

15 November 1966

Virginia Bennett telephoned me about 1030 hours today. She thanked me for having sent her the invitation to the literary gathering at the Overseas Press Club on 11 November. She said she had also received an invitation from Mr. Hajvas. Virginia went to the club where she talked briefly with Ivan DRACH. She first met DRACH in the New York Public Library one day last week. She said she was told by friends who work at the Library that DRACH had visited there several times and that he was expected again. She indicated a desire to meet him and on ~~his next visit~~ a subsequent visit to the Library, DRACH happened to come in and she was introduced to him. DRACH was polite but uncommunicative and seemed to be uneasy. Virginia said she had the feeling he was not very happy about their meeting. He casually inquired whether his wife had written her about his visit to the United States and seemed relieved to hear she did not. Virginia tried to engage him in conversation. She ~~asked him~~ told him of her desire to study in Kiev and asked his advice about a topic for her thesis. He suggested early Tychyna or Bazhan but he gave the impression he was pressed for time and anxious to get away. Virginia invited him to appear in Princeton. He said he would gladly go if she could talk the director into inviting him. (This Virginia has managed to do and it appears that DRACH will be issued a formal invitation from Princeton.)

At the Friday evening gathering at the Overseas Press Club, DRACH gave the impression he wanted to ignore Virginia. During a short talk, she offered to help with him do some shopping for his wife/whose tastes Virginia said she is familiar.

He gave her no encouragement. DRACH was as uncommunicative when he called her on the telephone Sunday evening, 13 November, to discuss the Princeton invitation. When (and if) DRACH does appear at Princeton, Virginia will, if an opportunity presents itself, invite him to visit in her home. ~~It is possible~~ DRACH's reaction to Virginia may be explained by the fact that he would rather not draw Soviets attention to her by reporting contact with her. He knows his wife and mother-in-law are very fond of Virginia.