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EX - 786 5 December 1966

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: "American Defectors to the USSR"

- 1. The attached material was part of a soft file entitled "American Defectors to the USSR", which was set up by SR/6 (Support) around 1960 and maintained by various SR components until ca. 1963. The compilations were derived from a variety of sources, and contain both classified and overt data.
- 2. In the fall of 1966, the files were turned over to CI Staff. In most instances, basic information was then abstracted for the US Defector Machine Program. In all instances in which the material was unique, or represented a valuable collation effort, it has been incorporated into the appropriate 201 file, along with a copy of this memorandum.
- 3. It is suggested that any dissemination of this data should be coordinated with SB Division and with CI Staff (CI/MRO), in view of the frequently inadequate sourcing and of the fact that disseminations have already been made through the US Defector Machine Program.

Orig - CI/MRO

1 - RID/FI

1 - SB/RMO

1 - CI/R&A

1 - CI/R&A/chrono

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WEBSTER Robert Edwar, 201-265h72 23 October 1928, Tiffin, Chio Plastics expert; Rand Co. employe

All entries through May 1962 come from 201 unless otherwise noted.

Circa 6-lh Earch 1959. He made preliminary trip to Foscow in connection with planning the Hand exhibit for next summer's U.S. fair.

Circa 3 May - late Junc 1959. Second trip to Moscow to help set up the Rand exhibit. Went steady with Vera PLFTONOVA, married, hostess at Hotel Ukraina/corrector for a Soviet correspondence school's English language department/English teacher at Medical Institute. The always met him outside so that colleagues would not know she dating American, but somebody knew because she usually had to request permission to take evening off - and she always got it. Always had the taxi leave her near but not at her home, and allowed nothing more than one kiss, at end of evening. He told her his wife didn't understand him, etc., and that he would come back to Moscow and marry her. Her name also reported as Vera ivanovna IVCHENKO, probably her maidenname. The night possibly be identical with Vera PLOTNIKOVA, reported in CO-B-3,110,059 of 21 Gept 1959 (SR/OC/BIO) as a 20-year old elevator aperator at the Ukraina; she became very friendly with the source's wife (Russian-speaking) but asked her not to show friendliness in public, met her elsewhere to takk, snared confidences, spoke poor to fair English.

3 July 1959. His third trip to the UCCR. he had about six pieces of luggare, cramed with nylon hose, Ella Fitzgerald records, copies of U.S. magazines, etc., and several boxes of books, but "he did not take heavy clothing because he felt this might look suspicious" 111 He had no trouble whitsoever with Loviet customs, and he went out with Vera on his first night back.

Circa 11 July 1959. He joined two high Poviet exhibit officials at their restaurant table at the fair and told then he wanted to defect. They arranged meeting few days later with government representative POPOV and SHISHKIN - for dinner at Praga [a favorite AGB hangout].

Circa 15 July 1959. Under influence of vodka and food at Praga, wrote letter to tupreme Loviet requesting stay as Soviet citizen. P. POV said not to tell anyone, since answer might take a while. Gave him questionnaire to take back to hotel and fill out: biog plus reasons for defection.

14 August 1959. Sent his wife a telegram saying had sold 100 units, which untrue.

Agust 1959. More meetings in private rooms at nice restaurants. The coviets impressed on him that if he stayed he could never leave. Questioning included debricfing by two chemists to see if he really could make the spray gun (for plastic coating jobs) demonstrated at Kand exhibit; jokes about buting him instead of gun.

Late August 1959. Wife cabled him asking if he coming back. She wanted to know so that she could decide whether to put the children into usual school (if he coming home) or move to her purents! home and get them in school there (if he not). He cabled to to shead and out them into usual school.

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2 tenter 1950. TOTAL met him at etropel restaurant and told him he had been accepted. This was just after closing of fair and three days before Rand group to leave for home. Plasked where he would like to work and when we said Hoscow informed him it would be reningrad. (W later told in Rand and Gongul Engler that he had been offered work in many cities.) In requested a vacation; granted. Heeting with POPOV and EMESHIEN on subway steps: arrangements for W to get away from Rand group without being noticed.

10 contember 1959. Sent to Leningrad with interpreter Volodya [see also Ricciardelli case]. Given 1000 old rubles and promised more. Set by Aleksey of Inturist in Leningrad. Each changing hotels so that man group couldn't get him. Had left note saying planned travel around WCSR before returning, but they smelled a rat and were trying to locate him anyway. Volodya stayed there with him; went sightseeing, applied for job at Leningrad Scientific Research Institute. He was allowed to call Vera, who came right up and brought the rest of his baggage; affair began.

Circa mid-Uctober 1959. Returned to Moscow.

16 October 1959. MFA called US Embassy to say that W had assumed Soviet citizenship.

17 October 1959. Confrontation meeting at Moscow OVIR, with Mand and Snyder present. Newspaper report said it was enotional scene at Ambassy and that we make said he had not yet received Soviet passport, but this probably wrong. True story seems be that we signed expatriation form, kept his U.S. passport nevertheless (on pretext that he didn't have it with aim, wouth he really did), and followed Doviet instructions in telling Snyder that he had received Doviet passport on 21 September (which he hadn't), had defected for political reasons (which he didn't), etc. According to information in CI/DIG files, Snyder said that the only discrepancy between his story and Embassy's facts was that he seemed homestly it normant of two phone calls he supposedly made to Mand office in Moscow. We said he might have authorized them to be made in his name. Note that both calls purportedly received by Kund's Soviet employee Galina Ivanovna REDMIKIANA while she alone in office.

October 1959. A Mashington Post article of 21 May 1962 said that he changed his mind after only three months in the USCR and went to the Embassy for a Mashington permit, but that it was turned down and he had to wait a year to reapply. [In the light of other reports, this seems thoroughly garbled and to be disregarded.]

Circa 18 October 1959. Immediately or shortly after the confrontation meeting, he and Vera took off for a vacation in Sochi.

11: November 1959. The wew York Times wrote that he had written his parents he was planning to marry a poviet girl.

Circa 18 tetrberx19 November 1959. After a month in Sochi, he and Vera returned to settle in Seningrad. Vera was his assistant and translator, and according to Rand [how would be know ?] she got about 2000 ribles a month. He was assigned to make the spray gun, at a salary of 2 00 a nonth plus semi-unnual bomus of 500-600 rubles, this was equal to the salary of the chief of Lab #5 where he worked. His only document was a suin from O/IR saying that he had applied for a passport. They lived at homoratovskiy samestax member 222 Prospekt house (3, mt 18, healinged K-32, a torse-room

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apartment with bath.

Late December 1959 or early war any 1960. Received Soviet internal passport.

27 January 1960. Received 6 Lecember letter from his father telling him his nother now in mental hospital because of his defection and reminding him of responsibility for his children, etc. He decided go hom but told no one.

3 March 1960. He wrote father asking help to return home and asking why his father hadn't replied to his 5 February letter (which the father had never gotten).

13 and 16 harch 1960. He wrote his father that the family should come visit him in the U.R. About this time hand advised the father to get Wisphone number so that they could talk to him.

1 April 1960. Rand reported receiving a wire from W giving his phone in Leningrad as G-23705. This was phone at lab, where father called him 2 Apr.

5 April 1960. We wrote his father that he would be in rescow for the May Da, celebrations and would call at the ampassy. He felt certain of returning to the Late and told father not to come visit him after all.

24 April 1960. Rand telephoned by who confirmed desire return U.S.

rande. The west. No mention Powers.

h la 1000. He visited U.S. Dessy, were not challenged by foriet quarts lecause of American annearance. Engder told his how go about petting exit visa. Information in CI/SIS files adds that he said at this interview that he had recently made a speech to a large audience on why he left the U.S. Claims said nothing derogatory to U.S. Was told speech recorded for fiture radio use.

6 May 1960. He wrote father requesting invitations necessary for Soviet exit paralle. Told Vera uno "at first" was "burt and ammyed". Vera, six nonths programt, had to approve his exit request, which she did, possibly assuming it wouldn't be granted anguay.

W. .av 1960. Rand was back in Roscow and phoned h.

18 July 1960. Father sent, withenticated invitation letters.

26 July 1970. " wrote father details of May Day trip. Utill no mention of Powers, though Aund had told press all about freeze(caused by U-2)which he can into when he left the 17th by car in June 1960.

18 Arrist 1960. Daughter Svetland born. A adopted her a few days later, explaining that he did not intend to many were because he was not divorced from his first wife.

en ust 1960. What completed ever thire for exit application. From the state of the complete control of the state of the st

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October 1960. Exit permit denied.

funner 1%1. Land Vers vacationed at heach near Riga. Vers received final divorce from first husband.

Therest 1961. World second exit amplication.

26 February 1962. This was the date W received exit permit, according to what father teld Hand. (CI/SIC files)

2 farch 1002. We wrote parents that he did not have much morey saved and might need it for Hoscow stay. (CI/SIG)

23 Harch 1962. Cleveland Plain Lealer article said that when he last wrote family he had job in mostov-on-lon, also with the Lept xxixixxxxx aides said in masking ton today that this is the first case of its kind in which the massians have granted an exit visa. This inaccurates he was never even in Roctov-on-lon so far as is known, and Oswald for one had already been granted an exit permit. (CI/EIG)

2h March 1962. Just work, thinking about to leave.

May 1962. He was met by no one upon arrival in Moscow. Remained to small hotel where presented note from Vera asking for cheap room. He had not learned any Mussian.

18 May 1962. Traded woviet internal passport for exit passport, at OVIR. Meanwhile ran out of money. Vera sent him some from wening rad.

Later in May. Received money and plane ticket from father. Returned Vera's loan plus extra, via LP correspondent.

20 May 1962. Arrived in U.C. under alien quota. Extensively debriefed by CIA, FDI, etc. Psych assessment that he unemotional, not the type to learn from experience, thou, htless of xxxxx others' feelings, might be bought off by Soviets if in need.

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or Hussia, returned home to
night "a little confused and
ured."
The 33-year-old Webster, who
left his wife and two children
when he went to Russia, said
he was going home to nearby
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livo with my father."
The United States Embassy
in Moscow aid it was ibformer! he left behind a Rusnisrud.
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missed my children and samliy and wife, who has divorced
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his wife, who has divorced
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In 1950 to set up a Rand Corp.
plastics exhibit in Moscow. In
October of that year, he appeared at the American Embassy, turned in his passport
and renounced his United
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Technician Home After Stay in Sovie

PITTS BUBGIL, May 20 (AP)
Robert, an American
technician who gave up his rity
scenship and felt his family
for Russia, returned home tonight "a little confused, and
tired."

left his wife and two collidren
when he went to Russia, said
he was going home to nearby,
Zellenopie "to rest a little and
live with my father."
The United States Embasag
in Moserow said it was the
formed he left behind a Rusa
alan girl and her baby in Lesnigrad.
If told newsmen at New
York International Africer, he
hoped for a reconciliation with

missed my children and ily and wife, of course.

Webster had gone to Ru in 1959 to set up a lland Couper of that year, he Couber of that year, he peared at the American bassy, turned in his pass and renounced his Unit Stakes ciliterahip.

Tirre month, late very Websler had the infal its asked for the bany and asked for the recuter the United But he was unned dithen had to wait a year he could apply again.

Webster was met

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Handwriting sample of Vera Ivanova PLATOHOVA, wife of Robert & Webster

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