With recently declassified Russian and American documents and interviews with Russian high-level officials and naval personnel, Ginor and Remez show that the Soviet Union had armed Egypt and Syria and pushed them toward hostilities with Israel in order to destroy Israel's nuclear reactor at Dimona. The result was the Six Day War.

The Soviets began this process by falsely advising Egypt that Israel was planning to attack Syria. In response, Egypt moved its forces toward the Israeli border, alarming the Israelis. The Soviets also began to amass a fleet of naval vessels in the Mediterranean powerful enough to conduct a major invasion of Israel. It included ten submarines (at least one carrying nuclear arms) and forty-three warships with a lesser force, including nuclear, in the Red Sea. By 1 June 1967, all these forces were put on "battle alert" to wait for Israel to make a preemptive strike, while the United States withdrew its Sixth Fleet from the Mediterranean. Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Russian Communist Party, boasted to his Polish and East German counterparts that this military build-up would soon result in a "decisive blow" to American interests in the Middle East.⁸⁹

When Egypt shut down shipping to the Israel's Red Sea port by closing the straits of Tammuz, the Israelis attacked.

⁸⁷ Philby, 152. Greene wrote the introduction to the book. During lunch with Greene in the South of France, Elliott spoke "pretty sharply" to Greene over his preface to *My Silent War*. See Lewis, 454.

⁸⁸ With the September 1 "Khartoum Resolution," the Arab League agreed to continued

belligerence against Israel but lifted the ban. Still, the Suez Canal, through which Britain had done much shipping, was now an impassable watery junkyard, a limited hardship on Britain.

⁸⁹ Isabella Ginor and Gideon Remez, *Foxbats Over Dimona*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 79.

By the end of the first day, Israeli fighter planes had destroyed the Soviet-built Egyptian air force on the ground in the Sinai and routed the Egyptian troops. Alarmed, the Soviets suspended their plan for a naval landing on Israeli shores, to the disillusionment the Egyptians. Nasser demanded a ceasefire to abate further losses unless the Egyptians received immediate Soviet military assistance. Premier Kosygin then used the Washington-Moscow hotline for the first time since the Cuban crisis of 1962 to warn President Johnson's administration that the Soviet Union would invade Israel if the Israelis did not agree to an immediate ceasefire. President Johnson discounted the threat, and the Israelis continued their advance for another few days until they reached the Suez Canal. The Egyptians regrouped on the other side of the canal, supported by Soviet naval units at the Canal's northern entrance.

During the war, Israel was attacked by Syrian aircraft artillery. Once the Egyptians were no longer a threat, Israel destroyed the bulk of Russian-made Syrian aircraft at their air bases, and successfully began a ground incursion to capture the Golan heights, from which Syria had regularly shelled Israeli villages below. During that battle, "all the Soviet warships in Mediterranean including missile launching ships were ordered toward the Syrian coast, escorted by several submarines."⁹⁰ These were not deployed. By the time of the ceasefire, Israel controlled the Sinai up to the Suez Canal—land that had

previously been held by Jordan west of the Jordan River, eastern Jerusalem, and parts of the Syrian Golan Heights—and the Soviets had a lot of explaining to do to Syria and Egypt.

Ginor and Remez write that the Soviet role in the events of the Six Day War received little notice because the Soviets effectively kept their role in this huge military defeat under wraps. Nevertheless, the losses had severely damaged the Soviet Union's stature with its satellites.⁹¹ Even Castro was unnerved, and "Kosygin hastened to Havana to placate these anxieties."⁹² At the same time, having removed the Soviet ambassador from Israel, the USSR had handicapped their own ability to serve their Arab clients diplomatically. With the sudden shake-up in Middle East, Russia was now in need of a diplomatic foothold. Kim Philby's friend Graham Greene had done much for Castro in helping to reverse the sale of weaponry to Batista. For the British, Greene had proved himself a reliable "go-between" in Viet Nam, as discussed above.

Within days, Premier Kosygin was shaking hands with President Johnson in Glassboro, New Jersey in a new phase of diplomacy.⁹³ What role did the British hope to play in the Middle East? I suggest that Greene's journey to Israel was meant to acquaint him with the current conditions, and possibly to suggest to the Russians and the Israelis that he might be a useful player in any further diplomacy.

⁹⁰ Ginor and Remez 195.

⁹¹ Ginor and Remez 196.

⁹² Ginor and Remez 209

⁹³ President Johnson invited Kosygin to a summit to improve relations between the countries and to work on an agreement limiting missile systems. While an agreement was not

reached, the friendliness of the conference at Glassboro was noteworthy as a sign of improved relations and dubbed the "spirit of Glassboro." See James Robbins, *This Time We Win: Revisiting the Tet Offensive* (New York: Encounter Books, 2010).

Greene's Israeli contact for his journey was none other than the architect and hero of Israel's victory, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, who even confirmed Greene's hotel reservations by telegram, although it must be stated that Dayan was a great fan of Greene's novels. Greene was ostensibly traveling to Israel to cover the aftermath of the war for the *Weekend Telegraph*. On his arrival, Greene had dinner with the Dayan family who arranged his travels through the Sinai in the company of Dayan's daughter, the writer Yael Dayan, and her husband, Dov Sion. Not only was Sion a top agent in the *Mossad*, the Israeli Secret Intelligence Service; he was also well known to both British and French intelligence services. Sion had been stationed at the Israeli Embassy in London between 1959 and 1963 where he had been in steady touch with British intelligence. He was a Brigadier General in the Israel Defense Forces, after serving in the British Army in World War II and then in the War of Independence. At their wedding, which occurred immediately after the Six Day war, Sion's best man was the war hero and future Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, while Israel's founding father and first Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion, was also in attendance. Sharon and Ben Gurion were Sion's substitute family, as his entire family had been killed in Czechoslovakia under the Nazi regime a few months after he had immigrated to

Palestine in 1939 at the age of 18.⁹⁴ Certainly Greene's contacts in Israel was far superior to any the Soviets now had.

Sion took Greene behind military lines and from there another *Mossad* agent traveled with him as far as the Suez Canal. While at the Canal, they found themselves targets of Egyptian fire, and Greene's guide was wounded by shrapnel. They hid behind sand dunes for hours in the scorching sun until they could make their escape.

Back in England, Greene would have communicated his thoughts and impressions to Maurice Oldfield and his brother-in-law, Rodney Dennys, who was now retired.⁹⁵ While information confirming Greene's role in secret Anglo-Russian diplomacy has not yet come to light (and of course if Greene was doing his job, there would be no such evidence extant), there is an assembly of facts that suggest he was deployed. Foremost, he was in close and friendly contact with Israel's Defense Minister. Second, the Soviet Union was severely concerned with its loss of influence in the region, and with satellites outside the region, such as Cuba, as a result of a war it had taken steps to provoke. Third, Kim Philby, living in Moscow and working for the KGB, had suddenly been in contact with Greene, just weeks after the Soviet clients lost the war.⁹⁶

Visits to Latin America and life in Antibes

that from 17 September to 18 October 1967 Greene "seems to have been [on] a fact-finding mission at first, getting opinions of Israelis about current status, etc." while the journal notes at Boston College may have more detail. This writer has not seen the journal entries for those dates.

⁹⁴ Yael Dayan interview, "Haaretz Weekend" September 2012.

⁹⁵ However, in a personal conversation, Dennys's son Nicholas Dennys is doubtful that Greene was gathering intelligence in Israel because he is not aware of any information being shared with his father.

⁹⁶ Jon Wise states in a personal communication that the Georgetown University Archives show

Greene's political interests had often been mixed with his Catholicism. In Viet Nam, his interest was the Catholic priest who headed a "third force." In Kenya, he saw Catholicism as a factor that might restrain the terrorism of the rebels. In Cuba, Greene praised Castro for his tolerance toward the church. Where the church was regressive, as in Haiti, Greene ignored it. When Pope John XXIII, the son of a Lombardy sharecropper, was elected, the direction of the Church changed dramatically. He held his office only four and a half years before his death, but his views, if not his years, were expansive, and the 1963 encyclica "Pacem in Terris" addressed the Church's view of communist activities. In Latin America, for the first time, the Church allowed that communist rebels could be a welcomed development against repressive dictators. Thereafter, Greene traveled to Peru, observing the activities of priests who defied the dictator General Alfredo Stroessner. The resulting novel *The Honorary Consul* was published in 1973.

Journalist Bernard Dietrich, with whom Greene traveled in Haiti in the fifties, introduced Greene to leftist Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega and General Omar Torrijos of Panama who was attempting to nationalize the Panama Canal. Greene was an unrecognized member of the Panamanian delegation in Washington, DC at the signing of the treaty that returned the Canal to Panama in 1978, standing in the photo-shot with President Carter. Soon afterward he quietly negotiated the release of two kidnapped delegates of the Bank of

England captured by Salvadorian guerrillas, and later helped to mediate the release of a South African ambassador kidnapped by rebels, presumably with the consent of the Foreign Office. Except for Argentina and the Falklands, Latin American countries may not have been areas of particular interest to Britain, and Greene's interest in these regions may have been largely personal and an outgrowth of his interest in the capacity of the Catholic church to play a positive role in modern times.⁹⁷

Yvonne Cloetta was quite clear that Greene "to the very end ... worked for the British Services."⁹⁸ She explained that he maintained it was not politics that really interested him at all; it was the people he met, and the principles they lived and died for. Greene wrote that what triggered his stands was not an intellectual conviction, but emotion, particularly anger: "It was anger induced by what I saw in Vietnam, in Haiti, in Mexico, that made me write *The Quiet American*, *The Comedians*, and *The Lawless Roads*. It's the people I spoke to, the on-the-spot witnesses, not the abstract principles or reported facts, that prompted this need to write which then became a necessity."⁹⁹

At Antibes, Greene and Cloetta enjoyed his many friendships from the publishing world (he was a partner in The Bodley Head with Max Reinhardt). They saw Charlie and Oona Chaplin in Switzerland, and Greene personally shepherded Chaplin's autobiography to publication. And until the end of his days, he continued to enjoy the company of spies. Yvonne described this particular clique as a "fraternity." She

⁹⁷ See, for example, Victor Bulmer-Thomas, *Britain and Latin America: A Changing Relationship*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989).

⁹⁸ Cloetta, 144.

⁹⁹ Cloetta, 100.

added: "All in all, Graham lived and breathed that atmosphere. It was a world he frequented. The greater majority of them were former SIS people, in France or England, starting with his sister."¹⁰⁰

Cloetta named some members of the "fraternity": former British consul Paul Paulson, a former Yugoslav agent named Popov, Ronnie Challoner, and Sir John Cairncross.¹⁰¹ Greene had met Cairncross in June 1943, soon after he came to work for Section V. Cairncross had worked at Bletchley Park. He was revealed to be a Soviet spy, one of the Cambridge Five, who had provided the Russians with top secret information deciphered from the German Enigma cipher, contributing to the Russian victory at the Battle of Kursk. After the war he was privy to highly classified nuclear secrets which he gave the Russians. In 1964 he confessed his treason to MI5 but was not publicly identified as the "fifth man" in the Cambridge spy ring until 1979.¹⁰² Cairncross had not associated with the Cambridge spies, although he did share the same handler, Yuri Modin, whose book about them gives a lengthy account of Cairncross's great significance to Russia.¹⁰³

Also at Antibes, Greene continued to see Moshe Dayan, Dov Sion, and Yael Dayan.¹⁰⁴ Sion was assigned to the Israeli Embassy in London and Yael, a novelist, worked for the BBC when Hugh Greene was its director. Hugh's wife at the time, Elaine, became Yael's literary agent.¹⁰⁵ Sion was instrumental in the

negotiations between Israel and Egypt that resulted in the return of the Sinai to Egypt in the 1979 Camp David Accords.

Greene steadfastly refused to visit Russia as long as dissidents were persecuted. When reforms were made under Mikhail Gorbachev's premiership, Greene and Cloetta arrived in Moscow in September 1986 with plans to see Kim Philby. The meeting was arranged by an official of the Russian Writers' Union, presumably an agent of the KGB. In Richard Greene's opinion, Russia was "aggressively courting Graham Greene, and using Philby, whose value was otherwise exhausted, as bait."¹⁰⁶ Greene visited with Philby, seeing him for the first time since the forties, at his bugged apartment, and the following evening at a Writers' Union event. Back home, Greene immediately planned a second visit that occurred in February 1987. He went alone. In addition to his seeing Philby, he participated in a Forum for a Nuclear-Free World, which was basically a huge public relations event for Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika* with the West. Western writers, statesmen, and intellectuals by the hundreds were invited to present their thoughts. Norman Mailer, Gore Vidal, Yoko Ono, Gregory Peck, John Kenneth Galbraith, Peter Ustinov, Armand Hammer, and Daniel Ellsberg were among the many notables in attendance.¹⁰⁷

At the conference, Greene was asked to give an impromptu speech to the huge crowd. *The Times* reported that Greene addressed Gorbachev and spoke about

¹⁰⁰ Cloetta, 142-43.

¹⁰¹ Cloetta, 141-42.

¹⁰² R. Greene, 152.

¹⁰³ Lewis, 458-59.

¹⁰⁴ Cloetta, 164.

¹⁰⁵ Interview by this writer with Yael Dayan.

¹⁰⁶ R. Greene, 488.

¹⁰⁷ Gary Lee, "Moscow's Puzzling Forum for Peace," *The Washington Post* (14 February 1987),

http://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/lifestyle/1987/02/14/moscows-puzzling-forum-for-peace/3ae376d6-f43d-4598-a167-4fa1879f269c/?tid=ss_mail

the Church and communists working together against dictatorships and cruelty in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Chile.

Cloetta relates that Greene met with Gorbachev at the Kremlin during this visit. Greene told her that the premier made an enigmatic comment to him. “I have known you for some years, Mr. Greene,” he said. Cloetta wrote: “I am inclined to believe that Gorbachev was referring not to Greene’s books, but to his dossier.”¹⁰⁸

While staying at the Metropol Hotel in Moscow in 2015, I snapped a picture of a photo that hung in a hallway. It was of the elderly Graham Greene chatting with actor Peter Ustinov at the 1987

Nuclear conference.¹⁰⁹ Ustinov had acted in the film version of Greene’s novel *The Comedians*, but he also had another association with Greene. During the war, Ustinov’s father “Klop” Ustinov worked for MI6 in Portugal. Klop Ustinov assisted Greene’s unit by getting to know the Nazi intelligence (*Abwehr*) agents and deciding which *Abwehr* agents might be “turned” to work for the allies as double agents. It was Klop who had interrogated Paul Fidrmuc, a con artist who had scammed MI6 by inventing agents, thereby inspiring James Wormold’s deception in *Our Man in Havana*.¹¹⁰ Klop could never have foreseen that his son would act in a movie that mined his war experiences.



Graham Greene (on right) with Peter Ustinov in 1987

¹⁰⁸ Cloetta, 143.

¹⁰⁹ The photo has since been replaced with one of more recent celebrities.

¹¹⁰ Sherry, (1994), 176.

In the summer of 1987, Greene and Cloetta visited Russia again, seeing Philby and his wife at dinner in Moscow. Another visit was made in February 1988 when a documentary about Philby was aired on Russian television. Philby appeared on the program and spoke highly of Greene and his writing for ten minutes, especially *The Quiet American*. "I wouldn't say that our views coincided, but he belonged to those few, who at least sympathized with me," he said. At a dinner in Philby's honor, Greene showed his skepticism of the new Russian freedoms when he asked a wealthy entrepreneur how he was able to obtain "independence from state control when no one else can?" The obvious answer was that he was very well connected. Philby died of a heart attack three months later.

Seeing an uncertain future, Greene declined an invitation to a Soviet celebration of his 85th birthday in October 1989, but he visited in October 1988 and received an honorary doctorate from the University of Moscow.¹¹¹ It is ironic how Russia pursued Greene, while Philby, a fervent communist who had risked his life to betray his country for Russia, was regarded as a "has been." Philby's life in Russia was not easy. He missed England and became an alcoholic. He may never have received the recognition that came to him late in life except for his claim to fame in knowing Graham Greene. While many questioned the propriety of Greene's visits with the traitorous Philby, the reason was probably simple and very characteristic of Greene: charity.

¹¹¹ R. Greene, 493-96.

¹¹² For example, a call for censorship of *Lolita* inspired him to create the John Gordon Society which hosted a riotously funny debate. See

Greene's Fiction and Cold War Espionage

Greene wrote three novels and a screenplay that depicted the world of Cold War espionage—a true Greenland if ever there was one—where betrayal and deceit were commonplace. In *The Quiet American* (1955) Pyle's spying emerges quietly as Fowler comes to understand that the young, patriotic American who is among those secretly planning America's own way in Viet Nam. But rather than deceitful, Pyle is depicted as deadly sincere in his allegiance to an American ideology, just as Philby was to his.

Perhaps because its physical setting was anything but grim—bright sunlight, candy-colored cars and buildings—*Our Man in Havana* (1958) became the world's first Cold War black comedy. But Greene saw the comedy in most situations, the more ludicrous the better.¹¹² The invention of agents by Wormold was, of course, taken from actual events in Portugal during the war. When Wormold confesses, C (for Chief of MI6) attempts to avoid embarrassment to the firm by promoting Wormold to a teaching post and recommending him for an OBE, lampooning the way the firm sometimes preferred to handle these matters. Greene's comedy seems never to age. The scene in which the Russians attempt to poison Wormold at a dinner resonates today with their attempted murders of Sergei Skripal and Alexei Navalny.

After *Our Man in Havana*, black comedy became the most pronounced cultural treatment of the nuclear threat of the Cold War, a genre that culminated

Sherry, (2005), 37-44. The sheer oddity of the pairing had him start the Anglo-Texan Society with a barbecue honoring Texan independence for 1,500 people. See R. Greene, 273.

in Stanley Kubrick's 1964 movie *Dr. Strangelove, or How I Stopped Worrying and Loved the Bomb* (which was based on suspense novel, not a comedic one).¹¹³ Peter Sellers's portrayal of the bizarre Dr. Strangelove may have been inspired by Greene's depiction of the equally strange C in *Our Man in Havana*, who wears a heavy black monocle, covering an eye "made of glass; pale blue and unconvincing, it might have come out of a doll which said 'Mama.'" Strangelove wears dark spectacles and has a false arm, an unruly device that insists on exploding into a "Heil Hitler" salute.¹¹⁴ Another possible offshoot of Greene's Cuban comedy may have been "Spy vs Spy," *Mad Magazine's* brilliant cartoon, which was the brainchild of Cuban political cartoonist Antonio Prohias who had "soured" on Castro's Cuba with its nationalization of a formerly free press.¹¹⁵ After Prohias was accused by Castro's government of working for the CIA (was he interrogated by the real life Ventura, the model for Captain Segura?), he fled to New York in 1960.¹¹⁶ Even though Greene has the reader chuckling from page one onward, the world of MI6, ultimately, is not comic. Wormold's ingenuous antics are taken seriously by the real spies who cause the deaths of his best friend and an innocent pilot.

Greene's interest in the Cold War spy novel continued with *The Human Factor* (1978) and its depiction of the

angst and terror of Cold War politics. It put the business of MI6 front and center and knowledgeably depicts how the discovery of the Cambridge Five changed the service, as MI6's internal security employs some brave new ideas from the world of technocrats like Dr. Percival. In his hands they become an instrument of death of the innocent Davis. We see how crass, cruel, and inhuman some of the "friends" can be, especially as contrasted with Castle's sincere idealism and love of family. The novel also drew a cameo portrait of Stewart Menzies, whose tenure as chief was badly tarnished by the double spying of his trusted Kim Philby. He is portrayed as a kindly, distracted old-timer who hunts at his country house in Luckington. It also presents a fair, if somewhat grim, picture of how the KGB handled and resettled the British defectors. Nevertheless, Greene's theme is not only the corruption of those involved in spying, but the tragedy of those, such as Castle, who did so for humanistic reasons. In this respect Castle in no way resembles Philby, who in cold blood identified British agents to the Soviets for execution and worked to prolong World War II.

A writer is a kind of spy, as Greene himself stated to Michael Korda: "The great advantage of being a writer is that you can spy on people," Greene told me as I took another tiny sip of my martini. "You're there, listening to every word, but part of you is observing. Everything

¹¹³ That movie was based on the 1958 book *Red Alert* by Peter George. Kubrick originally intended the movie to be serious, as was the book, until the huge absurdities of nuclear policies at the time urged him toward comedy.

¹¹⁴ Graham Greene, *Our Man in Havana* (New York: Penguin, 1958), 44

¹¹⁵ The year 1959 also saw the start of the satirical *Rocky and Bullwinkle* television

cartoon series, with Boris Badenov and Natasha Fatale who, working for "Fearless Leader," try to undermine the good deeds of Rocky and Bullwinkle. Since the series went into production in February 1958, it seems to have arisen almost simultaneously with Greene's novel.

¹¹⁶ See Wikipedia article on Antonio Prohias.

is useful to a writer, you see—every scrap, even the longest and most boring of luncheon parties.”¹¹⁷ Greene’s spies are partly composites of people he has scrutinized. What he often adds to make his novels quintessentially Greenean is something that is irrelevant, even counterproductive to the spy—charity: the sorrow for the innocent pilot mistakenly killed, or for Castle, exiled from his beloved wife and child. That is why, as good as he was, espionage could never have been a full-time career for Greene.

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¹¹⁷ See Korda.