

**FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION**

**ROY WILKINS**

**PART 1 OF 11**

**BUFILE: 62-78270**

Section 1

Ray Wilkins

April 28, 1945

**CONFIDENTIAL**

CLASSIFIED AND  
EXTENDED BY 2333

REASON FOR EXTENSION 2

FCIM, II, 1-2.4.2

DATE OF REVIEW FOR

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Background and Personal Data:

The following personal data unverified by other sources has been made available concerning Wilkins:

He was born August 13, 1901 in St. Louis, Missouri. He received his AB degree from the University of Minnesota where he majored in Journalism and sociology. From 1923 to 1931 he was managing editor of the "Kansas City Call," Negro newspaper. Since 1931 he has been assistant secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and since 1934, he has also served as editor of the "Oris," an official organ of the National Association for Colored People.

(Section of Book "What the Negro Wants")

Connections and affiliations:

It has been reported that on December 11, 1934, Roy Wilkins, along with Edward P. Levitt, Emmitt E. Dorsey, and Charles Houston, was arrested for parading without a permit in front of the Memorial Continental Hall at 17th and D Streets, N. W., Washington, D. C.

100-12111-1

It is reported that on the stationery of the International Juridical Association in September, 1936, there appeared as a member of the National Committee the name of Roy Wilkins. It might be noted that the International Juridical Association has been reported to be a Communist influenced organization in the legal field. (61-7559-1199)

The Daily Worker of July 29, 1937, carries an article pertaining to a scheduled meeting of the Scottsboro Defense Committee on that same date, at which time there would be a "victory celebration" to greet the "four freed Scottsboro Boys." Among the various groups participating were the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Communist Party, the International Labor Defense, and the League for Industrial Democracy. It was stated that among the list of outstanding speakers scheduled for the meeting was Roy Wilkins. (100-2561-2612)

The "Daily Worker" for September 2, 1937, carried an article pertaining to a scheduled mass meeting of the League Against War and Fascism and of the American Friends of Chinese People, both organizations sponsoring a meeting, for October 1, 1937. The article sets forth a number of "religious sponsors" of the meeting and included the name "Rev. Roy H. Wilkins." (61-7561-1378113)

The October 13, 1937, issue of the Daily Worker contained an

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article concerning plans made by the Harlem Scottsboro Defense Committee for a meeting scheduled October 25, 1937. The article listed among the speakers scheduled Roy Wilkins of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and Richard B. Moore of the Communist front group, the International Labor Defense. (61-7563-62X32)

[REDACTED]

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There are available the proceedings of the Fourth National Congress Against War and Fascism held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, November 26-28, 1937. The records reflect that there were a number of sub-sessions in which the delegates took part and the one entitled, "Sub-Session on National and Racial Minorities" was set forth as having for its Chairman Roy Wilkins, "delegate from the Book and Magazine Guild and Editor of the Crisis." (61-6589-62, pg. 192)

[REDACTED]

A press release of the Book and Magazine Guild issued in the early part of April, 1938, reported on a scheduled meeting for April 22, 1938, at the Central Industrial High School, 42nd Street, New York City. Among the listed speakers was Roy Wilkins, "Editor of the Crisis," and his subject was set forth as being "The War Danger -- and What to Do About It." (61-7566-918X)

In the testimony of Mr. Walter Steele before the Dies Committee on August 16, 1938, he discussed the last convention (1937) of the American League Against War and Fascism. In his testimony he stated that among the "headliners" at this convention was "Roy Wilkins," along with such people as Earl Browder, Elizabeth Garley Flynn, Max Yergan, and Max Bedacht. (Dies Committee, Vol. 1, pg. 46)

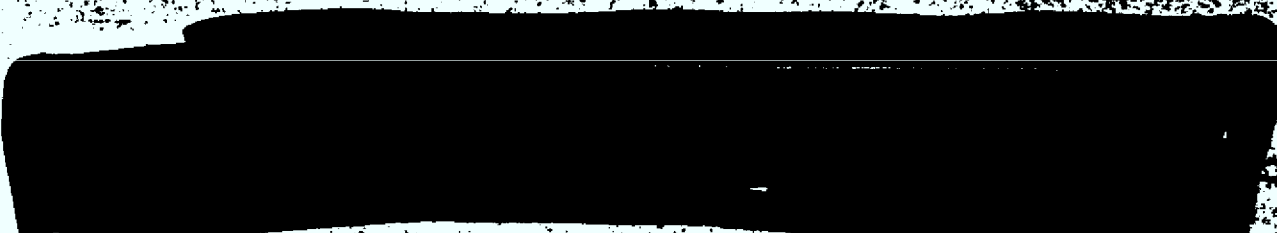
The February 7, 1939, issue of the Daily Worker contained an article concerning the proposed first convention of the Workers' Alliance.

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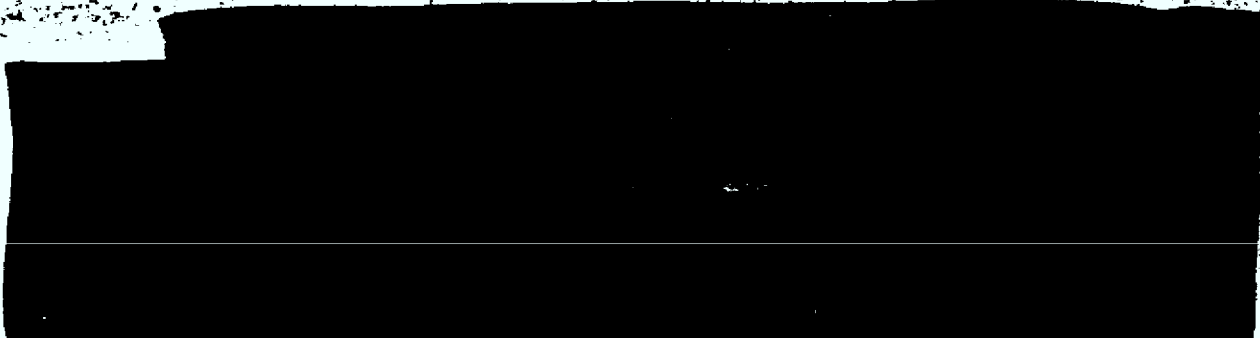
scheduled for February 10, 1939. The article stated that among the scheduled speakers were Roy Wilkins of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Helen Harris, New York Director of the National Youth Administration; David Lasser, and Herbert Benjamin, Secretary-Treasurer of the Workers Alliance. It might be noted that the Workers Alliance, during its existence, was known as a Communist influenced organization. (61-7551-16118)



The January 29, 1939, issue of the "Daily Worker" carried an article concerning the Negro Peoples Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, which was designated as an affiliate of the Medical Bureau and North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, which are related to have been Communist controlled groups. The article listed a number of "prominent Negro anti-Fascists", who sent pledges of support. Included among the names was that of Roy Wilkins.

(65-7563-69x78)

The January 30, 1943, issue of the Negro newspaper, the "New Jersey Herald News," published at Newark, New Jersey, contains an editorial by Harry V. Webber in which he charges that the major Negro newspapers in the country do not reflect Negro opinion. He states in the editorial, "Once upon a time there was a relatively free press in America, even among the national newspapers (Negro)... The national newspapers have welded themselves into an alliance with certain race organizations, certain education leaders, and religious leaders, to tell the Negro what he ought to think or what they wanted him to think...by some secret arrangement which Roy Wilkins refused to reveal when asked point-blank here several years ago, nothing opposed to the NAACP and its allies can ever appear in these controlled national newspapers...one might almost call Walter White and Elmer Davis of the national newspapers. So the nationals continue to bore people with race issue propaganda along lines laid down by 69 Fifth Avenue (address of the NAACP)." The foregoing has been unverified by other information. (100-135-32-17)



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During the course of rioting in Harlem, New York City during the first week of August, 1949, auxiliary police were appointed and among them Roy Wilkins of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was included.

(44-840-10)

The name of Roy Wilkins appears on the Board of Directors of the Citywide Citizens Committee on Harlem which group became active shortly after the rioting in the Harlem area in August, 1949. The purpose of this group, according to its advertisement, has been to better race relations in the City of New York.

(44-840-6)

The following speculation was offered by a usually reliable source in November, 1949, with respect to the columns of Roy Wilkins of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and W.E.B. DuBois, internationally known Negro editor, which has been reportedly suppressed by the Amsterdam News, New York Negro newspaper, because these columns were allegedly opposed to Republican candidates. It was stated that the Amsterdam News had been attacked by other Negro newspapers because of its support of the Republican Presidential candidate and because of the suppression of the columns. It was also stated that the possibility existed that the reason for the formation of a "league for a better press" in New York City was to offset attacks of the "Amsterdam News" on the Political Action Committee.

(100-7660-2664)

A flier announcing a series of forums on the general subject, "The Race Relations Battlefront Today," was distributed in February, 1944, by the Modern Trend Progressive Youth Group of New York City, an organization which was said to have had a number of speakers of divergent views appearing before the group, including Communist Party and Socialist Workers Party members. It was announced in the leaflet that the February 29, 1944, forum would deal with the "Negro press." Among the speakers listed was Roy Wilkins, editor of the "Crisis."

(100-172238-4)

The New York Amsterdam News for April 8, 1944, carried an article in which it stated that a move to draft A. Philip Randolph, leader of the March on Washington Movement and head of the Sleeping Car Porters Union, AP of L, as a candidate for Congress in opposition to Adam Clayton Powell. The article also stated that Harlem's nonpartisan committee chaired by Mack B. Rowe, announced that a conference would be held on April 15, 1944, and that the sponsors of the gathering were to have been Channing H. Tobias,

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Boy Wilkins, George E. Schuyler, Elmer Carter, Mrs. Rosa Elcker, Noah Walter, A. A. Austin, and Indlow V. Werner. It is further stated that a definite attempt was being made to have Randolph oppose Powell for the Congressional seat in a section in Harlem. (It might be noted that Randolph did not oppose Powell who subsequently won the election unopposed after having defeated preliminary opponents). (100-51230-36)

The January 14, 1944, issue of the "Daily Worker" contained an article discussing a scheduled meeting for January 16, 1944, sponsored by the National Workers Order, which meeting was labeled the "War-time Inter-Group Unity Conference." A number of persons either known Communists or reliably reported Communists, were listed in the article as scheduled speakers. Boy Wilkins, editor of the "Crisis," was a scheduled participant for the panel at the meeting to consider "the fifth column."

It is reported that the Ohio State News, a Negro newspaper published at Columbus, Ohio, criticized the race relations representative at Patterson Field, Dayton, Ohio, in its November and December, 1944, issues. Subsequently, there was a tour of this Field made by a group of Negroes including Louis R. Lautier, Administrative Assistant, Civilian Aid to the Secretary of War; Samuel L. Foster, race analyst of the Army Service Forces; Arnold B. Walker of the National Urban League, and Boy Wilkins of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. It is said that at the conclusion of the tour those who made it were loud in praise of racial conditions and complimented the race relations representative at the Field on his accomplishments. (100-660-25)

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Affiliation with National Association for Advancement of Colored People.

The "Daily Worker" for July 29, 1938, contains an article concerning an apparent interview had by the writer, Will Lawrence, with Boy Wilkins, the editor of the "Crisis" and Assistant Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The writer of the article states that Wilkins condemned the forces of big business which cause "misrepresentation

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of the Negro." In his remarks as reported by the author, Wilkins traced generally the plight for the Negro during and after the Civil War and pointed out that the movies, the press, the radio, the schools, and the theater premeditatedly repeat that the Negro is a bafeen, an "ignorant, happy-go-lucky, irresponsibly member of society." Wilkins reportedly referred to lynching and mistreatment of Negroes and alleged that many employers formerly were able to pit Negro workers against white workers. The article ends by stating that Wilkins informed the writer of the article along the following lines: "I am in favor of any program that will bring out the identity of class interests of the masses of Negro and white workers. Meanwhile, educate the white workers in the history and struggle of achievements of the Negro people. Teach them that not only have Negroes given of their sweat and blood to make this the richest country in the world, but that Negro engineers, scientists, writers, artists, and musicians have enriched the cultural life of the country."

(100-7563-61X19)

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People held its 33rd annual conference in Los Angeles, California, during the period July 14-19, 1942. On the night of July 14, 1942, Roy Wilkins gave the keynote address. He is reported to have stated that the organization would continue its fight against segregation and discrimination against Negroes and for equal rights of Negroes with white people. He is quoted as having made the following additional statements:

"We are determined forever to be through with status quo... this is no war--this is a social revolution. Nations and societies are being shattered and remolded overnight. I say to you that the reason why this association was born in 1909 and has lived 33 years -- the reason why I am here and you are here -- is because we are determined forever and a day to be through with the status quo. Are we worms to sit in a corner and say we yearn not for green pastures? We are impelled to impose the status quo by the imperatives of the situation. If you are in a crack you must get out...I do not recall a time when there has been such unity of thought and such clearness as to the path we have to follow. It is not luxuries as freedom of speech, by the control over his own body, the right to walk around and not be strung up to a tree, that concerns the Negroes at this time and that give rise to the association... Some say we should let things go during the war period so there will be no disunity, in other words remain in a status quo. That we will not do because to make people free is why the war is being fought. No one can call us subversive if we refuse to remain in a status quo position." (100-3176-45)

Wilkins addressed an open forum sponsored by the Portland Chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People on November 1, 1942, at which time Wilkins dwelt at length upon the minority in the United

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States, particularly the Negro minority. He referred to the situation involving the Negro during wartime. He discussed industry and employment of Negroes therein and their situation in various labor unions. He also stated the following according to a reliable source present:

"We are also concerned with the world front... Justice for all and not just for some. We cannot just sit here in Portland and say we will do as we please. After this war, we will have no separation from other places. The world is too small.... Why do you suppose that Japan took Java, a country of forty million people in one week... They were already sick of the people who were over them. It made no difference to them who was the slave driver. A yellow boss is just as good as a white boss. These countries would still be free if these people had felt they had something to die for. They will never take the United States if they will just wipe out some of these things. The Negro belongs here; it is as much their country as it is ours. We will fight for it just as long as the white man, just so we have a reason to fight. Give him, then hope for freedom, dignity, and security."

(Agent Coverage; 100-135-41-4)

On October 30, 1943, Wilkins spoke at the National Youth Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, held at Lincoln University, Oxford, Pennsylvania. It is reported that he devoted his address to criticizing the "reactionary forces in America" specifically mentioning Westbrook Pegler and stated in 1863 the Negro was thrown into a competitive world with nothing to struggle to the top with, and for that reason must continue to fight, first as an American for rights and second as a Negro, maintain the tradition to fight with two hands and whip. (61-1176-263 p. 67)

It is reported that in 1943 Wilkins was sent on a tour of the communities and army camps in the Western and Pacific Coast states by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. He reported on his tour in the "Crisis," the official organ of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, at which time he described various areas he visited. He ended his article by stating that all was not dark for the Negro soldiers stationed in the West, pointing out isolated cases in which Commanding Officers are to be praised for their fair play and sincerity in trying to better the conditions faced by the men under their command. He stated, "If the Army could in some way adopt the philosophy of these Commanding Officers and make it work (most Commanders give only lip service to the 'no discrimination' rule), it would boost morale among Negro soldiers overnight." (G-2 100-174048-3)

On June 11-12, 1944, the annual conference National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in the state of South Carolina was

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held, at Hunter, reported that the principal speaker of the session on June 12, 1944, was Roy Wilkins. According to a source present, Wilkins reviewed the history of the Negro relating how the Negro has always been disregarded as a personality both physically and politically in this country and added that the day of persecution for the Negro race was terminating. He is said to have extolled the efforts of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in citing the cases of the Negro and criticized representatives and political figures in the state of South Carolina for their degens on white supremacy in the south. He reportedly stressed the fact that the Negro in South Carolina was still practically a slave to the white man and that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People with the assistance of all the Negroes would win their rights through the courts. According to the source, Wilkins emphasized the fact that the Negro did not desire to acquire his lawful rights through revolution but would do so by lawful court procedure.

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It is reported that at the thirty-third annual conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, held at the Second Baptist Church, Los Angeles, California, Wilkins on July 14, 1944, as Assistant Secretary of the organization gave the key note speech. He is quoted as having stated, "We will fight against segregation and discrimination and for equal rights..... I know of no time when there has been such unity of thought on the path we must follow. Everywhere the sentiment is that now is the time for decision, and action.... We are determined forever to be through with status quo." He is also reported as having stated that some say "we" (Negroes) should let things go during the war, so there will be no disunity; in other words, remain in a status quo. He is said to have emphasized that Negroes would not let things go because to make people free is why the war is being fought. He also reportedly stated that no one can call Negroes subversive if they refuse to remain in a status quo position.

(100-135-27-2)

It is reported that at an annual Director's meeting of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People held January 2, 1945, at 69 Fifth Avenue, New York City, Roy Wilkins, Acting Executive Secretary during the absence of Walter White, stated that although progress had been made politically and economically and in the Armed Forces in subduing dangerous racial trends, "the picture for 1945 is not a rosy one."

(100-7660-2675)

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STATEMENTS AND WRITINGS

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The February 24, 1943, issue of the Daily Worker carried an article concerning the celebration of Negro History Week, which had just previously taken place. Among the speakers listed by the article as having addressed the group assembled were Roy Wilkins, of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Benjamin Davis, Jr., and Owendelyn Bennett, both known Communists. (61-7562-4)

It is reported that during the early part of March, 1943, Wilkins spoke at a Forum sponsored by the Resident Group and Public Affairs Committee of the Harlem branch of the YMCA. He is said to have addressed his audience on "What technique shall we use and how shall we use them to insure democracy here now and during the postwar period?" According to the source, Wilkins stated that at that time, for the first time in the history of the Negro, there was unity on what the Negro people wanted, but there were differences in the technique employed for the achievement of these wants. He reportedly stated that the Negro people want first of all to be primarily free to be employed on their merits, secondly, there should be an end to police brutality and lynching and, thirdly, there should be opportunity for education and, fourthly, there should be freedom from all humiliating restrictions on people when they travel through certain sections of the country. The source stated that Wilkins continued that these wants cannot be achieved through any mass organization on racial basis. It was his contention, according to the report, that large organizations do not "get" the masses of the people. He reportedly said that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People had only 175,000 members, which is a small amount of Negro population, but that there is a need of a million people to back up some sort of program and according to his statement no great organization would do it on a racial basis. (G-2, 100-7660-1255)

It is reported that Wilkins spoke at a conference of the Peoples Committee in New York City on March 18, 1943. The Peoples Committee has been reliably reported to be subject to Communist influence. It is an organization interested in bettering conditions for Negroes both locally and nationally. It has had a number of known and reliably reported Communists on its Board of Directors and list of officers including such people as Benjamin Davis, Jr., Charles Collins, Thelma Dale, Clifford McAvoy, Max Yergan, and others. Wilkins is said to have stressed in his speech at the conference the need for unity among various groups interested in racial conditions.

(100-109061-23)

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**[REDACTED]** (G-2 100-135-167)  
A usually reliable source reported that on May 3, 1943, the Residence Club and Public Affairs Committee at the Harlem Branch, NACA, held the Fourth of a series of forums at 180 West 135th Street. Wilkins spoke on the subject, "What techniques shall we use and how shall we use them to insure democracy here now and during the postwar period?" The source reported that Wilkins said the Negro people want primarily to be free to be employed on their merits and to put an end to police brutality and lynching, an opportunity for education and freedom from all humiliating restrictions when they travel through certain sections of the country. He reportedly outlined the following techniques to be employed in order to successfully accomplish an undertaking during the war:

1. In wartime identify your case with the war and show that the correction of certain evils is in line with the war effort.
2. Attempt to influence legislation.
3. Unite with other groups, small minorities, labor unions, Catholic groups, other Christian groups, and Jewish groups.

(G-2 100-135-96)

The Amsterdam Star News, issue of August 21, 1943, carried an article by Roy Wilkins in which he severely criticized the Attorney General's suggestion to curb the migration of Negro workers to industrial areas.

(100-135-35-167)

During the early part of September, 1943, Wilkins, in his column, "The Watch Tower," published in the Amsterdam News, Negro newspaper, applied the term "quising" to Warren Brown, Negro whose then recent article published by the Saturday Review of Literature and the Reader's Digest, advised the Negro press "not to holler so loud or the white folks would get mad."

(G-2 100-135-164)

In November, 1943, Benjamin Davis, Jr., Negro Communist functionary, was elected on the Communist Party ticket to the New York City Council. The Daily Worker for November 23, 1943, carried an article to the effect that Wilkins in his column "The Watch Tower" in the New York Amsterdam News, made the following statements after condemning the New York World Telegram in publishing articles on how Communists used racial and religious issues to win places in the elections:

"....Moreover, the Communist appeals were not vicious or based on hatred, whereas the Governorship battle was the slimiest waged here in many a decade....As our system of government is so weak that two Communists out of a council of 17 members constitute a danger, then we had better be looking into our foundations....As a matter of fact, the presence of two declared Communists in our council probably will benefit everyone. Communists stimulate activity. They stimulate progressive measures more often than they voice the aspirations of the plain peoples, even though these plain people would not

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go as far as to espouse Communism itself.....As for Ben Davis himself... it is to be doubted whether there is a single Council member of any higher caliber. Davis is a graduate of Amhurst and the Harvard Law School...Needless to say, with this background and with the graduate course he has received in the Communist Party, Davis is far from being a greenhorn....." (100-149163-4)

A usually reliable source reported on a meeting held December 15, 1943, under the caption "Freedom Now Mass Meeting" at the O. V. Cotte Elks Hall auditorium, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The meeting was given under the auspices of the Industrial Union of Marine and Shipbuilding Workers of America, CIO, and the Baptist Ministers of Philadelphia to celebrate the releases of Negro employees Henry T. McCrary and Willis Pickett, formerly employed by the Sun Shipbuilding Corporation, Chester, Pennsylvania, who had been sentenced to prison as a result of a shooting which took place at the Sun Shipbuilding Yard during the summer of 1943. Presiding as chairman of the meeting, according to the source, was Russell Watson, whom the source stated to be a registered Communist and Communist Party organizer. Among the speakers was Wilkins. He reportedly stated in substance that the Negro in America has three obstacles in his way and that one is a political one. He then referred to the poll tax in various states.

He also is alleged to have stated that economically the Negro must continue to fight in order to enjoy equal opportunities, and that through the CIO and other militant labor organizations the Negro is extending the opportunity of becoming united with powerful forces that will not only fight the cause of the Negro but will fight the cause of all working classes.

(G-2 100-135-38-92)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

In March, 1944, the House Military Affairs Committee Chairman condemned the use of the War Department of the pamphlet "Races of Mankind". Subsequently, this pamphlet was banned by the War Department. The "Daily Worker" for March 7, 1944, contained an article listing a number of persons who criticized the ban of the book. The article said that Roy Wilkins, acting secretary for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People stated that Representative May's outburst against the booklet "exhibits fear of scientific truth with respect to relations between the Negro and the white people of this

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country." Wilkins, according to the article, also said that the fact that the information of the pamphlet was known to science for decades is no reason "why the Kentucky Congressman should have been aware of it."

(100-135-A)

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A meeting was held on May 17, 1944, sponsored by the Minorities Workshop of the Socialist Party located at 303 Fourth Avenue, New York City, which was described as a "protest meeting against Mayor LaGuardia's proposed Japanese-American discrimination policy." (Mayor LaGuardia was alleged to have stated that he was opposed to the bringing of Japanese-Americans in the New York City area.) Among the speakers was Roy Wilkins, who described how the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which he represented, was the first to publish anything about the Japanese evacuation program, and the first to condemn that action. He compared this action with discrimination against Negroes. He stated that Italians and Germans on the East Coast were the cause of the Nazis sending some five to ten ships a day in 1942 because of the signals which they were able to give and that in contrast not one Japanese had been convicted of espionage or sabotage in the United States. He further stated that in Salt Lake City, Utah, there was a curfew at a certain hour of night after which Japanese-Americans were not permitted to leave certain sections of that city but rather remained at home. He said that in California, Negroes had absorbed the propaganda directed by Anti-Japanese forces and consequently a lot of Negroes were of the opinion that the Japanese had not done the Negroes any good. He described his conversation with one Negro in California and quoted that person as saying, "I do not know why we are fighting the Japanese. They have not done anything to me. When I go to a hotel operated by white people they either tell me that they are full or that they do not accept colored people, and here in California there was only one hotel at which I could stay and that hotel was run by the Japanese, so why should we fight the Japs."

(Agent Coverage 100-164629-11)

Wilkins further described the Japanese as being the best truck farmers in America and stated that "they are the backbone of this country." He further criticized Mayor LaGuardia for the attitude which he took against the Japanese.

(Agent Coverage 100-164629-11)

In his column in the July 6, 1944, issue of the "Amsterdam News," Wilkins wrote the following under the title, "Memo on 'Rape' Charges." He stated that Negro soldiers are getting "a thorough rooking in military courts on 'rape' charges." He cited life sentences given to two Negro soldiers in New Caledonia and the proposed hanging and later life sentences given to four Negro soldiers and a Merchant Marine in Australia for similar sex offenses. He also cited a recent conviction of a Captain Morrissey Wilkinson (white) by Court-martial

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in Santa Ana, California, to a sentence of 30 years' imprisonment for four sex offenses, bigamy and theft, "contrasted with the conviction of Negroes in the Army on charges of sex offenses" as being bound to raise the question of the differences between rape by white men and rape by black men.

In the August 3, 1944, issue of the Los Angeles "Centinel", a Negro newspaper, Wilkins in an editorial declared that the Negro vote was necessary for the winning party in the forthcoming election. He stated, "It may be true that most of them, like a great many white voters, are not exactly cheering for Dewey but they cannot even get up a smile for the Democratic platform and Truman. It might be that unless the Roosevelt Administration does something positive between now and November, great sections of the Negro population will swing to the G.O.P."

Wilkins' column, (100-135-27-121) "The Hatch Tower," appeared in the November 23, 1944, issue of the Los Angeles "Centinel." This article relates that Fordham Catholic University of America and Manhattan College and Sacred Heart had lowered the bars to Negroes in the past few years, but Notre Dame has the church baffled. No Negro has ever tried the campus at Notre Dame, according to the article, or worn its athletic uniform. The article also implied that an injury suffered by a great Negro football player on the Illinois football team during the fall of 1944, in the game with Notre Dame, was something more than just an accident.

The December 23, 1944, issue of the "Peoples Voice" carries an article entitled "Views on Dewey Ousted Writer." This article stated that Wilkins had been ousted from his post as columnist for the New York "Amsterdam News". The article stated that Wilkins interpreted his dismissal at the end of November instead of during the summer or fall as a desire on the part of the Editor to avoid "discussion of the muzzling of a supposedly 'free' columnist during a political campaign."

It is reported that (100-135-27-121) during the period January 19-21, 1945, a race religious institute was held at the Euclid Avenue Baptist Church in Cleveland, Ohio. Among the speakers on January 20, 1945, were Roy Wilkins and James L. Farmer, the latter being with the Fellowship of Reconciliation. According to an informant, Wilkins spoke on the subject, "A Program for Today" and stated that America is coming to age on the question of race relations. He reportedly made the following additional remarks: The Second World War caused us to realize this a great deal more. The good neighbor policy does not mean for us to be good to our neighbor but for our neighbor to be good to us. Security is necessary for all groups. This includes physical protection, economic security, and the right to work.

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The March 1, 1945, issue of the Peoples Voice, Negro newspaper of New York City, carried an article devoted to the directive of the Fair Employment Practice Committee to the Capital Transit Company in Washington, D. C., that it employ and upgrade Negroes as bus and trolley operators. The article advises that the head of this company insisted that a strike threat barred the company from employing Negroes in these capacities. The article further stated that Roy Wilkins, Acting Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, pointed out that the refusal of the Capital Transit Company to employ Negroes was more than a local issue. He is quoted as having stated, "The eyes of the country are on this case. The eyes of our soldiers overseas are upon it."

(100-135-54A)

On March 14, 1945, the sub-Committee of the Senate Labor and Education Committee concluded its hearings on the permanent Fair Employment Practice bill. Wilkins testified before the sub-Committee. He read into the record a five page prepared statement calling to the attention of the group the fact that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People then had more than 400,000 members, Negro and white, in some 800 local chapters, located in 44 states and the District of Columbia. In connection with the employment of Negroes in government agencies, Wilkins stated that an overwhelming majority of these employees are still limited to custodial and minor clerical positions, so that the general trend does not reflect any basic changes in governmental policy of limiting Negroes to laborious and unremunerative positions. Wilkins then referred to the discrimination against Negroes by the railroads and declared the adoption of S-101 would give real meaning to democracy and equality for 13 million Negroes. Wilkins criticized Senator Taft's bill, and pointed out that there was no defined area in which it was to operate, that it failed to provide for the inclusion of nondiscrimination clauses in contracts met by the government. He concluded with the statement that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was irrevocably opposed to the Taft bill but that it strongly supported S-101 in its then present form.

(100-272,184-13)

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Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. Nichols

DATE: April 13, 1955

FROM : M. A. Jones

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SL/144 SP6BJA/Bms

SUBJECT: ROY WILKINS  
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT  
OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP)

Classified by SP6BJA/Bms  
Declassify on: OADR 243,304

SYNOPSIS:

Newspaper story reflects on April 11, 1955, Roy Wilkins was unanimously elected by Board of Directors of NAACP to succeed the late Walter White as Executive Secretary of the organization. Director noted, "What do we know of him?" Roy Wilkins born St. Louis, Missouri, 1901; received A.B. degree from University of Minnesota, 1923, majored in journalism, economics and sociology. Has been connected with NAACP in various capacities since 1931. Approximate 400 references to Wilkins in Bureau files although never investigated by Bureau. The majority of references are newspaper items and review of them would indicate that in 1930's and early 1940's Wilkins tended to adhere to Communist Party line but since that time, appears to be strongly anti-Communist and has done all possible to steer NAACP away from any Communist infiltration. In September, 1936, was member of National Committee of International Workers Order, a Communist influenced organization. In 1937 also was active on the Scottsboro Defense Committee. Also associated with Congress Against War and Fascism in 1937. According to "Daily Worker," Wilkins in 1938 active in Parkers Alliance which was a Communist influenced organization. In June, 1939, confidential source alleged that Wilkins was Communist. Also in 1939 Wilkins was active in Negro Peoples Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, a Communist controlled group. In 1948 Wilkins, keynote speaker at 39th Annual Conference of NAACP in Kansas City, Missouri, urged delegates not to be intimidated by cry of Communism and said Negroes did not want totalitarian state either of the right or of the left. In 1949 stated Communist Party greatly concerned over election of Roy Wilkins to fill vacancy caused by year's leave of absence of Walter White. Informant alleged Wilkins openly opposed to tactics of Communist Party and had been one of leaders in NAACP responsible for defeat of the Communists in their effort to take over the organization on a national scale. Wilkins sided with Paul Robeson regarding the Peekskill riot in 1949. Benjamin Davis and Henry Winston, Communist Party functionaries on national level, critical of Wilkins in January, 1950, because he would not accept Communist help. Frederick Woltman's article in February, 1950, alleged NAACP a top priority target of Communist Party strategy and ultimate objective of the Communists was to oust Wilkins.

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as he was outspoken anti-Red. "American Magazine" for December, 1954 carried an article by Roy Wilkins entitled "Stalin's Greatest Defeat". This article concerned the Communist Party's attempt to recruit Negro people. Article considered excellent treatise on Communist Party approach to the Negro question by the Bureau. [REDACTED]

Bureau files further reflect that since initial association with NAACP Wilkins has traveled throughout the country speaking before various branches of the organization. Has urged Negroes to fight for equal rights but has never advocated violence or radical measures. In 1948 Wilkins repudiated allegations that NAACP would support Henry Wallace in his Presidential campaign. NAACP at 41st Annual Convention in Boston in 1950 voted 6 to 1 in favor of appointing a special board for purpose of uprooting Communist infiltration. "New Leader" for February, 1950, stated, "The Commies in the NAACP are gunning for Roy Wilkins, its determinedly anti-Stalinist secretary." Bureau has had little contact with Wilkins and files reflect he has written to us only twice in absence of Walter White and we have directed the letters to Wilkins.

RECOMMENDATION:

None. For information.

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JH

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DETAILS

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Declassify on: OADR 243,304

PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND:

A news story appearing in the April 12, 1955, issue of the "New York Herald Tribune" was headlined "Roy Wilkins Leader of N.A.A.C.P." The story stated that Wilkins, Administrator of the NAACP, had been named on April 11, 1955, to succeed the late Walter White as Executive Secretary of the organization, Mr. White having died on March 21, 1955. Wilkins was elected unanimously by the Board of Directors of the NAACP.

In regard to this news item, the Director noted, "What do we know of him?" The purpose of this memorandum is to answer the Director's inquiry.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Summary

Who's Who in America, 1954-55, reflects that ~~Wilkins~~ Wilkins, Social Welfare Executive, was born in St. Louis, Missouri, August 30, 1901. He received an A.B. degree from the University of Minnesota in 1923. He was Managing Editor of the "Kansas City Call" from 1923 to 1931. He was Assistant Secretary of NAACP from 1931 to 1949, Acting Secretary from 1949 to 1950, and Administrator of the organization from 1950 to his recent election as Executive Secretary. He was Editor of "Crisis" magazine, monthly official NAACP organ, from 1934 to 1949.

D.C.  
Pa.  
Mass.

Wilkins' home is at 147-15 Village Road, Jamaica, New York, and his office is at 20 East 40th Street, New York City.

Additionally, the news story referred to above reflects that Wilkins majored in journalism, economics and sociology. The news story also reflects that Wilkins' former position of Administrator in the NAACP was abolished at the election in which he became Executive Secretary.

INFORMATION IN BUREAU FILES:

There are approximately 400 references to ~~Wilkins~~ Wilkins in Bureau files. The Bureau has never conducted an investigation concerning him. A review of these references reflects that for the most part they are newspaper clippings referring to his activities in connection with his duties as

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an official of the NAACP. Because of the volume of this material, information will not be set forth in its entirety. The files have been reviewed and only significant references which will tend to characterize Wilkins are being set forth. It would appear from a review of Bureau files that in the 1930's and early 1940's Wilkins tended to adhere closely to the Communist Party line, but since that time, it appears that he has been strongly anti-Communist and has done all possible to steer the NAACP away from any Communist infiltration.

In April, 1945, Mr. Fred Lyons of the State Department submitted the names of five Negroes who were being considered for the position of American Minister to Liberia. One of these five individuals was Roy Wilkins. We, accordingly, prepared a 14-page blind summary memorandum of information appearing in Bureau files on April 20, 1945, and furnished it to the State Department. In connection with this memorandum, the above summary was utilized and brought up to date. (62-39749-456; 62-78270)

#### Connections and Affiliations

On December 11, 1934, Roy Wilkins, along with other individuals, was arrested for parading without a permit in front of the Memorial Continental Hall at 17th and D Streets, Northwest, Washington, D. C. (100-1411-1)

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In September, 1936, the name of Roy Wilkins appeared on the stationery of the International Judicial Association as a member of the National Committee. The International Judicial Association was reported to be a Communist influenced organization in the legal field. (61-7559-1159)

The "Daily Worker" of July 29, 1937, made reference to a meeting of the Scottsboro Defense Committee. Among the various groups participating were the NAACP, Communist Party and International Labor Defense. Roy Wilkins was listed as one of the outstanding speakers scheduled. (100-7563-36112)

Roy Wilkins was Chairman of a subcommittee of the Fourth National Congress Against War and Fascism held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in November, 1937. (61-6589-62)

In the testimony of Walter Steele before the Dies Committee on August 16, 1938, he discussed the last convention (1937) of the American League Against War and Fascism. In his testimony, he stated that among the "headliners" at this convention was Roy Wilkins, along with such people as Earl Browder, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and others.

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According to the "Daily Worker," in 1939 Wilkins was active in the affairs of the Workers Alliance which was a Communist influenced organization. (61-7551-161X18)

In June, 1939, a confidential source advised that Roy Wilkins, columnist for the "Amsterdam News," a Negro newspaper in New York City, was a Communist. He was alleged to have been extremely active in keeping the Book and Magazine Guild "in line" and at the same time active in the American League for Peace and Democracy. (61-7566-1866)

In 1939 also, Wilkins was active in the organization, Negro Peoples Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, which was a Communist controlled group. (65-7563-69176)

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The January 14, 1944, issue of the "Daily Worker" contained an article discussing a scheduled meeting sponsored by the National Workers Order. A number of persons, either known Communists or reliably reported Communists, were listed as scheduled speakers. Also listed as a speaker was Roy Wilkins, Editor of "Crisis." (61-7341-344169)

At the 39th Annual Conference of the NAACP held in Kansas City, Missouri, in June, 1948, Roy Wilkins, as the keynote speaker, stated, "Anyone who speaks up for his rights or who does not follow the beaten path is likely to be called a Communist." He urged the delegates not to be intimidated by the cry of Communism. He said that the Negroes do not want a totalitarian state either of the right or of the left and further stated that they wanted democracy and that they would speak and work for it with every weapon in their command. (61-3176-4651)

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In August, 1949, [redacted] advised that the Communist Party was greatly concerned over the election of Roy Wilkins to fill the vacancy caused by the year's

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leave of absence of Walter White of the NAACP. The informant alleged Wilkins had been openly opposed to the tactics of the Communist Party and had been one of the leaders in the NAACP responsible for the defeat of the Communists in their effort to take over the organization on a national scale. The informant stated the Communist Party was and had been attempting to infiltrate the local branches of the NAACP, and with the election of Roy Wilkins, they expected a great deal of opposition. (100-3-3068)

Further, the Anti-Communist newsletter put out by the American Justice Consultants, in its issue of September 2, 1949, stated the following: "That's the reason for the protest of Roy Wilkins, Acting Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, against the riot at the Robeson concert? Wilkins is hated by the Communists... They denounce him often in their meetings and their press. Yet as a high officer of the greatest mass organization of Negroes, he is protesting in behalf of civil liberties in general and in defense of the rights of Paul Robeson, a Negro in particular." (100-330512-261)

The "Daily Worker" for December 8, 1949, reflects that the American Civil Liberties Union in a 43-page report charged that Westchester county police permitted the assault on the Paul Robeson concert near Peekskill. The article stated that five additional organizations concurred in the report and signed it. Roy Wilkins, as Acting Secretary of the NAACP, was one of the signers. (61-190-A)

b7D [redacted] advised in January, 1950, that instructions were given out to all Communist Party members to make every effort to attend the National Civil Rights Mobilization sponsored by the NAACP on January 15-17, 1950. In connection with this, Benjamin J. Davis, member of the National Committee of the Communist Party, on January 8, 1950, criticized Roy Wilkins and top leadership of the NAACP for the efforts of the organization to rid itself of all forms of Communist assistance in the Mobilization.

According to the "Daily Worker" for May 16, 1950, Henry Winston, Organizational Secretary of the Communist Party, USA, was principal speaker at a mass rally sponsored by the Harlem Communist Party on May 14, 1950. In his speech, Winston attacked NAACP Administrator Roy Wilkins in supporting the cold war and confusing the Negro people in a way "that can only lead to slaughter." (100-135-34-583)

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According to a news article from the "Sunday Star" for January 8, 1950, about 2,000 representatives from more than 50 national anti-Communist groups were expected to come to Washington the following week for three days of campaigning for passage of President Truman's program of civil rights legislation. These representatives would be known as the National Emergency Civil Rights Mobilization, and Roy Wilkins was scheduled to be Acting Secretary. (66-6300-44-A)

On January 10, 1950, the Pittsburgh branch of the NAACP and the Allegheny County Committee on Civil Rights held a joint meeting in Pittsburgh. Roy Wilkins attended this meeting and stated that the NAACP definitely would desire the participation of the Communist Party at the demonstration referred to above to be held in Washington January 16-17, 1950. (100-87870-13)

The "New York World Telegram and Sun" in its issue of February 14, 1950, contained an article by Frederick Weltman which stated that the Communists had set their sights on the NAACP with intent to "capture or wreck this organization." Weltman stated that the NAACP had become a top priority target of the Communist Party strategy and the ultimate objective of the Communists was to oust Roy Wilkins, NAACP Acting Secretary and an outspoken anti-Red. (100-397652-1)

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C (100-3-28-1155)

The "Daily Worker" for November 14, 1950, stated "Negro mis-leaders, like Willard Townsend of the CIO, A. Philip Randolph of the Porters' Brotherhood, Roy Wilkins and Glester B. Current of the NAACP, by joining the anti-Communist pack and attempting to impose the Loyalty Program on the entire Negro people, bear direct responsibility for every case of Negro worker deprived of his livelihood on the pretense of 'disloyalty.'" (77-52109-40)

"The American Magazine" for December, 1951 carried an article entitled "Stalin's Greatest Defeat" which was written by Roy Wilkins. This article sets forth pertinent information con-

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According to the Communist Party's attempt over the years to recruit the Negro people into the Communist Party and stated that this attempted recruitment had been met by failure. In a memorandum to Mr. Baumgardner, Mr. E. O. Sly stated, "Inasmuch as this article represents a rather excellent treatise on the Communist Party approach to the Negro question, it is suggested that the attached photostatic copy of the article be placed in file for future reference purposes." (100-3-75-667)

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(C) (100-166849-62)

As of December, 1954, Walter White was Chairman of the "Leadership Conference on Civil Rights" and Roy Wilkins was Chairman of the Executive Committee. (100-416086)

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**MISCELLANEOUS:**

A review of Bureau files further reflects that since his initial association with the NAACP, Wilkins has traveled throughout the country speaking before various branches of the organization. A review of excerpts of talks he has given through the years as reflected in Bureau files would indicate that he has urged the Negro through the organization to fight for equal rights and against discrimination and segregation. There is no indication that he has ever advocated violence or radical measures but advocated fighting through teaching the Whites that the Negro is equal in all rights. He has criticized "reactionary forces in America" specifically mentioning Westbrook Pegler.

In 1943, Wilkins was sent on a tour of the communities and Army camps in the western and Pacific Coast states by the NAACP. He has been the principal speaker at numerous annual conventions of the NAACP throughout the country. The Amsterdam Star News issue of August 21, 1943, carried an article by Wilkins in which he severely criticized the Attorney General's suggestion to curb the migration of Negro workers to industrial areas. (100-135-35-167)

In November, 1943, Benjamin Davis, Jr., Negro Communist functionary was elected on the Communist Party ticket to the New York City Council. The Daily Worker for November 23, 1943, carried an article to the effect that Wilkins in his column "The Watch Tower" in the New York Amsterdam News made the following statements after condemning the New York World Telegram on publishing articles on how Communists used racial and religious issues to win places in the elections:

"....Moreover, the Communist appeals were not vicious or based on hatred, whereas the Governorship battle was the slickest waged here in many a decade....As our system of government is so weak that two Communists out of a council of 17 members constitute a danger, then we had better be looking into our foundations....As a matter of fact, the presence of two declared Communists in our council probably will benefit everyone. Communists stimulate activity. They stimulate progressive measures more often than they voice the aspirations of the plain peoples, even though these plain people would not go so far as to espouse Communism itself....As for Ben Davis himself...it is to be doubted whether there is a single Council member of any higher caliber. Davis is a graduate of Amherst and the Harvard Law School...Needless to say, with this background and with the graduate course he has received in the Communist Party, Davis is far from being a greenhorn....." (100-149163-A)

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In 1943, Wilkins is alleged to have been a member of the Executive Board of the Peoples Committee, a Negro organization in Harlem. This organization was reported to be Communist infiltrated.

On March 16, 1945, Wilkins testified before the Subcommittee of the Senate Labor and Education Committee which was holding hearings on the permanent Fair Employment Practice bill. Wilkins was very critical of Senator Taft in his testimony. (100-272-184-13)

According to a news item in the New York Times for March 20, 1948, Roy Wilkins, as spokesman for the NAACP, repudiated statements that the organization would assist Henry Wallace in his presidential campaign and the organization reaffirmed its nonpartisan policy. (61-3176-A)

The Boston Herald for June 24, 1950, carried a story headlined "Reds Told To Cease Attempts To Sabotage NAACP Program." The news item indicated that the delegates at the forty-first annual convention then convened in Boston had voted 309 to 57 in favor of a special board to be appointed for the purpose of uprooting Communist infiltration. The news item said that Roy Wilkins offered the following statement, "The decisive vote of almost 6 to 1 by which the delegates declared the opposition of this association to Communism is formal recognition of the oft-demonstrated fact that liberal organizations seeking reforms under the American system cannot work effectively with Communists." (61-3176-563)

The New Leader for February 4, 1950, in a column entitled "Heard On The Left" stated, "The Commies in the NAACP are gunning for Roy Wilkins, its determinedly anti-Stalinist secretary." (61-3176-A)

A news story appearing in the New York World Telegram-Sun for February 16, 1950, and headlined "NAACP Backs Wilkins Under Fire By Reds" stated that the first move in a Communist backdoor drive to oust Roy Wilkins, Acting Secretary of the NAACP, was decisively defeated by the NAACP Board of Directors at a meeting the previous day by a vote of 14 to 3. (61-3176-A)

The Bureau is currently conducting investigation in a case entitled "The Citizens Councils (of Mississippi), AKA Association of Citizens Councils of Mississippi" under an Internal Security-X caption. By memorandum to the Director dated March 3, 1955, Warren Olney III of the Department enclosed three Photostats of a news article which appeared in the Los Angeles Tribune on January 28, 1955, regarding the subject organization. Olney

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pointed out that according to the news article, certain Negro citizens of Mississippi transmitted affidavits to the NAACP regarding economic pressure brought against them by the Association of Citizens Councils. Olney pointed out that the article indicated that the affidavits referred to might be in the possession of Roy Wilkins of the NAACP and suggested that copies of these affidavits be obtained if possible in order to complete investigation. Olney's memorandum was acknowledged on March 13, 1955, and the New York Office requested to contact the NAACP for copies of the affidavits referred to. (105-34237-9)

**CONTACTS WITH THE BUREAU:**

Roy Wilkins has had very little contact with the Bureau. In the absence of Walter White he did write to the Director on September 10, 1947, in connection with "the so-called Robeson incident in Peoria, Illinois, last April." He requested investigation concerning this matter. Wilkins had received his information from a Mr. Hazelwood of Peoria, Illinois, a vice president of the Peoria Chapter of the NAACP. Hazelwood had written directly to the Bureau at an earlier date regarding this matter. Wilkins' letter was acknowledged on September 15, 1947, and he was advised that Hazelwood's letter had already been referred to the Attorney General for his consideration and any further action he deemed appropriate. We took no further action in this matter. (100-12304-87)

By letter dated August 14, 1953, Wilkins wrote to the Director and merely acknowledged receipt of a letter the Director had written on August 5, 1953, to Walter White. Wilkins advised that Mr. White would communicate with the Director upon his return to his office. (61-3176-252)

By letter dated November 15, 1954, the chief Post Office Inspector furnished to the Bureau for further action a letter dated November 5, 1954, received by him from Roy Wilkins. Attached to Wilkins' letter was a mimeograph of a copy of an extortion type letter wherein the writer signed himself "Yours for the NAACP, Rufus Tecumseh Washington III." This letter is dated September 8, 1954, and contains scurrilous language and threats against Governor White of Mississippi. Wilkins in his letter indicated that the NAACP had no connection with the mailing of the letter to Governor White and that the letter had been mimeographed and distributed in Mississippi in an effort to slander and discredit the NAACP. He requested investigation of the distribution of this letter through the mails. Actually, we had received an earlier copy of this letter through other channels, and investigation by the

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Bureau had failed to identify the sender of this letter to Governor White.

By letter dated November 19, 1954, Wilkins was advised that his letter had been referred to the Bureau from the Post Office Department. He was advised that the Bureau was already conducting investigation regarding this letter as a possible violation of the Federal Extortion Statute.

By letter dated December 21, 1954, Wilkins was advised that the Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division, Department of Justice, had advised that there did not appear to be a violation within the Bureau's jurisdiction and consequently no investigation was being conducted by the Bureau. (9-26769)

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August 1956

To : Mr. Nichols

From : M. A. Jones

Subject: ROY WILKINS  
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT  
OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP)

The New York Office by letter dated 8-2-56 forwarded a letter received by Walter Winchell. The letter written to Winchell is anonymous and is an attack on Negroes, particularly the NAACP. The anonymous letter writer quotes Wilkins as saying before the Bahai Assembly, 119 West 57th Street, in 1941, that "We Negroes are praying for a Japanese victory." According to the anonymous letter, during the question period a man sitting in the audience inquired "Why do you want a Japanese victory." Wilkins supposedly replied "Because the Japs will give us a better deal. You white people gave us a rotten deal."

Walter Winchell has written in the margin, "Is this true?"

A review of the numerous references to Wilkins in Bufiles failed to reveal such an incident.

The files do reflect that Wilkins supposedly described his conversation with another Negro in California in 1944 quoting the other Negro as saying, "I do not know why we are fighting the Japanese. They have not done anything to me. When I go to a hotel operated by white people they either tell me that they are full or that they do not accept colored people, and here in California there was only one hotel at which I could stay and that hotel was run by the Japanese, so why should we fight the Japs." Wilkins further described the Japanese as being the best truck farmers in America and "They are the backbone of this country. This information is the result of Agent coverage of a meeting at which Wilkins spoke. (100-164629-11)

The only other similar reference is the following supposedly said by Wilkins at an open forum on 11-1-42 at Portland, Oregon. "We are also concerned with the world front...Justice for all and not just for some. We cannot just sit here in Portland and say we will do as we please. After this war, we will have no separation from other places. The world is too small.....Why do you suppose that Japan took Java, a country of forty million people in one week....They were already sick of the people who were over them. It made no difference to them who was the slave driver."

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Jones to Nichols

ROY WILKINS

A yellow boss is just as good as a white boss. These countries would still be free if these people had felt they had something to die for. They will never take the United States if they will just wipe out some of these things. The Negro belongs here; it is as much their country as it is ours. We will fight for it just as long as the white man, just as we have a reason to fight. Give him, then hope for freedom, dignity, and security." This was also the result of Agent coverage.

RECOMMENDATION: None. For information