

TRUE COPY

CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Lucy Randolph Mason
Southern Public Relations
Representative

March 14, 1951

79½ Poplar St. N. W.
75 Ivy Street, N.E.
Atlanta 3, Georgia

40 Pryor Street, S. W.

Hon. J. Howard McGrath
Attorney General
Washington, D. C.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 2/29/84 BY SP8BTG/02
20/502

Dear Mr. McGrath:

As a member of the Executive Council of the Highlander Folk School, I was pleased to know from Myles Horton, the director, that a number of people had written to you concerning the recent visit to the School of FBI agents.

It is very disturbing that when the FBI visits the school the question of Negro attendance there seems to be a contributing factor in confusing the School with Communism. This is very dangerous, as I am sure you will agree.

In fact this whole manifestation of confusion in the minds of reactionary people between unions, Negroes and Communists comes up often enough to deserve thought and care - and some basic instruction to FBI investigators, especially those who are southern and have deep prejudices - against Negroes, and often against CIO union people.

I have been on the Highlander Council for some twelve years and have known the School for a longer time. I rarely miss a meeting. Also I have taught in the School almost every season and have spent days there. So I can testify from personal knowledge that the School is a sound, healthy institution, doing a good job in helping train union leaders (AFOFL as well as CIO).

If high character, devotion to the workers' cause, and belief that union members will be better leaders and citizens for having had some "workers' education" spells Communism, it can only do so with very ignorant and prejudiced persons.

Even though a sever case of flu prevented my writing nearer the time of the incident that caused the letters, I am writing now as I am sure you will want to know what reactions followed the FBI visit to Highlander.

Cordially yours,

/s/ Lucy R. Mason

ENCLOSURE

Mr. Peyton Ford
Deputy Attorney General

March 23, 1951

Director, FBI

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INFORMATION CONCERNING

Pursuant to your request, the attached letter dated March 20, 1951, addressed to Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., and prepared for your signature, has been reviewed.

This will advise that we have no objections or changes to make in connection with your reply to Congressman Powell in its present form. I am, therefore, returning the letter together with your other attachments.

Enclosures

DECLASSIFIED BY SP8 BFO/ACE
ON 2/29/84 24553b

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COMM - FBI
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[Handwritten signatures and initials]

TRUE COPY

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL
WASHINGTON

March 20, 1951

Honorable Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Congressman:

This will refer to your transmittal memorandum of February 20, 1951, addressed to the Attorney General, forwarding a communication, with enclosures, from Mr. Myles Horton, Director of the Highlander Folk School, Monteagle, Tennessee.

This material is very similar to material that was previously forwarded to the Department by Mr. Horton, at which time the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation advised that he had checked into the allegation made by Mr. Horton, and he wished to assure the Department that the Bureau had never investigated the Highlander Folk School, any representative of the school, or any other individual on the ground that the Highlander Folk School or the individual participated in interracial educational activities nor have the Bureau Agents inquired relative to the interracial aspects of that school.

It is noted that Mr. Horton, in his letter dated February, 1951, addressed to "Dear Friend", makes a new allegation in the following words: "What strategy prompted the FBI Agents to watch the school by night . . ."

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, through its Knoxville office, made a most careful check concerning this allegation that a physical surveillance or "watch" was conducted on the Highlander Folk School at night by Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The Special Agent in Charge of the Knoxville office has assured the Director that no surveillance or "watch" has been conducted either at or in the vicinity of the Highlander Folk School.

Yours sincerely,

Peyton Ford
Deputy Attorney General

1-7511-164

TRUE COPY

Mr. Peyton Ford
Deputy Attorney General

March 13, 1951

Director, FBI

CONFIDENTIAL

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INFORMATION CONCERNING

Reference is made to the material which you received from Congressman Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., of the 22nd Congressional District, New York, relating to the captioned matter and which you transmitted to this Bureau on March 9, 1951. We have made appropriate photostatic copies of this material and are returning the originals herewith to you.

The enclosed material is very similar to that previously forwarded by you to the Bureau and which was discussed in some detail in my memorandum to you of February 26, 1951.

It is noted, however, that Kyle Horton, Director of the Highlander Folk School, in his letter dated February, 1951, addressed to "Dear Friend" made a new allegation not incorporated in his previous correspondence with the Attorney General, namely, "that strategy prompted the FBI Agents to watch the school by night...."

The Knoxville Office of this Bureau made a most careful check concerning the allegation that a physical surveillance or "watch" was conducted on the Highlander Folk School at night by Special Agents of the FBI. The Special Agent in Charge of my Knoxville Office has assured me that no surveillance or "watch" at night has been conducted either at or in the vicinity of the Highlander Folk School.

No further action is contemplated by this Bureau regarding the enclosed material.

ENCLOSURE ATTACHED

Enclosure

RECORDED - 25
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MAR 14 1951
MAR 23 1951
U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE
DIRECTOR

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cc: kmb) [redacted]
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MAILED 7

Handwritten notes:
1/25
New York
1/28

Highlander Folk School
Monteagle, Tennessee
February 1951

Dear friend:

The F.B.I. agents have been asking our mountain neighbors about Negro students at Highlander. You will want to know the details. We need your advice and you need to know what is going on here. We believe Attorney General McGrath will be sympathetically interested and have sent him the enclosed letter.

That strategy prompted the F.B.I. agents to watch the school by night and to harass neighbors with questions linking Negroes with communism. It is not clear what has long been a matter of public record that they would catch us red handed practicing racial democracy by a visit to the school.

While we do not know the reasons we do know the results. A community that has accepted the presence of Negroes at Highlander for the past ten years is without a protest (and longer with protests) is again questioning the right of Negroes to come to the school. They gather from the F.B.I. questions that the presence of Negroes means the presence of communism. A climate of community suspicion is being undermined by an appeal to race prejudice.

My friend, a mountain woman aware of the traditional anti-Negro feeling here in the Cumberlands, tells in the attached letter, with the flying of the red flag on the school's non-discrimination policy means, Miss Emma Bonner, taught in the local grammar school and now writes books for children.

We have also asked Mr. McGrath for an opinion on the Highlander Executive Council's proposal that interviews with the F.B.I. be in writing. Two agents with short memories gave us a very broad embarrassing, was long as we remain opponents of American democracy, with emphasis on frontier equality we can expect investigation and would like to keep the record straight.

We would like to have your help in not letting this matter be handled until it is too late. We are in a hurry to get this letter to you and to the Attorney General.

Yours truly,
Styler Horton
Highlander Director

Handwritten notes:
Out
1/28

Sincerely yours,
Styler Horton
Highlander Director

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
MONTAGIE, W. VIRGINIA

January 31, 1951

Honorable J. Howard McGrath
United States Attorney General
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. McGrath:

Miss Lucy Randolph Mason, Southern CIO Public Relations Representative, has suggested that I ask your advice about a problem growing out of the attendance of Negroes at the Highlander Folk School. Because of your own personal feeling in regard to discrimination, Miss Mason felt that you would understand the problem here and be in a position to give advice.

The Highlander Folk School endeavors to put racial democracy into practice; consequently we can expect a measure of opposition.

We naturally expected, however, to have Negro students make the object of investigations by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. On October 11th I wrote Senator Estes Kefauver that FBI agents were harassing our parents about the attendance of Negroes and implying that our non-discrimination policy was commendable and immoral. This line of questioning has created confusion in the minds of our neighbors regarding the rights of Negroes to be at the School.

On December 10th I sized this problem with Mr. Hugh H. Gregg, Assistant Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and quoted one of the FBI agents who had told me that no report should be released concerning discrimination would be considered communitistic by a majority of Southern people.

The apparent confusion of racial democracy with communism by the FBI agents and the implication of this kind of thinking alarmed the Highlander Executive Council members who met January 22 and 23.

Honorable J. Howard McGrath

Page 2

January 31, 1951

Council members were also disturbed by the exchange of correspondence with Mr. Clegg. If agents can deny what they have said, they can likewise report things they have not been told. Since they go in pairs, the person interviewed is at a disadvantage.

With this problem in mind, a notice was made by Miss Lucy Randolph Mason that, because of previous misunderstandings in interviews with FBI agents, the Highlander Director shall speak for the staff and shall ask that all questions posed by any FBI agents be put in writing, and shall make his replies in writing provided legal counsel advises this action.

The Council is not raising the question of giving information, but of giving it in such a way that the person interviewed has the protection of a written record. Could you advise me as to the legality of the Council proposal that interviews be carried on in writing?

We shall greatly appreciate your advice on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

W. L. Horton, Director
Highlander Folk School

Do not pass on a comment on this matter until by a labor,

Highlander Folk School
Monticello, Tennessee

For immediate release

Monticello, Tennessee, November 20, 1950 - "Our Christmas bells could
be freedom bells if we dared include all minorities in our circle of brother-
hood," Wyles Horton told a conference of church leaders at the Highlander
Folk School.

"Freedom bells ringing in the cabins of Negro sharecroppers,
ringing for eager-minded students with opportunities limited by accident of
birth, and freedom bells echoing in distant lands would fill the troubled
world with thoughts of peace on earth and good will toward men," he said.

Highlander's democratic program is based on the brotherhood of
man, democracy to us means that membership in the human family entitles all
to the freedom of thought and religion, to equal rights to a livelihood,
to health and health care, to equal opportunity to participate in the cultural
life of any community and to equal access to public services, and religious
freedom.

"We hold that democracy is inactive unless workers are given a full
voice in their work, through unions; if farmers are given a voice in the market
place through cooperatives; or where freedom of thought and discussion is
limited, and that democracy is inhibited by deeply entrenched discrimination

and prejudice. We call for an affirmative program, based in a positive
vision of democracy deeply rooted in the lives, thoughts and traditions of the American people must be created. By broaden-
ing the scope of democracy to include everyone, and deepening the concept to
include every relationship, the Army of Democracy would be so vast and so
powerful that nothing undemocratic could stand in its path."

Rt. 1
Tracy City, Tennessee
January 26, 1951

Miss Myra Horton
Highlander Folk School
Monteagle, Tennessee

Dear Myra:

...this, to my mind, as a thoroughly honest and perfectly concise expression of the problem you present. I cannot see how Mr. McGrath can fail to understand its significance, and understanding, fail to take steps toward the prevention of future trouble.

Please feel free to use me as a reference if you have such need. I am always willing to speak or write my convictions regarding your personal integrity and the high purpose of Highlander.

I was here some years before you came. The newness of your program aroused wonder and even suspicion in the community. We heard all kinds of stories of Communist intent, alliance with Russia, machine guns in the attic and various forms of immorality. People came to me with these things and rumors, begging me to do something about it. I did do something. I visited the school when you and Don West gave a play for the children of our community. I went again when Jim Donagrow started a Bible study class. We learned a good deal about political conditions in the days of slaves and Gosh. I went to a meeting held after the neighbors' home had burned down and we started plans to build a new one. I went to a Christmas party where I played with the children's games and to you play Bent & Claus with a bag of presents. I went to a sewing bee in the neighborhood benefit. I was in on the P. A. was organized in your living room, but I heard all about it. I heard a good deal of other good news. Myra is in the neighborhood and something else to talk about than the fearful incidents of the early days. One dark night I went a good way to bring a doctor and care for my school. It is in a time to have her and her baby. I didn't know there were such good folks. Some neighbor woman said when I heard about the name that Claudia Lewis, the nursery school teacher, and another from Highlander, prepared all that was needed to carry a little child on a very poor family.

All these things and many more convinced me that your purpose and plan for coming to live in our community was essentially good and had no ulterior motive. In later years I have learned more of your practical program, your concept of true democracy in your policy of non-discrimination, non-segregation, and your actual example in living what you believe. I know a minister who said, "I wish I could feel that I came as near as Myra Horton to real consecration to the cause of real Christianity."

Walter Horton

January 26, 1951

"Do you think Highlander is radical?" The last time I was asked this question I gave the answer I would give today. "Yes, they are radical - as radical as the Declaration of Independence or the Common Sense on the Mount."

It is because you dare to believe that not only all men are created free and equal, but that there should be liberty and justice for all that you are radical. And the one who made all men to all his brothers made no difference between his white children and the black.

It is because you dare to explore the recent investigation of the F.B.I. agents, implying as it did, that your non-discrimination policy toward Negro students constituted proof of your communistic nature, purpose, plan and intent. When racial democracy can be confused with communism in the minds of F.B.I. agents, there is cause for alarm. It seems to me, our community is some way along in appreciating and understanding the policy of Highlander, its principles, its practice of real democracy. But this faith, fostered for so many years by living proof and example, cannot fail to suffer from the shock of a visit from the F.B.I. in which the school's policy of non-discrimination is given a red tag and label.

With all this in mind, I am glad you have written this letter to Mr. McGrath. I hope it leads to a definite understanding which will affect all future interviews.

I best wishes for you and the rest of the Highlander staff.

Your friend,

Walter Horton

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Highlander Folk School
Montezuma, Tennessee
December 10, 1950

Mr. Hugh H. Clegg
Assistant Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Clegg:

I have pleased to read from the International Labor News Service that you feel that the "success of communism" can be measured by the weaknesses of democracy. I am led to believe by your analysis of the situation that you would approve the enclosed statement of policy of the Highlander Folk School.

In the South, people are often criticized who believe as we do here at Highlander that discrimination is incompatible with democracy. In fact it was told recently by one of your agents that the contents of the enclosed news release would be considered "Communist" by a majority of Southern people.

I sincerely trust that the position taken by you in the New York Herald Tribune Forum is the official position of the F. B. I. and not the position implied by the activities of your representatives who have questioned our neighbors regarding visits of Negroes to the School.

Would you clear this matter up for me?

Sincerely yours,

(signed)

Walter L. Horton
Director

enc.

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

January 3, 1951

Mr. Nyles Horton
Director
Highlander Folk School
Monteagle, Tennessee

Dear Sir:

This will acknowledge your letter of December 30, 1950.

It has long been the established procedure of this Bureau to refrain from commenting on the statements and purposes of any organization and, therefore, we cannot comment on the policies of your school.

With regard to the statement that you attributed to a Special Agent for this Bureau, this will advise that I have checked with three Special Agents who contacted you on December 7, 1950, and they emphatically deny that you showed them the news release or that they made any statements to you tending to substantiate your allegation.

Very truly yours,

(signed)

Hugh H. Clegg
Assistant Director

F. B. I. Syles Horton gave a full report on some recent activities of F. B. I. agents who are questioning people in the community. The agents have been asking neighbors about Negroes attending or visiting Highlander. Horton read a letter in two to Senator Kefauver which said in part: "They (the F. B. I. agents) have been particularly insistent in their questions about the attendance of Negroes at Highlander sessions and conferences. They wanted to know where people sleep and what goes on after the conferences are over. I hope you can find time to look into this situation and do something to stop intimidation of our neighbors and the inference that the non-discrimination policy of the school, which is that of the CIO and AFL, is communistic and immoral."

Horton continued that the agents are going around the community trying to stir up the people by asking loaded questions about the Negro students at Highlander. At the same time, Horton read a newspaper report that the Assistant Director of the F. B. I. made a speech at the New York Herald Tribune Forum in which he said discrimination was incompatible with democracy. Horton congratulated the F. B. I. spokesman and reported a comment made to him by an F. B. I. agent who said that a Highlander news release which condemns discrimination would be considered communistic by the majority of Southern people. The F. B. I. Assistant Director answered that he had personally checked the matter and that both agents who talked with Horton emphatically denied making any such statements.

After prolonged discussion, it was moved by Lucy Randolph Mason that, because of previous misunderstandings in interviews with F. B. I. agents, the Highlander Director shall speak for the staff and shall ask that all questions posed by any F. B. I. agents be put in writing, and shall make his replies in writing, provided legal counsel advises all action. Motion seconded by Emil Williams and passed.

It was also suggested by Lucy Randolph Mason that the Director shall write U. S. Attorney General Howard McGrath and copy this situation and explain to him why he has been forced to take this action. Also that a copy of this letter be sent to Senator Kefauver and Highlander members.

(Attorney Jordan Stokes writes: "I see no reason why the F. B. I. should not be required to put their questions in writing and frankly I would insist on it for our protection and for the protection of the school.")

HIGHLANDER POLI SCHOOL

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE, PROGRAM AND POLICY

to reaffirm our faith in democracy, and to help bring dignity and freedom to all in democracy, as an expanding concept encompassing human relations from the smallest community organization to international structure, and embracing all economic, social, and political activities.

Democracy to us means that membership in the human family entails all the freedom of thought and religion, to equal rights to livelihood, education and health, to equal opportunity to participate in the cultural life of the community and to equal access to public service.

We hold that democracy is inactive unless workers are given a full voice in industry through unions; for farmers are given a voice in the market through cooperatives; for where freedom of thought and discussion is limited; that democracy is outlawed by legally entrenched discrimination and segregation; that there must be diversity of approach to each step; that the in conformity with the goal, which is not honored by each democratic act.

Our democratic goal is to reach a position to fight anything that gets in the way of the totalitarian communism of Russia, or the nationalistic imperialism.

The purpose of the Highlander Poli School is to assist in breaking barriers to democracy. Our services are available to labor, farm, community, and other organizations working towards democratic goals.

The program of the Highlander Poli School will be determined by the needs of the people.

The Highlander Poli School by individual organizations will be an organization of the people. It will be a place where people can meet and discuss their problems and find solutions.

The Highlander Poli School is a non-profit organization, operationally owned and controlled by the people. Its policies and program are determined by the people's committee composed of the people of the region and Southern Area.

Highlander Poli School is supported by contributions from individuals and organizations named by the school, foundations and other sources.

The place call for an affirmative program, based on a positive goal, can only be democracy deeply rooted in the lives, struggles and traditions of the American people must be created. By broadening the scope of democracy to include everyone, and expanding the concept to include every relationship, the way of democracy would be so vast and so determined that nothing could stand in its path.

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL SPONSORS

Dr. John Dewey

Saul D. Alinsky

Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Barnes

Dr. A. D. Beittel

Mary McLeod Bethune

Algernon Black

Dr. B. R. Brazoal

Mrs. Ethel Clyde

Roy Witherspoon Dodgo

Edward J. Durr

Merrill Eby

Mrs. Gladys Talbott Edwards

Conrado Ely

Roy W. J. Franklin

Mr. & Mrs. J. R. Gillman

Mrs. Harry Gershon

Clinton S. Gordon

George M. Guest, M.D.

Mrs. Grace E. Hamilton

Estacion Somerson

Miss Lela Henderson

Rabbi Ephraim Koltzberg

Dr. Fleming James

Dr. Charles S. Johnson

Dr. William W. Johnson

Lewis Jones

Wiley Justus

Edward Kirby

Mrs. Simon Kuhn

Mr. & Mrs. Corliss Lamont

Mrs. Ernest K. Lindley

A. U. Liveright

Lucy Randolph Mason

Dr. Benjamin E. Mays

Caroy McWilliams

Dr. George Mitchell

Mrs. Lucy Sprague Mitchell

Rev. Walter G. Muelder

Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr

Jennings Perry

Clarence E. Pickett

Dr. Walter Paulstrauch

Malcolm Ross

Roy Eugene Smathers

Hilda W. Smith

P. A. Stephens, M.D.

Jordan Stokes III

Dr. Alva W. Taylor

Dr. John B. Thompson

Mrs. M. B. Tilly

Dr. Willard Uphaus

Gerhard Van Arkel

J. Raymond Walsh

Mission. & Mrs. J. Watie Spring

Aubrey Williams

Thomas Williston, M.D.

Dr. Louis Wirth

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : The Director

DATE: February 23, 1951

FROM : D. M. Ladd

SUBJECT: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 3/2/84 BY SP8 BTJ/MS
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Mohr	
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Nease	
Gandy	

PURPOSE

To answer your inquiries raised by my memorandum of February 21, and to submit for your approval replies to Mr. Roger Baldwin and Mr. Peyton Ford of the Department.

DETAILS

Scope of the Investigation of the Highlander Folk School

In order to clarify just what investigation the Knoxville Office has conducted concerning the Highlander Folk School either directly or incidental to developing full information on the activities of various individuals, I wish to advise you as follows:

Under date of October 6, 1939, the Knoxville Office furnished the Bureau the first reported information concerning the Highlander Folk School. The first report reflecting investigation was submitted under date of April 10, 1941. This report set forth the information on the history of the school and the people connected with it. The letter and the report reflected that the investigation was instituted only after numerous allegations were received regarding Communist activity at the school. No active investigation has been made of the school since the closing report dated July 4, 1943. The file fails to reflect any pertinent information received since that date regarding any recognizable Communist Party activity on the part of the school itself; however, allegations of Communist Party sympathy or activity have been received concerning persons who were or had been connected with the school. These investigations were directed solely toward the individuals and not the Highlander Folk School. Some examples of these investigations are as follows: William Walter Remington, Perjury; [redacted] Atomic Energy Act - Applicant; [redacted] Loyalty of Government Employees; [redacted] Security Matter - C; [redacted] Loyalty of Government Employees; [redacted] Security Matter - C; [redacted] Loyalty

Attachments

[redacted] :kmb

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of Government Employees; and [redacted] was.,
Security Matter - C.

is he?
when was H.

[redacted]

No mention was made either by [redacted] or the Agents interviewing him regarding the Highlander Folk School.

b7c
b7D

As indicated in the four-page memorandum which was attached to my memorandum of February 21, 1951, the Highlander Folk School is not a school in the normal sense but merely has short session labor and social study classes usually of a two weeks' duration.

We would argue about this. It is a school whether in a normal or abnormal sense. H

Although as stated above no investigation has been made of the Highlander Folk School since July 4, 1943, the Knoxville Office made an effort to develop [redacted]

b7c
b7D

[redacted] a confidential informant.

Due to the volume of applicant cases in the Knoxville Office, particularly Atomic Energy Act - Applicant cases, people living at Monteagle, Tennessee, have been contacted; however, the Agents working in that area are aware of the general nature of the Highlander Folk School and the Agents have advised that no inquiries have been made concerning the interracial character of the school. SAC Robey has advised that he has personally contacted all of the Agents in the Knoxville Office who had worked in Monteagle and vicinity in the past year and all have categorically denied that they have discussed the interracial character of the school with anyone and that they have exerted utmost caution to prevent anyone from gaining the impression that the school was being investigated by the FBI.

*They shouldn't discuss the school
no or commit anyone.*
H.

Answer to Your Inquiries Raised in My Memorandum
of February 21, 1951, Which is Attached.

1. Why was Horton carried on the Knoxville Key Figure List and why was the case closed out?

87D

In June, 1940, Myles Horton, Director of the Highlander Folk School, was reported as taking an active part in or attending meetings held by the various Communist Party units in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and vicinity and that he formulated the policies and directed the activities of all the local units, as well as the entire group of units. This information was furnished by [redacted] On the basis of this allegation a custodial detention card was recommended and approved on Myles Horton. He was later listed as a Key Figure by the Knoxville Office. Investigation conducted of Horton between 1942 and 1944 failed to substantiate the original allegation that Horton was engaged in Communist activity; therefore, by closing report dated January 25, 1944, the Knoxville Office removed Horton from the Knoxville Key Figure List and the Security Index Card on Horton was cancelled by letter dated January 7, 1946.

2. You instructed that the Knoxville Office be advised to make no further contact with the Highlander Folk School on any matter.

Pursuant to your instructions the Bureau on February 22, 1951, telephonically instructed SAC Robey of the Knoxville Office to make no further contacts at the Highlander Folk School on any matter.

3. You inquired, "Why did we utilize such cumbersome procedure to get to the bottom of charges made by Horton in December, 1950?"

It has been the practice in the Security Division to immediately make direct contact with any individual who might make an unfounded allegation against the Bureau. In this instance we didn't go directly to Horton upon receipt of his December 10, 1950, letter because we recognized him as a trouble maker and felt that nothing would be gained by such an approach. We were wrong and I regret that we didn't

This is the most stupid reason yet advanced. Certainly nothing would have been lost. We would at least now have been in a better position
H.

go to him immediately and obtain specifics from him and compel him to either prove or retract his statement.

LD

4. In connection with using [redacted] as a source of information, you advised that [redacted] was being contacted for information on the activities of the Highlander Folk School. You asked why.

b7c

LD

[Large redacted block]

*... today's long to reach the conclusion & the name
re giving for reasons of justice
Reply to Mr. Roger Baldwin Highlander School
had been consummated*

Pursuant to your suggestions, there is attached hereto for your approval a proposed reply to Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union in which it is pointed out to him that the interracial character of the Highlander Folk School has never been considered as the basis for any investigation conducted by this Bureau.

*The basis for work
of the American Civil Liberties Union*

N. [redacted] LD

Memorandum from Peyton Ford dated February 19, 1951, Dealing with Correspondence from Myles Horton, Director of the Highlander Folk School

There is attached hereto a memorandum from Peyton Ford dated February 19, 1951, with photostatic copies of Horton's letter and attachments to Peyton Ford, together with Mr. Ford's draft of a reply to Horton. This correspondence regards the same unfounded allegation that Agents of the Knoxville Office have construed the interracial nature of the Highlander Folk School as being Communistic. It is not believed that the Bureau can agree with Peyton Ford's draft reply to Mr. Horton. Our Knoxville Office obviously should not conduct interviews in the Highlander Folk School with stenographic or other persons recording the interview. The attached reply for your approval to Peyton Ford points out the reason why this procedure should not be followed. There is also attached for Peyton Ford's information a copy of the summary memorandum prepared concerning the Highlander Folk School.

Memorandum from Peyton Ford dated February 19, Concerning Correspondence from Dr. Albert E. Barnett of the Candler School of Theology Emory University, Georgia

There is attached hereto a memorandum from Peyton Ford dated February 19, 1951, which sets forth the contents of a letter directed to the Attorney General from Albert E. Barnett which also regards the unfounded allegation that Agents of the Knoxville Office were investigating the Highlander Folk School because they surmised "that the free admission of Negroes as students at Highlander constituted evidence of Communist point of view." Obviously, Myles Horton has persuaded Dr. Barnett to write Attorney General McGrath in order to strengthen Horton's complaint against the FBI. For your information, Dr. Barnett is mentioned in the Bureau files. These references reflect that Barnett has been connected in one way or another with the following organizations which have been subject to considerable Communist infiltration.

45 -
The fact is we have been investigating
Highlander School & doing it in a crude &
inapt manner by trying to develop two
informants [redacted] unsuccessfully

BFD

Southern Conference for Human Welfare - At a dinner held on May 6, 1947, for the benefit of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare at Chicago, Illinois, Dr. Albert E. Barnett was listed as a sponsor and speaker. (100-10355-337)

The files also reflect that Dr. Barnett was one of the members of the Ad Hoc Committee which welcomed the Reverend Hewlett Johnson's arrival at La Guardia Airport in November, 1948. Unusual publicity resulted from the fact that the so-called "Red Dean's" first application for a visa was turned down due to the fact that he was sponsored by the National Council of American Soviet Friendship. (This organization has been declared to be within the purview of Executive Order 9835.) (100-146964-1477)

The "Daily Worker" of May 20, 1949, reflects that 275 prominent individuals had signed an open letter urging that Congress reject the Atlantic Pact and called upon President Truman to settle issues now outstanding through direct negotiations with the Soviet Union. Dr. Barnett was one of the signers. (100-3-81-A)

Committee for Peaceful Alternative to the Atlantic Pact - On August 21, 1949, Dr. Barnett was listed as an individual from Illinois who had signed an open letter to Senators and Congressmen urging defeat of President Truman's arms program. (100-364437-7)

Mid-Century Conference for Peace - In Chicago, May 29-30, 1950, Dr. Barnett was carried as a sponsor of this organization from the Chicago area. (100-364437-36 p.22)

Methodist Federation for Social Action - He was a delegate to a meeting of the organization held in Ohio, July 18 to 21, 1950. (61-3615-41)

No investigation has ever been conducted concerning Dr. Barnett; however, as indicated above, there is evidence reflecting that he has been connected with organizations which have been subject to Communist infiltration. In the attached memorandum to Peyton Ford, he is advised that Dr. Barnett has been misinformed by Myles Horton with respect to nature of our interest in the Highlander Folk School.

change both.

ACTION

There is attached hereto proposed letters to Roger Baldwin and to Peyton Ford for your approval.

ADDENDUM - 2-23-51

The Director further inquired as to why more complete details were not furnished in the first instance concerning the extent of our investigation at the Highlander Folk School.

Inasmuch as the issue raised by Horton and Baldwin was to the effect that Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation had confused interracial education with communism, the background information furnished in our original memorandum was designed to cover that issue.

We now realize that we did not give the Director sufficient background to enable him to properly evaluate this situation.

We will make every effort to avoid this in the future.

Baldwin's letter said no such thing. The last paragraph of his letter states why any investigation of the school has been made. (No limitation as to reason is stated.)

What you gave me was false & misleading information.

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Director, FBI

FROM : SAC, Knoxville

SUBJECT: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INTERNAL SECURITY - C
(Bufile 61-7511)

DATE: 5/4/51

Mr. Tolson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Ladd	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Clegg	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Glavin	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Nichols	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Rosen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Tracy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Harbo	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Alden	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Belmont	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Laughlin	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Mohr	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tele. Room	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mr. Nease	<input type="checkbox"/>
Miss Gandy	<input type="checkbox"/>

On 5-4-51, [redacted] SA, U. S. Treasury Dept., and [redacted] Internal Revenue U. S. Treasury Dept., both assigned Chattanooga, Tenn., voluntarily furnished an agent of this division the following information:

[Large redacted block]

[Large redacted block]

MMB
61-12

RECORDED - 43

61-7511-167
MAY 7 1951

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/29/84 BY SP8 BTG/OK
24582

[Redacted block]

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b7c

in

b7c

Vim

[Handwritten initials]

[Handwritten initials]

KX 61-12

Both men were thanked for the above information and informed they would not be interfering with any investigations being conducted by the FBI. No other comments were made concerning the Highlander Folk School.

The above information is being furnished to the Bureau for information purposes, and no further action is being taken by this division.

It should be noted that if a complete investigation is conducted by the Internal Revenue agents regarding the Highlander Folk School, the results of such investigation would possibly be extremely enlightening, especially concerning sources of income for this school. However, in view of previous instructions received from the Bureau, no effort will be made to obtain such information unless instructed to do so by the Bureau.

*We should get this
from Internal Revenue.*

St.

SAC, Knoxville

May 15, 1951

Director, FBI

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INTERNAL SECURITY - C
Bufile 61-7511 - 167

RECORDED - 117

~~RECORDED~~

EX - 97

Reurlet dated May 4, 1951, which reflects that the Internal Revenue Bureau may conduct a complete investigation of the Highlander Folk School.

The Knoxville Office should discreetly arrange, if possible, to obtain a copy of the investigative report concerning this school from the Internal Revenue Bureau.

The Bureau should be promptly advised of all developments.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/29/84 BY SP8BJT/CLW
246832

~~nlm~~ *nlm*

U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE
FBI
RECEIVED - MAIL ROOM

RECEIVED READING ROOM
MAY 16 7 27 PM '51
FBI
RECEIVED - JUSTICE 25 MAY

MAY 18 8 01 AM '51
7d Be

~~etc~~

- Tolson _____
- Ladd _____
- Clegg _____
- Glavin _____
- Nichols _____
- Rosen _____
- Tracy _____
- Harbo _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Nease _____
- Gandy _____

MAILED 6
MAY 17 1951
COMM - FBI

MAY 29 1951

copy;bw

April 20, 1951

Mr. Tolson

L. B. Nichols

MYLES HORTON
HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL

With reference to the attached letter from Herbert Monte Levy, Staff Counsel of the American Civil Liberties Union, there are two issues involved. *eh*

The first issue - Does the FBI consider interracial education as somewhat subversive and does it ask questions on this basis of neighbors.

Investigation which was made in February proves this view without foundation. To re-check the matter, I called SAC Robey at Knoxville and asked him if we had contacted neighbors. He stated every Agent working in that area had been questioned at least twice and we had not contacted neighbors.

Collateral to this issue is the attempt of the American Civil Liberties Union to force the FBI to issue instructions concerning comments on interracial education. There is no need for such instructions since they are part and parcel of the Bureau's operating procedures and policies. To issue such instructions would in effect admit that such a condition existed. To date there is no proven case to substantiate this.

The second issue has to do with contacting the Highlander Folk School.

The minutes of the Highlander Executive Council for January 22 and 23, 1951, which were forwarded to the Attorney General reflect that "because of previous misunderstandings in interview with FBI agents, the Highlander Director (Myles Horton) shall speak for the staff and shall ask that all questions posed by any FBI agents be put in writing, and shall make his replies in writing - provided legal counsel advises this action." This condition is, of course, impossible, and on February 22, 1951, instructions were issued to the Knoxville Office to make no further contact with the Highlander Folk School on any matter. *de*

A letter to Levy is attached.

cc - Mr. Belmont

LPN:CMC

Attachment

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 2/29/84 BY SP8 BTJ/ka
245522

61-17571-2
NOT RECORDED
45 MAY 2 1951

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 Benjamin H. Kiser
 Dr. John A. Lapp
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 Mrs. Agnes Brown Leach
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 Prof. Archibald MacLelish
 John P. Marquand
 Prof. William F. Floyd
 Bishop Francis J. McConnell
 Prof. William F. Floyd
 A. J. Muste
 Mrs. G. Bromley Oxnam
 Rt. Rev. Edward L. Parsons
 James G. Patton
 A. Philip Randolph
 Will Rogers, Jr.
 Eric Roper
 John Nevin Sayre
 Rt. Rev. William Scarlett
 Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.
 Joseph Schlossberg
 Odell Shepard
 Robert E. Sherwood
 Rubal Abba Hillel Silver
 Eilian R. Smith
 Prof. William F. Floyd
 Prof. William F. Floyd
 Prof. William F. Floyd
 L. Hollingsworth Wood
 Dr. William Lindsay Young

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Roger N. Baldwin Chairman, National Committee	Morris L. Ernst General Counsel	B. W. Huebsch Treasurer
Patrick Murphy Mallin Executive Director	George E. Rundquist Assistant Director	Mr. Tolson
	Clifford Forster Harbert Monte Levy Staff Counsel	Mr. Ladd Mr. Nichols Mr. Rosen Mr. Tracy Mr. Harbo Mr. Alden Mr. Belmont Mr. Laughlin Mr. Mohr Tele. Room Mr. Nease Miss Gandy

April 18, 1951

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover
 Director
 Federal Bureau of Investigation
 U.S. Department of Justice
 Washington 25, D. C.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
 HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
 DATE 2/29/84 BY SP8 BTJ/10
 2453/2

Dear Mr. Hoover:

I have recently reexamined the exchange of correspondence between Mr. Baldwin and you of last February concerning the Highlander Folk School. Your letter was most certainly responsive to Mr. Baldwin's inquiry.

However, a careful reexamination of the correspondence leads us to believe that Mr. Baldwin, who wrote you in his personal capacity rather than as an officer of this organization, did not quite hit the point which was troubling the Highlander Folk School authorities.

The real concern of the School and of several members of our Board who have been contacted by the school authorities is that some questions addressed by F.B.I. investigators to neighbors of the School led the neighbors to believe the questions were indicative of an attitude on the part of these agents that inter-racial education is somewhat subversive. We are confident that this does not reflect an F.B.I. attitude. Nor do we know whether the interpretation of the neighbors as to the purport of the questions was reasonable or unreasonable. We wonder however, whether, to avoid future repetitions of such incidents, it might not be possible to issue appropriate instructions to your agents to guard against any implication on their part that inter-racial education is necessarily subversive.

We note also in your letter of February 26 that you have issued appropriate instructions to discontinue any direct contacts to representatives of the School. But again, although you were not informed of it Mr. Horton had not been opposed to contacts being made at the School. Indeed, it would seem most unwise to discontinue direct contacts with the school representatives, both from the point of view of the F.B.I. the students, and Mr. Horton. Doubtless the F.B.I. would be able to get much better and fuller information from the officials of the School than from the neighbors who alone are now being contacted.

RECORDED - 29 61-7511-168
 EXPEDITE PROCESSING

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover.

-2-

April 18, 1951

I might add that I have communicated my views to Mr. Horton, and that he shares them fully. As he states in a letter to us dated April 14, "I have no objection to direct dealings with the F.B.I. on matters of internal security or in regard to legitimate inquiries. No purpose would be served ... by my failure to cooperate in such matters." He also agrees that the real concern is the issuance of appropriate directives to your agents concerning comments on inter-racial education.

We should appreciate your comments.

Respectfully yours,

Herbert M. Levy

Herbert Monte Levy
Staff Counsel

5451

RECORDED - 29

INDEXED 29 44-7511-168

April 20, 1951

Mr. Herbert Monte Levy
Staff Counsel
American Civil Liberties Union
170 Fifth Avenue
New York 10, New York

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/29/84 BY SP8 BTG/OK
245832

Dear Mr. Levy:

I wish to acknowledge your letter of April 18, 1951, with further reference to the allegations of Mr. Nyles Horton of the Highlander Folk School.

When Mr. Horton first alleged that interracial education was considered "somewhat subversive" by the FBI, and the basis for investigation, we made a very careful check into the matter. We could find no basis for corroboration of Mr. Horton's statement although it was quite obvious that these allegations had been widely disseminated by Mr. Horton. There are no facts to substantiate Mr. Horton's position that FBI Agents considered interracial education as "subversive," nor did the Agents ask questions which would permit any such impression to be conveyed. In view of the long-standing policies of the FBI and the absence of any proven instances of violations of these policies I saw no necessity then, nor now, to reiterate our policy. The very thought that interracial education is a basis for the conclusion of "subversion" is so far removed from the operations of the FBI that I see no purpose to be served in sending out any instructions on this subject at this time.

I have noted your comment as to the desirability of dealing directly with the Highlander Folk School. This is exactly what we did do on the occasion of our last contact with Mr. Horton. It has always been my view that the most accurate information can be obtained directly from the interested parties rather than from indirect inquiries. The Highlander Executive Council, however, at its meeting

cc: SAC, New York (With copy of incoming)
SAC, Knoxville (With copy of incoming)

cc: Mr. Belmont

LBN:CMC

Letter Received
SAC Robert
4/24/51

U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE
DIRECTOR

MAILED 3
APR 23 1951
COMM - FBI

Laumgard

54152

Mr. Herbert Monte Levy
Staff Counsel
American Civil Liberties Union
170 Fifth Avenue
New York 10, New York

April 20, 1951

in January, 1951, set up impossible conditions for the conduct of interviews to which this Bureau could not accede, and accordingly we had no other choice but to refrain from contacting those connected with the school in matters in which they might be helpful.

I appreciate your calling this matter to my attention.

With best wishes and kind regards,

Sincerely yours,

J. Edgar Hoover

DEPT. OF JUSTICE

LBT

APR 21 1951

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FOIPA DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET

4

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) b1; 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:
61-7511-169

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61-7511-169
SAC, Knoxville

May 24, 1951

130

Director, FBI

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

OCT-130

Burllet May 11, 1951.

Pursuant to your request, there are being enclosed herewith two copies of each of the two photographs which you forwarded with referenced letter. No steps should be taken at this time to identify the individuals depicted in these photographs. However, they should be placed with your file in the captioned matter for possible future identification if further investigation of the Highlander Folk School is authorized by the Bureau.

Incloses

bc

~~_____~~ *onb*

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 3/1/84 BY SP8 BTG/ML
245502

- Tolson _____
- Ladd _____
- Clegg _____
- Glavin _____
- Nichols _____
- Rosen _____
- Tracy _____
- Harbo _____
- Alder _____
- Belmont _____
- Laughlin _____
- Mohr _____
- Tele. Room _____
- Holloman _____

MAY 31 1951

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MAY 25 1951
FBI
RECEIVED - MAIL ROOM

OK

~~_____~~ *etc*

27/3

Mr. Peyton Ford
Deputy Attorney General
Director, FBI

May 12, 1951

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

RECORDED - 117 HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INFORMATION CONCERNING

INDEXED - 117 61-7511-170

Reference is made to the memorandum dated May 3, 1951, which the Attorney General received from Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., attaching a letter dated May 1, 1951, and a New York "Compass" newspaper article dated April 30, 1951, which were received by Senator Lodge from [redacted]

[redacted] relating to the captioned matter. We have made photostatic copies of this correspondence for our files and are returning the originals herewith to you.

The enclosed material makes the false allegation that the FBI is harassing the Highlander Folk School because of its interracial character. This allegation was originally made to the Attorney General by Myles Horton, director of this school and, since then, several individuals have written to the Attorney General in a similar vein. This previous correspondence has been discussed in our memoranda to you dated February 26, 1951, March 13, 1951, and March 28, 1951.

No further action is contemplated by this Bureau regarding the enclosed material.

Attachments
MAY 15 1951
[redacted] files

U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE
FBI
RECEIVED READING ROOM
MAY 14 10 27 AM '51

U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE
RECEIVED DIRECTOR
MAY 14 10 27 AM '51

COMM - FBI
MAY 14 1951
MAILED 18

DECLASSIFIED BY [redacted]
ON 3/1/84

192
62 MAY 31 1951

Tolson _____
Ladd _____
Clegg _____
Glavin _____
Nichols _____
Belmont _____
Tracy _____
Mohr _____
Tele. Room _____
Nease _____
Gandy _____

[redacted] etc

United States Senate

Handwritten signature and initials

MAY 3 1951

Respectfully referred to Honorable James
Howard McGrath, Attorney General of the United States,
Department of Justice, Washington 25, D. C.

With thanks for such favorable consideration as
the communication herewith submitted warrants,
and for a report thereon, in duplicate to
accompany return of enclosure.

By direction of

Handwritten signature of Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr.

Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., U. S. S.

44-371-8
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
MAY 4 1951
DIVISION OF RECORDS

ATTORNEY GENERAL
DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL

May 1st 1951

Senator Lodge
House of Congress
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Lodge:

In compiling a book which takes in
social questions of today in America...I am collecting
data on the status of the American Negro.

Today I found this page...and I
seek to authenticate this statement about the F B I
and the Federal Government...regarding the spreading of
the impression that this Highlander Folk School at
Monteagle, Tenna where trade-unionists study and live..

If this is not so...it is very
bad policy for good relations for this newspaper to
print it.. BUT if it is so...it is worse policy
for our F B I and Federal Government...

Can you help me, getting the truth
about this... and if not, will you kindly return
this page and suggest to whom in Washington I can write?

Thanking you...

Sincerely

FORWARDED
DEBOL

MAY 1 5 21 PM '51

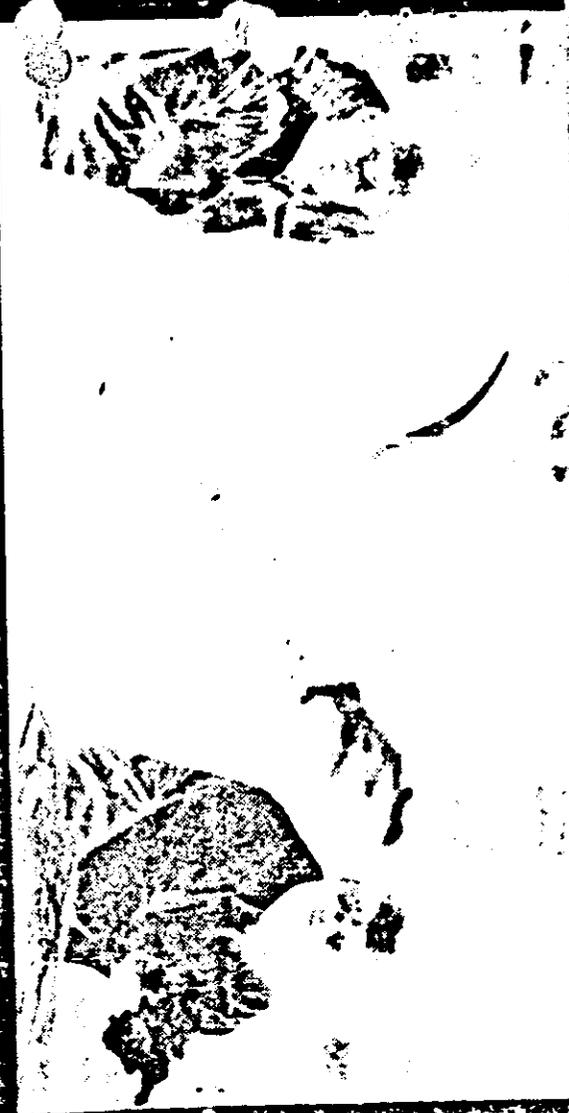
OFFICE OF THE
RECEIVED

A Tennessee Story



About a Ramon Cable School

AP Photo/John H. Johnson



AP Photo/John H. Johnson
Despite maintenance, school receives majority support of poor
his in attending assemblies Thursday, 12:30 p.m. at
local Delmonico Inn, including Will (owner) a waitress for
Highlander. And CIO has booked school for May courses
for in Southern organizing since



May 17, 1951

Honorable Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr.
United States Senate
Washington, D. C.

Benjamin
3-29

My dear Senators

This is in response to your note of May 3, 1951, which referred a letter and enclosure from [redacted] for consideration by this Department.

Play

The enclosure of [redacted] letter is an article from the "Daily Compass" of April 30, 1951, which suggests that agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation of this Department have harassed the Highlander Folk School of Monteagle, Tennessee.

May I reassure you for the benefit of [redacted] that such a suggestion is absolutely false and without any foundation whatever. As you know, the FBI is strictly an investigative organization, in fact as well as policy, and indulges in no harassment.

In accordance with your request, I am returning [redacted] letter and enclosure.

Yours sincerely,

PAYTON FORD

Peyton Ford
Deputy Attorney General

RECORDED - 1

INDEXED - 1

F. B. I.
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

MAY 23 10 35 AM '51

RECEIVED

161-7511-171

MAY 21 1951

37

Play

60 MAY 24 1951

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bk

bk

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Bishop Genevieve Graham
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Herbert Monte Levy
Staff Counsel

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Mr. Glavin	✓
Mr. Nichols	✓
Mr. Rosen	✓
Mr. Tracy	✓
Mr. Harbo	✓
Mr. Alden	✓
Mr. Belmont	✓
Mr. Laughlin	✓
Mr. Mohr	✓
Tele. Room	✓
Mr. Nease	✓
Miss Gandy	✓

May 18, 1951

RE: HIGHLANDER PO
SCHOOL CASE

Continued

Baumgardner

Secretary
J. Edgar Hoover
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Department of Justice
Washington, D. C.

Dear Friend:

I am highly embarrassed to write this letter, but I do hope you will bear with me.

Mr. Hoover was kind enough to write me on this subject a few weeks ago in response to a letter I wrote to him, and I now find to my shame that the letter has gone astray in our files and cannot be located.

I therefore wonder if I could prevail upon you to send me a copy of that letter.

With many thanks and deep appreciation in advance, I am

Cordially yours,

Herbert Monte Levy
Herbert Monte Levy
Staff Counsel

*nmk
1/10/51
5-24-51
OK*

RECORDED - 32
INDEXED - 32

61-7511-172
JUN 6 1951

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/1/84 BY SP8 BTG/CA
34552

EXPEDITE PROCESSING

May 24, 1951

16
my

RECORDED - 32 61-7511-172

Mr. Herbert Monte Levy
Staff Counsel
American Civil Liberties Union
170 Fifth Avenue
New York 10, New York

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/1/84 BY SP8 BTJ/cw
245582

Dear Mr. Levy:

Your letter of May 18, 1951, addressed to my Secretary, has been referred to my attention and in accordance with your request, I am enclosing a copy of my communication to you of April 20, 1951.

You may be sure that I am glad to be of assistance in this instance and if I can be of further aid do not hesitate to communicate with me.

Sincerely yours,
J. Edgar Hoover

REC'D. OF JUSTICE
FBI
RECEIVED-MAIL ROOM
MAY 25 2 58 PM '51

RECEIVED - DIRECTOR
FBI
MAY 25 10 08 AM '51
U.S. DEPT. OF JUSTICE

Enclosure
Director's letter to Mr. Levy of 4-20-51.

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8

RECEIVED HEADQUARTERS
FBI
MAY 24 6 28 PM '51
COMM - FBI

JUN 15 1951

POT
me
sk

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI
FROM : SAC, KNOXVILLE

DATE: June 22, 1951

SUBJECT: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INTERNAL SECURITY - C
(Bufile 61-7511)

Re Bureau memorandum dated 5/15/51 to the SAC, Knoxville.

etc
[Redacted] Internal Revenue, Treasury Department, advised agents of this office on 6/14/51 that as of that date no investigation of the Highlander Folk School has been instigated. However, he stated he anticipates in the very near future that his department, along with Special Agents of the Treasury Department, will conduct a full investigation of the income, expenses and operations of the Highlander Folk School and its personnel.

He stated he would keep agents of the FBI informed of the progress made in this and would be willing to allow agents of the FBI to review the results of such investigation.

etc
This Division will maintain contact with [Redacted] and will keep the Bureau advised as to the progress made in the investigations by the Internal Revenue Department.

etc
61-12
[Redacted]:jga

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 2/1/84 BY SP8 BTG/aw
24532

RECORDED - 18

JUN 25 1951

EX-129

JUL 9 1951

etc
Bureau (6/21/51)
173
[Redacted]
etc

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

DATE: 8/13/51

Office

1710

cm

[Handwritten signature]

TO : DIRECTOR FBI
FROM : SAC, KNOXVILLE
SUBJECT: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INTERNAL SECURITY - C
BUFILE 61-7511

Re bulet to Knoxville, dated 5/15/51.

[Redacted] Internal Revenue, U. S. Treasury Department, Chattanooga, Tennessee, advised that to date no action has been taken by his department or by the Special Agents, U. S. Treasury Department, in connection with an investigation of the Highlander Folk School or any of their personnel. He again stated he would immediately advise the writer when any information is received by his department.

[Redacted] /bg
61-12

etc

RECORDED - 6
EX - 100

161-7511-174
AUG 15 1951
19

[Redacted] *etc*

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 3/1/84 BY SP8 BTB/clh
2455312

61 AUG 21 1951

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Director, FBI

DATE: October 16, 1951

FROM : SAC, Knoxville

SUBJECT: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
SECURITY MATTER - C

Relet from Knoxville to Bureau dated 8-13-51.

bk

 Internal Revenue, U. S. Treasury Department, Chattanooga, Tennessee, advised an agent of this office on October 13, 1951, that as of that date no action had been taken by his department or by the special agents of the U. S. Treasury Department in connection with an investigation of the Highlander Folk School or any of their personnel. He again stated he would immediately advise agents of this office of any information developed as a result of his investigation.

bk

 jaw
61-12

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 3/1/84 BY SP8 BTG/ck
245302

JK

RECORDED - 48
EX-115

61-7511-175

OCT 19 1951

 etc

59 OCT 23 1951

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI
FROM : SAC, KNOXVILLE (61-12)
SUBJECT: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

[Handwritten signature]

DATE: 4/21/52

G.I.R.-6

ReKxlet dated 10/16/51.

etc

On April 17, 1952, [redacted] Internal Revenue, U. S. Treasury Department, advised that no investigation has as yet been conducted of the Highlander Folk School and its personnel by Treasury Agents. He added that because of a desire by the Internal Revenue Bureau to look into the tax returns of gamblers and racketeers his office had been ordered to discontinue any investigation of the Highlander Folk School for an indefinite period of time.

He advised that he would notify the FBI in the event that investigation was to be conducted at a future date. In view of these facts this case is being closed administratively by the Knoxville Office pending receipt of this advice from [redacted]

etc

etc

[redacted]:MCD

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 3/1/84 BY SP8 BTG/CA
245502

61-7511-176
APR 25 1952

REC-100-192
EX-92

[redacted]
[redacted]
etc

[Handwritten signature]

RECEIVED

3 Montague, Tenn.
July 31, 1953

Mr. Edgar Hoover,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
Washington D.C.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 3/1/84 BY SP8 BJA/aw

I am writing

you a confidential letter.
The Highlander Folk School,
about three miles of Montague
is believed by many citizens
around here, to be one
of the hottest beds of
Communist activity
in the United States.

It seems they get a
half bushel of mail a
day. People around
here, can't understand
what it all means,
They have been

RECORDED-37

61-7511-171

AUG 3 1953

AUG 3 1953

5-48

7 13 1953

for years. They claim they
are here to help the mountain
people, but no one knows
of any one around here
they have helped,
It is evident to me, from
what I know, that it
is a communist
center, what can be
done about it?
Who has the authority
to act in judging
out about it.

Sincerely
W. A. Swift

P.S. This is a confidential
letter. Rev. W. A. Swift

RECEIVED
AUG 3 5 04 PM '54
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

TRUE COPY

Monteagle, Tenn.
July 31, 1953

Mr. J. Edgar Hoover.
Federal Bureau of Information.
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Hoover:

I am writing a confidential letter. The Highlander Folks School, about three miles of Monteagle, is believed by many citizens around here, to be one of the hottest beds of Communist teaching in the United States. It seems they get a half bushel of mail a day. People around here can't understand what it all means. They have been here for years. They claim they are here to help the mountain people, but no one knows of any one around here they have helped. It is evident to me, from what I know, that it is a communist center, What can be done about it? Who has the authority to act in finding out about it?

Sincerely

/s/ W. A. Swift

P.S. This is a confidential letter.

/s/ Rev. W. A. Swift

August 6, 1953

Reverend V. A. Swift
Knoxville, Tennessee

INDEXED-31

Dear Mr. Swift: 61-7511-177

RECORDED-37 Your letter dated July 31, 1953, has been received and the motives which prompted your communication are indeed appreciated.

In view of the contents of your letter I am instructing the Special Agent in Charge of our Knoxville Office to have an Agent contact you in the near future.

Sincerely yours,

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 3/1/84 BY SP8 BJA/CW
24 JSCB

John Edgar Hoover
Director

G. I. R. J.

2cc - SAC, Knoxville (w/Enclosure)

Bureau files reflect that in December 1943 the correspondent communicated with the Bureau concerning juvenile delinquency matters and was afforded a cordial acknowledgement.

The letter of acknowledgement is being mailed in plain envelope inasmuch as Swift indicates that he desires his identity be kept confidential.

Bureau files reflect that a security investigation of the Highland Park School was closed in 1943, Knoxville, file 61-12, inasmuch as no evidence was developed that the school was Communist controlled or dominated. The files do not disclose pertinent information received since that date indicating Communist Party activity on any part of the school; however, allegations of Communist Party sympathy or activity have been received concerning persons who were or had been connected with the school.

- Tamm
- Ladd
- Nichols
- Belmont
- Clegg
- Glavin
- Harbo
- Rosen
- Tracy
- Gearty
- Mohr
- Winterrowd
- Tele. Room
- Holloman
- Siess
- Miss Gandy

COMM - FBI
AUG 7 1953
MAILED 30

6 AUG 20 1953

[Handwritten signatures and initials]

In regard to the Highland Folk School Bureau teletype to Knoxville dated February 27, 1951, instructed Knoxville to advise all agents that no discussion pro or con should be made with any individual concerning the school.

Bureau letter dated May 13, 1951, requested Knoxville to discreetly obtain a copy of the Bureau of Internal Revenue investigative report concerning the school. It is noted that a number of contacts were made with the Bureau of Internal Revenue for this purpose. By letter dated April 21, 1952, Knoxville reported that the Bureau of Internal Revenue investigation of the school had been postponed and the Bureau of Internal Revenue would advise Knoxville Office in the event that the investigation was conducted.

In view of the contents of the correspondent's communication you are requested to designate an agent to discreetly contact the correspondent as soon as possible and obtain from him the basis and substantiation for the allegations made in his letter bearing in mind the Bureau's instructions of February 27, 1951, hereinbefore-mentioned.

In regard to the correspondent's inquiries set out in his letter he should be orally advised that all pertinent information relating to subversive activities should be furnished to the FBI inasmuch as the FBI has been given the general responsibilities for the investigation of subversive activities within the United States under the security program defined by Executive Orders and Congressional enactments.

No investigation should be conducted in connection with the correspondent's allegations without securing specific Bureau authorization as set forth in the Manual of Instructions, Section 87-C, 5A.

The results of the interview should be promptly furnished to the Bureau with reference being made to this letter.

Copy: sdc

TO: MR. D. M. LADD •

August 25, 1953

FROM: MR. A. W. BELMONT

SUBJECT: MYLES HORTON
(Jenner Committee Request)

Jenner Committee requested name check on Horton, Southern Conference Educational Fund, Inc., June 30 1953.

b7c

Horton long-time head of Highlander Folk School, Monteagle, Tennessee. Close associate of known Communist Party members. Active in Southern Conference for Human Welfare (SCHW), a cited organization and Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF), successor organization to SCHW.* Horton and Tom West, known Communist, were principal organizers of program Highlander Folk School when latter organized in 1932. In December, 1950, Horton in letter to Mr. Clegg accused Bureau Agents of questioning neighbors of Folk School regarding visits of Negroes to School and also of stating that a press release released by School would be considered communistic by a majority of southern people. Horton made similar charges in letter to Attorney General, Senator Estes Defauver, to the press and to others. Horton's allegations found by Bureau to be false. Horton in letter to Attorney General stated that the Council of the School was considering the procedure for future interviews with Bureau Agents, i. e., of having the Director of School only speak for entire staff and of having all questions posed by Bureau Agents put in writing. Director of School to submit replies in writing. Subsequently Knoxville Office instructed to have no further contacts whatever at Folk School. Present review limited to main files on Horton and Highlander Folk School, and summary report dated October 4, 1947, concerning SCHW which was prepared in accordance with Executive Order 9835 and which contains summary on Horton. "See" references since that summary were also reviewed.* Horton was reported instrumental in starting the "Workers Alliance, designated by the Attorney General Pursuant to Executive Order 10450.

ACTION:

That the attached memorandum be forwarded to the Jenner Committee.

*2. NO. 10450 in copy
Filed in copy*

Attachment
(100-11615; 61-7511)
1 - Mr. Nichols

fjb

74

161-7511- ✓
NOT RECORDED
148 SEP 16 1953

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 3/1/84 BY JP8BTJ/OL
245502

62 SEP 22 1953

Monteagle, Tenn.
July 10, 1953

Dear Mr. Hoover:
your letter

pink

came this a.m.

I am glad you are
sending a representative
from Knoxville to
contact me in regard
to the Communist
situation here, which
I wrote you about.
I can give you
considerable information

Highland, Tenn.

RECORDED-33

INDEXED-33

117511-178
AUG 18 1953

Sincerely,
W. D. Stewart

No acc.
necessary

ENCLOSURE

Reference to me?
AUG 23 1953

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 3/1/84 BY SP8BTA/CS

5-lyk

245532

Deets Pickell
Board of Tennessee State

Among Our Neighbors

'Pastor Swift,' Wife Did a Lot of Healing

Lovable Couple Now Retired After 60 Years

By GORDON H. TURNER
Staff Correspondent

MONTEAGLE, Tenn.—Much of the South and nation and in fact a lot of the world would not be exactly the same had it not been for a lovable, retired couple now happily living in retirement here.

High above the world's ills, which they have done a lot to heal, are the Rev. W. A. Swift, an all-time famous Methodist preacher and his wife, the former Irene Keiser. Both were born and reared not far apart in southwest Kentucky during the latter quarter of the 19th century.

"Pastor Swift" had written me they were "retired," and that they were "at home" after 60 years of evangelizing and holding a dozen or so pastorates in many states. They bought a pretty home here 10 years ago and settled down, free from now on, of routine professional duties.

Although 60 years old, Mrs. Swift has attended to the famous Sunday school assembly programs here for 80 years (with her husband since the early 1870s). With such an acquaintance, he says nothing of continuing worldwide correspondence, reading from a large personal library, and filling in a thousand and one little calls and chores around here—the couple is yet quite active.

At their invitation by letter, I spent a recent unforgettable day with this remarkable couple, whom I had never before met, and for whom a dozen stories couldn't do justice. He did me the courtesy of complimenting my good-will work in the state, and my column. Though no publicity seeker, he consented for me to write their story.

Swift described hardships long



—Staff photo by Gordon H. Turner
MONTEAGLE, Tenn.—The Rev. and Mrs. W. A. Swift stand in front of their pretty home just inside the world famous Sunday School assembly grounds here. They have named the house Inglewood.

ago and when he served as school janitor to pay his way through a small college.

"When I was born there were no electric lights or paved roads, much less automobiles in Kentucky," he recalled. "But ox-wagons, spinning wheels, and homemade clay lamps were common."

He told of "dropping" corn, then covering and cultivating it with a hoe—of eggs selling at three to five cents a dozen, and drum prints at four cents a yard. Back

then men worked hard from sun to sun for 25 cents, corn sold for 20 cents a bushel, children walked miles to school, and preachers, usually riding horseback to appointments, often got as little as \$100 for a year's pay.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 3/1/84 BY SP8 BTG/ML

245862

61-7511-115

ENCLOSURE

Lost All for Friends

"Swift's dad was a well-to-do farmer until he lost all he had as security on notes for friends. W. A. never got a cent from home toward his education.

"One winter I had but one pair of socks to my name and washed them out at night to wear next day," he declared. "But before I married I had crossed the Atlantic ocean three times and traveled in all the world's continents except Australia."

It was actually in the middle of the Atlantic while on a trip to the Holy Land that he met the girl he was to marry in 1909. Their oldest daughter, Mary Elizabeth, died at age 6 and oldest son William was killed in an automobile accident at age 20. These losses were partially made up, however, for Eleanor (now Mrs. John R. West of Nashville) soon came along and then later within a matter of minutes of each other, Thomas, Margaret and Marjorie arrived to place the Swifts as the only known "Methodist pastor" parents of triplets in the world.

First Home Service

W. A.'s first sermon was at his home church, Mount Carmel, near Murray, Ky. in 1896. Before retiring a decade ago he held many pastorates, including also churches in Little Rock and Texarkana, Ark., Marion, Ill., St. Clair, Mo., and Millersburg, Ky. An editor of church papers for 11 years, he helped found two Methodist colleges (Kentucky Wesleyan and Athens, Ala.), and had the distinction of clearing several towns and cities of the "filth of alcohol and indecent shows and carnivals."

This man accumulated what may have been the largest personal library of any fellow-preacher in the country and though he had given away or sold nearly all of it, he recently counted more than 1000 volumes left. Too, he has always had a big correspondence and today values among keepsakes a personal letter to him from King Edward VII, three from King George VI, and one from Queen Elizabeth II.

Gate J. P. Alley A Start

As benefactor of the late J. P. Alley Sr., creator of Hambone's meditations who grew to be one of America's greatest commercial artists), Pastor Swift is very proud. While he was preaching at Asbury Methodist in Little Rock, Ark., out of work, came to him for help. Swift got him a good job, took him into his home for free board, slept in the same bed with him for two years, gave him money to take an art course by mail (only training he ever had) and watched him rise to fame.

Later Alley's were the only cartoons ever to hang on the walls of the U. S. capitol in Washington and the only ones created out of England to appear in a famous London magazine. As a top writer



This is a photo of the Swifts' triplet children, made when the trio graduated from Jackson city high school.

for the Memphis Commercial Appeal, he considered changing to one of the nation's biggest dailies at a tripled salary but Swift advised him to remain in Dixie. He did, and in Little Rock became a great lay leader and Bible teacher in Asbury church. Swift performed Alley's wedding ceremony, and when he died a few years ago, was called to preach his funeral.

The Swift triplets, parent-like, are blaxing their own brilliant trails. Born in Lexington, Ky., they graduated together at Jackson (Tenn.) high school under principal D. E. Ray and the late C. B. Hama then city superintendent. They literally worked their way through college — not one each but up to two, three, and more, all with exceptional records.

Thomas attended Lambuth (Jackson, Tenn.), the University of Tenn., and Ohio State, and is now a graduate chemical engineer in Houston, Texas. Margaret graduated from Wesleyan (Macon, Ga.), Scarritt in Nashville, and then from Columbia in New York City when its president was General Eisenhower. Later she attended the Universities of Michigan, California and Peiping, China. She served as a missionary in China until the Communists took over and is now field director of the American Red Cross in Japan.

Marjorie graduated from Lambuth, Peabody college, and then from Northwestern university

with a Ph.D. degree. Now with a top-spot on the University of Alabama faculty, she gets back here more often than the other children to visit the family.

The Swifts hosted me through their big home "so cool in summer that we always sleep under blankets." He has a vegetable garden (mostly beans and tomatoes now) and in lovely flower beds, dahlias are a specialty. There are enough beds in the big house "to sleep several families," and with two kitchens I got the idea that most of the time it is open house to friends from everywhere. Just finished on the backside is a tiny guest house as modern as tomorrow, which they plan to rent to assembly visitors when not used as their own guest house.

Philosophy on World

Strolling in the garden Swift who has been a student of government and world affairs from boyhood, gave me his philosophy of current conditions.

"The world, since I was born has improved very fast materially but constantly drifted morally," he said. "But if even yet America really turned to God in practice as well as theory, we can overcome communism and lead the world into a great spiritual awakening that would bring untold material blessings to all. If we don't, I fear communism will win out and set the world back a thousand years or perhaps even destroy civilization itself."

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI

DATE: August 27, 1953

FROM : SAC, KNOXVILLE (61-12)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 3/1/84 BY SP8 BTG/DAJ
245082

SUBJECT: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

61-7511-177
Bureau letter to Reverend W. A. SWIFT, Monteagle, Tennessee,
dated 8-6-53. *I.M.T.*

etc
Rev. WILLIAM ALPHEUS SWIFT, Monteagle, Tennessee, was interviewed at his residence by Special Agent [redacted] on 8-19-53. Rev. SWIFT advised that he is a retired Methodist Minister, 81 years of age, and that he has resided at Monteagle, Tennessee, for the past 10 years. Rev. SWIFT reported that the Highlander Folk School which is located on highway between Monteagle and Tracy City, Tennessee, was reportedly founded during the early part of 1930 by a man named DOMBROSKY. Rev. SWIFT stated that he did not know DOMBROSKY's first name and that he had never met DOMBROSKY. Rev. SWIFT advised that DOMBROSKY is no longer connected with the Highlander Folk School, but that he is reported to be sympathetic with the Communist. Rev. SWIFT stated that he believed DOMBROSKY to be sympathetic with Communism because of newspaper accounts linking DOMBROSKY with strikes which were occurring all over the United States. Rev. SWIFT stated that he had never heard any comments made either by or accredited to DOMBROSKY which would lead him to believe him to be Communistic and he stated that he had not received any reports of any activity on the part of DOMBROSKY other than the newspaper accounts of DOMBROSKY participating in strikes which would lead him to believe that DOMBROSKY was sympathetic with Communism or any subversive organization.

Rev. SWIFT stated that he has been informed that the Highlander Folk School is reportedly operated under the leadership of a man by the name of HORTON, first name unknown. He said that he has never met HORTON and does not know anyone connected with the Highlander Folk School either in the past or at the present time. He also advised that he has never visited the Highlander Folk School and has never associated with anyone who has frequented the Highlander Folk School or associated with any of the individuals connected with this school. Rev. SWIFT advised that he has no direct information regarding the Highlander Folk School or any of its past or present personnel. He stated that his only information concerning the possible sympathies of the Highlander Folk School with the Communist Party or other subversive organization is in the form of hearsay information. Rev. SWIFT was asked for specific information even in the form of hearsay upon which he based his opinion that the Highlander Folk School was Communistic in nature. Rev. SWIFT advised it is his opinion that the Highlander Folk School was dominated by Communist Sympathizers on the following events.

RECORDED - 91

INDEXED - 91

61-7511-179
27 AUG 31 1953

SEP 18 1953

BEST

INT/REC

[redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]
etc

Rev. SWIFT stated that sometime during 1952, he observed Mr. HORTON, Highlander Folk School Director, throw away a copy of the Romanian News, Sunday Edition, dated October, 1952, numbered 206. Rev. SWIFT stated that HORTON discarded this newspaper in the Post Office of Monteagle, Tennessee and he reclaimed the newspaper for information purposes. Rev. SWIFT stated that after reading this edition of the Romanian News, he considered it subversive in nature.

Rev. SWIFT stated that the Highlander Folk School has claimed for years that the purpose of their location at Monteagle, Tennessee is to assist the mountain people in that vicinity. He stated that he has been visiting in Monteagle and vicinity for the past 35 years and has lived continually at Monteagle, Tennessee for the past 10 years. He stated that in visiting with mountain people in that vicinity, he has yet to find anyone who has stated that anyone connected with the Highlander Folk School has assisted the mountain people in any way.

Rev. SWIFT said that [REDACTED] advised him some time ago that the Highlander Folk School was made up of Communist Sympathizers. Rev. SWIFT advised the interviewing agent that [REDACTED] did not elaborate on the comment and did not give any reason or basis for making this remark.

Rev. SWIFT also advised that he had been informed by [REDACTED] that the Highlander Folk School was a "hot bed of Communist". Rev. SWIFT was unable to furnish any additional information regarding the comment and stated that [REDACTED] had not elaborated on this remark. He also stated that he has seen extremely large quantities of mail being delivered at Monteagle Post Office to representatives of the Highlander Folk School. He stated this mail comes from all over the world and a great deal of it is in the form of air mail and special delivery mail. Rev. SWIFT stated that he cannot understand how any school could receive this much mail unless it was engaged in some sort of illegal or subversive activity.

Rev. SWIFT also advised the interviewing agent that he had been informed by several mountain people, names unknown, that while doing day labor on the grounds of the Highlander Folk School, they had learned that there was a building on the ground of the Highlander Folk School called the Film Center. Rev. SWIFT stated these people had advised him that no one, other than Highlander Folk School personnel were allowed to enter or go near this building. He stated that he had no other information regarding the building, but it seemed rather suspicious to him that a school would be so particular in maintaining a building and its contents in such secrecy.

Rev. SWIFT stated that Dr. J. T. BLACKWOOD, a retired Methodist Minister who is 91 years old and resides at Monteagle, Tennessee, had commented to him that the Methodist Church which was located in the immediate vicinity of the

Highlander Folk School had been forced to close its doors. Rev. BLACKWOOD informed Rev. SWIFT that this church was forced to close its doors due to the distractions offered by the Highlander Folk School personnel. He reportedly stated whenever a church service was in progress, the Highlander Folk School personnel would plan a demonstration picnic or offer to take the children on hikes or rides through the woods and in this method distract them from the church services.

Rev. SWIFT advised that the Highlander Folk School personnel were acting as spies in the different churches in the vicinity of Monteagle and Tracy City, Tennessee. When asked to explain what he meant by this, he stated that they attend a church service without invitation and the next Sunday they would go to some different church. He stated that to his knowledge, they have never caused any disturbance at any of these churches, but that they do not continually go to the same church in the vicinity of Monteagle or Tracy City. He was asked specifically why he thought they were acting as spies and he could offer no explanation other than the fact that they did not attend any church regularly.

Rev. SWIFT also advised that he had heard, source unknown, that several manufacturing establishments had refused to build in the vicinity of Monteagle or Tracy City because of the Communistic leadings of the Highlander Folk School which was located in the same vicinity of Monteagle and Tracy City, Tennessee. They reportedly stated that they did not want to build near the Highlander Folk School because the school would continually be causing trouble in the form of strikes.

Rev. SWIFT stated that he could not furnish any additional information other than what was related above. He stated he believed the school was a "hot bed of Communist" and he based this opinion upon the several events which are related above. Rev. SWIFT advised he was unable to furnish any additional information regarding the Highlander Folk School either in the form of hearsay or otherwise. Rev. SWIFT was orally advised that all pertinent information relating to subversive activities should be furnished to the FBI, inasmuch as the FBI has been given the general responsibilities for the investigation of subversive activities within the United States under the Security Program defined by Executive Orders and Congressional Enactments. He was informed that if he received any additional information regarding any subversive activities that he should immediately notify the Special Agent in Charge of the Knoxville Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Closed.

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : DIRECTOR, FBI (61-7511)

DATE: 9/10/53

FROM : SAC, KNOXVILLE (61-12)

SUBJECT: W. A. SWIFT
INFORMATION CONCERNING
(INTERNAL SECURITY)

Ref Bulet September 9, 1953, entitled as above.

Re let 8/27/53 entitled "HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL,
INTERNAL SECURITY - C," reported the result of the interview
with Reverend WILLIAM A. SWIFT.

l-7c [redacted] bk

RECORDED - 122

161-7511-180

31 SEP 14 1953

341
53 SEP 17 1953

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 8/1/84 BY SP8 BTG/CL
845602

INT [signature]

SAC, Knoxville

September 9, 1953

Director, FBI (61-7511)

W. A. SNIET
INFORMATION CONCERNING
(INTERNAL SECURITY)

HIGHLAN FOLK SCHOOL

ReBulet dated August 6, 1953, directed to the captioned individual, Monteagle, Tennessee, copies of which were designated for your office with the request that the correspondent be interviewed.

Examination of Bureau files fails to disclose the receipt of the results of your contact. You are requested to forward this information to the Bureau at once.

In the event these data have been submitted to the Bureau, please furnish the date and caption of your communication.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 3/1/84 BY SP8 KST/OW

245532

RECORDED-57

INDEXED-57

EX - 118

61-7511-181
SEP 16 1953
130

- Belmont
- Glavin
- Ladd
- Nichols
- Tracy
- Harbo
- Belmont
- Tele. Room
- Holloman
- Gandy

COMM - FBI
SEP 9 1953
MAILED 28

270

SEP 13 1953

Handwritten signature/initials

~~SECURITY INFO~~

~~N - CONFIDENTIAL~~

Director, FBI

REGISTERED MAIL

11/28/53

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES
AND FIELD OFFICES
ADVISED BY ROUTING
SLIP (S) OF class.
DATE 3/9/84

SAC, Knoxville (100-00)

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
Thumbnail Sketch
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

Classified by SP8 BTJ/CW
Declassify on: OADR 2/1/84
245532

Re SAC Letter 53-72.

There are no known subversive organizations within the Knoxville Division purely local in nature, nor are there any national headquarters for such organizations in this division; however, the Highlander Folk School, Monteagle, Tennessee, is occasionally referenced in connection with security matters and, therefore, the following documentation is being submitted:

[REDACTED] furnished the following information regarding the Highlander Folk School, Monteagle, Tennessee:

"The Highlander Folk School is an institution located near Monteagle, Tennessee. It is an institution with classes on a seminar basis and is supported primarily by donations from individuals, from labor unions in the form of payments for students who attend, and to some extent by the Farmers' Union. It offers courses of instruction in labor organization, social economics, parliamentary procedure and the general field of labor education. This school has had Communist Party members on its staff and as instructors, and has followed the practice of welcoming CP members as students, but to my knowledge, the school has never offered courses of instruction in Communist matters nor has the Communist element ever completely controlled the institution."

Confidential Informant Knoxville T-2, a governmental agency, has advised that LOUIS FRANCIS BUDENZ, admitted former editor of the "Daily Worker," an East Coast Communist newspaper and an official in the Communist Party, advised on 11/21/52 that the Highlander Folk School was pro-Communist.

[REDACTED]

(T-2 is memo prepared by the House of Representatives Select Committee to Investigate Foundations and other Organizations.)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE.

NOT RECORDED
DEC 3 1953

JAN 15 1954

~~SECURITY INFORMATION - CONFIDENTIAL~~

COPY FILED IN

SECURITY INFORMATION - CONFIDENTIAL

Director, FBI

11/28/53

Re: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
IS-C

New York advised Knoxville by letter 10/26/53 that this information had been made available to New York Office by Bureau letter 2/24/53, entitled "Use of Benevolent Trust Funds, Philanthropic and Eleemosynary Institutions to Implement the Programs of Subversive Groups, IS-C." The Bureau instructed that in reporting the material it be attributed to BUDENZ and the source of memoranda be referred to only by confidential symbol.

SECURITY INFORMATION - CONFIDENTIAL

FBI KNOXVILLE 3-24-54 6-15 PM EST

DIRECTOR, FBI URGENT

MYLES HORTON, WAS., SM - C, HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL, IS - C. CHATTANOOGA
 NEWS-FREE PRESS ARTICLE APPEARING MARCH TWENTYTHREE FIFTYFOUR RELATES
 THAT HORTON REPORTS HE WILL GIVE AN ACCOUNT OF HIS APPEARANCE AS WITNESS
 AT SENATE INTERNAL SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING AT NEW ORLEANS,
 INCLUDING HIS CLOSED HEARING WITH SENATOR JAMES EASTLAND. MEETING
 SCHEDULED FOR THURSDAY NIGHT MARCH TWENTYFIVE FIFTYFOUR, AT HIGHLANDER
 FOLK SCHOOL, MONTEAGLE TENN. IT IS REPORTED MEETING ADVERTISED BY
 MAILING APPROXIMATELY FIVE HUNDRED CARDS TO PERSONS RESIDING VICINITY
 OF SCHOOL. KX OFFICE HAS RECEIVED TELEGRAM FROM MONTEAGEE, TENN., ON
 THIS DATE QUOTE FBI, HAMILTON BANK BLDG., KNOXVILLE, TENN. I WILL
 REPORT ON THE EASTLAND HEARING AT HIGHLANDER SEVEN THIRTY PM TOMORROW.
 SIGNED MYLES HORTON UNQUOTE. PURSUANT TO BUTEL BEB. TWENTYSEVEN
 FIFTYONE, INSTRUCTING NO CONTACTS WHATSOEVER SHALL BE MADE AT HIGHLANDER
 FOLK SCHOOL AND THAT NO DISCUSSION SHOULD BE MADE WITH INDIVIDUALS
 CONCERNING HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL, NO ACTION IS BEING TAKEN IN THIS
 MATTER UACB.

SOUCY

END

6-20 PM OK FBI WA fch

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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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 DATE 3/1/84 BY SP8 BTJ/da

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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

TO : Director, FBI (61-7511) (REGISTERED MAIL) DATE: 4/7/54

FROM : SAC, Knoxville (61-12)

SUBJECT: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
IS - C

Re Knoxville letters to Director 5/4/51, 6/22/51,
and 4/21/52.
Re Bureau letters to Knoxville dated 5/15/51.

b7c

On 3/19/54 [redacted] Internal Revenue, Treasury Department, advised SA [redacted] of this office that he had again been instructed to make an investigation concerning the Highlander Folk School and its employees in line with the information set forth in referenced Knoxville memo dated 5/4/51.

b7c

[redacted] stated that he was notifying the FBI of this investigation in that he would gladly cooperate with Agents of the FBI in furnishing any information through official channels that they desired. [redacted] stated he would notify Agent [redacted] of the progress of his investigation and if information was desired concerning his investigation, it could be obtained through official channels.

b7c

The Bureau will be kept advised of the progress of [redacted] investigation and if deemed advisable at the completion of [redacted] investigation, a request will be submitted to obtain the results of his investigations through Internal Revenue Bureau.

b7c

[redacted] mlc

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED BY SP8 BTG/016
ON 2/1/84 2455861

61-7511-182

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APPROPRIATE AGENCIES
AND FIELD OFFICES
ADVISED BY ROUTING
SLIP(S) OF declass.
DATE 3/5/84

DIRECTOR, FBI

5/26/54

SAC, KNOXVILLE (100-00)

① HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

Re SAC Letter 54-22 and mylet 11/28/53.

The thumbnail sketch concerning the Highlander Folk School as set out in replet presently fulfills all requirements as set forth in SAC Letter 54-22.

RC 5-1

etc

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DATE 3/1/84 BY SP8 BTJ/02
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61-7511-

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1-10-54

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Mr. Tolson	_____
Mr. Boardman	_____
Mr. Nichols	_____
Mr. Belmont	_____
Mr. Ladd	_____
Mr. Clegg	_____
Mr. Glavin	_____
Mr. Harbo	_____
Mr. Rosen	_____
Mr. Tracy	_____
Mr. Egan	_____
Mr. Gurnea	_____
Mr. Hendon	_____
Mr. Pennington	_____
Mr. Quinn	_____
Mr. Nease	_____
Miss Gandy	_____

AIR-TEL

Transmit the following Teletype message to:

FBI KNOXVILLE

6/7/54

GCM/wsw

DIRECTOR

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL, IS - C. RE KX LET TO BUREAU 4/7/54.

INTERNAL REVENUE AGENT, CHATTANOOGA, ADVISED THIS DATE HE HAS RECORDS OF HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL IN HIS POSSESSION

BUREAU REQUESTED TO REQUEST FROM INTERNAL REVENUE BUREAU

BECAUSE OF INTERNAL REVENUE DEPARTMENTAL REGULATIONS NOT ALLOWED TO RELEASE THIS INFORMATION IN THE FIELD, BUT IMPLIED IT COULD BE OBTAINED FROM INTERNAL REVENUE HEADQUARTERS.

[REDACTED]

INVESTIGATION TO BE CONDUCTED WITHIN THE NEXT TWO WEEKS.

SOUCY

RECORDED-98

AIR MAIL

END

JUN 9 1954

61-12
Mr. Belmont

Approved: Easton
Special Agent in Charge

Sent 10:10 Per [Signature]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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DATE 3/1/84 BY SP8 BTJ/DB
2455

BAUMGARDNER
[Handwritten initials]

MC

MC

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

29a

RECORDED

To: COMMUNICATIONS SECTION. JUNE 11, 1954

AIRTEL

Transmit the following message to SAC, [redacted]

61-7511-183

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL, ES-C, REURAIRTEL JUNE 7, 1954

REQUESTING THE BUREAU TO CONTACT INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE
IN WASHINGTON, D. C., [redacted]

[redacted] YOU ARE REFERRED TO BUTEL DATED FEBRUARY 27, 1951, WHICH SPECIFICALLY INSTRUCTS THE KNOXVILLE OFFICE THAT NO CONTACTS WHATSOEVER SHOULD BE MADE AT THE HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL AND THAT NO DISCUSSION, PRO OR CON, SHOULD BE MADE WITH ANY INDIVIDUAL CONCERNING THIS SCHOOL. YOU WILL ABIDE BY THESE INSTRUCTIONS AND TAKE NO FURTHER ACTION IN THIS CASE WITHOUT SPECIFIED BUREAU AUTHORITY. THE REQUEST MADE IN REFERENCED AIRTEL IS

DENIED. ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE.

Bureau file 61-7511

NOOVER Classified by SP8 BTJ/clw
Declassify on OADR 3/1/84
245532

NOTE ON YELLOW ONLY: Highlander Folk School is an institution located near Monteagle, Tennessee. Classes are held on a seminar basis and institution is supported primarily by donations from individuals, labor unions and so forth. This school has had Communist Party members on its staff as instructors and has welcomed Communist Party members as students.

[redacted] that the school has never offered courses of instruction in Communist matters nor has the Communist element ever completely controlled the institution. There is no indication in Bureau files to establish that the Highlander Folk School is Communist dominated. The instructions outlined in referenced Butel of February 27, 1951, per instructions of the Director as noted in a memorandum from Mr. Ladd to the Director dated February 23, 1951.

- Tolson
- Belmont
- Mohr
- Nease
- Tracy
- Laughlin
- Tele. Room
- Holloman
- Gandy

COMM - FBI
JUN 11 1954
MAILED 28

JUN 21 1954

CONFIDENTIAL

SENT VIA

Per