

XAAZ-17359
18 September 1956

CONTACT REPORT • Biographic information on Richard SNYDER
SUBJECT: Richard SNYDER developed at 18 Sep 56 meeting

1. The undersigned had dinner with Subject this date, he being a classmate at university and long-time personal friend. Subject is a member of the Foreign Service of something over six years standing.
2. Subject has a flair for foreign languages, speaking fluent French, German and Russian. He has also studied Chinese, and presumably knows some Japanese, having just returned from a tour of duty in Japan. He is in addition, a well informed and keen political analyst.
3. Subject graduated from Yale University in June 1948. He took a summer course for Foreign Service at OSA, and then took a year's graduate work (Chinese language) in General Studies at Yale. Leaving Yale in June 1949, he came to Washington and, having applied for employment with the Agency, was picked up by OFC. In OFC, he attended the OSO Operations Course then existing, and then worked in some desk, until approximately mid-1950, at which time his Foreign Service appointment came up.
4. Entering the Foreign Service, Subject went through routine training, and then went to Germany in some type of intern category. He spent 2 1/2 years in Germany, the first six months or so performing public relations work at the Kreis (?) level, and the last two years doing consular duties. Subject was then assigned to Japan. There he spent the first year as a U. S. Information Service assignment at Mitaka, and the second year doing consular work at the Embassy in Tokyo. Returning to the United States in March 1956, Subject elected to specialize in Russian Area studies. He was accepted and sent to Middlebury this summer for language work. He is now entering a year's graduate work in Russian Studies at Harvard.
5. At Harvard, Subject is scheduled to take Soviet Economic System under Borison, Russian History and Culture from Zarporich, and Russian Literature. Subject also plans to audit other courses, perhaps, e.g., Malin's. Following this year's work, the probability is that he will be assigned to the Embassy in Moscow.
6. Subject was asked about the university and Agency friends he may have met in touch with. The answer is almost none--i.e., only a few persons at the [redacted] namely Harry Little and a [redacted]

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| DATE 18 Sep 56 | | |

13-3

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Jack Peters. He had met Jack Peters, he said, in Germany, and later coincidentally they were together again in Japan. Peters apparently knew of Subject's former ties with the Agency, and according to Subject, kept him up to date, in a general sense and not involving any compromise or breach of faith, with happenings in the Agency.

7. At this point I suggested to Subject that he could help us out a great deal while he was at Harvard, by keeping in regular touch with me on matters that came to his attention which he knew could be useful to us: specifically, people studying Russian language and area, students and professors planning to travel to the USSR, people whom we should avoid and also people whose qualifications and interests appeared particularly appropriate to my work.

8. Subject was completely agreeable, volunteered to help in any way he might be useful, and gave me his address at Harvard. He suggested I send him a letter outlining my interests, which he guaranteed would be secure with him and he would burn immediately. We both agreed that on such a personal official basis, we might be better correspondents than we were formerly. I also mentioned that I was in Boston at least every three months, and would drop in to see him on my next trip.

9. Subject is at present about thirty-five years old. Stands about 5'9" in height, weight 160, wears rimless glasses, has light brown hair combed straight back, pronounced widow's peak, beginning to bald. Wife is Anna, and they have two girls, the oldest of whom is now thirteen.

10. Subject and I discussed a wide range of topics, but principally the Foreign Service and its attractions for him. He is well satisfied with his choice of career. His principal attraction to it, however, is the opportunity for foreign travel and residence and the responsibility placed on the FSB's. He is not averse to the selection system, including the selection out features. He thinks the Service is doing well by him in its training program.

11. My interest in him, from an operational point of view, has been a long standing feeling that Subject might well be the type to cooperate with the Agency without revealing such a fact to the Department, should he be involved and if good and sufficient reasons were given to him. He is completely in accord with the Agency's objectives and methods, and would still be with the Agency today if he had not been attracted by the prestige and status of the Foreign Service. The totally matter of fact manner in which he accepted my suggestion re spotting and recruiting for us at Harvard does, I think, support my views.

12. Subject's address in Boston is: 15 James St., Brookline 41, Massachusetts.

Nelson K. Erickson