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20 July 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with Anthony and Vera SHUMYKO

1. I made arrangements by telephone with Vera SHUMYKO to meet her and her husband in New York on Tuesday evening, 18 July 1961. Upon arrival I called her at her office. We agreed to meet for dinner at the Hotel Sheraton-Atlantic, where I was expecting to stay.

2. We met at 2000 hours as previously arranged. I was introduced to Anthony SHUMYKO for the first time under the alias [] [] Conversation at dinner was limited to small talk, in the course of which I tried to draw out Anthony. I received the impression that he is to some extent dominated by his wife by virtue of the fact that he is an employee of the travel business which she owns and as a result of her superior educational background. Vera is centered on herself rather than those around her, and she does not hesitate to deprecate various qualities or lack of them in her husband. He does not seem to take offense, but good-naturely admits the truth of her depreciations. Vera's habit does not spring from maliciousness, but from a simple conviction that what she says is true, as it might be in some cases. Vera also has the irritating habit of referring to her husband in the third person in his presence. Despite these idiosyncrasies the two seem devoted and well adjusted to each other.

3. The SHUMYKOs described some experiences of previous tours of the USSR and problems they had had with members of their tour groups who were too outspoken, too rash or showed a lack of good judgment in other ways. I found this recognition of unwise conduct heartening, as it seemed to indicate a probable understanding of what they would be up against on an operational mission. They know Soviet reality, have been pushed around by Intourist, and they have experienced difficulties such as film confiscation, Intourist route run-arounds and other chronic

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discomfitures experienced by those who travel in the USSR. Both despise the Soviet system and the USSR and are returning only because of business.

4. Following dinner, I took the SHUMEYKOs to my room at the Statler-Hilton for serious conversation. The SHUMEYKOs first signed secrecy agreements after ~~the~~ significance had been explained to them. I then told them that my agency was interested in their trip and particularly in what they might see while traveling. I asked whether they would be willing to cooperate with us by allowing themselves to be briefed prior to their departure so that they knew what to look for. With little hesitation they both agreed. We discussed in general terms various aspects of Soviet life and activity which are of interest to this Agency. Feeling myself on very firm ground with the couple I brought the question up of photography, discussing the advantages of photography over visual observation. They discussed their own experiences in photography in the USSR, exhibiting considerable knowledge of what could and could not be done safely. I stated that our discussion was philosophical only and that it was unlikely that I would ask them to do any special photography.

5. I next brought up contact with Soviet citizens, a subject on which, again, they were well versed. They did not consider contact with Soviet citizens as impossible from the safety standpoint or even very dangerous provided that one always used common sense and kept himself covered with a plausible story. In the end they seemed completely willing to accept either a photographic or contact mission provided that they had plausible cover in either or both cases. Having established the degree to which they would cooperate, and without making any definite statement as to our intention, I concluded the conversation by asking the couple to fill out personal history statements, which they did quite willingly.

6. We agreed that I would phone them concerning subsequent meetings prior to their departure. It was understood that they would be briefed in one or two evenings in New York, since they were extremely busy getting ready for their trip and were working literally night and day.

7. The SHUMEYKOs exhibited several qualities which recommend them as REDSKINers. First, having been in the USSR, they are over that condition of shock which seems to affect most travelers, including our

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own agents, when they hit the USSR for the first time. This shock usually manifests itself in mixed feelings of fear, helplessness, loneliness and futility. The SHUMYKOs would be fairly immune to this condition. Second, the SHUMYKOs exhibited excellent common sense regarding what can and cannot be done by a traveler in the USSR. Third, they were willing to cooperate right down the line as long as they felt that they would have a reasonable explanation for whatever action we should ask them to take. Based on these considerations, I recommend that they be given an operational mission of some kind, depending upon our needs and the results of subsequent testing and training of the couple.

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