

Two Canadian envoys named as having been spies for Soviets

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LONDON — Two one-time Canadian envoys, now dead, are named in British reporter Chapman Pincher's new book as having worked for Soviet intelligence.

One was Herbert Norman, former ambassador to Egypt, and the other was John Watkins, former ambassador in Moscow.

The names are given in *Their Trade is Treachery*, which has caused a stir in several countries this week with its allegations of Soviet penetration of British intelligence up to the 1960s.

Solicitor-General Robert Kaplan said yesterday that the allegations were known to Canadian authorities some time ago and were investigated by the security service of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

He refused to be pinned down on what was done about the allegations. Asked whether he expects more spy revelations, he said there is a "continuing investigation" of national security.

The Solicitor-General, who is responsible for the RCMP, said it is in the interest of "adverse elements" to attack the reputation of highly placed Canadians. But he did not impute sinister motives to Mr. Pincher, suggesting he is mainly interested in selling his book.

The author says Mr. Norman was identified by former Soviet agent Anthony Blunt as having been "one of us."

After attending Cambridge University, where he was recruited by the KGB, Mr. Norman "joined the Canadian diplomatic service and, while he was ambassador in Cairo, he was recalled to Ottawa to discuss his Communist past," which had come to light following inquiries in the United States, Mr. Pincher says.

"Just prior to his departure, a CIA man in Cairo was imprudent enough to try to encourage Norman to talk to him about his links with the Russians.

"Later the CIA man quoted the Canadian as having said to him, 'I can't go back to Ottawa because if I did, I would have to betray more than a hundred people.'

"That night he jumped from the roof of an apartment block where he had a flat."



John Watkins



Herbert Norman

Mr. Norman was the target of espionage allegations from a U.S. Senate subcommittee, apparently from information the RCMP gave to the Federal Bureau of Investigation but later retracted. He died on April 4, 1957.

Mr. Pincher describes John Watkins as "a close friend of the then prime minister of Canada, Lester Pearson."

Mr. Watkins was "so well known for his homosexuality that Khrushchev was able to mock him about it at a rather drunken dinner party given for visiting Canadian dignitaries in the Crimea," the book says.

"The Royal Canadian Mounted Police were told by two defectors that the KGB had successfully blackmailed Watkins, but

they felt unable to move against him until the more direct evidence from a third might become available.

"This happened in 1963 when a Russian film-script writer, Yuri Krotkov, defected in London while on a visit with a group of Soviet writers.

"Under interrogation he confessed that he had been involved in setting up blackmail operations for the KGB, involving both homosexuals and prostitutes.

"He told how Watkins had been seduced by another man in a room which had been fitted with hidden cameras.

"The KGB had then shown the incriminating photographs to the ambassador, who was due to return to Canada to a high-level post in Ottawa, where he could influence foreign policy."

Mr. Pincher says Mr. Watkins was on a European mission when MI5, British intelligence, informed Canada of the allegations and he was taken to London for questioning.

The interrogation showed he had been seen by a Soviet controller, who had told him: "Use your influence to assist the Soviet Union whenever you can. Steer things our way. We shall be watching.

"Watkins was then taken to Ottawa for further questioning by a tough interrogator called Jim Bennett... but the attempt to extract a confession ended prematurely with the ex-ambassador's death from a heart attack."

Mr. Watkins' obituary said he had died at home in Montreal, aged 61.

Leslie James Bennett, formerly head of the RCMP's counter-intelligence branch in Ottawa, now lives in Australia.

He has been surrounded by controversy over his decision to leave Canada and because of a fictional thriller, *S: Portrait of a Spy*, about a former head of RCMP counter-intelligence who was a triple agent.

The publisher recently agreed to pay Mr. Bennett \$30,000 in an out-of-court settlement of a libel suit in which he claimed he was the model for the protagonist in the novel, written by Ian Adams. A note is to be inserted in the book stating that S is not Leslie James Bennett.



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