

me a good excuse of testing the FBI without delay. It concluded with instructions that he should inform Boyd of its contents. Paterson, doubtless thinking that his face would be pretty red by the end of the interview, asked me if I would accompany him on the grounds that two red faces might be better than one. The fact that my face was probably more grey than red did not alter the principle of the thing.

Boyd took the news with remarkable calm. A few flashes of mischief suggested that he might almost be pleased that the bloody British had made a mess of it. But I guessed that his calm masked a personal worry. Boyd had often met Burgess at my house, and had invited him back to his own. Against all the odds, they had got on well together. Both were aggressive, provocative characters; they exchanged insults with mutual appreciation. At their first meeting, Burgess had attacked the corruption and graft which, he alleged, made nonsense of the Indianapolis motor trials, and in doing so took several hefty sideswipes at the American way of life in general. Boyd positively liked it. He had probably never heard a prissy Englishman talk that way before. In the present crisis, he would not have been Boyd if he had not wondered how much "the boss," Hoover, knew about his own acquaintance with Burgess. I concluded that Boyd's personal interest would work in my favour. From him, we went to see Lamphere, whose manner was quite normal. We discussed the escape with him, and he ventured a few theories in his solid, earnest way which suggested that he was still far from the truth. I left the building much relieved. It was possible that both Boyd and Lam-

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O r d e a l

Burgess's departure with Maclean faced me with a fateful decision. From the earliest discussions of Maclean's escape, my Soviet colleagues had been mindful that something might go wrong and put me in danger. To meet such a possibility, we had elaborated an escape plan for myself, to be put into effect at my discretion in case of extreme emergency. It was clear that the departure of Burgess gave rise to an emergency. But was it extreme emergency? I had to put aside the decision for a few hours, in order to deal with two immediate problems. One was to get rid of certain compromising equipment hidden in my house. The other was to get the feeling of the FBI, since that might affect the details of my escape. Getting rid of the equipment was perhaps the most urgent task of the two, but I decided to let it wait. It would have looked very odd if I had left the Embassy immediately after hearing the news; and Paterson's telegram gave

phere were consummate actors who had fooled me. But it was no good jumping at shadows. I had to act as if the FBI were still in the dark.

It was possible that at any moment MI5 might ask the FBI to put me under surveillance. They could easily have done so without my knowledge by using the FBI representative in London as a direct link with Washington. But here again I felt that I had a few days' grace. It was most unlikely that MI5 would put a foreign security service on to me without the agreement of MI6,¹ and I thought that the latter would hesitate before compounding an implied slur on one of their senior officers. I should emphasise that this was pure guesswork on my part, and remains guesswork to this day. It is supported, however, by the fact that for several days I was left in peace.

When Paterson and I got back to the Embassy, it was already past noon, and I could plausibly tell him that I was going home for a stiff drink. In my garage-cum-potting-shed, I slipped a trowel into my briefcase, and then went down to the basement. I wrapped camera, tripod, and accessories into waterproof containers, and bundled them in after the trowel. I had often rehearsed the necessary action in the mind's eye, and had lain the basis for it. It had become my frequent habit to drive out to Great Falls to spend a peaceful half-hour between bouts of CIA-FBI liaison, and on the way I had marked down a spot suitable for

¹ Originally the section of British Military Intelligence concerned with positive espionage. It was later the popular name for SIS.—Eds.

the action that had now become necessary. I parked the car on a deserted stretch of road with the Potomac on the left and a wood on the right where the undergrowth was high and dense enough for concealment. I doubled back a couple of hundred yards through the bushes and got to work with the trowel. A few minutes later I re-emerged from the wood doing up my fly-buttons and drove back home, where I fiddled around in the garden with the trowel before going into lunch. As far as inanimate objects were concerned, I was clean as a whistle.

I was now in a position to give attention to the escape problem. As it had never been far from my mind in the previous weeks, I was able to make up my mind before the end of the day. My decision was to stay put. I was guided by the consideration that, unless my chances of survival were minimal, my clear duty was to fight it out. There was little doubt that I would have to lie low for a time, and that the time might be prolonged and would surely be trying. But, at the end of it there might well be opportunity of further service. The event was to prove me right.

The problem resolved itself into assessment of my chances of survival, and I judged them to be considerably better than even. It must be borne in mind that I enjoyed an enormous advantage over people like *uchs who had little or no knowledge of intelligence work. For my part, I had worked for eleven years in TM secret service. For seven of them I had been in ^{V' y * * * n i o} r position, and for eight I had worked in

hazdh ^{Collaboration} ^{MIS - For nearl} y two years I ^{h e} en intimately linked to the American services,

and had been in desultory relationship with them for another eight. I felt that I knew the enemy well enough to foresee in general terms the moves he was likely to make. I knew his files—his basic armament—and, above all, the limitations imposed on his procedures by law and convention. It was also evident that there must be many people in high position in London who would wish very much to see my innocence established. They would be inclined to give me the benefit of any doubt going, and it was my business to see that the room for doubt was spacious.

What evidence, to my knowledge, could be brought against me?

There were the early Left-wing associations in Cambridge. They were widely known, so there was no point in concealing them. But I had never joined the Communist Party in England, and it would surely be difficult to prove, eighteen years after the event, that I had worked illegally in Austria, especially in view of the sickening fact that most of my Vienna friends were undoubtedly dead. There was the nasty little sentence in Krivitsky's evidence that the Soviet secret service had sent a young English journalist to Spain during the Civil War. But there were no further identifying particulars, and many young men from Fleet Street had gone to Spain. There was the awkward fact that Burgess had got me into the secret service in the first place. I had already decided to circumvent that one by giving the name of a well-known lady who *might* have been responsible for my recruitment. If she admitted responsibility, all would be well. If she denied it, I could argue that I would scarcely have

med her if I had not really believed that she was responsible.

It would have been desperately difficult, of course, if the Security Service had been able to check the files I had drawn during my service at headquarters, since that would have proved that my interests had roamed far and wide beyond my legitimate duties. My only possible defence, that I was passionately interested in the service for its own sake, would have carried little conviction. But I knew that the tallies were periodically destroyed, and thought it very unlikely that they would have survived the holocaust of unwanted paper that took place after the war. There were also the number of cases which I had handled, such as the Volkov case, which had gone wrong for reasons which had never been established with certainty. But even one was susceptible to explanation without reference to myself; and therefore there were two important cases, those of May and Fuchs,² which, despite my best efforts, had gone right. The cases which went right would not clear me; but they would help me to throw the essential doubt on my responsibility for the others.

The really difficult problem was to explain away my relations with Burgess. I shared very few of his tastes, very few of his friends, and few of his intellectual interests. The essential bond between us was, of course, Political, and that was a point that had to be blurred

² Allan Nunn May and Klaus Fuchs, two atomic scientists. Fuchs' conviction of espionage activities, in which he was instrumental, through his confession, of uncovering the atomic bomb, was the only one of the cases in which he was involved. With Harry Gold, David Greenglass, and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg.—Eds.

to the best of my ability. To a certain extent, geography helped. While I was in Austria, he was at Cambridge; while I was in Spain, he was in London; much of the war period, he was in London, but I was in France, Hampshire and Hertfordshire; then I went to Turkey, and he only caught up with me in Washington after a year. I could therefore show that real intimacy never had a chance to grow; he was simply a stimulating but occasional companion. Even the fact that he had stayed with me in Washington could be turned to advantage. Would I be such a complete fool as to advertise my connection with him if we shared a deep secret?

Another difficulty was the actual course of my career. The more I considered it, the less I liked it. There were the known Left-wing associations at Cambridge, and suspected Communist activity in Vienna; then the complete break with my Communist friends in England, followed all too closely by cultivation of Nazis in London and Berlin; then the choice (of all places) of Franco Spain in which to carve out a journalistic career; then the entry in the secret service with Burgess's help and my emergence in the service as an expert on anti-Soviet and anti-Communist work; and finally my foreknowledge of the action to be taken against Maclean and the latter's escape. It was an ugly picture. I was faced with the inescapable conclusion that I could not hope to prove my innocence.

That conclusion did not depress me unduly. A strong presumption of my guilt might be good enough for an intelligence officer. But it was not enough for a lawyer. What he needed was evidence. The chain of

circumstantial evidence that might be brought against me was uncomfortably long. But, as I examined each single link of the chain, I thought I could break it; and if every link was broken singly, what remained of the chain?' Despite all appearances, I thought, my chances were good. My next task was to get out into the open and start scattering the seeds of doubt as far and wide as I possibly could.

The next few days gave me plenty of opportunity. In the office, Paterson and I talked of little else, and Mackenzie joined our deliberations from time to time. I do not think that Paterson had an inkling of the truth at the time, but I am less sure of Mackenzie. He was idle but far from stupid, and on occasion I thought I caught a shrewd glint in his eyes. My part in the discussions was to formulate a theory which covered the known facts, and hammer it home until it stuck. The opening was given me by the decision of MI5, which I have already described as foolish, to withhold certain papers from Maclean and to put his movements under surveillance. Taking that as a starting-point, I made a reconstruction of the case which was at least impossible to disprove. It ran thus.

The evidence of Krivitsky showed that Maclean had been working for at least sixteen years. He was therefore an experienced and competent operator. Such a man, ever on guard, would be quick to notice that certain categories of paper were being withheld from him and to draw disquieting conclusions. His next step would be to check whether he was being followed. As he was being followed, he would not take long to discover the fact. But, while these discoveries would alert

Maclean to his danger, they also put him in a quandary. The object of surveillance was to trap him in company with a Soviet contact; yet without a Soviet contact, his chances of escape would be greatly diminished. While he was still meditating this problem, the Act of God occurred. Burgess walked into his room—his old comrade. (I would produce no evidence that there had been an old association between Burgess and Maclean, but the fact that they had gone together made it a wholly reasonable assumption.) The arrival of Burgess, of course, would solve Maclean's problem, since Burgess, through *his* contact, could make all necessary arrangements. This was strongly supported by the fact that it was Burgess who looked after the details such as hiring the car. And why did Burgess go too? Well, it was clear to Paterson and Mackenzie that Burgess was washed up in the Foreign Office, and pretty near the end of his tether in general. Doubtless, his Soviet friends thought it would be best to remove him from a scene in which his presence might constitute a danger to others.

Such was my story and I stuck to it. It had the advantage of being based on known facts and almost unchallengeable assumptions. The only people who could disprove it were the two who had vanished and myself. I was also happy to see that the theory was wholly acceptable to the FBI. Boyd and Lamphere both liked it, and, in a short interview I had with Hoover at the time, he jumped at it. In his eyes, it had the superlative merit of pinning all the blame on Mia. I have no doubt that he made a great deal of political capital out of it, both on Capitol Hill and in subse-

quent dealings with MI5. Hoover may have got few winners on his account; but he was not the man to look a gift-horse in the mouth.

The position with regard to CIA was more indefinite. It was an FBI case, and I could not discuss its intricacies with CIA without running the risk of irritating Hoover and Boyd, both of whom I was anxious to soothe. So I confined my talks with CIA officials to the overt details of the case which became known through the press, somewhat late and more than somewhat inaccurate. I had no fear of the bumbling Dulles; years later, I was to be puzzled by President Kennedy's mistake in taking him seriously over the Bay of Pigs. But Bedell Smith was a different matter. He had a cold, fishy eye and a precision-tool brain. At my first meeting with him, I had taken a document of twenty-odd paragraphs on Anglo-American war plans for his scrutiny and comment. He had flipped over the pages casually and tossed it aside, then engaged me in close discussion of the subjects involved, referring from memory to the numbered paragraphs. I kept pace only because I had spent a whole morning learning the document by heart. Bedell Smith, I had an uneasy feeling, would be apt to think that two and two made four rather than five.

Just a few days dragged. I experienced some mild social embarrassment when the news broke with the carefree embellishments of the popular press.

One of the snootier of the Embassy wives gave me a glacial stare at one of the Ambassadors garden parties, and I arrived at the Embassy ominously silent. One telegram from London saying that "it was understood"

that I knew Burgess personally; could I throw any light on his behaviour? But the one I was expecting was a most immediate, personal, decypher-yourself telegram from the Chief, summoning me home. At last the summons came, but it took a most curious thought-provoking form. An intelligence official specialising in the fabrication of deception material flew into Washington on routine business. He paid me a courtesy call during which he handed me a letter from Jack Easton. The letter was in Easton's own handwriting, and informed me that I would shortly be receiving a telegram recalling me to London in connection with the Burgess-Maclean case. It was very important that I should obey the caU promptly. While the sense of the communication was clear enough, its form baffled me. Why should Easton warn me of the impending summons and why in his own handwriting if the order was to reach me through the normal telegraphic channels anyway? There is often a good reason for eccentric behaviour in the secret service, and there may have been one in this case. My reflection at the time was that, if I had not already rejected the idea of escape, Easton's letter would have given me the signal to get moving with all deliberate speed.

After a few days the telegram came. I booked passage for the following day and prepared to say goodbye to Washington for ever. I met Angleton for a pleasant hour in a bar. He did not seem to appreciate the gravity of my personal position, and asked me to take up certain matters of mutual concern when I got to London. I did not even take the trouble to memorise them. Then I called on Dulles who bade me farewell

and wished me the best of luck. Boyd was next on my list and we spent some of the evening together. He seemed to be genuinely preoccupied with my predicament and kindly offered some words of advice on how to keep out of trouble in London. Part of his concern may have been due to his sense of personal involvement in the Burgess affair; but I also detected some genuine feeling for which I was grateful. Ruthless as he was, Boyd was a human being.

I arrived in London about noon, and was immediately involved in a bizarre episode. I had boarded the airport bus and taken a seat immediately next to the door. When the bus was full, an agitated figure appeared on the running-board and frantically scrutinised the passengers. He looked over my left shoulder, over my right shoulder, tried to look over my head and then looked straight at me. Dismay settled on his face and he vanished. It was Bill Bremner, a fairly senior officer on the administrative side of SIS. I knew very well whom he was looking for. If I had been two yards away from him instead of two feet, he would certainly have spotted me. I had never been met officially before. What with Jack Easton's letter and the designation of an officer of Bremner's seniority to act as reception committee, I could not complain that I had not been warned. As the bus drove into London, the red lights were flickering brightly.

I went to my mother's flat and, after lunch, telephoned Easton. There was a perceptible gasp at the other end of the line. After a pause, Easton asked me what was going on, and I told him. Was I too tired to come to the office on Broadway straight away? Of course not. On

my way, I took relish in the thought of the panic that must have spread when Bremner reported my non-arrival. Easton looked a bit sheepish when I entered his office. He said that my telephone call had surprised him, because he had sent Bill Bremner to the airport, "to see if he could be of any help to me." It was pretty lame, and I felt that I had won the first trick. The trick was valueless, of course, but the mere winning of it did me good. The perhaps fanciful thought has since occurred to me that part of Bremner's mission to the airport was to see that MIS did not pull a fast one on SIS by arresting me on arrival. In view of later developments, this seems, on the whole, unlikely, so I put forward the idea for fun only.

Easton told me that Dick White was anxious to see us both as soon as possible, so we drove across the park to Leconfield House, off Curzon Street, where MI5 had set up their headquarters. This was to be the first of many interrogations, although an attempt was made, at this early stage, to conceal that ugly fact. Easton sat in while White asked the questions; the role of the former was presumably to see fair play. It may be imagined that there was some apprehension on my side, some embarrassment on theirs. I could not claim White as a close friend; but our personal and official relations had always been excellent, and he had undoubtedly been pleased when I superseded Cowgill. He was bad at dissembling, but did his best to put our talk on a friendly footing. He wanted my help, he said, in clearing up this appalling Burgess-Maclean affair. I gave him a lot of information about Burgess

t and impressions of his personality, taking the line that it was almost inconceivable that anyone like Burgess, who courted the limelight instead of avoiding it and was generally notorious for indiscretion, could have been a secret agent, let alone a Soviet agent from whom strictest security standards would be required. I did not expect this line to be in any way convincing as to the facts of the case; but I hoped it would give the impression that I was implicitly defending myself against the unspoken charge that I, a trained counter-espionage officer, had been completely fooled by Burgess. Of Maclean, I disclaimed all knowledge. I had heard of him, of course, and might even have met him here or there, but offhand I could not have put a face to him. As I had only met him twice, for about half an hour in all and both times on a conspiratorial basis, since 1937, I felt that I could safely indulge in this slight distortion of the truth.

I offered to put a summary of what I had said on paper. It was possible that our talk was bugged, and I wanted a written record to correct any bias that the microphone might have betrayed. When I went back for my second interrogation a few days later, White gave my note a cursory glance, then edged towards the real focus of his interest. We might clarify matters, he said, if I gave him an account of my relations with Burgess. To that end, a detailed statement on my own

part would be useful. As I have explained in the previous chapter, there were some awkward zig-zags that I could not explain, but I explained them away as best I could. Doing so, I gave White a piece of gratuitous information, a slip which I regretted bitterly at the

time. But it is virtually certain that they would have dug it out for themselves in time, and it is perhaps just as well that I drew attention to it myself at an early stage.

This information related to a trip which I had made to Franco Spain before *The Times* sent me as their accredited correspondent. It seemed that MI5 had no record of that trip and had assumed that *The Times* had sent me to Spain direct from a desk in Fleet Street. When I corrected White on this point, he did not take long to ask me if I had paid for the first journey out of my own resources. It was a nasty little question because the enterprise had been suggested to me and financed by the Soviet service, just as Krivitsky had said, and a glance at my bank balance for the period would have shown that I had no means for gallivanting around Spain. Embedded in this episode was also the dangerous little fact that Burgess had been used to replenish my funds. My explanation was that the Spanish journey had been an attempt to break into the world of high-grade journalism on which I had staked everything, selling all my effects (mostly books and gramophone records) to pay for the trip. It was reasonably plausible and quite impossible to disprove. Burgess's connection with my Spanish venture was never found out. I had an explanation ready, but I already had quite enough to explain.

When I offered to produce a second summary of our talks, White agreed, but asked me rather impatiently to harp less on Burgess and concentrate on my own record. All but the tip of the cat's tail was now out of the bag, and I was not surprised to receive

summons from the Chief. He told me that he had received a strong letter from Bedell Smith, the terms of which precluded any possibility of my returning to Washington. I learnt later that the letter had been drafted in great part by William J. Howard, whose wife Burgess had bitterly insulted during a convivial party at my house. I had apologised handsomely for his behaviour, and the apology had apparently been accepted. It was therefore difficult to understand Howard's retrospective exercise in spite. From Howard, of all people! After this, it was almost a formality when the Chief called me a second time and told me, with obvious distress, that he would have to ask for my resignation. He would be generous: £4,000 in lieu of pension. My unease was increased shortly afterwards when he told me that he had decided against paying me the whole sum at once. I would get £2,000 down and the rest in half-yearly instalments of £500. The ostensible reason for the deferred payments was the fear that I might dissipate all in wild speculation, but, as I had never speculated in my life, it looked a bit thin. A more likely reason was the desire to hedge against the possibility of my being sent to gaol within three years.

So there I was, with £2,000 in my hands and a great black cloud over my head. I spent the summer of 1951 on grouse-hunting and settled for a small place near J.J. Mansworth. It was already November when the Chief called me and asked me to see him at ten o'clock in the morning. I drove up to London and found him sitting in his study with the hedgerows glowing under inch-thick rime. The Chief ex-

plained that a judicial enquiry had been opened into the circumstances of the Burgess-Maclean escape. The enquiry was in the hands of H.J.P. Milmo, a King's Counsellor who had worked for MI5 during the war. I was required to give evidence, and the Chief hoped I would have no objection. The mention of Milmo indicated that a crisis was at hand. I knew him and of him. He was a skilled interrogator; he was the man whom MI5 usually brought in for the kill. As I drove with the Chief across St. James's Park to Leconfield House, I braced myself for a sticky ordeal. I was still confident that I could survive an examination, however robust, on the basis of the evidence known to me. But I could not be sure that new evidence had not come to hand for Milmo to shoot at me.

On arrival at Leconfield House, I was introduced to the head of the legal branch of MI5 and then ushered into the presence of Milmo. He was a burly fellow with a florid, round face, matching his nickname, "Buster." On his left sat Arthur Martin, a quiet young man who had been one of the principal investigators of the Maclean case. He remained silent throughout, watching my movements. When I looked out of the window, he made a note; when I twiddled my thumbs, he made another note. After sketchy greetings, Milmo adopted a formal manner, asking me to refrain from smoking as this was a "judicial enquiry."

It was all flummery, of course. It crossed my mind to ask Milmo for his credentials or to suggest that the headquarters of MI5 were an odd venue for a judicial enquiry. But that would have been out of character for the part which I had decided to play; that

cooperative ex-member of SIS as keen as Milmo himself to establish the truth about Burgess and Maclean. So for the best part of three hours, I answered or parried questions meekly enough, only permitting myself a note of anger when my character was directly attacked. It was useless, I knew, to try to convince the ex-intelligence officer in Milmo; my job was simply to deny him the confession which he required as a lawyer.

I was too closely involved in Milmo's interrogation to form an objective opinion on its merits. Much of the ground that he covered was familiar and my answers, excogitated long before, left him little to do but shout. Early in the interview, he betrayed the weakness of his position by accusing me of entrusting to Burgess "intimate personal papers." The charge was so obviously nonsensical that I did not even have to feign bewilderment. It appeared that my Cambridge degree had been found in Burgess's flat during the search which followed his departure. Years before, I had folded that useless document and put it in a hook. Burgess, as anyone would have told Milmo, was an inveterate borrower of books with and without the permission of their owners. The aim of the accusation was to show that I had deliberately underplayed the degree of my intimacy with Burgess. It was flimsy tuit and went far to strengthen my confidence in the outcome.

J... produced at least two rabbits out of the theTeh... showed that even I... evidence against me was... nger than I had feared. Two days after the

Volkov information reached London, there had been a spectacular rise in the volume of NKVD wireless traffic between London and Moscow, followed by a similar rise in the traffic between Moscow and Istanbul. Furthermore, shortly after I had been officially briefed about the Embassy leakage in Washington, there had been a similar jump in NKVD traffic. Taken in conjunction with the other evidence, these two items were pretty damning. But to me, sitting in the interrogation chair, they posed no problem. When asked in Milmo's most thunderous tones to account for these occurrences, I replied quite simply that I could not.

I was beginning to tire when suddenly Milmo gave up. Martin asked me to stay put for a few minutes. When I was invited into the next room, Milmo had disappeared and the MI5 legal officer was in charge. He asked me to surrender my passport, saying that they could get it anyway but that voluntary action on my part would obviate publicity. I readily agreed as my escape plan certainly did not envisage the use of my own identity papers. My offer to send the document that night by registered post was rejected because it was "too risky." John Skardon was detailed to accompany me back to my home and receive it from me. On the way, Skardon wasted his breath sermonising on the Advisability of Cooperating with the Authorities. I was too relieved to listen, though my relief was tempered by the knowledge that I was not vet out of the wood—not by a long chalk.

Several times in the following weeks, Skardon came down to continue the interrogations. He was scrup-

lously courteous, his manner verging on the exquisite; nothing could have been more flattering than the cosy warmth of his interest in my views and actions. He was far more dangerous than the ineffective White or the blustering Milmo. I was helped to resist his polite advances by the knowledge that it was Skardon who had wormed his way into Fuchss confidence with such disastrous results. During our first long conversation, I detected and evaded two little traps which he laid for me with deftness and precision. But I had scarcely begun congratulating myself when the thought struck me that he may have laid others which I had not detected.

Yet even Skardon made mistakes. He began one interview by asking me for written authority to examine my bank balance. He could have got legal authority to do so whether I approved or not; so I raised no objection—especially since he would find no trace of irregular payments because no irregular payments had ever been made. But, with the authority in his hand, he began to question me on my finances, and I took the opportunity of giving him some harmless misinformation. My object in doing so was a serious one. I had been able to invent plausible explanations for most of the oddities of my career, but not all of them, "here my invention failed, I could only plead lapses of memory. I just could not remember this person or

a incident. The probing of my finances gave me a sense of confirming the erratic working of my memory of confirming the erratic working of my memory of financial transactions, I could not be expected to remember all the details of my social and professional life.

After several such interrogations, Skardon came no more. He did not tell me that he was satisfied or dissatisfied; he just left the matter hanging. He was doubtless convinced that I was concealing from him almost everything that mattered, and I would have given a lot to have glimpsed his summing up. There was no doubt that the evidence against me was impressive, but it was not yet conclusive. That it was not so regarded emerged from yet another summons to Broadway, this time to be interrogated by Sinclair and Easton. It was distasteful to lie in my teeth to the honest Sinclair; I hope he now realises that in lying to him I was standing as firmly on principle as he ever did. But I enjoyed my duel with Easton. After my experiences with White, Milmo, and Skardon, I was moving on very familiar ground, and I did not think he could succeed where they had failed. He didn't.