

sumed the self-appointed and unwelcome role of recruiter of fellow officials such as Field and Duggan. Gumperz had at once informed her Soviet superior, an "illegal" station chief named Boris Bazarov, who had the unpleasant task of notifying Moscow (in an April 26, 1936, dispatch) that the whole Gumperz-Duggan-Field-Hiss situation had become something of an unseemly tag team match among agents, actual and potential:

The result has been that, in fact, [Field] and Hiss have been openly identified to [Laurence Duggan]. Apparently [Duggan] also understands clearly [Gumperz's] nature. And [Gumperz] and Hiss several months ago identified themselves to each other. Helen Boyd, [Duggan's] wife, who was present at almost all of these meetings and conversations, is also undoubtedly briefed and now knows as much as [Duggan] himself. . . . I think that after this story we should not speed up the cultivation of [Duggan] and his wife. Apparently, besides us, the persistent Hiss will continue his initiative in this direction. In a day or two, [Duggan's] wife will come to New York, where [Gumperz] will have a friendly meeting with her. At [Field's] departure from Washington, Helen expressed a great wish to meet [Gumperz] again. Perhaps Helen will tell [Gumperz] about her husband's feelings.⁶

NKVD Moscow pressed for continuing efforts to bring the Duggans on board, however, and a May 3, 1936, cable responding to Bazarov complained about Gumperz's handling of the situation (unfairly since Gumperz, too, had protested Hiss's having crossed over to other networks in search of recruits): "We do not understand [Gumperz's] motives in having met with [Hiss]. As we understand, this occurred after our instruction that [Hiss] was 'the neighbors' man' [working with military intelligence], and that one should leave him alone. Such experiments [as Gumperz's meeting] may lead to undesirable results."⁷

Moscow instructed Bazarov to be certain that none of his agents undertook similar meetings across jurisdictional boundaries "without your knowledge," especially not Hedda Gumperz, "knowing that her drawbacks include impetuosity." As for "how to untangle" the interwoven agents, Moscow was similarly practical:

[Field] left [for Europe], which isolates him to a certain degree, and [Hiss] will gradually forget about him. As for how to save [Duggan] and his wife [completing their agent recruitment], [Duggan] may be of interest to us, taking into account his status in "Surrogate" [the State Department]; his wife, also, taking into