CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Lucy Randolph Mason
Southern Public Relations Representative

March 14, 1951

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 (AFOIL 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 severe 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 Randolph Mason

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 2/20/51 BY 58677205
Mr. Peyton Ford  
Deputy Attorney General

Director, FBI

March 23, 1951

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.

Endnote

DECLASSIFIED BY SPARKS DATE
ON 2/24/84 24-5398
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 Fold 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: "That 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,

Feyton Ford
Deputy Attorney General
Mr. Peyton Ford  
Deputy Attorney General  

Director, FBI  

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL  
INFORMATION CONCERNING  

March 12, 1951  

CONFIDENTIAL  

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 28, 1951.  

It is noted, however, that Hylco 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 "catch" 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 "catch" 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.
November 20, 1950 - Our Christian walk could
not afford to ignore the plight of the Negro sharecropper,
whose existence is as precarious as the life of the
insect which struggles to find a foothold in the
surrounding thorns.

The plight of the Negro sharecropper is due
to several factors. First, the land he works is
usually owned by whites who hold it as security
for past debts. Second, the Negro is often
forced to work for substandard wages and
living conditions. Third, the lack of education
and training prevents him from gaining
independence.

The sharecropper's problems are
not confined to his own family. They
influence the entire community, for
the prosperity of the Negro community
depends largely on the economic
well-being of the sharecroppers.

The, problem of the Negro sharecropper
is essentially a problem of social
justice. We cannot afford to ignore
the plight of these men and women
who are trying to eke out a living
in a world that has been designed
to exclude them. We must recognize
the dignity of all human beings and
strive to create a society where
everyone has an equal opportunity
to participate in the decision-making
process.

Our Christian walk must be
a demonstration of our belief in
the sanctity of life and the
equality of all people. It is not
enough to express sentiments
of sympathy; we must also
act upon those sentiments.

Let us commit ourselves
to the task of improving the
lot of the Negro sharecropper
and other members of society
who are currently
experiencing hardships.

For immediate release.

...
I'm afraid I can only provide the text in the image. Here is the text as it appears in the image:

In the best of fortune is a truly honest and perfectly non-conventional approach to the problem you present. I cannot see how Mr. McGrath will understand its significance, and understanding will lead to real progress, and real progress will lead to real democracy. We need understanding, and understanding will lead to real democracy. We need understanding, and understanding will lead to real democracy.

In the best of fortune is a truly honest and perfectly non-conventional approach to the problem you present. I cannot see how Mr. McGrath will understand its significance, and understanding will lead to real progress, and real progress will lead to real democracy. We need understanding, and understanding will lead to real democracy. We need understanding, and understanding will lead to real democracy.
Do you think Highlander is radical? When 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 Spahn on the frontier.

I believe you have to believe that not only all men are created equal but that every man should be free and equal. We are all brothers and we are all made in the image of our Maker. We cannot afford to be divided by the color of our skin.

As I have said, the non-discrimination policy toward Negro students has not been a hardship on us. Our communist nature, purpose, plans, and intentions have been based on brotherhood.

Our recent investigation of the N.D. agents, implying as it did, that your non-discrimination policy toward Negro students has not been a hardship on us. Our communist nature, purpose, plans, and intentions have been based on brotherhood.

Our recent investigation of the N.D. agents, implying as it did, that your non-discrimination policy toward Negro students has not been a hardship on us. Our communist nature, purpose, plans, and intentions have been based on brotherhood.

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Our recent investigation of the N.D. agents, implying as it did, that your non-discrimination policy toward Negro students has not been a hardship on us. Our communist nature, purpose, plans, and intentions have been based on brotherhood.
United States Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D. C.

January 1, 1951

Mr. J. L. Horton
Director
Highlander Folk School
Montgomery, Alabama

Mr. Horton,

I acknowledge your letter of December 12, 1950.

It has been the established procedure of this
Agency to refrain from commenting on the statements of Alma A. H. and
related to any organization and, therefore, I cannot comment
on the activities of the school.

The materials are the property of the
Southern Regional Council. The Agency has no
predominant influence over the Southern Regional Council. It
sent a questionnaire to all the organizations in the South
to ascertain whether they had any
information relative to the release of the
Alma A. H. or if they had any
information relative to the release of the
Alma A. H.

Sincerely yours,

[Signature]

Assistant Director

[Date]
from Highlander Executive Council Minutes (page 3) - 12 January 22-23, 1951

Mr. Kyle Horton gave a full report on some recent activities of FBI agents who are questioning people in the community. The agents have been making neighbors about Negroes attending visiting Highlander. Horton said a letter to Senator Kefauver, which said in part, "The FBI agents have been particularly persistent in their questioning about the attendance of Negroes at Highlander Conferences. They wanted to know where people sleep and what they eat after the conferences are over. You can find out to the situation and to something to stop intimidation of our neighbors."

Horton continued that the agents were asking around the community trying to stir up the people by asking leading questions about the Negro students at Highlander. Meanwhile Horton read a newspaper report that in Augusta the Director of July 23 had made a speech at the New York Institute of Public Affairs in which he said discrimination was incompatible with democracy. Horton congratulated the FBI spokesman and reported that many debates followed by an FBI agent who said that discrimination was incompatible with democracy. Horton had personally checked the matter and the agents had acted politically with such statements.

The speech of the state's Attorney General was interpreted by Roy Wilkins as Mason's keynote speech at the convention of the NAACP. Mason, speaking in interviews with the state's Attorney General, who was present by the FBI, had been forced to leave the convention by the FBI. His character was put under close scrutiny and his protection was withdrawn.

Mr. Horton closed by saying that negroes should not be required to put their claims in writing and that they would insist on it. "Just as protection was withdrawn, the Sharon school is being closed."
OFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: The Director
FROM: D. M. Ladd
SUBJECT: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE: February 23, 1951

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:


Attachments

RECORDED: 51 APR 16 1951

[Handwritten notes and signatures]
of Government Employees; and was a Security Matter - C.

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

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 troublemaker and felt that nothing would be gained by such an approach. We were wrong and I regret that we didn't
go to him immediately and obtain specifics from him and compel him to either prove or retract his statement.

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.

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.
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 Communist. 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.
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.
ACTION

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

ADDE: DUM - 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.

Please note the revised text in the margin.
Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO: Director, FBI
FROM: SAC, Knoxville

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

DATE: 5/4/51

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:

[Redacted information]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE: 6/1/51

RECORDA - 43
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.
SAC, Knoxville

Director, FBI

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INTERNAL SECURITY - C
Bufile 61-7511 - 147

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 2/29/51 BY SP希望
24-082
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.

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.

A letter to Levy is attached.
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 UNCLASSED
DATE 4.29.51 BY SPG 3670

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 that 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. For do we know whether the interpretation of the neighbors as to the purport of the questions was reasonable or unreasonable. We wonder 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.
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 Monte Levy
Staff Counsel
Mr. Herbert Monte Levy
Staff Counsel
American Civil Liberties Union
170 Fifth Avenue
New York 10, New York

Dear Mr. Levy:

I wish to acknowledge your letter of April 18, 1951, with further reference to the allegations of Mr. Myles 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 corroborating 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 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)
     Mr. Belmont

LBN: CWC

April 30, 1951
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
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) 81, 7C, 7D 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
May 24, 1951

Directed...-...-...-...-...-...-...-...

SAC, Knoxville

130

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

Boulet May 11, 1951.

Pursuant to your request, there are being enclosed hereewith 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.

Incluseves

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 3/1/51 BY 52 3/20/51

May 3 1 1951
COMM. FBI

RECEIVED 7 MAY 1951
EBI
WASHINGTON, D.C.
Mr. Peyton Ford
Deputy Attorney General
Director, FBI

CONFIDENTIAL

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
relating to the captioned
matter. We have made photostatic copies of this correspond-
ence for our files and are returning the originals
herewith to you.

The enclosed material makes the false allega-
tion 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,

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

Myles

by

No

March 13, 1951, and March 28, 1951.

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

52 MAY 31 1951
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, Tenn 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,
May 17, 1951

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

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.

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,

[Signature]

Peyton Ford
Deputy Attorney General

RECORDED 1
INDEXED 1
37

60 MAY 24 1951
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 Monti Levy
Staff Counsel

May 18, 1951

RE: FALICHEADER \N SCHOOL CASE

Cordially yours,

Herbert Monti Levy
Staff Counsel

[Signature]

[Stamp: Recorded - 32]
[Stamp: Indexed - 32]
[Stamp: Jun 6 1951]
Mr. Herbert Monte Levy  
Staff Counsel  
American Civil Liberties Union  
170 Fifth Avenue  
New York 10, New York

May 24, 1951

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

Enclosure

Director's letter to Mr. Levy of 4-20-51.
Office Memorandum - UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI
FROM: SAC, KNOXVILLE
DATE: June 22, 1951

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

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

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.

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

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 5/11/51 BY OSP/1630
24/632

RECORDED: 16
EX-129
173

JUL 25 1951

1951
TO: SAC, KNOXVILLE

FROM: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL

SUBJECT: INTERNAL SECURITY - OJ

DATE: 8/13/51

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

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.
TO: Director, FBI
FROM: SAC, Knoxville

DATE: October 16, 1951

SUBJECT: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
SECURITY MATTER - C

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

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.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREBIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE: 3/1/51 BY SHERMAN
2455302

RECORDED - 48
EX-115
61-7-11-175
61-2-20-1951
59 007 23 1951

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

Re: Letter dated 10/16/51.

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].
July 31, 1953

Porter, Texas

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

I am writing this letter to you about a school of the most Negroes in the United States. It seems they get a half bushel of mail a day. People around here have been very interested and want to know what is going on. They have been at the school for more than a year.
For years this older Chin
ese man has helped the mountain
people, but no one knows
any one around here
they have helped,
It is evident to me, from
what I know, that it
is a Communist
center, what can we
done about it?
Who has the authority
to act on finding
out about it?

Assured,
R. A. Swift

P.S. This is a confidential
letter, Rev. W.R. Swift
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 Folk 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. L. Swift
Montevallo, Tennessee

Dear Mr. Swift:

RECORDED-37. Your letter dated July 31, 1953, has been received and the notices 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,

John Edgar Hoover
Director

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HERECIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 31/8/53 BY SPEAK NO.

2cc - SAC, Knoxville (V/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 among 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.

COMM - FBI
AUG 7 1953
MAILED 30
In regard to the Highland Folk School Bureau teletype to Knoxville dated February 27, 1951, instructed Knoxville to advise all agents that no discussion of any kind 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 23, 1951, 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 67-C, 51.

The results of the interview should be promptly furnished to the Bureau with reference being made to this letter.
TO: MR. D. N. LADD  
FROM: MR. A. H. BELKONT  
SUBJECT: MYLES HORTON  
(Jenner Committee Request)  


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 (SCED), successor organization to SCHW.* Horton and "West, known Communist, were principal organizers of program Highlander Folk School when latter organized in 1932. In December, 1950, Horton in letter to Mr. Yegel accused "Bureau Agents of questioning neighbors of Folk School regarding visits of Negros 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 Kefauver, to 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 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.

Attachment (100-11615; 62-7-511) [initials]  
1 - Mr. "Nichols

ek  
G2 SEP 22 1953

21-75/11 = V  
 NOT RECORDED  
148 SEP 16 1953

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 3/1/54 BY SPCGT104
Monteagle, Tenn.
Aug. 10, 1953

Dear Mr. Horvitz:

Your letter came this A.M. I am glad you are sending a representative from Knoxville to contact me in regard to the Communist situation here. With what I wrote you about I considerable information.

Sincerely,

W. L. Shepp

[Handwritten note: Reference to me, Deeds Pickel, Board of Pensions, Bldg. 7, Montgomery, Ala.]
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 world would not be aware the same had it not been for a lovable, retired couple now happily living in retirement here.

High above the world's tills, 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 Kaiser. Both were born and reared not far apart in southwest Kentucky during the latter quarter of the 1800s.

"Pastor Swift" had written me they were "retired," and that they had a pretty home here 60 years ago and settled down, free from now on, of routine professional duties.

Almost 60 Years

Rev. W. A. Swift has attended to his church Sunday school assembly programs here for 60 years (with his husband since the early 1920s). With an acquaintance, so my nothing of continuing worldwide correspondence, reading from a large personal library, and sitting in a thousand and one little talks and chores around here—the couple is yet quite active.

At their invitation by letter, I spent a recital 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, and my column. Though an author-society seeker, he asked me for me to write their story, which Swift described hardships long ago and when he served as a 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 Wagons, spinning wheels, and homemade clay lamps were common."

He told of "dropping" corn, then cooking and cultivating it with a hoe—egg selling at three to five cents a dozen, and eggs gleaned at four cents a pound, house rent for 50 cents a month, corn sold for 50 cents a bushel, chicken weeds miles to school, and "grandpa," family riding horseback to appointments, often got as little as two for a year's pay.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HERIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 2/18/84 BY SP8G7O

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

The first Home Service W. A.'s first sermon was at his home church, Mount Carmel, near Way, in 1898. Before retiring a decade ago he held many pastorates, including churches in Little Rock and Texarkana, Ar. and Millersburg, Ky. An editor of church papers for 11 years, he helped select two Methodist colleges (Kentucky Wesleyan and Atlanta, Ala.), and had the distinction of closing several towns and cities of the "fifth of alcohol and indecent shows and carnivals."

This man accumulated what may have been the largest personal library of any fellow-preacher in the nation, though he has always had a big correspondence and today values among keepers of personal letters to him from King Edward VII, three presidents, King George VI, and one from Queen Elizabeth II. As benefactor of the late J. P. Alley Sr., creator of Hambone's mediation, who grew to one of America's greatest commercial artists, Pastor Swift is very proud. While he was preaching at Asbury Methodist in Little Rock, a boy went to him for help. Swift got him a good job, took him in his home, trained, slept in the same bed with him for two years, gave him money to take an art course in New York, and helped him rise to fame.

Elder Alley's were the only carriages to bang on the walls of the U.S. Capitol in Washington and the only ones to appear in a television magazine. As a boy, Swift was...

For the Memphis Commercial Appeal, he considered changing to one of the nation's biggest dailies at a triple 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 planned Alley's wedding ceremony and when he died a few years ago, was called to preach his funeral.

The Swift triplets, parent-like, are blazing their own brilliant trails. Born in Little Rock, Arkansas, and trained in Asbury church, they graduated from the University of Alabama. Their father, Rev. W. A., has been a great influence in the church. He is now retired and lives in Little Rock with his family.

Swift attended Lambuth (Jackson, Tenn.), the University of Tennessee, and the University of Alabama. He is now a graduate chemical engineer in Houston. Texas.

Margaret graduated from Wesleyan, Macon, Ga. She married in Nashville, and now in New York City. Now she lives in Little Rock with her children.

Swift attended the Universities of Michigan, California, and Harvard, and served as a missionary in China with the United States Army. He is now in China, working for the American Red Cross in Japan and China. 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 home 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 home house for friends from everywhere. Just the thought of the backside of the house is modern as tomorrow, when they plan to rent it to assembly visitors when not used at the ladder house.

Swift attended the University of Alabama, and the University of Tennessee. He is now a graduate chemical engineer in Houston. Texas. Margaret graduated from Wesleyan, Macon, Ga. She married in Nashville, and now in New York City. Now she lives in Little Rock with her children.

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Rev. William Alfred Swift, Monteagle, Tennessee, was interviewed at his residence by Special Agent [reddacted] on 8-19-53. Rev. Swift advised that he is a retired Methodist Minister, 61 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 Domrosky. Rev. Swift stated that he did not know Domrosky's first name and that he had never met Domrosky. Rev. Swift advised that Domrosky 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 Domrosky to be sympathetic with Communism because of newspaper accounts linking Domrosky 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 Domrosky which would lead him to believe him to be Communist and he stated that he had not received any reports of any activity on the part of Domrosky other than the newspaper accounts of Domrosky participating in strikes which would lead him to believe that Domrosky 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 Communist in nature. Rev. Swift advised it is his opinion that the Highlander Folk School was dominated by Communist Sympathizers on the Following events.
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 adviser him some time ago that the Highlander Folk School was made up of Communist Sympathizers. Rev. SWIFT advised the interviewing agent that 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 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 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 that 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 Communist leanings 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

TO: DIRECTOR, FBI (61-751X)
FROM: SAC, KNOXVILLE (61-12)

DATE: 9/10/53

SUBJECT: W. A. SWIFT
INFORMATION CONCERNING
INTERNAL SECURITY

Ref Bullet September 9, 1953, entitled as above.

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

RECORDED 122 16L-75-11-180
31 SEP 14 1953

53 SEP 17 1953

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE STAMPED BY: SPG 10-40
IN SED.
SAC, Knoxville

September 9, 1953

Director, FBI (61-7511)

W. A. SHIFLET
INFORMATION CONCERNING
INTERNAL SECURITY

HIGHLAND FOLK SCHOOL

Re: Bulletin 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: 888812

RECORDED-57 INDEXED-57 EX: 118

SEP 16 1953 130

COMM = FBI SEP 9 1953 MAILED 28
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:

Confidential Informant Knoxville T-2, a governmental agency, has advised that LOUIE FRANCIS HUDENZ, 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.

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

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.
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 MONTEAGLE, 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.

END

6-20 PM OK FBI WA fch
TU

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 3/1/54 BY SRF STG.

SU L. 5 1954

MAR 30 1954
Re Knoxville letters to Director 5/4/51, 6/22/51, and 4/21/52.
Re Bureau letters to Knoxville dated 5/15/51.

On 3/19/54, Internal Revenue, Treasury Department, advised SA 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.

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. stated he would notify Agent of the progress of his investigation and if information was desired concerning his investigation, it could be obtained through official channels.

The Bureau will be kept advised of the progress of investigation and if deemed advisable at the completion of investigation, a request will be submitted to obtain the results of his investigations through Internal Revenue Bureau.
SAC, KNOXVILLE (100-00)

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

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

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

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 31/84 BY SP 475582

61-7511-
NOT RECORDED
156 JUN 1 1954

8 JUN 3 1954
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

AIR-TEL

Transmit the following Teletype message to: P 6/7/54
DIRECTOR
FRI KNOXVILLE GCW/msw

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL, IS - C. HE IS INJ TO BUREAU 6/7/54.

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.

INVESTIGATION TO BE CONDUCTED WITHIN THE
NEXT TWO WEEKS.

SOURCE

RECORDED-99

END

6/7/54

by: Belmont

approved:

Special Agent in Charge

AIR MAIL

LE JUN 9 1954

Sent

Per
To: COMMUNICATIONS DEPT.

June 21, 1954

Transmit the following message via TEL:

TO: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL

FROM: AINTEL

June 7, 1954

REQUESTING THE BUREAU TO CONTACT INTERIOR REVENUE SERVICES IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

YOU ARE

REFERRED TO BULLETIN DATED FEBRUARY 27, 1952, 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 AUTHORIZATION

FROM BUREAU AUTHORITY. THE REQUEST MADE IN REFERENCED AINTEL IS

DELETED. ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED

HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN.

Bureau File 61-7511

NOTE: TELLER ONLY: Highlander Folk School is an institution

located near Monticello, Tennessee. Classes are held on a semi-annual 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. 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 in Communist dominated. The instructions outlined in

REFERENCED BULLETIN OF FEBRUARY 27, 1952, PER INSTRUCTIONS OF THE

DIRECTOR AS NOTED IN A MEMORANDUM FROM MR. LADD TO THE DIRECTOR

DATED FEBRUARY 23, 1952.