

[REDACTED]

(m)

Sept. 23rd, 1939.

Federal Bureau Investigation
Washington, D. C.

b7c

Dear Sir:

Would you send me information concerning an investigation into the workings of Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas? I have a son who is there at present and have heard unpleasant things of an investigation held about a year ago. If there is any charge for this information I will gladly pay for it.

Receipt

[REDACTED]

b7c

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 9/14/12 BY 60322/BAW
228/193

61-6156-10
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
SEP [REDACTED]
U. S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE
TWO

Feb 21

July 5th, 1940

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D.C.

Attention John Edgar Hoover

Gentlemen:

⁰
Commonwealth College situated some ten miles from
Mena, Arkansas, has for years been a stigma on
the otherwise fair escutcheon of our City. The
enrollment is made up of that long haired be-
whiskered element, which classes itself as rad-
ical. We have ever considered the college as not
only a City, but a State and National menace.
The students are ever ready for a fight, and on
the night of June 25th, several of them set up-
on three of our local boys, much to the student's
disallusionment as to the fighting qualities of
our American youngsters. We frankly feel that
this so called institution should be investigated,
since we are confidant the school and its individ-
ual members are antagonistic to our form of Govern-
ment. Please suggest just what you suggest should

be done in the premises.

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

61-6156-11
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
Sincerely yours, 30 1940
[Redacted Signature]
FIVE 21

Little Rock
7/8/40

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 9/30/92 BY SP4 JPL/LAR
224/193

Recd
7-25-40
[Redacted]

Information as to post office obtained
from Return A to which this was

→ Mena, Ark

July 24, 1940

RECORDED

61-6156-11

Acknowledging receipt of your letter dated July 5, 1940, I desire to advise you that a perusal of the contents thereof indicates the Federal Bureau of Investigation would have no jurisdiction over matters pertaining to Commonwealth College in the absence of a violation of a Federal Statute within the jurisdiction of this Bureau.

In the absence of any jurisdiction in this matter, I do not feel that I am in a position to offer any suggestions as to what course you should follow.

I desire to state, however, that if I can be of any assistance to you in matters of mutual interest, I hope you will feel free to call upon me.

Sincerely yours,

John Edgar Hoover
Director

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 9/20/82 BY SP/PR/LW
224,193

- Mr. Tolson _____
- Mr. Clegg _____
- Mr. Foxworth _____
- Mr. Ladd _____
- Mr. Nathan _____
- Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
- Mr. Egan _____
- Mr. Glavin _____
- Mr. Nichols _____
- Mr. Rosen _____
- Mr. Tracy _____
- Mr. Gandy _____

CC - Little Rock

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
 MAILED
 ★ JUL 26 1940 ★
 P. M.
 FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION,
 U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

mas
[Redacted]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 9/20/82 BY sp/gx/lhr

August 16, 1940

224/93

NEW THEATRE LEAGUE

b7c

The New Theatre League, 110 West 47th Street, New York, New York, according to a statement on the back cover of "New Theatre News," a publication of the League for January-February, 1939, is "a federation of theaters throughout the country which produces labor and progressive plays for audiences of trade unionists and others interested in a vigorous drama of the people's problems. The only publishing agency in America for progressive social drama: discoverer, sponsor, and agent for "Waiting For Lefty", "Bury the Dead", "The Cradle Will Rock", "Plant in the Sun", and over fifty other plays. Sponsor of the only theatre school in America which offers serious artistic training for professional theatre as well as for leadership in the progressive theaters. Publisher of "Theatre Workshop", quarterly magazine of the theatre crafts, and "New Theatre News", bi-monthly bulletin on progressive theatre."

Indicative of the political views of the New Theatre League is the following editorial which appeared in the January-February, 1939, issue of New Theatre News:

"The curtain that went down on 1938 marked the end of a year of many discouraging events for the forces of progress throughout the world. Tragedy, grim and almost overwhelming, hogged the 1938 scene, with Munich as a grand and terrible denouement.

Now we've rung up the curtain on 1939, and it's good to relate that the scene is shifting. Tom Mooney, after 23 years of frame-up imprisonment, is a free man due to the action of a Governor elected by the united will of the democratic people of California. As we go to press, the Loyalist forces in Spain are heroically withstanding the Fascist offensive. Roosevelt is proving himself more and more of a true people's president by his consistent anti-Nazi actions, and his equally consistent appointment of progressives in high places.

RECORDED & INDEXED

What has all this to do with our theatre?

61-6156-11X

We know surely that the future of the new theatre, the future of all art in America, depends upon preserving and extending our democracy against the forces that would destroy it. Four years ago, in January, 1935, The New Theatre League was formed and dedicated to this task through the use of its own artistic medium. Now, in January 1939, at the beginning of the fifth years of our existence, we take inventory of our accomplishments to gain perspective for the job ahead.

- Mr. Tolson _____
- Mr. Clegg _____
- Mr. Foxworth _____
- Mr. Ladd _____
- Mr. Nathan _____
- Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
- Mr. Egan _____
- Mr. Glavin _____
- Mr. Nichols _____
- Mr. Rosen _____
- Mr. Tracy _____
- Miss Gandy _____

ESTIGAR

FIVE

1 cc of memo - sent to [illegible]

We've come a long distance from the first days of the New Theatre League in 1935, when a few young enthusiasts decided the time had come for a national center and federation of the progressive theatres that were springing up mushroom-like all over the country. Inheriting the experience of the Provincetown Theatre, the New Playwrights' Theatre, and the League of Workers Theatres, we set ourselves the ambitious goal of breaking through the narrow scope of existing workers' dramatic groups, and establishing people's theatres rooted deep in American life.

We have made strides toward this aim. Our contribution might be measured alone in terms of the outstanding plays and playwrights we have discovered: *Waiting for Lefty* by Odets in '35, *Bury the Dead* by Shaw in '36. *The Cradle Will Rock* by Elitsstein in '37, and *Plant in the Sun* by Bengal in '39. Our fourth birthday will be commemorated by a presentation of scenes from these four prize plays in a Cavalcade of New Theatre on February 5th in New York City, with the original companies of each production taking part.

But beyond these plays, we can be proud of our thirty-five affiliated new theatres, an anti-fascist, pro-labor cultural chain across America. We can point to the publication of the only craft magazine of the theatre arts in the English language, *THEATRE WORKSHOP* and to the new interest in drama developing among the trade unions, expressed through our bulletin, *NEW THEATRE NEWS*. There is the continuous functioning of our *NEW THEATRE SCHOOL*, training forces for the people's theatres as well as for Broadway; the publication of many new plays annually, giving encouragement to young progressive playwrights and providing the materials of social drama to innumerable university and little theatres.

This growth was signalized by the last National Conference of the New Theatre League in June 1938, when fifty groups from California to Virginia re-dedicated themselves to the program of building a vital national people's theatre movement, and most recently, this December, when members of the National Council of the League assembled in New York City to hear and give reports of progress made in the last six months. Again it was recorded when our National Secretary, speaking at the National Congress of the American League for Peace & Democracy in Washington, D. C. January 8th, pledged the use of our new theatres in the all-important fight against reaction this coming year.

In spite of all the encouraging signs for 1939, we know that the counter-offensive of reaction is girding itself for new attacks against every progressive group via the headlines, newsreels and airwaves. The Dies Committee has its new appropriation. The embargo on Loyalist Spain is still to be lifted. Trade union unity is still to be forged. Much, very much, remains to be done.

- Mr. Tolson _____
- Mr. Clegg _____
- Mr. Foxworth _____
- Mr. Ladd _____
- Mr. Nathan _____
- Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
- Mr. Egan _____
- Mr. Glavin _____
- Mr. Nichols _____
- Mr. Hendon _____
- Mr. Rosen _____
- Mr. Tracy _____
- Miss Gandy _____

The people who freed Mooney, who elected Olson in California, who support Roosevelt in his progressive moves, need constant encouragement. Our new theatres can give it to them. Too many of us in the army of progress still waver at every Munich. In the days to come all optimism, all hope,—all the stimulus that is such an integral and splendid part of our new theatre—will be needed to keep the army going forward. Now, more than ever before, our job is clear. It is more than a job. It is a necessity and a challenge!"

Under the heading "What the Critics Say", New Theatre News for January-February, 1939, briefs critical comment appearing in various publications including a review in the Greenwich, Connecticut "Time" of the production of Erwin Shaw's "Bury the Dead", produced by an all Negro cast sponsored by a group known as "The Comrades" affiliated with the Negro Drama Association of Connecticut which includes among others the "Theatre Progressive" in New Haven, which is affiliated with the New Theatre League. There is quoted from the prospectus of the Negro Drama Association of Connecticut, the following:

"From Nat Turner to Angelo Herndon, the Negro people's history in America has been charged with drama. From the earliest spirituals to Haiti, the Negro people have expressed the drama of their lives through their own creative culture. But to the world-at-large under our present theatre, "Stepin Fetchit" is made to represent Negro culture. The bright visions and fierce hatreds, the dignity and beauty, the magnificent struggles for freedom of a people who have suffered much—these are stifled and suppressed!"

The Theatre Progressive, above mentioned, was organized by Powell Lindsay, colored playwright, a member of the New Theatre League Executive Board as of January-February, 1939.

The New Theatre News under the heading of "What the Critics Say" also briefs a review by William L. Patterson in the Midwest Daily Record (official organ of Communist Party) of Langston Hughes' play, "Don't You Want To Be Free?" produced by a Negro People's Theatre at the Abraham Lincoln Center stage on the South Side of Chicago. The following is quoted:

"Don't you Want to be Free" is a series of closely knit sketches tracing the history of the struggles of the Negro people in America for full and complete freedom....It is the stark realism, the unvarnished truth, with which the conditions of their daily lives are portrayed by Hughes, that will stir people to action. From the slave block of 1619, the spectator is carried step by step along the trail of history until at the end, the listener eases forward in his seat, unconsciously repeating in unison with those upon the stage a song of Chicago, 1938, The South Side is tired.

- Mr. Tolson _____
- Mr. Clegg _____
- Mr. Foxworth _____
- Mr. Ladd _____
- Mr. Nathan _____
- Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
- Mr. Egan _____
- Mr. Glavin _____
- Mr. Nichols _____
- Mr. Hendon _____
- Mr. Rosen _____
- Mr. Tracy _____
- Miss Gandy _____

The South Side is tired—that's the note one carries home. Tired of the inhumanly high rents, the lack of hospital facilities, the absence of playgrounds, the presence of police terror, unemployment... The South Side is on the move along with progressive America... There are some who will say Don't You Want to Be Free is propoganda. It is. That is the role of any artistic expression. It moves to action, or it mollifies or soothes to inaction; that is art... There are moments such as when the haunting story of the black woman's struggle in America pours from the lips of the mother, frantic with fear that her son will give up, that will draw tears from the most hard-boiled audience...

The Negro People's Theatre has a bright future. It is needed on the South Side. The production as a whole shows that intelligent direction has been given to a talented group. Miss Sumner is to be congratulated, as is Fanny McConnell. It is difficult to single out a star. William Nix as the militant Negro youth of today and Daisy Roane as a Mulatto girl stand out. But the Negro People's Theatre is truly welding together a collective theatre."



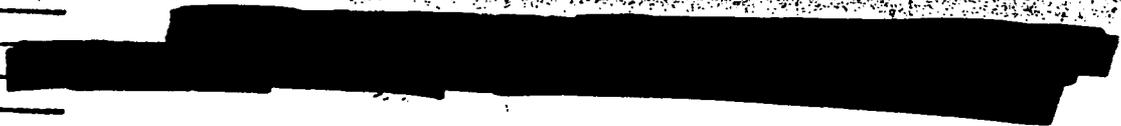
b7c

As early as November 1936, the New Theatre League was alleged to be among those organizations which are affiliated in one way or another with the Communist Party.

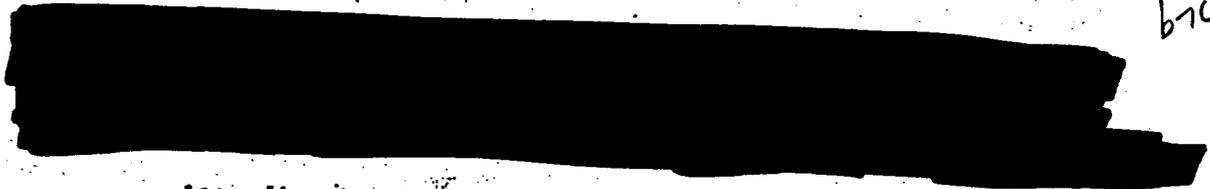
The New Theatre League participated in the 1940 May Day demonstration in N. Y. C., a demonstration which was claimed to be a triumph for the Communist Party. In the parade, in addition to the New Theatre League, were such units as the Communist Party led by Browder and Ford, the Young Communist League, the International Workers of the World, the Veterans of Abraham Lincoln Brigade, the Workers Alliance, and the American Student Union.

- Mr. Tolson _____
- Mr. Clegg _____
- Mr. Foxworth _____
- Mr. Ladd _____
- Mr. Nathan _____
- Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
- Mr. Egan _____
- Mr. Glavin _____
- Mr. Nichols _____
- Mr. Hendon _____
- Mr. Rosen _____
- Mr. Tracy _____
- Miss Gandy _____

On January 1, 1937, approximately 35 actors brought together by the League took part in a revue at the Adelphi Theatre, N. Y. C., called "Pink Slips On Parade," the "Pink Slips" referring to the then current notices of dismissal from the Federal Theatre Project of the W. P. A.



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According to the Daily Worker (official organ of Communist Party) for December 19, 1938, Ben Irwin, National Secretary of the New Theatre League, issued a statement answering charges of Miss Hazel Huffman before the Dies Committee, which statement reads as follows:

"Miss Huffman's charges that the New Theatre League is affiliated with the International Union of Revolutionary Theatres with 'headquarters in Moscow' is on a level with the rest of the farcial proceedings of the Dies Committee, who have labeled Christopher Marlowe and Shirley Temple as Communists. The International Union of Revolutionary Theatres has been defunct for five years, and the New Theatre League was founded in 1935.

"As for charges that Miss Hallie Flanagan is a 'contributing editor to the New Theatre League,'—that would be difficult to manage, since we are a national association of progressive theatres and not a publication. The New Theatre League does publish two periodicals, 'Theatre Workshop' and 'New Theatre News' but Mrs. Flanagan is a contributing editor of neither of these publications.

"Among the members of the New Theatre League Advisory Council are Walter Pritchard Eaton, dean of the Yale Drama School, Barret H. Clark, Orson Welles, and numerous other prominent theatre people, all of whom are unquestionably suspect material for the Dies Committee.

"The New Theatre League strongly protests the Dies Committee's outrageous waste of taxpayers' funds, and urged that Mr. Dies be compelled to repay the money he has been allotted by appearing for a week's run at the Palace. We guarantee him an audience."

On January 13, 1940, a dance for the benefit of the "400 Veterans of the International Brigade" imprisoned in Spain was held at the studio of the New Theatre League, 110 West 47th Street.



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- Mr. Tolson _____
- Mr. Clegg _____
- Mr. Foxworth _____
- Mr. Ladd _____
- Mr. Nathan _____
- Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
- Mr. Egan _____
- Mr. Glavin _____
- Mr. Nichols _____
- Mr. Hendon _____
- Mr. Rosen _____
- Mr. Tracy _____
- Miss Gandy _____

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The basis of the Theatre League was said to be the necessity of developing soundly trained theatres to take advantage of the superiority of the new plays written for the Revolutionary Theatres. The League felt that the programs of its theatres during International Theatre Week, particularly May 12 to 19, 1935, would feature plays against war, Fascism, and censorship. The League felt that it was its task to build the Revolutionary Theatre, create revolutionary drama and organize the American United Theatre Front against cultural suppression and for a completely free stage.

Five plays, available through the International Theatre League, are advertised by the League in the following manner:

WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS by Ben Martin tops the list of new plays released this month. The NTL is proud to present this play on civil liberties by a new young author, and we truly believe this to be one of the finest scripts seen on the new theatre horizon for many months... Pericles Saportas, a Greek restaurant owner, has just become a citizen. He takes the American constitution seriously, more seriously in fact than some 100 per center vigilantes who try to prevent him from renting to a union the hall attached to his restaurant... Though the script is packed with serious meaning, its point is made through rich humor. (304..254 NTL)

DR. BRUCE, By Ben Blake, (author of **AWAKENING OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE**) is our second play on civil liberties for this month, tackling the problem in a more restrained but very effective way... Dr. Bruce is a M. D. in a small American community, isolated from the turbulent currents of labor struggle... he learns a lesson about civil

rights when he attempts to defend a wounded strike leader, whom he is treating, from a committee of vigilantes...A quiety persuasive and highly dramatic statement of fundamental American principles, this is a play suitable for the broadest and most conservative type of audience and an excellent program balance for WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS... (30¢..25¢ for NTL-ers)

ACCORDING TO LAW, by Noel Houston, prize winning play of the American Civil Liberties Union recent contest, deserves the immediate attention of our new theatres...Taking place in a Southern court room and dealing with the legal lynching of a Negro, guilty of no crime, this is an expertly conceived drama by a newspaperman who knows his subject intimately...Printed in One Act Play Magazine this play is agented by the NTL... (50¢..45¢ NTL-ers)

INTERNATIONAL HOOKUP, originated by the New York Theatre of Action and adapted for 1940 by Ben Irwin, is a new version of an old favorite...a satirical skit, poking fun at the radio commentators and the various air wave programs that are stirring up war hysteria..this is sure-fire stuff for us, has the virtue of being easily staged and very suitable for mobile bookings...Published with other short selections of an anti-war nature in one script... (30¢..25¢ NTL-ers)

THE LAND OF BEYOND TIME, a satire on Mr. Martin Dies who meets an old colleague A. Mitchell Palmer (of the 1919 witch hunts) in the "land beyond". Mr. Dies and Mr. Palmer collaborate to try some of the famous revolutionary characters of history, including Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln and find them guilty of seditious crimes. Published by the American League for Peace and Democracy. 20¢ Royalty free."

It has very recently been stated that the National Theatre League is among the numerous organizations controlled outright by the Communist Party.

On July 12, 1940, the Federated Press announced that the Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas, would cease its activities at the close of the present summer session, due to the current "reaction in America, born of the attempt of Wall Street to involve the country in the war now raging in foreign lands" and that beginning in October, 1940, the grounds of Commonwealth College would be occupied by the New Theatre League whose aim is to bring labor and farm organization to the workers through the delicate medium with emphasis on the South.

- Mr. Tolson _____
- Mr. Clegg _____
- Mr. Foxworth _____
- Mr. Ladd _____
- Mr. Nathan _____
- Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
- Mr. Egan _____
- Mr. Glavin _____
- Mr. Nichols _____
- Mr. Hendon _____
- Mr. Rosen _____
- Mr. Tracy _____
- Miss Gandy _____

Ben Blake is also editor of "12 Plays for Boys and Girls" published by the Federation of Children's Organizations and Junior "Section of International Workers Order" at New York, New York in 1935. "This is the first collection of workingclass plays ever published in the United States""Here you will find no sham fairy princes no ruthless slayers glorified as military conquerors, no false pictures of equal opportunities for rich and poor, for millionaire and worker or farmer." (Introduction)

cc
[REDACTED] August 17, 1940

b7c
MEMORANDUM FOR MR. H. H. CLEGG

In keeping with your request, the files of the Bureau have been reviewed and the following memoranda have been prepared on the subjects listed:

- National Council for the Prevention of War.
- Young Communist League.
- New York State Committee of the Communist Party.
- Keep America Out of War Congress.
- The California Youth Legislature.
- Lawyers Committee to Keep The United States Out of War.
- World Peaceways, Incorporated
- Committee to Defend America by Keeping Out of War.
- Communist Party of Red Congress.
- American Student Union.
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.
- The Medical Bureau of the North American.
- Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy.
- The New York Peace Association.
- Emergency Peace Mobilization Committee.
- New Theatre School.
- Youth Committee Against War.
- New Theatre League.
- The Fellowship of Reconciliation.
- War Resisters League.

Respectfully,
b7c

RECORDED & INDEXED

- Mr. Tolson _____
- Mr. Clegg _____
- Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
- Mr. Foxworth _____
- Mr. Nathan _____
- Mr. Ladd _____
- Mr. Egan _____
- Mr. Glavin _____
- Mr. Nichols _____
- Mr. Rosen _____
- Mr. Tracy _____

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED

HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 9/20/82 BY SP/px/LAT
224 193

61-6156-11X

RECORDED
& INDEXED

61-6156-11X

August 20, 1940

CONFIDENTIAL

b7c

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. UGC CARUSI
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Reference is made to telephonic conversation had with you by [redacted] of this Bureau on August 19, 1940, relative to the request of [redacted] for information, as contained in this Bureau's files, concerning the following organizations:

- National Council for the Prevention of War.
- Young Communist League.
- New York State Committee of the Communist Party.
- Keep America Out of War Congress.
- The California Youth Legislature.
- Lawyers Committee to Keep the United States Out of War.
- World Peaceways, Incorporated.
- Committee to Defend America by Keeping Out of War.
- Communist Party of Red Congress.
- American Student Union.
- women's International League for Peace and Freedom.
- The Medical Bureau of the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy.
- The New York Peace Association.
- Emergency Peace Mobilization Committee.
- New Theatre School.
- Youth Committee Against War.
- New Theatre League.
- The Fellowship of Reconciliation.
- War Resisters League.

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HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 9/21/82 BY SP/9/LLH
224/193

DECLASSIFIED BY SP/9/LLH
ON 9/20/82

- Mr. Tolson _____
- Mr. Clegg _____
- Mr. Foxworth _____
- Mr. Ladd _____
- Mr. Nichols _____
- Mr. E. A. Tamm _____
- Mr. Egan _____
- Mr. Glavin _____
- Mr. Harbo _____
- Mr. Rosen _____
- Mr. Tracy _____
- Miss Gandy _____

Pursuant to your request, memoranda on the above described organizations are being transmitted herewith for such use in connection with [redacted] request as may be deemed appropriate.

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
MAILED
★ AUG 21 1940 ★
P. M.
Incl. Bureau of Investigation
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

b7c

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover
Director

[Redacted signature area]

ORIGINAL FILED IN

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
Washington, D. C.

Mr. Tolson.....
Mr. Clegg.....
Mr. E. A. Tamm.....
Mr. Foxworth.....
Mr. Nathan.....
Mr. Ladd.....
Mr. Egan.....
Mr. Glavin.....
Mr. Nichols.....
Mr. Hendon.....
Mr. Rosen.....
Mr. Tracy.....
Miss Gandy.....

RM

b7c

July 26, 1940

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. H. H. CLEGG

File

Re: Commonwealth College

The following information is being reproduced for record purposes:

The Federated Press for July 12, 1940, announced that Commonwealth College is ceasing its activities at the close of the present summer session, after having operated for 17 years. The article states that over 15,000 students have lived on the campus during that period and have been trained in union methods, organizing technics, labor journalism, dramatics, office procedures, parliamentary law, and public speaking.

It is stated that some of the graduates of Commonwealth College are A.F. of L. and C.I.O. organizers today, and that some of them hold government jobs.

The article gives as a reason for the cessation of its activities, the current "reaction in America, born of the attempt of Wall Street to involve the country in the war now raging in foreign lands, has made it difficult to obtain the donations needed to keep the college going. Unions facing war problems are less ready to give scholarships or send students. Liberals, foreseeing the necessity of resorting to air raid shelters from the Dies committee and other bombers of freedom, find it wise to husband their resources."

The article states that the campus of Commonwealth College will not be unoccupied, however. It states that beginning in October, 1940, the grounds will be occupied by the New Theater League, whose aim is to bring labor and farm organization to the workers through the dramatic medium with emphasis on the south. There is no connection, according to this source, between the New Theater League and Commonwealth College.

RECORDED & INDEXED

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HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 9/2/82 BY SP1 GPR/LK
224,193

61-6156-12

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

1 JUL 30 1940

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

CLEGG

Memo for Mr. Clegg

-2-

In announcing the closing of Commonwealth College, Director Nathan Oser, of that school, stated that the closing of Commonwealth College "removes the last of the long-t residential labor schools from the American scene."

Respectfully,

A large black rectangular redaction covers the signature and name of the sender.

b7c

October 21, 1940

COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE
Mena, Arkansas

The following information was obtained from an outside unknown source dated at New York City, October 11, 1940, and is being made a part of the files for any attention which may appear appropriate:

Commonwealth College, sometimes referred to as Commonwealth Labor College, on August 30, 1940, passed out of existence after being active for seventeen years. This resulted from prosecutions by the State of Arkansas. The property of the College has been taken over by the New Theatre League of New York City for its southern New Theatre School.

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DATE 9/20/82 BY SP/epR/llr
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RECORDED & INDEXED

61-6156-13

INVESTIGATION

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION FOIPA DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET

2 Page(s) withheld entirely at this location in the file. One or more of the following statements, where indicated, explain this deletion.

- Deleted under exemption(s) b7c b7D with no segregable material available for release to you.
- Information pertained only to a third party with no reference to you or the subject of your request.
- Information pertained only to a third party. Your name is listed in the title only.
- Document(s) originating with the following government agency(ies) _____, was/were forwarded to them for direct response to you.

_____ Page(s) referred for consultation to the following government agency(ies); _____ as the information originated with them. You will be advised of availability upon return of the material to the FBI.

_____ Page(s) withheld for the following reason(s):

For your information: _____

The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:

61-6156-14

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X DELETED PAGE(S) X
X NO DUPLICATION FEE X
X FOR THIS PAGE X
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Little Rock, Arkansas,
October 22, 1940.

52302

Special Agent in Charge,
New York, New York.

RE: NEW THEATER LEAGUE, formerly
COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE, Mena,
Arkansas; INTERNAL SECURITY.

Dear Sir:

On September 21, 1940, Deputy Prosecuting
Attorney J. F. QUILLIN, Mena, Arkansas, filed charges against
Commonwealth College at Mena, Arkansas, charging it with
teaching anarchy and advocating overthrow of the State and
National Government by force. The warrant was served on KATEAN
OSER, Director of the College.

This institution for a number of years has
been brought to the attention of this Office and of the Bureau
from time to time as being a Communistic institution. Recently
the name of the institution was changed to the New Theater
League.

[REDACTED]

This information is being furnished to the
New York City Field Division for whatever attention deemed
appropriate. No active investigation is being conducted by the
Little Rock Field Division concerning Commonwealth College under
its new name, the New Theater League, but information is reported
from time to time concerning this institution.

RECORDED & INDEXED
Very truly yours,

FRED HALLFORD,
Special Agent in Charge.

61-6156-15
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
1 OCT 23 1940
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FH:adm
61-3

cc Bureau

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 1/28/82 BY SP-1/MLK

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61-6156-15

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
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4 Page(s) withheld entirely at this location in the file. One or more of the following statements, where indicated, explain this deletion.

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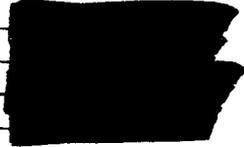
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1940

MR. CLEGG
MR. CARSON
MR. KRAMER

FILES SECTION



b7c

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Oct. 24, 1936.

b7c

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover,
Chief Department of Justice,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:-

I am writing you relative to radical school, located in this community (12 miles west of Menz) known as Commonwealth college. The main objective of this school is to overthrow our Government, and establish a soviet russia in America. I know whereof I speak, as I joined the Communist party, while taking a night course of lessons there, and can show my membership card as proof.

Please donot get the wrong impression that I am a renegade Communist. For I entered Commonwealth college for the express purpose of learning if all the rumors I heard of their disloyalty to our government as well as their teachings of free-love were true. Later, I joined the Communist party to get deeper into their confidence, and remained a member for six months, at the expiration of which time, I asked them to drop me as a member temporarily, which request was granted with the option of being reinstated at my pleasure.

I learned that this institution was composed of the radical element of "reds" that their teachings is directed toward the purpose of overthrowing our present form of government, in its entirety, and set up a communistic form, corresponding with that of russia today. I, moreover learned that this institution is a place of great vice, but cleverly kept under cover, though prior to the investigation of local and state authorities into the teachings and morals of this institution some two years ago, the student of this place might be seen about the campus so nearly devoid of clothings as to rightly class them nudists.

I was reared in a religious home, and am loyal to my government, hence I entered this institution, not as a regular student, but taking nightly lessons, in a few subjects, to get the "dope" on this vile bunch of "reds", and I, now, believe I have abundant proof of what they are dangerous enemies to our government. Therefore, I am submitting this information, and ask that it be filed in your office, so if it leads to the arrest and conviction of these people, I will be entitled to the reward for this service. I did not work solely for the possible financial gain I might receive from disclosing this information, but also, for the good of my country. Yet, I am aware of the fact that I am endangering my life, as I shall probably be needed as a star-witness against them, in open court, after arrests have been made and this institution suppressed, nevertheless, I am willing to face any danger incurred. But, until arrests are made, all additional proof at this institution, which can be found, seiged, I am asking that you hold this information in strictest confidence.

In answering this letter, please send special delivery letter, and make an appointment for a private interview. Hoping to hear from you at your earliest convenience, I am,

cordially and loyally yours

61-7558-20

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

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b7c

Oct. 24, 1936
Edwin Howard Jackson

COMMUNISM
AND
COMMONWEALTH
COLLEGE
UNMASKED

This pamphlet contains extracts taken from an address delivered by L. D. Summers in the First Baptist Church, Mena, Arkansas. Most of the material used in this address was gathered from the report of the committee appointed by the House of Representatives to investigate Communism in the United States and is known as the Fish Committee, also the individual views of Mr. John E. Nelson, and other authors.

These pamphlets are free, but if any one should desire to help send them out they may do so by sending a free will offering to the person named below.

L. D. SUMMERS
MENA, ARKANSAS

EARLY REVOLUTIONARIES AND THEIR AIMS

From Plato to the present, every age has had its intransigents. Early in the Christian era antagonists to established order appeared. They held that "liberty and equality are the essential rights that man in his original and primitive perfection received from Nature. Property destroyed equality; governments and religion destroyed liberty; therefore to reinstate man in his original rights, it was necessary to destroy all religions, all civil societies, and all property."

"It was during the latter part of the eighteenth century, with its industrial revolution and consequent concentration of population in the industrial centers, that the age-old problem of the "one against the many" took on increased emphasis, and radicalism, as we now understand the term, was conceived and began its gradual development.

One of the greatest of the early revolutionaries was Dr. Adam Weishaupt, a professor of law in a Bavarian college. At the age of 28 years, in 1776, he organized the order of the illuminati, dedicated to the destruction of Christianity and all existing governments. Weishaupt was, perhaps, the first great exponent of world revolution. Reduced to a simple formula, the aims of his society may be summarized under six points, or "abolitions."

1. Abolition of monarchy and all ordered government.
2. Abolition of private property.
3. Abolition of inheritance.
4. Abolition of patriotism.
5. Abolition of the family (i. e., of marriage and all orthodox morality, and the institution of the communal education of children)
6. Abolition of all religion.

The order spread rapidly through France, Italy, and Germany. Eventually exposed and outlawed, the remnants of the order went underground to form the inner circle of an international revolutionary movement.

It is interesting to note that while Weishaupt and his followers were formulating these subversive principles, George Washington and our forefathers were struggling for independence and formulating those noble and constructive principles of representative government and individual liberty upon which our Constitution rests. The struggle which we face today is between these two systems of philosophy and ideology, born at the same time, but diametrically antagonistic and mutually exclusive.

COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

Perhaps the greatest enemy to Christianity and constitutional government today is the Communist Manifesto, often called the Communist Bible, written by two young German apostate Jews, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. It was based on these "abolitions" of Weishaupt, and was published in 1848, as the platform of Communist League, a workingmen's organization, at first exclusively German, but later international in its scope. To the abolitions of Weishaupt, Carl Marx added certain others of his own. His manifesto and other writings divided modern society into two general classes; the bourgeoisie, representing the capitalist class, and the proletariat, representing the workers, classes having nothing in common and therefore to be separated by class warfare until such time as the workers shall have overcome and forever destroyed the bourgeoisie. According to his philosophy, this could only be accomplished through the abolition of religion, family relations, patriotism, capitalism, and property and inheritance rights.

It was this manifesto that gave to the world that slogan so well known today: "Workingmen of the world, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains, and the world to gain!"

While the writings of Karl Marx are generally considered as the original source of socialist philosophy, yet his ideas were undoubtedly derived from the subversive teachings of Kolmar, Weishaupt, Rosseau, and other antecedent philosophers.

TWO RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONS

It is well to remember that there were two Russian revolutions. The first came with the abdication of Nicholas II, on March 16, 1917, which marked the end of the Russian Empire. The governing power then developed upon the Duma, the only legal mandate-holding group in the country. A provisional government, under Kerensky, was organized, and was immediately recognized by the United States, our Government being the first to recognize the right of the Russian people to revolution. From March to November, 1917, a period of about eight months, Russia lived under a democratic form of government.

With the formation of the provisional government political amnesty was declared and former revolutionaries began to return to Russia. Lenin was then in exile in Switzerland; Stalin was in exile in Siberia; and Trotsky was living in the Bronx, N. Y.

At once this Bolshevik group who had had nothing directly to do with the abdication of the Czar, became active. Trotsky, who had been delivering soap-box orations in Union Square, New York, and in Philadelphia, prepared to return to Russia. In his farewell speech, delivered in German Hall in the Bronx, he is reported to have said:

"I want you people to organize and keep on organizing in America in order that you may be able to overthrow this dirty, rotten Government of the United States. I am going back to Russia to overthrow the government there, and stop this war with Germany."

"RESPONSIBILITY FOR RUSSIAN POLITICS"

So we soon find in Russia three great distinct, yet inter-related organizations; first, the Russian Communist Party; Second, the Soviet Government; and third, the Third International or Komintern known to us as Bolshevism, which teaches the following sad facts:

"Bolshevism is the avowed enemy of religion. Atheism is taught to the children. All church property has been confiscated, and the clergy and all others connected with religious institutions have been disfranchised and deprived of the right to occupy public positions. The Sunday School has been suppressed and all teachings of religious doctrines in public, either in schools or institutions of any kind, is expressly forbidden. The recognition of a Supreme Being in judicial oaths has been prohibited. Under the old regime, it was obligatory on every newspaper or periodical printed in Russia, on Easter Sunday, to carry as a headline, "Christ is Risen." On Easter Sunday, 1918, the Bolshevist papers substituted the headline "One Hundred Years Ago Today, Karl Marx Was Born."

Taken from—Collier's New Encyclopedia, Volume 2, P. 96.

The Third International (or Communist International) was created in March 1919. It is the governing body of the communist activity throughout the world, and is made up of a group of many countries including the United States. The Third International is dominated and controlled by the Russian Communist

Part and its whole machinery is in their hands. To fully understand the real teachings of Communism, you must know the name of that form of government is **"UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALISTIC REPUBLIC."**

The agent or agents, of this "Union of Soviet Socialist Republic" is the Communist Party, and it has committed to it by the "Union of Soviet Socialist Republic" the solemn duty to teach and put over this form of government in every country. This communist party is a wheel in a wheel. The communist party of America was organized at Chicago in September, 1919. The communism in the United States, is organized on the theory of Karl Marx with the tactics applied by Lenin. Their objectives are definite and they have adopted an uncompromising policy by which to attain them. They openly declare the following: "To arouse the working class consciousness," To teach that our Government is dominated and controlled by and for the capitalist class; that the workers produce everything and own nothing," and the capitalist "produce nothing and own everything." "To educate the masses to a common view point, and set them up as enemies of capitalistic society." "To prepare them for the revolution that is to usher in the dictatorship of the proletariat." "To expropriate all means and instrumentalities of production, and to suppress or eliminate all those who may oppose them." "To make America a Soviet Republic."

COMMUNIST PLEDGE

The undersigned declares his adherence to the program and statute of the Communist International and the Communist Party of The United States of America, and agrees to submit to the discipline of the party and to engage actively in its work.

CONDITION OF MEMBERSHIP IN COMMUNIST PARTY

The constitution of our party specifies that only they can be members of the party who accept the party program, are members of a party nucleus, carry out all decisions, pay dues regularly, and perform active party work. No one can be a party member without carrying out definite party tasks.

"A member of the Communist Party becomes such not only through his own selection, but by the privilege of the working class among whom he lives and toils. Not only must he come with recommendations from older party members of five to ten years standing. Recommendations taken so sincerely that a member may be expelled for endorsing an unworthy candidate. Not only must he undergo a period of probation ranging from one to two years, but admission may be refused. A member once admitted may be expelled not only by the judgment of other Communists, but in response to accusations for non-party workers as well," so says Miss Anna Louise Strong, who for twelve years worked in Russia with the Communist Party.

PRINCIPLES OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The main principles of the Communist International are as follows: Overthrow and annihilation of so-called capitalist governmental power and its replacement by proletarian power; dictatorship of the working class confiscation of property; arming of the proletariat; armed conflict by the proletariat against capitalism; no compromise with socialists remaining in the Second International.

THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AND THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

The Communist International is dominated by the Russian Communist Party and soviet officials, and could not exist without the whole-hearted support of the leaders of the Russian Communist Party and the financial backing of the Soviet Government.

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN THE UNITED STATES

The Communists in the United States openly admit their allegiance to the Communist International at Moscow, and glory in the fact that they obey all the orders issued from there immediately and implicitly.

SPECIAL NEGRO COMMUNIST PARTY

The Communist Party has a negro work department and a national negro organizer. This special department extends down through all communist units, including the District, the section, and finally to each unit or nucleus, with a responsible director.

The task of the communists among the negro workers is to bring about class consciousness, and to crystallize this is independent class political action against the capitalist class; to take every possible advantage of occurrences and conditions which will tend to develop race feeling with the views of utilizing racial antagonism. At every opportunity the attempt is made to stir up trouble between the white and negro races.

The negroes are made to believe that the communists practice complete racial and social equality and that only when a communist Government is set up in the United States will the negroes obtain equality and freedom from exploitation by the "white bosses," and in order to attract and impress the negro the communists make a point of encouraging mixed social functions where white women communists dance with negro men and white men communists dance with negro women. It is openly advocated that there must be complete social and racial equality between the whites and negroes even to the extent of intermarriage.

William Z. Foster, recognized as the outstanding communist in the United States and who appeared before the committee, testified as follows:

"Mr. Eslick—Now, you used this expression "The communists are leading the fight for complete equality and self-determination of the negroes." Do you believe in the social equality of the negro and the white man?"

"Mr. Foster—I do; most assuredly.

"Mr. Eslick—Do you believe in interracial marriages between negroes and whites?"

"Mr. Foster—I believe that any person has a right to marry whomever they please, without regard to the color of their skin;—that there is no basis in science or anywhere else for the assumption that the negro is in any way inferior to the white man.

"Mr. Eslick—So you make no distinction between races?"

"Mr. Foster—No, sir."

THE NEGRO COMMUNIST DEMAND

"We demand the full equality of the negro people in the social system of the United States and everywhere. Against racial inequality we raise the standard of social equality. We unqualifiedly refuse to regard our people as inferior in any respect.

We demand the abolition of all laws which openly or by subterfuge discriminate against our people, or which in any way recognize a distinction of races. We champion this demand not only for our own race but also for all other races, yellow or brown. We declare that all claims of an inherent difference between races are ignorant and unscientific if not pure hypocrisy. We demand:

1. The abolition of all laws which result in segregation.
2. The abolition of all Jim Crow laws.
3. The abolition of all laws which disfranchise negroes, or any working people, on the basis of color or race or place of birth, ancestry, the lack

of a permanent home, the lack of property, or for any other reason.

4. The abolition of all laws which forbid the intermarriage of persons of different races.
5. The abolition of all laws and public administrative measures which prohibit or in practice prevent colored children or youths from attending the general public schools or universities.

We also take notice of those established customs which discriminate against negroes in practice, although not written into law. We demand—

(1) The abolition of the right of landlords and real estate agents to discriminate against the colored race in renting or selling of homes shall be taken out of the hands of all private persons and shall be made a matter of public administration with the first applicant served regardless of race.

(2) We demand the full and equal admittance of our people to all theaters, restaurants, hotels, railroad-station waiting rooms, and all other places of public resort, and no separation or recognition of color distinctions, and that heavy penalties be imposed against persons who so discriminate.

We regard these political and social demands as embodying the demand of full social equality for the negro people.

COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE

Commonwealth College, a school located in Polk County, Arkansas, twelve miles west of Mena is a Communist institution.

When this institution was first established in Polk County, Arkansas, the citizens were lead to believe that it was a school in which poor boys and girls could obtain an education with little expense; that is, if they were

willing to work part of their time. The citizens of Polk County welcomed such an institution, feeling that it would be a blessing to their people. It finally dawned on the citizens of Mena and Polk County that this was an institution in which radicals were being trained to further the cause of Communism in this state and other states. And when much publicity was given to this fact, a joint Legislative committee of Arkansas General Assembly met in February and March, 1935 to investigate Commonwealth College as to its teachings and practice. This committee soon learned from sworn statements given by the president, or general manager of the college and other witnesses, that it was Atheistic, also that Communism was being taught and that revolutionary movements were being organized among the student body and morals were at a very low ebb.

Lucien Koch, head of the College and other teachers, swore that they did not believe in a God.

Free love was practiced in this school as is shown by sworn testimony of Mr. J. T. Thomas and Mr. D. S. Tankersley who lived near the school at that time.

Mr. T. J. Thomas, when being asked by the chairman of the committee, the following questions, gave the following answers:

Q. Have you seen men and women at Commonwealth College in bathing together without clothes? A. Sure.

Q. When? A. Last summer, 1934.

Q. Where? A. Down on Mill Creek in the swimming hole.

Q. How many? A. Six or eight, ten; creek full of them.

Q. Does that occur often? A. Oh, yes. Often.

Q. Have you noticed prior to last year, the same thing happening? A. Yes.

Did you see any other things in the swimming hole, that is, any action on their part?

A. No. In the swimming hole, they were just swimming.

Q. In any other place?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Where?

A. In the woods.

Q. Naked?

A. Just the same as naked.

Q. What were they doing?

A. You can guess the balance of it.

Q. Were they having intercourse?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. Do you know who they were?

A. I knew the girl. She was at school.

Q. Was the man in this act a student of the college?

A. Yes, sir.

TESTIMONY of Mr. D. S. Tankersley, who lived at Mena, Arkansas and served as Deputy Sheriff about four years ago. Testified to this effect; that a gentleman from Louisiana came to Mena, swore out a warrant for two men who were students in Commonwealth College, and that when he went to the college to arrest these two young men, it was in the night time. He found them in a building called a "dormitory," with several other young men and women paired off on pallets, with a very few night clothes on, and that in arresting the two young men, he took along with him the two young ladies that were their bed companions in this dormitory, and brought them into Mena, and the fathers of the girls agreed to drop the case if the young men would marry the girls, which they did.

These statements are made to show that Communism teaches free love and practices free love.

Also, they teach the abolition of religion and have no respect for the Bible. They have only one flag and that is the Red Flag of Russia.

The following statements copied from Mr. Walter S. Steele 46-page report to Congress of the National Republic, Washington, D. C.,

DO YOU REALIZE THAT

. . . . there are six times as many members in the Communist Party and its affiliated movements in the United States today as there were in Russia at the time of the bloody Bolshevik revolution which cost the lives of millions of so-called "capitalists," peasants, ministers, men, women and children, and all of their property and private rights?

. . . . there are over 610 national Communist and affiliated organizations, with thousands of State and local branches, in heated revolutionary action in the United States today?

. . . . there are over 300 Communist newspapers and magazines, printed in all languages, circulated regularly (some daily and some weekly) in the United States today?

. . . . there are millions of books and pamphlets issued on thousands of Marxian, Communist, Socialist, atheist and other subversive subjects in the United States annually?

. . . . in the field of youth the Communists maintain thousands of local dance schools and clubs, art schools, baseball, soccer and basketball clubs and leagues, theatre groups, film movements, strike schools, atheist Sunday Schools, summer camps, college chapters, anti-war and various types of Russian clubs in the United States, all teaching revolutionary spirit and tactics?

... the United States is mapped into 26 districts, 15,000 or more sections, many thousands of units and thousands of cells, for the efficient operation and direction of Communism!

... the Communists state in plain language that the first acts of the "Soviet Government" when set up in the United States will be to confiscate all banks, factories, farms, property, savings and business?

... Communists have organized and have obtained control of 122 or more national labor, racial and veteran unions and leagues in the United States and that a newly organized "Rank and File" movement is penetrating and grasping control of many A. F. L. local unions?

... there are over 36 national Communistic youth movements in the United States, all poisoning the minds of youth against the United States Government and so-called "capitalists," and that the salute of their members is the raised fist, their flag red and their emblem the hammer and sickle?

... there are over eleven national atheist movements operated in the United States, teaching disbelief in God and the Christian religion, defiance to all churches and ministers?

... the Reds maintain over 28 national defense movements in the United States which direct the arrested "comrades" to lie and deceive, to condemn the United States courts and to free arrested and convicted revolutionists?

... over 100,000 copies of the Moscow Dictator's (Stalin's) book on Lenin and Bolshevism have been circulated in the United States recently?

... Red songbooks, circulated to thousands of youth in the United States, burlesque such sacred hymns as "Onward Christian Soldiers," and that the Unknown Soldier has also been burlesqued in Communist books?

... Communists maintain over 320 Communist schools in the United States?

... most of the strikes, riots and demonstrations in the United States during the past year have been engineered by Communists for the purpose of alienating American workers, farmers, veterans and youth from the American system of government and to create the theory of two classes so as to turn class against class?

To further convince you, my friend, that Communist College in Polk County is a Communist institution, they send their students and teachers to every section of the country where there is confusion or disturbance between the employer and the employee, where there are strikes, farm troubles or race troubles.

TEN REASONS WHY I AM OPPOSED TO COMMUNISM

First: It is Atheistic.

Second: It teaches the overthrow of the United States Government by revolution.

Third: It teaches the abolition of family life and inheritance.

Fourth: It teaches social equality between races.

Fifth: It teaches that religion is an opium, or superstition.

Sixth: It teaches the love of the Red Flag above any other flag.

Seventh: It teaches theft and murder.

Eighth: It stirs up strife between classes.

Ninth: It teaches that all mankind should be under the control of the Soviet Government.

Tenth: It strives to completely destroy all kinds of human society.

TD
61-7558-20

November 9, 1936

RECORDED

b7c

[Redacted]

Dear Sir:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter dated October 24, 1936, in which you furnish certain information with regard to Commonwealth College, located in the vicinity of Mena, Arkansas.

Please be assured that appropriate consideration will be given to the information contained in your letter. I must advise you, however, that this Bureau is offering no reward for information relative to matters of this kind. The information furnished by you will be treated in strict confidence.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

SPECIAL DELIVERY

- Mr. Tolson.....
- Mr. Baughman.....
- Mr. Clegg.....
- Mr. Coffey.....
- Mr. Bowers.....
- Mr. Egan.....
- Mr. Foxworth.....
- Mr. Glavin.....
- Mr. Harbo.....
- Mr. Joseph.....
- Mr. Lester.....
- Mr. Nichols.....
- Mr. Quinn.....
- Mr. Schilder.....
- Mr. Tamm.....
- Mr. Tracy.....
- Miss Gandy.....

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
MAILED
NOV 9 - 1936
P. M.
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

b7c
[Redacted]

TD
61-7558

November 9, 1936

b7c

Special Agent in Charge,
Little Rock, Arkansas.

Re: SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES,
General.

Dear Sir:

I am inclosing herewith copies of a letter dated
October 24, 1936 from [redacted]
[redacted] together with a copy of the Bureau's
reply thereto.

In keeping with the request contained in [redacted]
[redacted] letter, it is suggested that your office make an
appointment with him for a private interview, to obtain
all information available with reference to subversive
activities at Commonwealth College.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

Inclosure No. 1020405

RECORDED
&
INDEXED

61-7558-26

Mr. Tolson	
Mr. Clegg	
Mr. Glavin	
Mr. Ladd	
Mr. Nichols	
Mr. Rosen	
Mr. Tracy	
Mr. Carson	
Mr. Egan	
Mr. Gurnea	
Mr. Hendon	
Mr. Pennington	
Mr. Quinn	
Mr. Nease	
Miss Gandy	

NOV 9 - 1936

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

[Handwritten signature/initials] [redacted] b7c

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RED COLLEGE OUSTER DRIVE SPEEDED

MENA, Ark., Jan. 4.—A determined drive to rid this little community of Commonwealth College, openly Communist in its teachings, was launched today by local citizens as they rallied around the Rev. Luther D. Summers, militant Baptist pastor, who is leading the fight.

Antagonism against the college recently was revived when Miss Charlotte Marcowitz, secretary-treasurer of the school, appealed to the United States Senate for protection against local residents.

Miss Moskowitz applied to the Civil Liberties Committee of the Senate to investigate conditions in this community in connection with possible violence against the school and its faculty from residents.

CHARGES PUBLICITY.

According to Mr. Summers, this plea was made solely for the purpose of gaining desired publicity for the school. No violence was intended, Mr. Summers said, although every legal means would be used to oust the school from the community.

As a result of Miss Moskowitz's appeal, citizens of Polk County gathered in the First Baptist Church and drew up a set of resolutions, signed by 913 citizens. The resolutions denounced the subterfuge of Miss Moskowitz and closed with:

"We express to the world our disapproval of the teachings and practices at said college by its students and faculty members. We regret that this college is in our midst, but any steps which we may take toward closing said School will first have full legal and moral sanction and will not in any degree be related to mob action."

The resolution was signed by judges of the courts, bankers, attorneys, the Superintendent of Schools, editors and other representative citizens.

GETS FERA FUNDS.

Commonwealth College, while it is supported by voluntary contributions, has four paid scholarships donated by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. It also receives donations from the Carnegie Fund, the Gariand Fund and several labor organizations.

NEW YORK EVENING JOURNAL

Forwarded by New York Office

JAN 4 - 1937

Mr. Nathan
Mr. Tolson
Mr. Baughman
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Coffey
Mr. Dawsey
Mr. Egan
Mr. Foxworth
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Harbo
Mr. Joseph
Mr. Lester
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Quinn
Mr. Schilder
Mr. Tamm
Mr. Tracy
Miss Gandy

INDEXED

NOT RECORDED

61-7558-411X

b7c

Federal Bureau of Investigation

United States Department of Justice

Post Office Box 1469,
Little Rock, Arkansas,
December 12, 1936.

Director,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D. C.

Re: * COMMONWEALTH COLLEGE; MENA, ARKANSAS;
[REDACTED] - Informant;
SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES - GENERAL.

b7c

Dear Sir:

With reference to inquiries conducted at Mena, Arkansas, relative to Commonwealth College (Bureau file 61-7558), there is enclosed herewith a copy of an article appearing in the December 19, 1936 issue of Liberty, entitled, "Rah, Rah, Russia!", which was called to my attention by [REDACTED] clerk in the Little Rock Field Division.

It is possible however, that the Bureau is already familiar with the contents of this article.

Very truly yours,

John B. Little
JOHN B. LITTLE,
Special Agent in Charge.

JBL:cpw
61-3
Enclosure

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R 287 APR 26 1964

RECORDED
&
INDEXED.

b7c
DEC 17 1936

61-7558-49	
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION	
DEC 15 1936	
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	
ONE	FILE

Handwritten initials
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION FOIPA DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET

2 Page(s) withheld entirely at this location in the file. One or more of the following statements, where indicated, explain this deletion.

- Deleted under exemption(s) b7c with no segregable material available for release to you.
- Information pertained only to a third party with no reference to you or the subject of your request.
- Information pertained only to a third party. Your name is listed in the title only.
- Document(s) originating with the following government agency(ies) _____, was/were forwarded to them for direct response to you.

_____ Page(s) referred for consultation to the following government agency(ies); _____ as the information originated with them. You will be advised of availability upon return of the material to the FBI.

_____ Page(s) withheld for the following reason(s):

For your information: _____

The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
61-7558-57

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X NO DUPLICATION FEE X
X FOR THIS PAGE X
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STATE OF ARKANSAS



2530

S. HERMAN HORTON
Craighead County
Jonesboro, Ark.

FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JOHN M. BRANSFORD
Speaker

A. M. LEDBETTER, JR.
Chief Clerk

Vice-Chairman
MEMORIALS
Member of
JUDICIARY
LEVEES AND DRAINAGE
PUBLIC SERVICE CORPORATIONS
Committees

LITTLE ROCK, ARK.

January 22, 1937

- Mr. Nathan
- Mr. Tolson
- Mr. Beach
- Mr. Clegg
- Mr. Coffey
- Mr. Dawsey
- Mr. Egan
- Mr. Foxworth
- Mr. Glavin
- Mr. Ladd
- Mr. Joseph
- Mr. Lester
- Mr. Nichols
- Mr. Quinn
- Mr. Schickel
- Mr. Tracy
- Mr. Tracy
- Miss Gandy

Hon. J. Edgar Hoover
Department of Justice
Washington D.C.

Dear Sir:

Enclosed find House Bill No. 149, the same being a bill for an act to be entitled: "An act to prohibit the teaching of any foreign doctrine of government for the purpose of overthrowing the government of the United States or the State of Arkansas by violence and for other purposes."

I am the author of this Bill and I will appreciate it very much if you will give me your opinion on the advisability of the passage of such an act.

As my Bill will come up for passage within the next ten days, I will appreciate a prompt reply in regard to this Bill if you desire to give any opinion at all on it.

Yours very truly,

Herman Horton

HH/lm

ack. state cannot due to policy express opinion re legislation re refer to act 1/20/37

I ENCL W

81

RECORDED & INDEXED.

61-7558-60
 FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
 JAN 25 1937
 U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
 TOLSON
 Tamm
 Ladd
 Nichols
 Rosen
 Tracy
 Egan
 Gurnea
 Harbo
 Hendon
 Pennington
 Quinn
 Nease
 Gandy

ack b7c small 8.1 1-26-37

A BILL

FOR AN ACT TO BE ENTITLED: "AN ACT TO PROHIBIT THE TEACHING OF ANY FOREIGN DOCTRINE OF GOVERNMENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF OVERTHROWING THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OR THE STATE OF ARKANSAS BY VIOLENCE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

Whereas, there is now alleged to be taught in this State foreign doctrines of government for the purpose of overthrowing the Government of the United States and the State of Arkansas; and,

Whereas, there is now alleged to be taught in connection therewith the doctrine of free love for the purpose of encouraging adoption of such a social order.

NOW THEREFORE: BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

Section 1. Any person who teaches, instructs, or purports to teach or instruct any group, class or body of persons in this state the doctrine of communism or any other foreign doctrine of government with the intention or for the purpose of starting a movement to overthrow the government of the United States and the State of Arkansas by violence, shall be deemed guilty of a felony.

Section 2. Any person in charge of any institution or any school, either as instructor, director or officer in such school or institution, who knowingly allows or encourages free love among the students or inmates of such school or institution shall be deemed guilty of felony.

Section 3. Any person who teaches, instructs or purports to teach or instruct any class, group or body of persons in this state the doctrine of free love in such a manner as to encourage said group, class or body of persons to adopt and practice this social doctrine as superior and contrary to the laws of this state shall be deemed guilty of felony.

Section 4. Free love as used in this act means the co-habitation together as man and wife without having been married as provided by the laws of Arkansas.

Section 5. A person convicted of violating either Section 1 or 2 of this act shall be deemed guilty of felony and shall be imprisoned in the state penitentiary for a period of

92572

H. B. No. 148 (Horton of Craighead -2-

Jan. 19.

Section 6. Every sentence and section of this act are separable and severable and if any sentence or section of this act shall be declared unconstitutional the remainder of said act shall be and remain in full force and effect.

Whereas, if such teaching and practices do exist in the state of Arkansas they are extremely dangerous to the preservation of the health, safety, and peace of the people of Arkansas an emergency is hereby declared to exist and this act shall take effect from and after its passage.

[Redacted]

X

Jan. 31, 1937.

[Redacted]

F. B. I.

92680

Washington,
Sir:

As a taxpayer I should like to have an explanation of the vile condition described on enclosed pages 7, 8, & 9 of Liberty Magazine of Dec. 19, 1936 wherein it is claimed that your department gave financial support to this "Soviet Marxist Commonwealth College" at Kenna, Ark. and that this fellow Incign/Boen (president) is now, together with associates Clay, Fulke, and Cunningham and W. P. Leach on the pay roll of the U. S. Govt. and that this so called college is still permitted to operate. This looks like a case for Mr. J. Edgar Hoover to whom I am sending a copy of this as well as to the President.

b7c

Yours with disgust.

[Redacted]

Dear Mr. Hoover: I should certainly say it was a crime within your jurisdiction to have these fellows on the Govt pay roll any where as per page 9.

With regards,

Faithfully,

[Redacted]

Sub. M.
Wash. D.C.
2/1/37

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&
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61-7558-63

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

FEB 5 1937

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