

John Burton: undermined by dishonest history:
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Dr John Burton headed the Department of External Affairs in 1947 at age 32, his minister being Herbert Vere Evatt ('the Doc'). He and Evatt shared a joint vision for an Australian foreign policy independent of Britain and the United States. In his short public service career Burton had significant influence over Australia's foreign policy. Ahead of his times, he held the view that Australia's security in the Asia-Pacific region depended upon better understanding of and engagement with its neighbours. To achieve this, he advocated 'open diplomacy'.

Burton's work and influence has been the subject of numerous scholarly works. Curiously, alongside the honest historians, there has been a concerted effort by some dishonest ideologues writing to discredit Burton and what he stood for. Sixty years on, malicious writers continue to skew the historic record by asserting that Burton betrayed his country. Why? And how can the record be corrected?

I am a non-fiction writer. I would love to write fiction, but I've been told that it's not my forte, because I can't help letting truth get in the way of a good story.

There are non-fiction writers, however, who *won't* let the truth spoil a story. Take the example of a recent article in the magazine *Quadrant*, 'The curious case of Dr John Burton'.¹ A fictitious spy story if ever there was one, though it purported to be an historical account. The contributor was Rob Foot, better known as a perennial critic of the National Museum of Australia. I won't encourage you to read it. Instead I will tell you the true story of John Burton.

My talk raises questions about what motivates writers to write dishonestly. How do they live with their consciences? Or are they victims of self-deception, ideologues who are blind to the truth when it gets in the way of the myths they live by? Importantly for tonight's talk, what can children do to destroy the credibility of those who have maligned their parents?

The way John Burton has been treated by the political right is a case study of how a distorted picture of someone can be built up over time by commentators willing to undermine someone because of what they stand for. It's the strategy of attacking the messenger, the bearer of threatening views.

First, I must declare my interest. I am one of Dr John Burton's daughters and, though possibly biased, I have done a lot of homework.

My research reveals that one of the first brushstrokes on the 'let's get Burton' canvas was a political attack in May 1952 by RG Casey, Minister for External Affairs. Under privilege of parliament in a speech designed to discredit the Labor Party he referred to 'a nest of traitors' in the Public Service, opening the door for WC Wentworth (Liberal, NSW) to suggest Burton might have handed a document to the Communist newspaper *The Tribune*. Casey, while conceding that there was nothing secret about the document, a draft Treaty of Friendship with the USA, and that it was 'improbable, at least, that Dr Burton had been responsible', given that he had left the Department 18 months before the leak occurred, successfully fuelled suspicion about Burton's loyalty.

¹ Rob Foot, 'The curious case of Dr John Burton', *Quadrant*, November 2013.

Eddie Ward (Labor, NSW) came to Burton's defence, saying the attack was a cowardly attempt to smear Burton, who had left for China the previous week for a 'Pacific Peace conference' in Peking and couldn't defend himself.

The point of targeting Burton was that he had resigned from the Public Service in 1951 to become the endorsed Labor candidate for the federal seat of Lowe.

Over a period of 50 years other players emerged to add their clumsy daubs to this portrait of Burton the traitor. After his death the palette was further enriched to depict him as a Russian spy – not any old spy but a GRU agent working for military intelligence, no less.

On the other side of this canvas, John Burton has been described by various honest historians as one of the stars of the Public Service who substantially influenced Australia's foreign policy after the Second World War. In 1999, in the Panorama section of the *Canberra Times*, Norman Abjorensen included Burton in his list of 50 'great unsung heroes' who, over the previous 100 years, had helped build the nation.



Dr JW Burton and Dr HV Evatt, Downing Street, London, c. 1944 (supplied: Pamela Burton)

At 32 Burton was head of the External Affairs Department, responsible to the brilliant but erratic Herbert Vere Evatt, 'the Doc'. He and Evatt shared a vision for an Australian foreign policy independent of Britain and the United States. I quote Ph. D. scholar, David Fettling, whose work I refer to again below:

As Secretary of the Department of External Affairs between 1947 and 1950, Burton became the foremost champion in Australian government of an Asian regionalist orientation. Burton's sharply pro-Republican stance in Indonesia was accompanied by a vision of Asia-wide political independence combined with economic growth and state-centred development ...

Burton's fundamental objective was to attain security and stability in Australia's immediate environs, including from communist insurrections: in this way he was an exemplar of, not an exception to, Australia's long 'search for security.'

Burton believed that Australia's security was dependent upon stability among the nations of the Asia Pacific region, a stability which could only be achieved if countries like India and Indonesia were free to achieve independence from their colonial masters. Unrest in developing nations could only encourage Communism.

Political conservatives scorned such left-leaning approaches to international diplomacy. They believed that the British colonial hold had to be strengthened if Communism was to be repelled.

Independence movements, even those pushing for democratic self-government, were likely communist breeding grounds.

The conservatives had a mantra, 'If you are not with us, you are against us' and 'if you are against us, you are our enemy'. And in those days when Communists were the new enemy, suspicion fell on all radical thinkers.

Alan Reid of the Sydney *Sun* took advantage of Casey's political scaremongering while Burton was still in China. (Burton was there leading an unofficial Australian Delegation for preparatory talks before the September Peking Peace Conference.) His scheduled return was delayed. Cecily, his wife, wasn't sure when he would be back, she told the press. Burton must either be 'dead or red', Reid implied in his news story, suggesting he was a spy.

In fact, as became clear on his return on 17 June, Burton had extended his stay to make inquiries about the condition of three Australian airmen gaoled for 20 months in China shortly after Mao Zedong came to power. There were press reports that the prisoners were being cruelly treated by a primitive and repressive government. Burton did not want our nationals roughly treated, but neither did he believe it was in Australia's interest for our press to smear the new China.

Evatt, Chifley, and Burton all advocated recognition of Mao's China to give Australia a platform for influencing Chinese policies as they affected Australia. It was important that Australia establish and maintain friendly relations with countries in our region.

Much to the relief of the airmen's parents, Burton's intervention was largely responsible for the men's release on 14 August 1952.

Burton sued Reid and his paper. I was nine years old when, in 1955, Burton was awarded damages for the defamation. One hundred pounds – not quite the £25 000 he sought but enough to buy each of his three daughters a party dress. Mine was pale lemon lace and my father's win was worth boasting about at school.

But mud sticks. More than 50 years later, Prime Minister John Howard resurrected the slanders as ammunition for his 'war on terror'. He likened terrorists to dangerous people from our past, and extraordinarily, he singled out Burton and, wait for it, historian Manning Clark.

The occasion was *Quadrant's* 50th anniversary dinner on 3 October 2006 and, in praising the magazine for taking up causes close to his heart, Howard said, 'It's worth recalling just some of the philo-communism that was once quite common in Australia in the 1950s and 1960s'.



Burton and Evatt, United Nations Conference, San Francisco, 1945 (supplied: Pamela Burton)

Howard told his audience that John Burton had argued that Mao's China was a model for the 'transformation' of Australia. 'Transformation' was the single word Howard quoted as being Burton's. He gave no reference, no date, and provided no context.

Our father was not yet dead and his brain sprang into life when he read the *Canberra Times* report of the address, with front page headlines, 'Reagan, Thatcher are PM's heroes'. At 92, bedridden with

a back injury, he risked pneumonia to crawl out of bed to write a letter to the editor which Jack Waterford obligingly published. Our father was flattered to be remembered, albeit backhandedly, for his advocacy of a foreign policy that focused on Australia being part of Asia, rather than a province of the UK or the USA.

Putting made-up words in someone's mouth and then leaving it up to the targets to 'prove' they never said them, is, as author Doug Cocks puts it, one of the many 'weapons of mass deception' that word-tricksters deploy. How does one prove that something was *not* said? Unfortunately, brazen people are all too often believed. Lies trump truth.

Burton guessed that what Howard's minders had dredged up for him to selectively quote was a comment on his positive experience of the fledgling republic of China in 1952. So, in his letter to the editor he contextualised his comment and explained that he was comparing Chifley's post-war reconstruction of a welfare state with the 'fascist-type capitalism that prevailed' after the Liberal Government came to power.²

John Kunkel, one of Howard's staffers, was frank in his recall of the incident in 2008 in an Institute of Public Affairs publication.

Our targets included Manning Clark and Doc Evatt's former foreign affairs svengali, John Burton. To my amazement, Burton (who I thought was dead) wrote an angry letter to the *Canberra Times* where he attacked the 'fascist' Menzies government and basically substantiated our main charges.³

Note Kunkel's vicious language. Words like 'target' and 'svengali' are chosen to legitimise Howard's attempt at character assassination. And how easily he recast my father's use of the word 'fascist' in his 2006 letter.

Howard's attack gave our father cause to warn me and my sister, Meredith Edwards, before he died in 2010, that more would follow when he was no longer around to defend himself.

Professor Des Ball proved our father correct.

It is an unenviable task defending a parent against an opponent as well placed as Des Ball AO. He has been labelled 'the man who saved the world from nuclear annihilation' by former US president Jimmy Carter and acclaimed for the brave work he has done in Cambodia.

More reason for him to be diligent and accurate with his research. And certainly not to be so cowardly as to avoid interviewing my father when he was alive but waiting until he was dead before making unsubstantiated and sensational allegations that Evatt and Burton 'were probably agents of Soviet Intelligence'.

Ball told Peter Wilson of *The Australian* that it was Ball's long-held suspicion that former Labor leader Herbert Evatt worked for the Soviet Union against Australian interests.⁴ In the same interview Ball said that Burton was involved, but 'for legal reasons' he did not air it earlier in *Breaking the Codes*, the book he co-authored with David Horner in 1998.

Not good enough. Ball either had evidence or he did not. While our defamation laws might be overly restrictive, given the value we place on the right of free speech, they do permit the publication of opinions, honestly held, on matters of public interest, in the absence of malicious intent. That is, it is expected that a reasonable effort is made to establish facts and that defamatory opinion is balanced by publishing the response of the person being defamed.

² *Canberra Times*, 6 October 2006.

³ John Kunkel, 'Reflections on the "Howard Project": IPA review article', *Institute of Public Affairs*, May 2008.

⁴ Peter Wilson, 'Fearing Herbert Evatt's Soviet ties, Robert Menzies leaked Petrov papers', *Weekend Australian*, 9-10 April 2011.

Why then, didn't Ball put the 'evidence' for his suspicions to Burton while he was alive? Ball lived in the same city as Burton, had long-standing acquaintance with several family members, and yet never interviewed him.

Many people took advantage of Burton's open door policy. Greg Pemberton, David McKnight, Frank Cain, David Dunn, Philip Adams and Adam Hughes Henry were some of the scholars, authors, students and journalists who talked with and interviewed him.



Evatt, 1948 (National Archives of Australia, A1200, 11229899)

Ball's interest in Burton focused on his role as head of External Affairs and his defence of staff members accused of leaking material to the Soviets. In February 1948, after it became known that there had been an unauthorised release of a 1945 UK strategic plan through the Australian Government to the Soviets, Percy Sillitoe and Roger Hollis from MI5 came to Australia to find out how it had been leaked. Hollis and others from MI5 came back in July. Ian Milner, an External Affairs officer, was identified as one of the culprits. Suspicion of him and other External Affairs officers arose during the decryption of Soviet signals under the FBI's Venona project.

Burton was concerned about the unauthorised release of material. It was a serious issue. However, he never accepted that the leaks compromised Australia's security. He, like Evatt, was sceptical about the rhetoric of the Cold War and believed that over-classification of documents more often hindered rather than enhanced his 'open diplomacy' approach to preventing hostilities.

In 1954, when the Petrovs sought asylum in exchange for the names of Soviet agents, the Royal Commission on Espionage was established. Burton was not a suspect but he gave evidence *in camera*. He was not convinced that those targeted by the inquiry were Soviet agents, particularly Ric Throssell and Jim Hill. His defence of them was the basis of Ball's 'suspicions' about Burton.

The Spectator quickly picked up on Ball's revelations:

Eyebrows were raised last weekend when leading defence scholar Desmond Ball argued that it was likely that one or both of these characters [Evatt and Burton] were Soviet spies. It's difficult to dismiss someone of Ball's standing in the national security debate.⁵

Ball was on a roll. One week later in *The Australian*, Ball came out with his opinion that Evatt and Burton were 'witting parties' to Soviet espionage operations in Australia'.⁶ He stated that he and Horner had shown in *Breaking the Codes* that Burton had 'lied' under oath to the Royal Commission

⁵ Anthony McAdam, 'Reds under Canberra beds: was Doc Evatt, the Labor icon during the early Cold War years, a Soviet spy?' *Spectator*, 16 April 2011.

⁶ Desmond Ball, 'The moles at the very heart of government', *Weekend Australian*, 16-17 April 2011.

about the date he (Burton) first met Jim Hill. This 'lie', according to Ball, was evidence that Burton might himself have been a spy.

Suspect logic aside, I knew my father was not a liar and I would prove it. The transcript of Burton's evidence had been made public in the mid 1980s. I had a copy stuffed away in a cupboard and worked through the night to find out how on earth my father might have got important dates wrong. Or had he?

No, he had not. It was Ball who got it wrong. He either didn't read all the evidence or he misread it. Ball ignored Burton's evidence about the date he first met Hill at the Department and instead quoted the date Burton told the Commission that he had 'deliberately' moved 'much closer to Hill'. Why? Because he had been asked by MI5 in 1948 to keep 'a close eye on him', which he did.

Two weekends later *The Australian* published my article detailing the evidence that Burton had given, proving that Ball was wrong and that Burton had not lied.⁷ This is what I said in the article:

The commission identified the Hollis visit as having occurred in 1948-49. Burton, who died last year, was secretary of External Affairs from 1947 to 1950 and had been Evatt's private secretary.

Burton's evidence was that at this time he "did not know Hill in any way personally" though he knew him as a work colleague, stating that he thought Hill was "one of the most capable officers in the department . . . I had a high respect for his ability".

Burton said that he was first aware of Hill when Hill (a lawyer) was, he thought, on war crimes work. No year was mentioned as to this but clearly it was before the MI5 visit because it was put to Burton: "You were yourself fairly closely associated with him later on, were you not?" and he replied: "Not really, until after this visit by Hollis. Then I was very closely associated with him quite deliberately."

In summary, Burton knew Hill 'as a work colleague' from some time after Hill entered External Affairs (June 1945, according to Ball) but was not 'closely associated' with him until 1948 or 1949. And that is what Burton said to the Royal Commission.

Proving that Burton did not lie does not prove that he was not a spy. Ball's mistaken understanding seemed to be his best evidence that Burton was a spy. Once again, no one can prove a negative and 'guilt by association' is another useful weapon in the armoury of those who do not want absence of evidence to ruin a good story.

Ball had set the hares running. Just days later Angus Chapple, former intelligence analyst, in an article in *News Weekly* subtitled 'Australia's Kim Philby? The case of Dr John Burton', suggested that Burton might have been 'recruited' in the Soviet Union, during a visit there in 1934 in a 'personal capacity' and during a second visit in August 1939.⁸

The phrase 'personal capacity' was a dead giveaway. I recalled that my grandfather, also Dr John Wear Burton, had used it in his autobiography when describing his trip to Russia in 1936. As a Methodist minister, he was curious to see how Russians coped without religion. Having got the man and the date wrong, Chapple made up the agenda.

In 1934, the 19 year-old Burton (junior) did not visit Russia. We knew that from our mother's oral history; they sat in lectures together at Sydney University that year.

⁷ Pamela Burton, 'Burton was a patriotic public servant, not a traitor,' *Weekend Australian*, 30 April – 1 May 2011.

⁸ Angus Chapple, 'Australia's Cold War: Australia's Kim Philby? The case of Dr John Burton, *News Weekly*, 30 April 2011.



Burton with Arthur Tange, left, and Keith Waller, Baguio Conference, held to foster mutual protection and aid between Asian nations, Luzon, Philippines, May 1950. Both Tange and Waller later headed the Department ([Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade](#))

Chapple had got his information from a piece by journalist Andrew Campbell in the *National Observer* in 2008. I emailed both authors asking for the source for their assertion but none was forthcoming.

Both Campbell and Chapple relied on Horner and Ball's reference in *Breaking the Codes* to frequent visits by Soviet GRU officer Colonel Viktor Zaitsev to liaise with Burton at his office in West Block. Burton did meet Zaitsev there, hardly clandestine, just as he met other high-ranking representatives of foreign powers, an important part of his role as departmental secretary.

As historian Dr Adam Hughes Henry observed, 'Chifley and the entire Labor Cabinet' had to all be working for the Russians, if this was so, because Henry's research showed that 'everything Evatt and Burton did was "open", on the record, and quite obvious'.

Ball kept the issue alive. In another article in *The Australian* in January 2012 he reported that academic Coral Bell had told him that she 'wouldn't be in the least surprised' if Burton was a spy.⁹ I wonder who suggested to her that he was. Bell was not in Australia, let alone at External Affairs, when allegations of leaking documents surfaced. In 1947 she was transferred from her position in External Affairs to New Zealand by my father who was acting head at the time. Their animosity continued when, as academics, they became intellectual rivals over their different philosophies on international relations. But how does one prove that her claims and Ball's use of them were mischievous?

Political scientist Gregory Pemberton helped here. In an article in *The Australian* on 18 January 2012, 'Old gossip, but no evidence John Burton was a spy', he mocked Ball's use of this peculiar remark.¹⁰ It was one he had been told about more than 20 years earlier when Bell made it in the presence of Cambridge history professor Christopher Andrews. Andrews, having been a British intelligence officer and a conventional diplomat, became in 1984 one of the first to research government documents and write in a scholarly way about spies. Pity Ball didn't take a leaf out of his book.

In 2013 I confronted Ball at a party hosted by a mutual friend. Terrible behaviour on my part but I was angry and I wanted an apology and a 'please explain' from him.

⁹ Desmond Ball, 'Soviet spies had protection in very high places', *Weekend Australian*, 14-15 January 2012.

¹⁰ Gregory Pemberton, 'Old gossip, but no evidence John Burton was a spy', *Australian*, 18 January 2012.

'Why,' I asked him, 'didn't you apologise for the blatant mistake you made in your article in *The Australian*, after I pointed out that you had misquoted the Petrov transcript of my father's evidence?'

'Because I believe in what I said', was his answer.

I pushed him: 'But you got it wrong', I said. 'He didn't lie to the Inquiry.'

His strange reply was that his sources were 'too secret' to be revealed.

'But you quoted the public record, the transcript of evidence', I said.

He did not explain. What he said was, in effect, 'I never use the public record. I only rely on secret material; material not available to anyone else.'

In my opinion, at worst it was deceptive and dishonest of Ball to cite a transcript he hadn't read and at best, unprofessional. But then, he would not have expected anyone, let alone Burton's daughter, to have the transcript at hand and check him, before persuading *The Australian* to promptly publish an article in reply.

I moved on to ask him about his secret sources; his use of them to make libellous allegations, without having to reveal them, because they are secret.

'That's right. I don't give my sources', he confirmed.

It was getting surreal but, having unashamedly bailed him up in our host's kitchen I wasn't going to let him escape until I asked him all my questions. I was giving Ball the opportunity he didn't give my father, the opportunity to respond before I said what I am saying tonight.

Why did he use the excuse of 'legal reasons' to explain why he didn't raise his suspicions about Burton in *Breaking the Codes*? Why did he not interview my father, put his evidence to him, instead of waiting for my father to die, when he could make unsupported allegations, without the risk of being sued?

Ball told me that he was 'too busy' writing the *Codes* book to talk to Burton.

'Too busy to talk to a prime source involved in the outcome of Venona?'

To me it's clear that Burton had to be dead before Ball could offer Chris Mitchell, editor of *The Australian*, a sensational revelation that the high-flying Dr John Burton might have been a spy.

I had more success asking Ball about Coral Bell's so-called 'evidence'. In his article Ball had mentioned Bell's self-confessed lust for Ric Throssell and Jim Hill. So I put to Ball that she also lusted after the handsome young acting head of department, John Burton, who not only likely rejected her advances, but sent her packing to New Zealand.

Ball agreed with me. He said, 'She said as much'.

To top it off, Ball then said words to this effect: 'I have never said that your father was a spy, or even that he was a member of the Communist Party.' He said that, while Burton might have been regarded as a left wing rat bag by the conservatives, they didn't suggest he was a Communist or a spy. 'I shared your father's views. I share his values. I am left wing, I always have been. I believe in what he believes. I only said that he covered for those who were. And I believe he did.'

I protested loudly, 'But you did say you suspected him of being a spy?'

Ball said, 'He defended those who proved to have been leaking documents to the Soviets'.

Well, I've defended people too, criminals no less, and I don't think it makes me a criminal.

I warned Ball that I would use our conversation in my efforts to defend my father. He said, 'You do with it what you must', so we were clear about that.

Nevertheless, I am mystified as to why Ball would want to risk his professional reputation at the end of a glowing career.

Fortunately for me and my sister, truly professional historians and serious commentators base their judgements on evidence. Ball is well outnumbered on his view of Burton.

Historian Peter Edwards, former New South Wales Premier Bob Carr, historian Robert Manne and political scientist David McKnight have stated in various forums that they have seen no evidence to support Ball's suspicions about Evatt and/or Burton.¹¹ Pemberton in his 2012 piece explained that it was Burton's nationalistic view that Australia's foreign policy should be independent that was problematic for some. Over time, of course, it has become accepted that Australia should engage fruitfully, not aggressively, with its powerful Asian neighbours.



Jim Hill, 1950 (National Archives of Australia, A9626, 1188393)

For a superb analysis of Burton's role and contribution to Australia's foreign policy and stability in its region, wait for the publication of David Fettling's Ph. D. thesis, *Australian Officials and Asian Decolonisation 1945-1950*. This diligent and insightful piece of research speaks of the true Burton, not recognisable as the person Ball and his foot soldiers have portrayed.¹²

Was it coincidence that it was after my ruthless interrogation of Ball that Rob Foot's article appeared in *Quadrant*? Foot is clearly a man of vivid imagination. His spy story is set in Australia in the time of the Cold War. In the style of Frank Moorhouse's *Cold Light*,¹³ but without his use of asterisks to differentiate fact from fiction, Foot's protagonist is the 'intellectually gifted' young and handsome John Burton who, he states, was recruited as a spy in Moscow in 1939 – at least the reference to 1934 has been dropped.

Foot's plot gets wonky at this stage, because it depends on some Russian in Moscow picking John out from among the group of Australian tourists with whom he and his new bride are travelling, and predicting that this 24 year-old would, after a war not yet declared and during a subsequent cold war period, become influential in Australia's foreign affairs.

Foot concedes that the MVD (Russia's Interior Ministry) could not have recruited Burton because Petrov, an MVD defector who delivered the names of Milner and Clayton to Australian intelligence, denied having come across Burton's name. Therefore, Foot concludes, if Burton had not been

¹¹ David McKnight, *Australian Spies and Their Secrets*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW, 1994.

¹² Bonita Maywald's 1999 research essay to complete a Master of Arts in International Relations, Research School of Political Science, Australian National University, 'Is it possible to re-imagine an Australian IR through John W. Burton's experience and seeing *other-wise* to develop alternative approaches in our international relations?' also captures Burton's perspective on international relations.

¹³ Frank Moorhouse, *Cold Light*, Vintage, Sydney, 2011.

recruited by the MVD, he must have been recruited by the GRU (citing Ball as a source) because – remember the first premise – Burton was a spy.

Foot conceded that ‘It is unlikely that Burton played an active part in running the [Friends of the Nook] network’ but insists that he was personally or professionally close to most of its agents and facilitators. Why? Because he worked in External Affairs, where those accused of leaking documents worked.

Hmm, if Burton was a mole, he had a long sleep, never called upon from his presumed recruitment as a youth until his death in Canberra at age 95.

Not surprisingly, *Quadrant* failed to publish an article that countered Foot’s attack. Interestingly, Ball’s chapter in his co-authored recently released monograph about codes and spies – unfortunately not quite the same readership as *The Australian* – names ten people as espionage agents. Burton is not one of them.¹⁴

One piece of ‘evidence’ Foot cites was that MI5 found Burton to be ‘very cooperative’. This cooperation, he says, is evidence that Burton was an espionage agent. Well, here’s an idea. Being cooperative is consistent with him *not* being a spy.

Then there is Hollis’s record in an MI5 file that Burton was *not* a Soviet agent and his warning that propagandising from China should not propel MI5 to the view that he was. Foot’s confident answer: Hollis was wrong about that. Full stop.

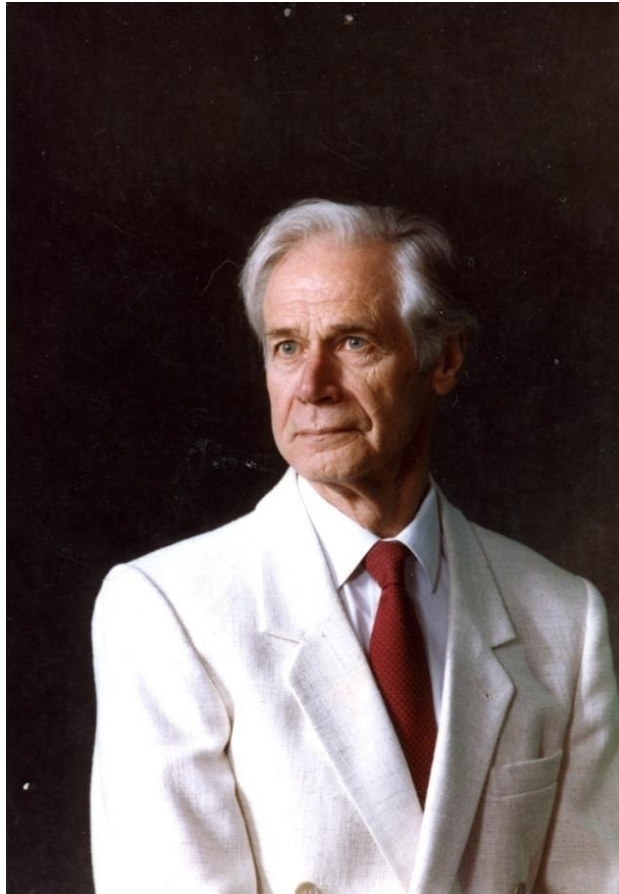
History, to some, is what you can make people believe.

In conclusion, my sister and I are not alone in our struggle to clean up the record about a parent. Penny Lockwood, daughter of Rupert, Karen Throssell, daughter of Ric, Biff Ward, daughter of Russell, and Andrew (as well as Sebastian), son of Manning Clark, have all expressed their disgust over the unconscionable conduct of grubby headline seekers. We all have an advantage in being authors in our own right, but equally recognise that children start from a weak position when it comes to defending their parents.

Not to mention recent news reports that Katerina Clark was under ASIO’s watch, for studying in Moscow under an ANU-Moscow university exchange arrangement.

Meredith and I are grateful to those who have assured us that they can distinguish fact from fiction, and particularly so to those who have published articles and letters which rebut Ball and his followers’ claims. And, thank you Honest History and Manning Clark House for this forum.

¹⁴ Desmond Ball & Keiko Tamura, *Breaking Japanese Diplomatic Codes: David Sissons and D Special Section during the Second World War*, ANU E-press, Canberra, 2013.



Burton in later life (supplied: Pamela Burton)

*Pamela Burton is a Canberra lawyer and writer. She is also the daughter of Dr JW Burton and has felt compelled to defend her father's reputation, sullied after his death in 2010. She is the author of *The Waterlow Killings: The Story of a Family Tragedy* (Melbourne University Press, 2012), and *From Moree to Mabo: The Mary Gaudron Story* (University of Western Australia Press, 2010).*
