

ESPIONAGE

On Display

After years of silence and secrecy as the most important British spy the Russians have ever owned, Harold Philby has begun compensating by becoming something of a celebrity. Exposed only after he fled to Moscow in 1963, "Kim" Philby has since become the protagonist of a half-admiring, half-shocked avalanche of serialized articles in every major London newspaper. In the past three months, the British press has literally feasted on his exploits, as revealed to "Our Own Correspondent" by his 24-year-old son (in London), his third wife (in Tunisia), and former colleagues (sometimes identified only as "X") on practically every continent except Antarctica. Last week Philby went on display in Moscow, almost in the manner of the czar's crown jewels.

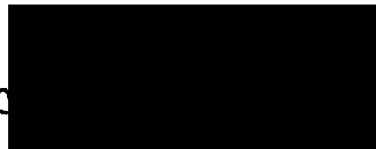
Chain-smoking Russian Pamir filter cigarettes, he threw a candlelight dinner for correspondents of the Daily Express, at which he blithely denounced such Western institutions as "the expense-account lunch and the English Channel." He poured vodka, wine and brandy at the Minsk Hotel and "a number of restaurants" for a visiting science correspondent from London's Sunday Times. And, most satisfying of all, Moscow's own Izvestia ran a front-page interview with him appropriately titled: "Hello, Comrade Philby."

Easy Time. Between the caviar and cognac, Philby managed to sandwich in a few new fascinating revelations about his past activities. He had worked, he claimed, with such unheralded British spies as Novelist Graham Greene ("he worked in intelligence") and the late Ian Fleming ("he was aide to the direc-

tor of naval intelligence"). Furthermore, Fleming's James Bond "had an easy time of it: Bond's only worries were gay holidays and amorous intrigues." As for himself, Philby modestly admitted that, as chief of British intelligence operations in Washington in 1951, he had personally thwarted a CIA plot to overthrow the Communist government of Albania. How? Simply by letting Moscow in on a CIA airlift of "several hundred saboteurs" who were parachuted into the country. They were, he said, "greeted in a proper way."

In his new role as Hero of the Revolution, Philby also revealed that he has written an 80,000-word manuscript "illuminating my position as a spy." So far, no London newspaper has dared buy his work: The Sunday Times, which was interested, was dissuaded by a threat of prosecution under the British government's Official Secrets Act. In view of the lack of buyers, Philby proposed to hand over his masterwork for free if the British would agree to release Peter and Helen Kroger, two convicted Soviet spies now serving 20-year terms in Wainwright, Scrub. His proposal went unappreciated. The British turned him down.

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