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28 September 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Contact with Virginia BENNETT in
Washington D.C. on 21 September 1966

1. Virginia came to Washington at my request. I met her at Union Station at 1150, and from there we went by taxi to the Market Inn in southwest Washington where we had lunch and held our conversation.

2. Our conversation concerned the fact that Ivan Drach was in the United States and the probability that he might try to contact her during his stay here. Judging from developments during the past year, it is likely Drach is collaborating with the KGB. Virginia said she found it very difficult to believe Drach would collaborate with the authorities, because of the very strong nationalist feelings expressed by Maria during their visits. However, she said she did realize the people were subject to great pressures and that she was aware Drach could be forced to cooperate with the KGB against his will, but she said she could not believe he would knowingly do anything which might harm his colleagues. Jaroslav Hajvas had also informed Virginia--later on the same day I did--about Drach's being in the United States. She

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said Hajvas had certain plans in mind for her, such as inviting him to her home to repay the hospitality she had received in the Drach's home when she was in the Ukraine. Virginia said she supposed Hajvas would want to be present at any such gathering. Hajvas had suggested that she get in touch with Drach. I told her it would not be wise for her to do so at this time, at least not until after the news of his presence in New York was well circulated in the emigration. Virginia agreed and promised to check with me prior to any contact with him. I told her there were three things I would like her to try to get from Drach, in the event she did meet with him; i.e., (a) a true picture about the intellectual ferment and political atmosphere in the Ukraine today; (b) indications that Drach is under some kind of pressure from Soviet authorities; (c) what could be done in the West to help Soviet Ukrainian writers and other intellectuals.

3. Virginia gave me a photo copy of the letter received from Maria Drach's mother. The original was still with Hajvas. Should Drach be in contact with Virginia, no mention will be made about the letter from his mother-in-law unless he brings it up. It is quite

likely he is not aware of the fact that the letter was written. Hajvas told Virginia what the letter from Maria's mother to the man in Irvington contained. Hajvas was of the opinion that nothing further will develop. (I have since learned from A/29 that the man will not respond to any of the letters received because he has had second thoughts about his offer of marriage via the press and has decided to forget about it.) Hajvas hopes to persuade the man to reply to the letter from Maria's mother, even if in the negative.

4. A Princess Marina Troubetskoy, according to Virginia, telephoned her sometime in February of this year saying she would like to meet Virginia and talk to her about her trip to the Soviet Union. They didn't meet until late May, at which time Troubetskoy questioned Virginia in great detail about the group with which Virginia travelled to the USSR, the Culture et Amitie, Jeunesse et Voyage Foyer des Deux Ours, explaining that she wanted to visit the Soviet Union and thought she would like to travel with that particular tour group. Virginia has not heard from her since, but she has learned through a friend of hers that the young priest in charge of the tours was refused a Soviet visa this

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summer and she wondered whether this might not have been the result of her conversation with Troubetskoy. I told Virginia I knew nothing about Troubetskoy but that I would check around and see if anyone else knew who she was.

5. Virginia said she was starting classes at Princeton on the twenty-second, two weeks earlier than originally planned. She still hopes to get a fellowship for study in the USSR. Her preference is Kiev, but because she feels this might in some way turn out to be harmful to the Draches she will try for another university. Also, she said she was having difficulty coming up with a Ukrainian topic for her thesis, which would not be too unfavorably received at Princeton. She felt it might be wiser for her to go to Moscow and work on a non-Ukrainian theme.

6. I saw Virginia off on the 4 p.m. train.

Summary: a. Virginia will call me if she should be contacted by Drach.

b. She will contact me prior to initiating any contact with Drach.

c. In the event she and Drach do meet, she will try to determine the three things listed in paragraph 2.

d. I will call Virginia to let her know when it would be considered all right for her to initiate a contact with Drach, if he does not contact her first.

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