

5 October 1960

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Debriefing of Vladimir I. Toumanoff re [REDACTED]

1. Through the courtesy of Mr. Boster, I had the opportunity of debriefing Toumanoff on 4 October 1960 re his connection with the [REDACTED] case. Toumanoff said that Bob Owen, who was Acting Chief of Chancery and is normally 1st Secretary and Chief of the Internal Section at the Embassy gave him the two [REDACTED] envelopes, asked him to read them and be prepared to brief Ed Freers on the contents. Toumanoff said the envelopes were not sealed and they did not have the appearance, as he recalls, of having been torn open. Freers took Toumanoff into the secure room where Toumanoff began briefing him on the contents of the envelopes. Freers interrupted and called [REDACTED] who came in for the briefing. After Toumanoff gave them a free translation and his comments on the matter, Freers told [REDACTED] to "take it from there".

2. As far as Toumanoff knows the details of the case, some Soviet military officer gave the envelopes to some tourist with the request that they be taken to the Embassy. He did not know to whom the envelopes were given in the Embassy. He did not know if Bob Owen read the contents. It must be assumed he either did or that he may have been told by Freers of the contents. He said that as far as he knew the Military Attaches in Moscow did not know of the existence of these envelopes.

3. Toumanoff said that he thinks the case could be clean. If the letter had been written six months ago, there would have been no doubt in his mind that they were clean but he feels the time now is ripe for many provocations. On the other hand, he said, because of the disillusionment inside the USSR due to Khrushchev's dumping of the Summit that some people could turn to the USA.

4. He said that a reading of the letter left him with these impressions: that they were written under emotional strain by an able and disciplined mind. The letter does not



have the sound of the work of the Soviet police. It had a ring of genuineness. Regarding the technical aspects of the dead drop site and signal site, he said it was a fancy piece of work. He said the author worked out a drop which is inconspicuous and which he feels would be safe to use. He had praise for the neat piece of work.

5. Initially, Toumanoff could not remember any other items in the envelopes beyond the letter and the sites. Then after some recollection he mentioned the photograph; then after more recollection and some prompting he remembered the list of names. He said he did not really study the list -- just noted that the names sounded genuine rather than sounding like pseudonyms adopted for that purpose -- such as Kirov or others which some Soviets like to use. He is of the opinion that this was the listing of military officers going to an espionage school and that possibly they could show up in various Soviet embassies as military attaches.

6. I briefed Toumanoff on the fact that only one officer in the Department, namely Dick Davis, was briefed by us on this matter and I requested that he not speak to anyone about this case without our approval. This he said he understood and would be glad to oblige. I queried him on other leads, which are written separately.

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