

Philby Has Job At Russian Spy H.Q.

'British Desk'

By DAVID FLOYD

KIM PHILBY, the former British Intelligence officer and journalist, who was the "third man" in the Burgess and Maclean case in 1951 and finally took refuge in Russia in 1963, is now acting as principal adviser to the "British Desk" in the Russian intelligence service.

I learnt this yesterday on the highest authority. Philby's movements since he arrived in Moscow in 1963 have been carefully observed by agents of Western intelligence services.

He has been seen to make regular visits to the large office building on the Lubyanka Square which is the headquarters of the Soviet Committee for State Security, known by its Russian initials K.G.B.

Philby's reported work for the Novosti news agency, which supplies feature material about Russia to the foreign Press, is known to be no more than a cover to explain his source of income and comparatively comfortable circumstances.

The Novosti agency, set up under Mr. Khrushchev, is generally

known to be itself mainly a cover for Russian intelligence operations, with about 80 per cent. of its staff consisting of employees of the K.G.B.

Though his services will undoubtedly be highly valued, Philby's present position leaves him a long way from the top of the Russian intelligence service, in which his influence and access to information will be strictly limited.

However long he has been in the Russian service, the Russians will still eye so skilful an operator with great suspicion, and will be unlikely to let him penetrate as far into the Russian service as it is claimed, in sensational accounts now appearing, he penetrated into the British.

Experts of the Russian intelligence services are sceptical about Philby's claim to have been working for the Russians steadily since

1934. It is known from top Russian defectors that the Russian intelligence service was completely disorganised by Stalin's purges of the 1930s.

At that time even the men in charge of security and espionage were themselves being shot. No Russian then would dare to maintain contact with a Western agent.

Harm exaggerated

It is unlikely that Philby was trusted and used at a time when top Russian spies were themselves being shot.

The leakage of the Philby "revelations" by the Russians is believed to be a further attempt to discredit the British intelligence service. But the official view is that Philby's treachery and defection did less damage to the Western intelligence operation inside Russia than had been suggested.

Foreign intelligence is only one of the branches of the K.G.B. as it is now organised, and comes under the general direction of Col.-Gen. Nikolai Zakharov.

Real 'brain'

The real "brain" of the Soviet intelligence service is a special committee of the Central Committee of the Communist party. It is headed by the man who is unquestionably Russia's super-spy: Gen. Alexander Panyushkin.

Philby will not be working now in close contact with Gen. Panyushkin's office. But the General may well have consulted him over the handling of the recent case of Dr. Tkachenko, the Russian scientist who was the cause of a scuffle between British security men and Soviet Embassy staff before he returned to Russia.

Mr. Ivan Shishkin, who was prominent in negotiations over the Tkachenko affair in London, is known to be a senior intelligence officer.