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PAUL THEROUX

MEMO

When I took up my post at the London Embassy I entered into a tacit agreement to share all the information to which I became privy that directly or indirectly had a bearing on the security of the United States of America or on my own status, regardless of my personal feelings.

I feel it is my duty therefore to report on an American national new resident in Britain.

The Subject is a thirty-two-year-old female Caucasian; slight build, blond hair, green eyes, no visible marks or scars. She is single. She has no criminal record, although our files show that she was arrested once on a charge of Obstruction; the charge was later dropped. She was born in Windsor, New Jersey, of mixed Scottish-Mexican ancestry. Education: Wellesley College and Oxford University, England. She is presently on a one-year sabbatical from Bryn Mawr College, where she is a member of the Department of English, specializing in Women in Literature.

As an undergraduate at Wellesley, the Subject was a founder-member of several feminist groups, and at Bryn Mawr she has continued to support feminist organizations by acting as faculty adviser. She was arrested in 1980 at a sit-in protesting against the nonadoption of the Equal Rights Amendment; as stated above, the charge against her was dropped. More recently, she led a demonstration at a nuclear power station in central Pennsylvania.

The Subject entered the United Kingdom on a student visa in January 1981 and became caretaker-tenant of an apartment in Stamford Brook, West London. Her stated reason for being in London was to complete her research for a biography of Mary Shelley, author of Frankenstein (1818), and Lodore (1835), as well as Valperga, or the Life and Adventures of Castruccio, Prince of Lucca (1823). This research did not fully occupy the Subject, and soon after her arrival, together with some British nationals, the Subject founded a group calling itself Women Opposed to Nuclear Technology.

The US Embassy Fact-Finding Task Force on Security here in London has a substantial file on this (legally registered) organization, as well as tapes and films of its activities, and a membership list on which the Subject’s name appears as Chairperson of the Agitprop Committee. The Subject attends the weekly Friday meeting of this committee.

What the Fact-Finding Task Force on Security is evidently not aware of is that the Subject has twice been entertained as a guest of Ambassador L. Burrell Noyes at

Winfield House. Ambassador Noyes and the Subject's father are graduates of Franklin and Marshall College, Class of '43.

It was at Winfield House earlier this year that I became acquainted with the Subject, though it was some weeks before I learned of her activities in the areas of feminism and antinuclear protest. She struck me as tough-minded, independent, and somewhat combative intellectually. She is extremely personable. She is also lovely. In a short time in England she has managed to make friends with British people – most of them women, most of them opinion-formers – representing a wide spectrum of political thought.

The Home Office has refused to extend the Subject's visa, claiming that her student status is no longer applicable, as she has completed her work on Mary Shelley. Personally, I think the Home Office is somewhat antagonized by the Subject's political activities, but there has been no direct comment on this by the Home Office.

The foregoing may be necessary to you because of the sensitive nature of my job, and my involvement with the Subject. But none of it is really of much importance, and the only fact worth recording is that roughly two months ago I fell in love with the Subject. Yesterday, having consulted no one – why should we? – we met at the Chelsea Registry Office, where my part of the dialogue went as follows:

Registrar: 'Do you, Spencer Monroe Savage, promise to take Flora Christine Domingo-Duncan as your lawfully wedded wife,' etc.

And I said, 'I do.'