would exact of himself that made him tell of his wrongdoings. The Communists had talked to him until they had given him new eyes with which to see his own crime. And they sat back and listened to him tell how he had erred. He was one with all the members there, regardless of race or color; his heart was theirs and their hearts were his; and when a man reaches that state of kinship with others, that degree of oneness, or when a trial has made him kin after he has been sundered from them by wrongdoing, then he must rise and say, out of a sense of the deepsest morality in the world: 'I'm guilty. Forgive me.'"

WRIGHT continues with the comment, " This, to me, was a spectacle of glory; and yet, because it had condemned me, because it was blind and ignorant, I felt that it was a spectacle of horror. The blindness of their limited lives--lives truncated and impoverished by the oppression they had suffered long before they had ever heard of Communism--made them think that I was with their enemies. American life had so corrupted their consciousness that they were unable to recognize their friends when they saw them. I knew that if they had held state power I should have been declared guilty of treason and my execution would have followed. And I knew that they felt, with all the strength of their black blindness, that they were right."

The foregoing portion of WRIGHT's article has been quoted because of the fact that it is believed significant in indicating that WRIGHT disapproves wholeheartedly of the American way of life and living even though he has publicly at this time announced a breach with the Communist Party organization.

The concluding portion of his article tells of his transfer from the Federal Experimental Theater to the Federal Writers Project and leads up to the event of May Day 1936 when WRIGHT was refused the right to march in the parade and was physically rejected from the line of march by white Communists while other Communists, white and black, looked on without coming to his assistance. WRIGHT again refers to the blindness of these individuals and made the statement "I remembered the stories I had written, the stories in which I had assigned a role of honor and glory to the Communist Party, and I was glad that they were down in black and white, were finished. For I knew in my heart that I should never be able to write that way again, should never be able to feel with that simple sharpness about life, should never again express such passionate hope, should never again make so total a commitment of faith."

He then tells of his resolution to write and to do what he could by his writing to fight and to create a sense of the hunger for life that gnaws in us all, to keep alive in our hearts a sense of the inexpressibly human."

In regard to the articles by WRIGHT it may be noted that these two

articles were originally the final portion of WRIGHT's new book, as yet unpublished, an autobiography entitled, "Black Boy".

[redacted] furnished this information concerning

[redacted]

In view of the fact that the publicity and the information furnished by informants indicated WRIGHT's break with the Communist Party was an actual fact, it was felt that a discreet and careful interview with WRIGHT might be productive. However, it was ascertained on August 31, 1944 that WRIGHT is presently on his vacation and will not be back in New York City until about September 15, 1944.

P E N D I N G

WRIGHT, R. 196

NY 100-41674 CONFIDENTIAL

UNDEVELOPED LEAD

NEW YORK FIELD DIVISION

AT BROOKLYN, NEW YORK- Will, after careful consideration, discreetly interview subject WRIGHT concerning his association with the Communist Party.

Did it happen?

CONFIDENTIAL

WRIGHT, R. 197

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANTS

[redacted] b1 C b2 b7D

A confidential symbol was used for [redacted] to protect the identity of the informant because of [redacted] b7D and also because of the information he furnished.

4-750 (2-7-79)

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WRIGHT, R
199

29

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT NEW YORK, NEW YORK

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ NY FILE NO. 100-41674

REPORT MADE AT	DATE WHEN MADE	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE	REPORT MADE BY
NEW YORK, NEW YORK	9/5/44	7/28;8/21,31; 9/2/44	[redacted]

TITLE	CHARACTER OF CASE
RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT	INTERNAL SECURITY-C

b7C

KEY FIGURE

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES AND FIELD OFFICES ADVISED OF SUBJECT'S RESIDENCE AND EMPLOYMENT DATE 10-24-81 BY SP2 [redacted]

Subject continues to reside at 69 Lefferts Place, Apt. C23, Brooklyn, 16, N.Y. [redacted] b7E Subject author of two articles appearing in ATLANTIC MONTHLY for August and September, 1944 entitled, "I Tried To Be A Communist". Theme of articles seems to conclude with thought that subject broke with party because his friends in the Party, including those of his own race, were unable to recognize him as their friend. Articles do not appear to attack Communist Party as as revolutionary club, but because of failure of individuals in Party who properly recognize and deal with problems in society. Articles received wide-spread newspaper publication. Reports of informants and publicity indicates prominent Party members concerned over WRIGHT's articles. WRIGHT has authored new book "Black Boy", an autobiography which is not expected to appear until next year. ATLANTIC MONTHLY articles were originally final portion of this book.

AGENCY [redacted]
REC'D
REF'T FOR

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE b7C

-P-

REFERENCES: Bureau File 100-157464.
[redacted] dated 7/8/44 b7C
Report of Special Agent at New York, New York.

DETAILS: [redacted] Subject has been considered a Key Figure in Communist activities in the New York Field Division.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

APPROVED AND FORWARDED	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES	
E.E. Conroy		100-157464-13	RECORDED & INDEXED 6-2 b7C

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3-New York

SEP 8 19[redacted]

CLASS. & EXT. BY [redacted]
REASON - FCIM II, 1-2.4
DATE OF REVIEW 8-25-81

COPY D[redacted]

WRIGHT, R 200

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WRIGHT, R. 201

2

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FBI/DC

WRIGHT, R. 202

7

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT NEW YORK, N. Y.

FILE NO. 100-15433

REPORT MADE AT	DATE WHEN MADE	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE	REPORT MADE BY
WASHINGTON, D. C.	6/9/44	5/27,29/44	[redacted]

TITLE	CHARACTER OF CASE
RICHARD WRIGHT	~~SECURITY MATTER~~ - C

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS: [redacted] (C)

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES AND FIELD OFFICES ADVISED REGARDING CLIP - 2 Class DATE 10-21-81 ems

- RUC -

AGENCY [illegible]
REQ. REC'D [illegible]
REP'T FORW. [illegible]
BY [redacted]

DETAILS: AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

[redacted] (C)

A review of the indices of the Washington Field Office indicated that the person referred to [redacted] was undoubtedly a nationally prominent negro author by the name of RICHARD WRIGHT, who resides in New York City. It was found that numerous references to this RICHARD WRIGHT have been made in the Daily Worker over the course of years, and that information with regard to him has also been developed by the Special Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, Honorable MARTIN DIES, Chairman.

[redacted] (C)

APPROVED AND FORWARDED [illegible] SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE

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100-15741-8

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REASON - FCIM II, 1.2.4.2

WRIGHT, R
203

NFO #100-15433

CONFIDENTIAL

b1
b7D
b7E

[redacted]

In view of the fact that RICHARD WRIGHT is reported to reside in New York City and inasmuch as there is no further investigation to be conducted with regard to him in Washington, D. C., the New York City office is being designated office of origin herein and this case is being considered referred upon completion to that office.

- REFERRED UPON COMPLETION TO THE OFFICE OF ORIGIN -

CONFIDENTIAL

100-15[illegible]

WRIGHT, R. 204

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT NEW YORK, N. Y.

NY FILE NO. 100-41674 SD

REPORT MADE AT	DATE WHEN MADE	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE	REPORT MADE BY
NEW YORK, N. Y.	7/8/44	5/24; 6/1-3/44	[redacted] b7C

TITLE	CHARACTER OF CASE
RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT	INTERNAL SECURITY - C

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

KEY FIGURE

Subject presently resides 89 Lefferts Place, Brooklyn, NY. Registered with SS LDB #178; classified 4F, 1/31/44. [redacted] b7C b7D b7E

AGENCY REC'D
REQ. REC'D
REF'T FORM. [redacted]
BY [redacted]

P

REFERENCE: Bureau File No. 100-157464.
Report of Special Agent [redacted] dated 5/28/43 at New York City. b7C

DETAILS:

Although it is noted that referenced report of Special Agent [redacted] was a Closing Report, in view of the fact that Subject is considered a key figure in Communist activities in the New York Field Division, this case was reopened and the activities of Subject have been followed. b7C b7D b7E

[redacted]

APPROVED AND FORWARDED: [redacted] SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE

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100-157464 9

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3 - New York

JUL 10 1944

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COPY IN FILE

WRIGHT, R.
205

[redacted] b7D

[redacted] b7C b7D

[redacted] b7C

It has been ascertained that the Subject presently resides at 89 Lefferts Place, Apartment C23, Brooklyn 16, New York. Inquiry in the neighborhood of his former residence, Columbia Heights, at 7 Middagh Street, Brooklyn, New York, produced no information of value to this investigation.

[redacted] b7C b7D

As previously reported, Subject is registered with Selective Service Local Draft Board No. 178 and has Order No. 2025. On June 1st, 1944, [redacted] who Agent interviewed [redacted] advised that Subject had been classified 4F on January 31, 1944. His rejection by the armed forces on January 15, 1944 had been made with the noted reason: "psychoneurosis, severe, psychiatric rejection; referred to Local Board for further psychiatric and social investigation".

[redacted] b7C

NY 100-41674

[redacted]

It appeared from Subject's contacts with his Local Board that his interest in the problem of the Negro has become almost an obsession and it was said that he apparently overlooks the fact that his own rise to success refutes many of his own statements regarding the impossibility of the Negro's improving his personal position.

[redacted]

From all the information concerning Subject in publications and according to information from Informants in the New York Office, Subject is continuing his activities as a writer. In addition to his better known books he has also been engaged in the writing of skits and stories, most of which concern the Negro. The publicity which has been received by Subject WRIGHT is typified by the rather lengthy review of his life appearing in the volume "Current Biography 1940" published by the H. W. Wilson Company. This volume states that RICHARD WRIGHT, Author, was born September 4, 1908 and his present address is care of HARPER & BROTHERS, 49 East 33rd Street, New York City. It refers to him as a brilliant young Negro writer whose collection of short stories "Uncle Tom's Children" won a $500 prize competition in 1938 and whose book "Native Son" was the March, 1940 selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club. Much of the article contains a review of the character and theme of that book.

The life of RICHARD WRIGHT, beginning with his birth, September 4, 1908, on a plantation 25 miles from Natchez, Mississippi, is summarized, as follows:

His father, NATHAN WRIGHT, was a mill worker and his mother, ELLEN WRIGHT, a country school teacher. The family was continually on the move so his education was very much neglected. When his mother was stricken with paralysis during the first world war, the Subject was sent to an uncle's house to live. WRIGHT is quoted as having stated that he did so much fighting, lying and school-cutting that he was sent back to his grandmother who predicted that he would end on the gallows. He was put in a 7th Day Adventist

WRIGHT, R. 207

School, taught by his aunt. At 15 he left home and went to Memphis and got a job as porter and messenger. During the subsequent years he worked his way all over the country working at any kind of job from ditch-digging to clerking in a post office. He drifted to Chicago where he had heard Negroes stood a better chance of getting jobs. He was a clerk for a while and in 1933 had a taste of politics. The review then quotes what is purportedly the Subject's own statement:

> "I became an assistant precinct captain in the Republican Primary Election", he said,"I was promised a job. I didn't get it. Next time I became an assistant precinct captain for the Democrats and was promised a job, which I didn't get. So then I became a Red. Now I am what the papers refer to as a card-carrying Communist.".

In 1935, WRIGHT was on the FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT in Chicago and had sold paper articles and some stories to the magazines. He came to New York in 1937 where he again got on the WRITERS' PROJECT. He wrote an essay on Harlem in the "New York Panorama". He also did some work on the "Daily Worker" and became a contributing editor of the "New Masses". In 1939, WRIGHT reportedly got a Guggenheim fellowship which enabled him to quit the Project and complete his novel "Native Son". He lived for some months during 1940 in Mexico but returned to the United States in November of 1940.

[redacted]

WRIGHT, R. 208

4-750 (2-7-79)

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WRIGHT, R. 209

FBI/1

15

UNDEVELOPED LEADS

NEW YORK FIELD DIVISION

At New York, N. Y. - Will follow and report activities of Subject.

WRIGHT, R, 210

20

FD-122

Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice

bk

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO
FILE NO. 100-41674
[redacted] AHD

June 28, 1944

Director, FBI

RE: RICHARD WRIGHT
~~SECURITY MATTER~~
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

Dear Sir:

It is recommended that a Security Index card be prepared relative to the individual named below:

Name: RICHARD WRIGHT
Aliases:

Residence Address: 89 Lefferts Place, Apartment C-23
Brooklyn 16, New York

Business Address: None

X	Native Born	____	Alien	____	Naturalized
X	Communist	____	German	____	Miscellaneous
____	Fascist (Italian)	____	Japanese	____	____

Date of Birth Sept. 4, 1908
Place of Birth Natchez, Mississippi
Entered U. S. ____ at ____
Naturalized (date) ____
Naturalized (place and Court) ____

Very truly yours,

E. E. Conroy 100-157464

E. E. CONROY
SAC

[redacted]

RECORDED 28 JUN 29 1944

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DATE 8-25-81 BY SP3 Tj/bcc

JUL 8 1944

WRIGHT, R
211

3

NY 100-41674

IDENTITY OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANT

In the report of Special Agent [redacted] dated July 8, 1944 at New York, N. Y., the Confidential Informant is as follows:

b7c

[redacted]

b2,b7

A temporary informant symbol is used to further conceal the identity of this Informant, [redacted]

WRIGHT, R. 212

SAC-NYC 4-4-44 DTC

TELETYPE

JUL 2[illegible] 1944

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
COMMUNICATIONS SECTION

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 8-25-81 BY SP8 [illegible]

Mr. Tolson
Mr. E. A. T[illegible]
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Coffey
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Ladd
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tracy
Mr. Mohr
Mr. Carson
Mr. Hendon
Mr. Jones
Mr. Quinn
Mr. Nease

WASH FROM NEW YORK 2 28 1-14P

DIRECTOR URGENT

"I TRIED" WRITTEN BY IMMIGRANT TRIBUNE 11-1-

GAIN. RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT, IS-C. FOR THE BUREAUS INFO ARTICLE TODAYS NY HERALD TRIBUNE ENTITLED "NEGRO AUTHOR CRITICIZES REDS AS II TOLERANT", STATES THAT RICHARD WRIGHT, AUTHOR OF "NATIVE SON" IN DISCUSSING HIS OWN BREAK WITH COMMUNIST PARTY SAYS PARTY FEARS NEW IDEAS AND THAT COMMUNIST POSITION ON AMERICAN NEGRO HAS UNDERGONE A "DISTII AND LAMENTABLE REGRESSION" IN RECENT YEARS. WRIGHT WAS FURTHER CREDITED WITH DESCRIBING COMMUNISTS AS "NARROW MINDED, BIGOTED, INTOLER/ AND FRIGHTENED OF NEW IDEAS WHICH DONT FIT INTO THEIR OWN." THE HER/ TRIBUNE FURTHER STATES THAT MR WRIGHTS REMARKS WERE PROMPTED BY QUES' GROWING OUT OF AN ARTICLE WHICH HE HAS WRITTEN FOR THE ATLANTIC MON FOR AUGUST UNDER THE TITLE OF "I TRIED TO BE A COMMUNIST." THE TRIB' FURTHER STATES THAT IN THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY ARTICLE THE AUTHOR OF NA' SON DISCUSSES HIS EARLIEST EXPERIENCES AS A CP MEMBER IN CHICAGO TOU ING ON THE PROBLEMS HE FACED IN TRYING TO PRESENT HIS OWN IDEAS TO T PARTY. FURTHERMORE THE AUGUST ATLANTIC MONTHLY DESCRIBES THE ARTICL AS THE FIRST OF TWO INSTALLMENTS AND MR WRIGHT ADVISED THE TRIBUNE R PRESENTATIVE YESTERDAY THAT HE WOULD NOT DISCUSS THE SPECIFIC DETAIL

100-15244-4
EX-1
23 AUG 8 1944

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WRIGHT, R
213

OF THE CHICAGO BREAK WITH THE COMMUNISTS BECAUSE THESE WILL BE COVERED IN THE SECOND MAGAZINE ARTICLE. WRIGHT FURTHER ADVISED THE TRIBUNE THAT HIS CP MEMBERSHIP COVERED THE PERIOD, ROUGHLY, FROM THE LATTER PART OF NINETEEN THIRTYTWO TO NINETEEN FORTY AND THAT HIS EARLY ASSOCIATION WITH THE COMMUNISTS IN CHICAGO HAS BEEN BROKEN IN NINETEEN THIRTYSEVEN WHEN HE WAS EJECTED FROM THE SAME. WRIGHT FURTHER ADVISED THAT HE WAS ON THE OUTS WITH THE PARTY FROM MAY UNTIL AUGUST THIRTY SEVEN AND THAT HE WAS REINSTATED IN NY IN SUCH YEAR AND "MAINTAINED A RELATIONSHIP" WITH THE PARTY UNTIL FORTY WHEN HE SAID HE LEFT THE SAME. THE TRIBUNE ARTICLE DISCUSSING WRIGHTS COMMENTS ABOUT THE LAMENTABLE REGRESSION OF THE CP POSITION ON THE AMERICAN NEGRO CREDITED MR. WRIGHT WITH STATING "PUBLICLY COMMUNISTS WILL DENY THAT THERE IS ANY SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE IN THEIR MILITANCY, BUT PRIVATELY THEY OFFER ANY HANDY EXCUSE. THE MILITANCY OF THE NEGRO QUESTION HAS PASSED INTO THE HANDS OF RIGHT WING NEGROES. THAT WAS NOT TRUE EIGHT YEARS AGO. MOST OF THE BATTLES THEN WERE LED BY COMMUNISTS." THE ARTICLE FURTHER STATED THAT IN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION AS TO WHAT CAUSED THE CHICAGO RIFT BETWEEN HIM AND THE COMMUNISTS WRIGHT HAD STATED "IT WAS AN ACCUMULAT OF MANY THINGS - NOT SO MUCH A LEAVING AS AN EJECTION OF A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION. I HAD MY WAY OF EXPRESSING MY CONCEPTION OF NEGRO EXPER-

END PAGE TWO

NY2 PAGE THREE

IENCE IN WRITING. I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE OF VALUE TO THEM. THEY HAD THEIR IDEAS OF HOW I SHOULD REACT AS A COMMUNIST. THERE WAS AN IRRE CONCILABLE GAP BETWEEN OUR ATTITUDES. I DO NOT REGARD THE COMMUNIST TODAY AS EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENTS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE." WRIGHT FURTHER ADVISED THE TRIBUNE THAT THE COMMUNISTS HAVE A TERRIBLE LOT TO LEARN ABOUT PEOPLE. COMMUNISTS PECULIARLY ARE TOO MUCH THE VICTIMS OF THE VERY SOCIETY THEY ARE TRYING TO CHANGE. THIS TOO OFTEN FINDS EXPRES IN INTOLERANCE AND NARROWNESS." AT THE PRESENT TIME THE NY OFFICE H UNDER CONSIDERATION THE ADVISABILITY OF INTERVIEWING MR WRIGHT.

CONROY

HOLD

WRIGHT, R. 213

35

[redacted] LVO
100-157464 — 11

August 4, 1944

SAC - New York City

John Edgar Hoover - Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

Reference is made to your teletype of July 28, 1944, concerning the reported disaffiliation on the part of the subject with the Communist Political Association. It is noted in your teletype that you have under consideration the advisability of interviewing Wright.

In connection with any interview you might undertake with Wright, it is suggested that you consider obtaining from him specific information concerning exploitation of the Negro race by the Communist Political Association. Furthermore, if the interview actually takes place a previous study should be made of Wright's articles and particularly pertinent comments he makes with regard to the Communist Political Association.

Any interview with Wright must, of course, be most discreet, particularly in light of his reported comments in which he laments the "regression" of the Communist Political Association's position with respect to the American Negro. From a review of the teletype you submitted in this regard, it would seem that Wright does not think the Communist Political Association revolutionary enough at the present time with respect to the advancement of the Negro. This should be considered seriously prior to any action on your part.

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DATE 8-25-81 BY SP1 ctg/ka

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MAILED
AUG - 5 1944
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

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AUG 5 11 1944
FBI

Tolson
E. A. [illegible]
Clegg
Coffey
Glavin
Lade
Nichols
Rosen
Tracy
Acers
Carson
Harbo
Hendon
Mumford
Starke
Quinn Tamm
Nease
Gandy

78 SEP 16 1944

36

FILE

To Tell the Truth

Mr. Wright Didn't Discover It

By Robert Minor

IN the half-dozen years that Richard Wright was a member of the Communist Party he did not discover that the Communists have no concern whatever with persuading people to be loyal to the Communist organization per se. He sat in meetings for years, and did not discover that the only thing required is that you be loyal to the people's cause. If you are that, then loyalty to the Communist organization will take care if itself.

Wright has a piece in the Atlantic Monthly, in which, whether inadvertently or not, he takes a position on far bigger questions than whether a person likes Communists.

Within the past few years, and faster in recent months, the Negro people have shaped in final form their answers to the national question for the Negro of the United States: That this is their country as well as anyone else's, and that they will have their equal place in it and will fight knock-down-and-drag-out for that equal place, and will win, and those who oppose it will go the way of Martin and Joe and Cotton Ed and Viereck and Dilling and Goebbels.

• • •

RICHARD WRIGHT forgot that this fight is on, and with his head stuck into his typewriter he wrote:

"Could a Negro ever live halfway like a human being in this goddamn country?"

That was all the editor needed to have Richard Wright's signature to, in the main; but Wright kept on and said what logically goes with it—because the big, all absorbing, worldwide fight in this war keeps pushing us along. He wrote:

"Then . . . a Jewish chap . . . He introduced me to a Jewish boy . . . (again) to a Jewish boy . . . Jewish chap . . . a short, friendly, black-haired, well-read fellow . . . [illegible] like: "Der Jude mit haengender Unterlippe and Gloiz Augen."

Throughout our country, as we all know, there are desperate efforts to accentuate the "racial" divisions in every possible complexity. "Negro against Jew," is the Gerald Smith way of getting Negro support for an anti-Negro movement; since anti-Semitism is only a form of white chauvinism. And Negro against trade unions, purely as an aid to the old vileness of trade-union exclusiveness against the Negro. The first demand on a man who is to remain in the Communist movement is that he be a democrat—in the broad, nonparty sense of the word—a republican in the great long-time historical meaning. And even Richard Wright's remarkably talented book, "Native Son, had as its weakest side, as Ben Davis pointed out at the time, a certain lack of sense of the vast democratic character of the Negro's struggle of the ages. Now the greatest "national" struggle of all time is raging to its fiery climax in which the victory lies with all peoples seeking freedom. And Mr. Wright forgot that certain editorial people are glad to get anything in election time that seems to line up talented people on the untalented side of the enormous struggle.

The extermination of the Jim Crow system is going to be realized because this is not a "goddamn country." History has advanced; the day has dawned when the mass of Negro workers is entering the trade unions, and the trade unions are beginning to fight for their rights; voters of the biggest city of the world, composed of an alliance of democratic-willed white and Negro people, elect a Negro to represent them in the City Council on a platform that includes abolition of the Jim Crow system, and will elect to the United States Congress another great Negro leader—all a very modest beginning, only a bridgehead for a fight; but the people have decided. Mr. Richard Wright lends his name to the other opinion.

• • •

CAN we do without Richard Wright? Yes, a great movement of the people can do without any individual. The movement goes on, and rises, even when the individual we once loved pulls himself down. Didn't many get discouraged and quit before the great Scottsboro campaign in the 1930's; and didn't thousands of others then come with vision in their eyes for every individual who, with faded eyes, pulled himself down?

One who came in 1932 in the height of the surging movement of the people stirred by the Scottsboro struggle, was a fine young man, living in that Hoover day as a part-time street-sweeper in Chicago, one of those many sons of the people in whom the spark of genius needs but to be fanned by millions of brothers in a common cause, Richard Wright.

Is he gone, now? Others will come; more than you can count; and firmer; more able to reject those who say we will not succeed in living all as human beings "in this goddamn country," and—who translates into our political speech: "Der Jude mit haengender Unterlippe. . . ."

Wright says, "I lay in bed thinking, I've got to go it alone . . ."

You are not alone, Mr. Wright. You are in bad company.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 8-25-81 BY [illegible]

NOT RECORDED 14 87 AUG 16 1944

This is a clipping from page 6 of the DAILY WORKER
Date 8-15-44
Clipped at the Seat of Government.

WRIGHT, R. 218

37

b7C

New York 7, New York

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL
August 8, 1944.

[redacted] ED
100-4931

Director, FBI

Re: COMMUNIST POLITICAL ASSOCIATION
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

Dear Sir:

[redacted]

b1
b2
b7C
b7D

Very truly yours,

E. E. CONROY
SAC

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN
OTHERWISE

Encls. (4)

cc. NY File #100-41674

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES
AND FIELD OFFICES
ADVISED BY ROUTING
SLIP(S) OF class
DATE 10-21-81 ans

CONFIDENTIAL

RECORDED

1 ENCL

CLASS. & EXT. BY SP8 BD Nance
REASON - FCIM II, 1-2.4.2
DATE OF REVIEW 8-25-87
8.25.81

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
AUG 28 1944
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

INITIALS ON ORIGINAL

WRIGHT, R. 217

38

General Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
New York, New York

[redacted] DEC
100-41674

September 14, 1943

[redacted]

Director, FBI

RE: RICHARD WRIGHT
INTERNAL SECURITY (C)
SECURITY MATTER

Dear Sir:

Enclosed are the original and one copy of the report of [redacted] received by this office on September 10, 1943, concerning RICHARD WRIGHT the Colored novelist who is being considered a key figure in the New York Field Division.

[redacted]

Copies of instant report are being placed in the appropriate New York Files.

Very truly yours,

E. E. CONROY
SAC

COPIES DESTROYED
153 AUG 20 1960

Enclosure,
copy for 65-12830

1 ENCL 6

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES
AND FIELD OFFICES
ADVISED BY ROUTING
SLIP(S) 2046 by JK
DATE 6-9-77

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DATE 8-25-81 BY SP2 [illegible]

RECORDED & INDEXED
100-157464-1
SEP 17 1943

Mr. Tolson
Mr. E. A. Tamm
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Colby
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Ladd
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tracy
Mr. Acers
Mr. Carson
Mr. Hendon
Mr. Mumford
Mr. Starke
Mr. Quinn Tamm
Mr. Nease
Miss Gandy

FOR VICTORY BUY UNITED STATES DEFENSE BONDS AND STAMPS

WRIGHT, R
219

Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
New York, New York

[redacted] DEC
100-41674

September 14, 1943

[redacted]

Director, FBI

RE: RICHARD WRIGHT
INTERNAL SECURITY (C)
SECURITY MATTER

Dear Sir:

Enclosed are the original and one copy of the report of [redacted] received at this office on September 10, 1943 concerning [redacted] RICHARD WRIGHT, the famed colored novelist who is considered a key figure in this office.

[redacted]

Copies of instant report are being placed in the appropriate New York Files.

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES
AND FIELD OFFICES
ADVISED BY ROUTING SLIP

Very truly yours,

E. E. CONROY
SAC

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153 AUG [illegible] 1943

Enclosure
copy for N.Y. 65-12830
1 ENCL G

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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DATE 6-25-81 BY [illegible]

100-157440-6

SEP 17 1943

54 OCT 14 1943

WRIGHT, R. 220

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
New York, New York

[redacted] DEC
100-41674

September 14, 1943

[redacted]

Director, FBI

RE: RICHARD WRIGHT
INTERNAL SECURITY (C)
SECURITY MATTER

Dear Sir:

Enclosed are the original and one copy of the report of [redacted] received by this office on September 10, 1943, concerning RICHARD WRIGHT the Colored novelist who is being considered a key figure in the New York Field Division.

[redacted]

Copies of instant report are being placed in the appropriate New York Files.

Very truly yours,

E. E. Conroy

E. E. CONROY
SAC

COPIES DESTROYED
158 AUG 20 1960

Enclosure,
copy for 65-12830
1 ENCL
38

APPROPRIATE AGENCIES
AND FIELD OFFICES
ARE BEING ADVISED
DATE: 6-9-77

RECORDED & INDEXED
100-157464-1
SEP 17 1943

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 8-25-81 BY [redacted]

Mr. Tolson
Mr. E. A. Tamm
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Colby
Mr. Glavin
Mr. Ladd
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tracy
Mr. Acers
Mr. Carson
Mr. Hendon
Mr. Mumford
Mr. Starke
Mr. Quinn Tamm
Mr. Nease
Miss Gandy

WRIGHT, R
219

4-750 (2-7-79)

XXXXXX
XXXXXX
XXXXXX

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
FOIPA DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET

1 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) b2, 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:
100-157464-4 enclosure

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X DELETED PAGE(S) X
X NO DUPLICATION FEE X
X FOR THIS PAGE X
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXX
XXXXXX
XXXXXX

FBI/

WEIGHT, e. 219

/

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

NY FILE NO. 100-41674 JK

Form No. 1
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT NEW YORK, NEW YORK

REPORT MADE AT	DATE WHEN MADE	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE	REPORT MADE BY
NEW YORK CITY	5/28/43	2/17;3/1;4/10; 5/6,7/43	[redacted] b7C

TITLE	CHARACTER OF CASE
RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT	CUSTODIAL DETENTION - C SEDITION

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

RICHARD WRIGHT, popular negro writer and former reporter on Daily Worker, according to an article in Daily Worker on 4/13/41 by RALPH WARNER, is a Communist. Other articles in the Worker indicate WRIGHT's Communistic tendencies. He himself in so many words admits his affiliation. [redacted] Selective Service classification 3-A.

- C -

AGENCY
REQ. REC'D
REP'S FORW.
BY [redacted] b7C

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 1-22-81 BY [redacted] b7C

REFERENCE: Bureau file 100-157464.

Report of Special Agent [redacted] dated February 9, 1943 at New York City.

DETAILS: AT NEW YORK.

Inasmuch as a review of RICHARD WRIGHT's writings indicate he is at least a fellow traveller if not a member of the Communist Party, additional inquiry has been made and is being set out below.

With reference to the reference report where certain sections of WRIGHT's novel "Twelve Million Black Voices"

APPROVED AND FORWARDED: E. E. Conroy, SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE

DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES

RECORDED & INDEXED

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1 - Col.S.V.Constant,G-2
3 - New York.

15 MAY 31 1943 b7C

FX - 32

WRIGHT, R. 220

NY file
100-41674

were set out as possibly falling within the violation of the sedition statute, a brief review of this book does not indicate that any other portion of the novel is of an sedition nature.

"Twelve Million Black Voices" is a fictitious story of the social conditions of the Negro in the United States from the first slave days to the present in which he discusses the progress of the Negro.

WRIGHT was also the author of the popular novel "Native Son" and when questioned by writers and critics why he created such a character as "Bigger", he explained same in an article which was published in "The Saturday Review" of June 1, 1940, page 18. He discussed pro and con what prompted him to write such a novel and to create such a character as "Bigger" from which, among other things, is taken the following excerpt:

> "Another thought kept me from writing. What would my own white and black comrades in the Communist Party say."

From such a published statement, one would assume WRIGHT to be a member of the Party or at least a fellow traveller.

The American-Journal, New York daily newspaper of February 15, 1943 states that RICHARD WRIGHT was a former reporter on the Daily Worker. WRIGHT's picture appears in the "Negroes and the War", published and distributed by the Office of War Information.

The files of the New York office also reflect that RICHARD WRIGHT's name appears on the "Committee to Free Earl Browder", which list was published in the People's Voice, a New York Negro weekly newspaper issued March 21, 1942.

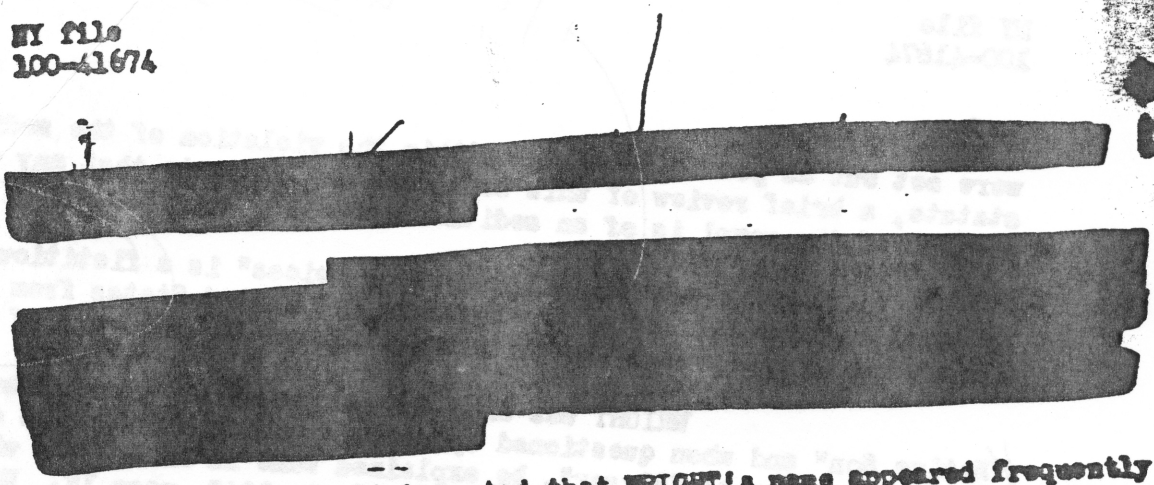
[redacted] advised that on March 6, 1942 WRIGHT's name appeared on the "American Committee to Save Refugees," and on September 18, 1942 was listed as one of the officers of the League of American Writers, advocating a second front in Europe.

[redacted]

b2
b6
b7C

WRIGHT, R. 221

NY file
100-41674



It is noted that WRIGHT's name appeared frequently in the Daily Worker during 1941 and 1942. In an issue dated February 25, 1941, page 4, column 1, it is noted that RICHARD WRIGHT was listed along with EARL BROWDER, BEN GOLD and JOE NORTH as one of the speakers at which time the Daily Worker celebrated MIKE GOLD's 25th anniversary in the labor movement.

In an issue dated February 28, 1941 WRIGHT was listed as one of the writers who would greet THEODORE DREISER at a testimonial luncheon attended March 1, 1941 at the Commodore Hotel under the auspices of the American Council on Soviet Relations. Others to be present were JESSICA SMITH, editor of "Soviet Russia Today", CLIFFORD ODETS, Dr. JOHN A. KINGSBURY and others.

In an issue of March 19, 1941, page 5, column 7, WRIGHT greeted WILLIAM Z. FOSTER, National Chairman of the Communist Party on his 60th Birthday.

In an issue dated March 22, 1941 WRIGHT along with RUTH McKENNEY, was reported to have accepted to serve on the Board of Honorary Chairmen of the May Day Committee.

In an issue of April 5, 1941, page 7, column 2, RICHARD WRIGHT's name appeared with other writers in what was known as the "Call to the 4th Congress of the League of America" to be held in New York City on June 6 and 8, 1941 to discuss how best writers can resist the trend toward war, what to do to restore the WPA and what to do in defense of culture.

In an issue dated April 13, 1941, the Sunday Worker, page 7, column 1, RALPH WARNER discussed the play "Native Son" and among other things admits that "Max", one of the characters in the play is symbolic of a Communist. "However, that nowhere in the play is he called a Communist but he is clearly a sympathiser." WARNER states however, that RICHARD WRIGHT is a Communist and the conception of Max and of his entire play is.

WRIGHT, R. 222

11

NY file
100-41674

In an issue of April 21, 1941, page 1, there is an editorial which speaks about WRIGHT's stirring condemnation of the imprisonment of EARL BROWDER and of a long forward by JAMES W. FORD contained in WRIGHT's "Bright the Morning Star", a short story in pamphlet form printed by the International Publishers. FORD highly endorsed WRIGHT and the article also pertains to a part of a letter to the International Publishers by WRIGHT in which he says he wants no royalty for this work and those that are received are to accrue to the "Earl Browder Defense Fund."

In an issue dated June 9, 1941, page 1, WRIGHT's name appears among those of the Writers Congress who adopted a firm anti-war program.

In an issue dated July 24, 1941, page 7, column 3, it is noted that WRIGHT's name appears among the American writers who pledged full support to Great Britain and the Soviet Union.

A change of attitude of RICHERD WRIGHT and other writers is pointed out in that in early June they adopted a firm anti-war program and in July they advocated full support to the Soviet Union. Further, that Germany declared war on Russia on June 22, 1941.

In an issue dated August 18, 1941 WRIGHT appears on the Citizen's Committee to Free Earl Browder and in an issue dated August 11, 1941, page 9, WRIGHT states that HARRY BRIDGES is a friend of America and has become a symbol in America and that those who fight against him are enemies of America.

In an issue dated October 22, 1941, page 1, paragraph 1, WRIGHT's name appears as one of the members of a group of citizens calling for a release of EARL BROWDER.

On November 19, 1941, page 3, in the Sunday Worker, RICHARD WRIGHT was declared winner of the Spingarn medal for the writing of "Native Son." Also in this issue WRIGHT along with A. W. BERRY, Secretary of the Communist Party, Reverend ADAM CLAYTON POWELL, Jr., and HORACE MARSHALL, Vice-President of the National Negro Congress, protested against police brutality and general economic conditions existent in Harlem.

In an issue dated February 13, 1942, page 7, column 4, a letter of WRIGHT's was published dealing with the controversy on music which letter is dated February 10, 1942 and begins as follows:

"Dear Comrade Sender Garlin:"

WRIGHT, R. 223

NY file
100-41674

things states that he would like to see letters from the public on "how can recruitment of negroes to the Communist Party be increased." This letter also stated that "The Communist Party is the only political party in America vitally concerned about culture and its problems."

It is also noted that in JAMES W. FORD's book "The Negro and the Democratic Front", on page 193, FORD states that he wants to "express publically the high appreciation of our Negro comrades and Negro people for the splendid contributions of RICHARD WRIGHT, LANGSTON HUGHES and other artists and musicians of our people."

On October 14, 1942 [redacted] advised that RICHARD WRIGHT, a former known Communist Party member, had split with the Party because of his dissatisfaction with the way the Party handled the Negro question. b2 b7D b7C

[redacted] 327 Lafayette Street, Brooklyn, furnished the following information as reflected in the files of that board concerning WRIGHT.

He advised that WRIGHT's questionnaire was returned May 9, 1941 at which time WRIGHT resided at 473 West 104th Street, New York City. However, he presently resides at 7 Middagh Street, Brooklyn, New York. On May 28, 1941 WRIGHT was placed in 3-A classification because of collateral dependents. On July 1, 1942 his collateral dependency was removed and he was placed in classification 1-A.

On July 6, 1942 he was about to be inducted into the Army and he asked for a 90 day extention, which was granted. On November 2, 1942 a continuation of this extension was granted. On November 16, 1942 he was placed in 3-A in order to permit him an opportunity to take Volunteer Candidate Training, but was subsequently rejected.

The questionnaire reflects that WRIGHT was born September 4, 1908 at Natchez, Mississippi. His education was given as eight years of elementary school. He states his employment experience is that of a novelist, playwright, poet and newspaper reporter. He did not set forth his place of employment but advised that he was engaged as a writer of political and labor news from 1937 to 1938. This might possibly be the period that he was a reporter for the Daily Worker.

WRIGHT furnished a list of his writings to the Local Board. It was noted that "Uncle Tom's Children" according to WRIGHT was written by him and was later translated into Russian by the U.S.S.R. and issued in international literature.

WRIGHT, R. 224

NY file
100-41674

His questionnaire further reflects that he was married March 10, 1941 at Coytesville, New Jersey. His dependents are given as that of his mother ELLA WRIGHT, [redacted] NATHAN WRIGHT, father, [redacted] LEON WRIGHT, brother, [redacted] and CLEO WRIGHT, sister-in-law at the same address. b7C

WRIGHT listed as property one house valued at $3,000. [redacted] WRIGHT is divorced from his first wife, because on June 7, 1942 he listed his dependents as ELLEN WRIGHT, wife, age 29 and JULIA WRIGHT, two months, daughter, born April 12, 1942.

[redacted] advised that the file further reflects a letter from the Office of War Information, New York City, in which was transmitted a program as prepared for them by RICHARD WRIGHT. The records further reflected that WRIGHT has lived at the following addresses: b7C

467 Waverly Avenue, Brooklyn. (1940)

473 West 140th Street, New York City. (May 1941)

11 Revere Place, Brooklyn. (July 7, 1941)

7 Middagh Street, Brooklyn. (Present address)

[redacted] advised that the Board's association with RICHARD WRIGHT had been very pleasant and that he had been very cooperative and prompt in his transactions with them.

A description of WRIGHT as furnished by [redacted] is as follows:

Age	34
Born	September 4, 1908, Natchez, Mississipp
Height	5'7"
Weight	158 pounds
Build	Medium
Eyes	Brown
Hair	Black
Complexion	Dark
Race	Negro
Occupation	Writer
Marital status	Married
Criminal record	None
Scars or marks	None
Citizenship	American
Marital status	Married

No further investigation is being conducted and this

WRIGHT, R. 225

17

NY file
1674

IDENTITY OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANTS:

[redacted] mentioned in the report of Special Agent [redacted] dated May 28, 1943 at New York City, is a flimsy report from G-2, Governor's Island, and is being made an informant in view of the fact that the Bureau has expressed a desire not to have them mentioned in reports.

b2
b7D
b7E

[redacted] who is being made an Informant in accordance with a Bureau request.

WRIGHT, L. 226

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
New York, N.Y.

[redacted] EMC
100-41674

b7c

March 3, 1943

Director, FBI

RE: RICHARD WRIGHT
INTERNAL SECURITY
SEDITION

Dear Sir:

In reference to Bureau letter of January 20, 1943, (Bureau file 100-157464) requesting the status of the above entitled matter, this is to advise this case has been reassigned and placed in line for immediate investigation.

Very truly yours,

E. E. Conroy

E. E. CONROY
SAC

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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DATE 8-25-81 BY [redacted]

1

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RECORDED

100-157464-
5

MAR 5 1943

[redacted] b7c

WRIGHT, R.
227

COPY

COPY

Los Angeles, Calif.
June 18 - 45

Dear Sir:

Richard Wright the negro who wrote black boy and Native Son books are doing no good and a lot of harm they are causing disunity and spreading race hatred and if you people dont want America tore up the same as Germany you had better put a stop to sutch people as that poor old ass of a Southern Senator with his back to Africa move ment and sutch old fools as that poor crazy old Richard Wright. We colored people are good natured all we want is justice a good job with good pay for work well done. Every time we turn around some one is complaining nagging constantly critercising every thing we do. Richard Wright seem_ to be unhappy in America so we wish to God he would leave and go some place else for he is geting on our nerves. I and all the other colored people know that ninty percent of the trash that he puts in his books are lies, but if people in Germany should get a hold of Black boy I'm awfull afraid Uncle Sam's face is going to be red for you cant rule a German if you cant rule America. And the lies that poor sick braned fool Richard Wright put in his books sure dont do America any good in the foreigner's eye sight. We colored people want Richard Wright's books baned if he cant write a story without trying to agitate race trouble we want him to pick himself a new vocation. Just get a copy of his books and go through them. We dont see why he isn't in the Army anyway. If he went to India or some other place and saw how horrible those people live then he would see how far advanced we are. After all we colored people are doing the best we can if you would get a copy of the negro hand book for 1942 you would see just how well we are doing. We are only a small race of people. We colored people are very discouraged and that is the reason sixty million little bity Japanese can fight all most two billion people without a allie and hole out so long. Because that Billion colored people are on the point of giving up. After all this is not our war and if we win we loose So I suppose there is nothing to do but just say to hell with the hole bloody mess.

[redacted]

This is from that poor old fools book Black boy this is enough to provoke the devil.

WRIGHT, R.
229

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EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Los Angeles Cal

July 1-45

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
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DATE 8-25-81 BY SP8 TJ/bcc

Dear Sir

We are writing you people in hope you will be able to have books like Black boy and also native son by the negro Richard Wright ~~hated~~ RICHARD WRIGHT hated as he is spreading race hated and causing disunity. If you will look through the mans books you will see how he rant and rave like a mad man. It is terrible and also he use to much filthy expressions the white writys don't do that. So why should he do for the sake of Unity please have his books taned. they are doing no good

RECORDED 09-15764-29
INDEXED
1945

WRIGHT, R 230

FD-119

VICTORY BUY UNITED STATES WAR BONDS AND STAMPS

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
New York 7, New York

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO
FILE NO. 100-41674

[redacted]MHR

May 18, 1945

Director, FBI

RE: RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT
SECURITY MATTER - C
Bureau File 100-157464

Dear Sir:

The copy of the Security Index Card maintained at this field office relative to the above-named individual has been revised and is now captioned as follows:

WRIGHT, RICHARD NATHANIEL NEGRO NATIVE BORN COMMUNIST

Apartment C-23
89 Lefferts Place
Brooklyn, New York (Res.)

Born Sept. 4-08 Natchez, Miss.

Free-lance writer at residence (Bus.)

REFER TO BUREAU LETTER DATED MAY 7, 1945 IN INSTANT CASE. NEW YORK CARD HAS BEEN MADE UP.

In accordance with Bureau instructions, a white 5" x 8" card, captioned as above, has been prepared and filed in the Confidential Security Index Card File of this office. Appropriate disposition has been made of the card previously maintained in the Card File, in accordance with existing instructions. It is suggested that the original Security Index Card maintained at the Seat of Government be revised in agreement with the caption above set out.

Very truly yours,

E. E. Conroy

E. E. CONROY
Special Agent in Charge

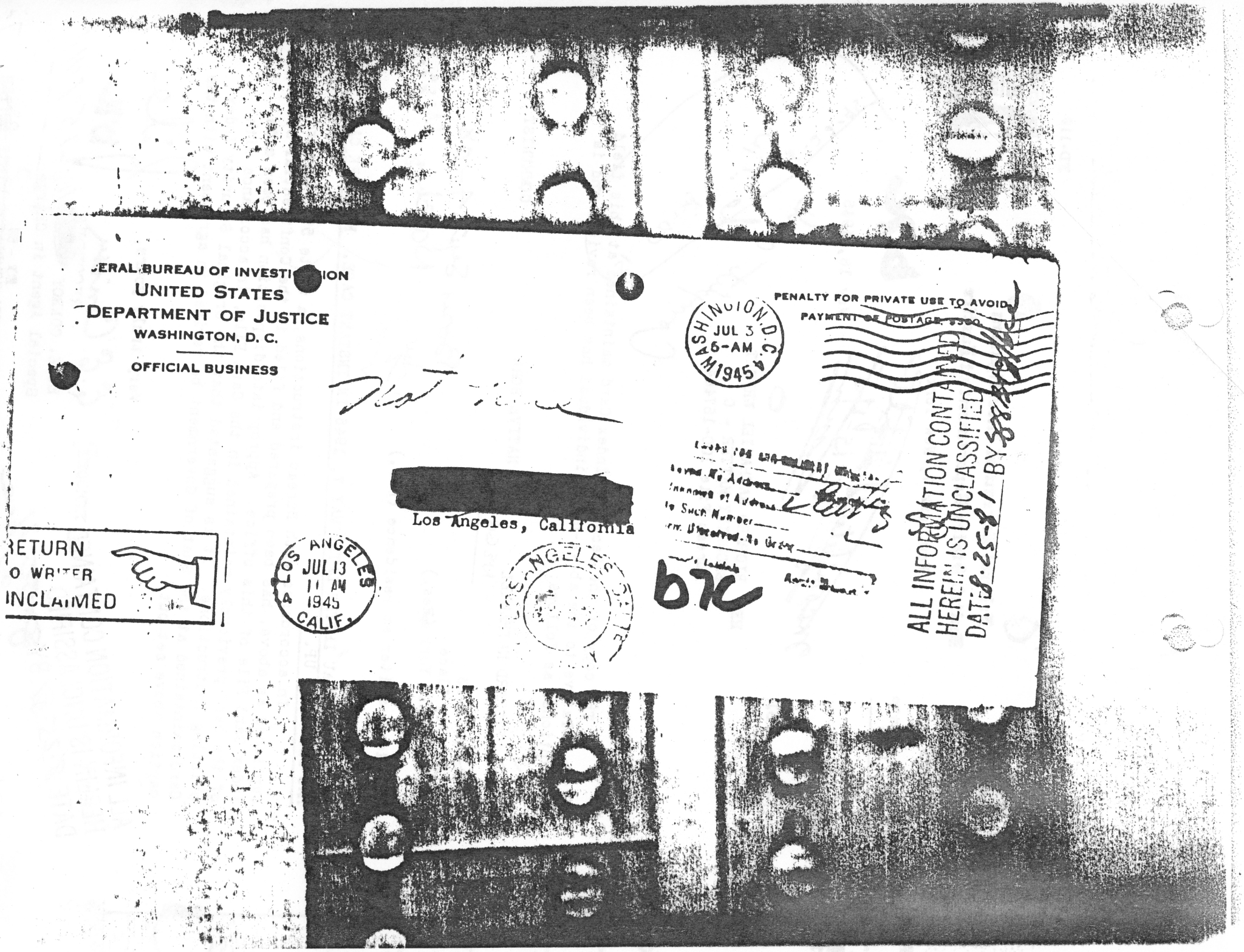
EX - 68

~~WHEN THE ACTION REQUIRED HEREBY HAS BEEN COMPLETED, THIS LETTER~~

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN DATE 8-25-82 BY 8889/lee

WRIGHT, R. 231

WRIGHT, R 832



ERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

WASHINGTON, D.C.
JUL 3
6-AM
1945

PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE TO AVOID
PAYMENT OF POSTAGE, $300

[redacted]
Los Angeles, California

RETURN
TO WRITER
UNCLAIMED

LOS ANGELES
JUL 13
11 AM
1945
CALIF.

LOS ANGELES
JUL 13
1945
CALIF.

b7C

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 8-25-81 BY SP2 [illegible]

STANDARD FORM NO. 64

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

100-41674
[redacted]:mcG

TO : Director, FBI

DATE: February 26, 1945

FROM : SAC, New York City

SUBJECT: RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT
SECURITY MATTER C
(Bureau file 100-157464)

Reference is made to the report of Special Agent [redacted] made at New York City on September 5, 1944 entitled RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT; INTERNAL SECURITY C. This report sets out a lead for the New York Field Division, "After careful consideration interview the subject WRIGHT concerning his association with the Communist Party."

After very careful consideration it is felt inadvisable to interview WRIGHT particularly as the basis of his break with the Communist Party, as appears from his recent articles in the Atlantic Monthly Magazine, is the Communist Party's failure to be sufficiently radical and militant with respect to the advancement of the Negro. These articles also indicate a complete disapproval by WRIGHT of the American way of life.

Also considered in arriving at the decision not to interview WRIGHT are the facts that he has been classified 4-F due to severe psycho-neurosis and his contacts with his Local Selective Service Board have reflected his interest in the problem of the Negro to be almost an obsession.

In view of the subject's public break with the Communist Party, he is no longer being carried as a Key Figure by the New York Field Division, however, a Security Index Card on him is being maintained by the New York Office due to his militant attitude toward the Negro problem.

The only information secured by this office concerning WRIGHT that has not already been reported is that he was listed as a member of the National Committee of the International Labor Defense in a pamphlet entitled, "Equal Justice and Democracy in the Service of Victory," published by the International Labor Defense in September 1944. WRIGHT'S residence address has been verified as Apt. C-23, 89 Lefferts Place, Brooklyn, New York, as of February 15, 1945.

This investigation is being placed in a closed status by the New York Field Division. In the event further investigation becomes necessary, it will be reported under a Security Matter C character.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 8-25-81 BY SP8 Blake

RECORDED 100-157464-15

INDEXED MAR 1 1945

WRIGHT, R.
233

50 APR 16 1945

FILE

29225

New Times

Some Impressions Of Black Boy

by Benjamin J. Davis, Jr.

IN BLACK BOY, Richard Wright has written a furious and terrifying story of the impact of the Jimcrow system upon human beings in the deep South. The result is a picture which challenges America.

There may be exaggerations in the book. Many of the incidents may be highly fictional, and never really happened to Wright. But what difference does that make if they happened to some other young Negro. The point is that they should not happen to any Negro and the conditions which corrode the Negro family must be eliminated. For they victimize not only the Negro citizen; they suffocate the poor whites to a more or less degree, and retard the development of the whole South.

It does no good to run away from this essential significance of the book for the purpose of grappling with the secondary aspects, some of which are contained in the book, and others of which surround the author's views and his writing of the book. It is of supreme importance that this main picture of the life and death of the Negro under the reign of white supremacy should hit America with full force. For it concerns America. Any attempt to bypass this over-all picture will lessen its force and thereby lead to an underestimation of its starkness and blunt the sharp need for correctives. When this main picture is changed in its principal outlines, the derivative secondary aspects will disappear. But until it does, naturally there are going to be all kinds of confusion, badly focused perspectives, and misleading ambiguities and conclusions—many of which mar Black Boy.

• • •

THE book is intensely subjective. In fact, it is limited by its subjectiveness. But people are not born subjective, and it is clear that a young Negro who has to run the gauntlet of every type of oppression—just short of lynching—has subjectiveness forced into his marrow. This heavy pressure pushes him to view the world in which he lives entirely through glasses colored by his own personal suffering from national oppression, which suffering in one form or another he meets every day. Those who complain of that intense subjectivity are forever stopped from doing so, unless they realize what brought it about, and also help to eradicate the diseased soil from which it grows.

It is important, however, that this subjectiveness be overcome. It can be done and is being done since there are new trends and factors which make the overcoming possible. It is also necessary to overcome it, lest one fall into the trap of frustration and defeatism which the white supremacy forces have set. Black Boy says some wholly unacceptable things about the Negro's capacity for genuine emotion. Here the author's subjectivity has overcome reality. For the truly remarkable achievement of the Negro is that he has made such singular contributions to America—culturally and musically and in all other fields—despite the system of national oppression which tends to thwart his every effort. The point is: Will Wright himself be able to overcome this limitation of subjectivit imposed upon him in order that he may se clearly, and participate with, the forces whic would destroy the myth of white supremac Inasmuch as Wright has attained literar prominence, and some circles have thrust upo him the mantle of spokesman for his people he above all must maintain a clear head.

• • •

THERE is no doubt that Wright wields brilliant and stormy pen. Few story teller are his equal. But is this sufficient whe there are brilliant writers on both sides o the barricades. It is vitally important tha the artist who reflects and the artist who see the way out should be one and the sam person. For both these factors exist in th objective real world, outside one's self. Jim crow is here, yet Jimcrow is also being drive defeated from the scene. Life is not stati One has to see both to be realistic, and t shape the future.

Wright does not see the positive, construc tive side, and therefore the mirror of his pe does not give a complete picture. He omit the biggest new thing which is happening i the world today—the main progressive cur rents from which even the South is no immune. Apparently he is isolated from thes developments—and far removed from the peo ple. Such isolationism can lead to stagnatio —to form without content. It is pretty dif cult to see what happened in 1915 if one isolated from 1945. While Wright is, of cours not responsible for Black Boy conditions, h is, however, responsible for his own voluntar act of withdrawal from the forces which ar among the leaders of the fight for a ... world. He can blame himself

INDEXED 100-15744-1
NOT RECORDED
14 APR 18 1945
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This is a clipping from:
page 9 sec. 1 of
THE WORKER
Date 4-1-45
Clipped at the seat of Government

WRIGHT, R. 234

WAR DEPARTMENT
Military Intelligence Service
Washington

NOV 2 1942

Subject: Letter of Transmittal.

To: Lt. Col. J. Edgar Hoover
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Department of Justice

The attached communications are forwarded for your information and such action as you consider advisable.

For the Chief, Military Intelligence Service:

Arthur T. Bissell

A. T. BISSELL
Colonel, General Staff,
Asst. Executive Officer, M. I. S.

Enclosures:

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ON JAN 6 1988
BY: CDR USAINSCOM FOIPO
Auth: Para 1-603 DoD 5200. 1-E

Released 25 yo Jan 6, 77

NIT

NIT

WRIGHT, R. 237

100-157464-1

October 16th 19[illegible]

[illegible]. Stimson
Secretary of War
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

I beg to call to your attention books by one Richard Wright designed to stir racial dissension in America confining my charges to one entitled "12,000,000 Black Voices' Its entire contents are designed to destroy the morale of an important percent of American citizens under call to the armed forces of the United States; In particular I ~~fix~~ refer to page 143 in which Japan is held up as the possible saviour of the colored races, this by inference plays directly into the hands of our enemies in arms, therefore constituting treasonable utterance in time of war.

This publication has had a large circulation among colored people and other enemies within the United States; Responsible for serious violations of law and order in all parts of the Country, especially where there are large colored populations.

Material of this character in the hands of designing persons can lead to many forms of sabotage and result in a general breakdown of morale bound to corrupt
be used to ~~corrupt~~ national unity so necessary in an all out "win the War" effort by America and her allies.

Two other books by this writer are equally dangerous to national welthe names of which
fare ~~which~~/I will gladlly supply upon request from your office.

In addition to the books, this ties in with one of the most dangerous appeals to racial dissension, of alien origin, being used by subversive forces at work in America.

Very truly yours

[illegible]

WDAGO
OCT 14 1942
Received

David P. Rice
21 East 17th Street.
New York, N.Y.

WRIGHT, R. 238

2

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1
THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT NEW YORK, NEW YORK

NY FILE NO. 100-41674 JMG

REPORT MADE AT	DATE WHEN MADE	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE	REPORT MADE BY
NEW YORK, NEW YORK	2-9-43	1-2,3,5,11-43	[redacted] b7c

TITLE: RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT

CHARACTER OF CASE: INTERNAL SECURITY SEDITION

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS: Subject born in Natchez, Mississippi, 1909, and at age of 15 ran away from orphan asylum and then bummed his way throughout the country. Subject employed by WPA from 1-3-38 to 5-17-39. Subject the author of "Native Son", a novel which was later adapted into a play by same name, and this play was included in "The Best Plays of 1940 and 1941". Information regarding subject's book, "Twelve Million Black Voices" set out.

AGENCY [illegible]
REQ. REC'D [illegible]
REP'T FORW. [illegible]
BY [illegible]

- C -

REFERENCE: (Bureau File Number 100-157464)
Bureau Letter to New York dated December 9, 1942.

DETAILS: A review of the indices of the Public Library of New York City, located at 5th Avenue and 42nd Street, reflected that the subject's true name is RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT and that he was born in 1909. The indices also reflected that the subject wrote the following books: "Fire and Cloud", Twelve Million Black Voices", "Native Son", and "Uncle Tom's Children".

Mr. M. B. TOLSON, in the 1939 issue of the "Modern Quarterly", Volume Eleven, Number Five, in reviewing the works of the subject, stated that RICHARD WRIGHT was born "on a broken down plantation near Natchez, Mississippi, a State which leads the Union in illiteracy, Christianity and mobocracy. His family travelled from town to town like grub-worms. His father got tired of his poverty-ravaged household and deserted the family. Paralysis struck his mother down and he entered an orphan asylum but ran off at fifteen. In Memphis he haunted Beale Street and later he bummed his way all over the country, fighting, stealing, lying. He'd reached only the eighth grade in school. Somewhere

APPROVED AND FORWARDED: E E Conroy, Special Agent in Charge

DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES

100-157464-2

COPIES OF THIS REPORT
6 - Bureau
1 - Capt. R. C. MacFall, ONI
1 - Col. S. V. Constant, G-2
2 - New York

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 6-25-81 BY [illegible]

WRIGHT, R
239

CC-28

[redacted] fp

100-157464 -1

Date: December 9, 1942

To: SAC, New York

From: J. Edgar Hoover - Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Subject: RICHARD WRIGHT
INTERNAL SECURITY - SEDITION

Transmitted herewith are copies of a communication addressed by [redacted] to the Honorable Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, at Washington, D. C., under date of October 13, 1942. The Bureau of course received this communication by reference from the Military Intelligence Service. b7C

In view of [redacted] specific allegations as to certain writings of subject, it is desired that your office make inquiry of sources available to you for the purpose of determining whether the book entitled "Twelve Million Black Voices" or other publications of subject are in fact given to the expression of statements having significance under the Sedition Statutes. If possible, you should secure a copy of this publication as well as other writings of subject and review the same for the possible presence of such material.

If your inquiry develops information of an affirmative nature, you should of course cause an investigation to be undertaken as to subject's background, inclinations, and current activities.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 8-26-81 BY [redacted]

Mr. Tolson
Mr. E. A. Tamm
Mr. Clegg
Mr. Glavin Enclosures
Mr. Ladd
Mr. Nichols
Mr. Rosen
Mr. Tracy
Mr. Carson
Mr. Coffey
Mr. Hendon
Mr. Kramer
Mr. McGuire
Mr. Quinn Tamm

COMMUNICATIONS SECTION
MAILED 10
DEC 10 1942 P.M.
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

WRIGHT, R. 240

[redacted] b7

along the gutted road it dawned upon him that he needed an education. And then, whether digging ditches or clerking in the post office, he devoured the contents of newspapers and magazines as well as books that came his way."

[redacted] advised the writer that the subject had been employed by the WPA on a Federal Writers' Project from January 3, 1938, to May 17, 1939, when he resigned to accept private employment. At this time subject was residing at 809 Saint Nicholas Avenue, New York City.

"The Best Plays of 1940 and 1941" by BURNS MANTLE included the subject's play, "Native Son", which was produced from the subject's novel by the same name.

Mr. BROOKS ATKINSON in the New York Times had the following to say about the subject's play, "Native Son": "In the drama Mr. GREEN and Mr. WRIGHT work in a more objective style. Without the subjective background their defense of Bigger Thomas's ghastly crime in the court scene sounds like generalized pleading. It lacks the stinging enlightment of the last third of Mr. WRIGHT's novel. But that completes this column's bill of exceptions to the biggest American drama of the season."

The novel, "Twelve Million Black Voices", which was written by the subject, was published by the Viking Press in New York City in October, 1941, and this book is divided into four parts: (1) Our Strange Birth; (2) Inheritors of Slavery; (3) Death on the City Pavements; and (4) Men in the Making. In the foreword, Mr. WRIGHT states "while this novel purports to render a broad picture of the processes of negro life in the United States, intentionally it does not include in its considerations those areas of negro life which comprise the so-called 'talented tenth' or the isolated islands of mulatto leadership which are still to be found in many parts of the South or the growing and influential negro middle class professional and business men of the North who have, for the past twenty years or more, formed a sort of liaison corps between the whites and the blacks".

The reference letter reflected that on Page 143 of the above-mentioned novel, there was material that appeared to be seditious in nature; and for the benefit of the Bureau, the above-mentioned page is being quoted in full:

"There are millions of us and we are moving in all directions. All our lives we have been catapulted into arenas where, had we thought consciously of invading them, we would have hung back. A sense of constant change has stolen silently into our lives and has become operative in our personalities as a law of living.

NY 100-41674

"There are some of us who feel our hurts so deeply that we find it impossible to work with whites; we feel that it is futile to hope or dream in terms of American life. Our distrust is so great that we form intensely racial and nationalistic organizations and advocate the establishment of a separate state, a forty-ninth state, in which we black folk would live.

"There are even today among us groups that forlornly plan a return to Africa."

"There are others of us who feel the need of the protection of a strong nation so keenly that we admire the harsh and imperialistic policies of Japan and ardently hope that the Japanese will assume the leadership of the 'darker races'.

"As our consciousness changes, as we come of age, as we shed our folk swaddling clothes, so run our lives in a hundred directions.

"Today, all of us black folk are not poor. A few of us have money. We make it as the white folk make theirs, but our money-making is restricted to our own people. Many of us black folk have managed to send our children to school, and a few of our children are now professional and business men whose standards of living approximate those of middle-class whites. Some of us own small businesses; others devote their lives to law and medicine.

"But the majority of us still toil on the plantations, work in heavy industry, and labor in the kitchens of the Lords of the Land and the Bosses of the Buildings.

"The general dislocation of life during the depression caused many white workers to learn through chronic privation that they could not protect their standard of living so long as we blacks were excluded from their unions. Many hundreds of thousands of them found that they could not fight successfully for increased wages and union recognition unless we stood shoulder to shoulder with them. As a consequence, many of us have recently become members of steel, automobile, packing and tobacco unions."

The following quotations are found on Page 146 of the same book and is the last page of the novel:

"The differences between black folk and white folk are not blood or color, and the ties that bind us are deeper than those that separate us. The common road of hope which we all have travelled has brought us into a stronger kinship than any words, laws or legal claims."

"What do we black folk want? We want what others have, the right to share in the upward march of American life, the only life we remember or have

WRIGHT, R. 242

ever known. The Lord of the Land say: 'We will not grant this!' We answer: 'We ask you to grant us nothing. We are winning our heritage though our toll in suffering is great!' The Bosses of the Buildings say: 'Your problem is beyond solution!' We answer: 'Our problem is being solved. We are crossing the line you dared us to cross though we pay in the coin of death!' "

"The seasons of the plantation no longer dictate the lives of many of us; hundreds of thousands of us are moving into the sphere of conscious history."

"We are with the new tide. We stand at the crossroads. We watch each new procession. The hot wires carrying urgent appeals. Print compels us. Voices are speaking. Men are moving! And we shall be with them."

A "NOVEL" THAT TRUCK DOCUMENTARY SOON!

- CLOSED -

NY 100-41674

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMANT

[redacted] as mentioned in the report of Special Agent [redacted] New York, New York, dated February 9, 1943, is [redacted]

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b7D

WRIGHT, R. 244