Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts

Subject: Richard Wright

File Number: NY 100-41674

Federal Bureau of Investigation

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New York Field Office file

OPCA-20 (12-3-96)

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Section 552		Section 552a
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☐ (b)(4)	☐ (b)(8)	☐ (k)(5)
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__1__ Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of **HQ 100-157464-1**

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-1

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X **No Duplication Fee** X
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1 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-NR dated 12/8/42

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-NR dated 12/9/42

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FBI/DOJ

CC-181

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER
DIRECTOR

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

100-157464

January 20, 1943

Special Agent in Charge
New York, New York

Send file JR

MLH

RE: RICHARD WRIGHT
INTERNAL SECURITY - SEDITION

1/29/43

Dear Sir:

The Bureau desires that it be advised as to the exact status of this case at the present time.

Very truly yours,

J. Edgar Hoover

John Edgar Hoover
Director

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED 289-582
DATE 12-19-58 BY QRIABS

Admin Bur. Case assigned report will be submitted as soon as possible
JR

100-41674-3
F.B.I.
JAN 22 1943
N. Y. C.
FILE

b7c [redacted]

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5 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-2

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-4

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X Delete Pages(s) X
X No Duplication Fee X
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1 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-3

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-5

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
X Delete Pages(s) X
X No Duplication Fee X
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__1__ Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-4

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-6

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-7

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7 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-5

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-8

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2 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-6

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-9

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__1__ Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of **HQ 100-157464-7**

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-10

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X **No Duplication Fee** X
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FBI/DOJ

WRIGHT, Richard
New York City

(CONFIDENTIAL)
(Evaluation TRUE)

3ND

Subject's name appears on a list of sponsors of the Citizens' Non-Partisan Committee to elect Benjamin J. DAVIS, Jr., Communist Party candidate for the New York City Council from Manhattan.

ONI-FBI-MID 2SC
11-15-43

Copy for B7-A
B7-CP

[redacted]

100-41674 b7c

[redacted]

(num ref)

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HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 5-15-01 BY 39043 ELW/pwlbd

#942928

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100-41674-41

F. B. I.
NOV 30 1943
N. Y. C.
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ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED 289852
DATE 12/22/88 BY DPIAGSC

Richard Wright

Richard Wright

100-47674-12
F. B. I.
MAY 9 1944
N. Y. C.
ROUTED TO FILE

Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice

234 U. S. Court House
Foley Square
New York, 7, New York

100-41674
CWJ:JR

Hon. Frank J. Quayle, Jr.
Postmaster
Federal Building
Washington & Johnson Streets
Brooklyn, N. Y.

June 3, 1944

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 12/22/88 BY SP1 A GJC

Dear Sir:

In connection with an investigation being conducted by this Bureau, it is requested that a cover be placed on the mail of the following for a period of thirty days:

RICHARD WRIGHT
89 Lefferts Place, Apt. C-23
Brooklyn 16, N. Y.

Please refer to our file No. 100-41674, when forwarding to this office:

[x] return cards

[ ] tracings

Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Very truly yours,

E. E. CONROY
Special Agent in Charge

100-41674-13

OPCA-20 (12-3-96)

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-14

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-15

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9 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-9

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-16

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FBI/DOJ

Negro Author Criticizes Reds As Intolerant

Wright, Discussing His Own Break With Communists, Says Party Fears New Ideas

The Communist position on the American Negro has undergone a "distinct and lamentable regression" in recent years, Richard Wright, Negro author and former party member, said here yesterday in describing Communists as "narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant and frightened of new ideas which don't fit into their own."

Mr. Wright's remarks were prompted by questions growing out of an article which he has written for "The Atlantic Monthly" for August under the title of "I Tried to Be a Communist."

In this article, the author of "Native Son" and other books discusses his earliest experiences as a Communist party member in Chicago, touching on the problems he faced in trying to present his own ideas to the party.

The August "Atlantic Monthly" describes the article as the first of two installments and Mr. Wright said yesterday that he would not discuss the specific details of his Chicago break with the Communists because these will be covered in the second magazine article.

Mr. Wright said that his Communist party membership covered the period, roughly, from the latter part of 1932 or early 1933 to 1940. His early association with the Communists in Chicago, he said, was broken in 1937, when he was "ejected" from the party.

On the outs with the party from about May until August, 1937, Mr. Wright said that he was reinstated in New York in 1937 and "maintained a relationship" with the party until 1940 when, he said, he left the party.

Discussing what he described as the "lamentable regression" in the Communist party position on the American Negro, Mr. Wright said that he does not know the reason for this.

"Publicly," he said, "Communists will deny that there is any substantial change in their militancy but privately they offer any handy excuse. The militancy on the Negro question has passed into the hands of right-wing Negroes. That was not true eight years ago. Most of the battles then were led by Communists."

In answer to the question as to what caused the Chicago rift between him and the Communists, Mr. Wright said:

"It was an accumulation of many things—not so much a leaving as an ejection over a difference of opinion. I had my way of expressing my conception of Negro experience in my writing. I thought it would be of value to them. They had their ideas of how I should react as a Communist. There was an irreconcilable gap between our attitudes."

Mr. Wright said that "I do not regard the Communists today as effective instruments for social change" and observed that "the Communists have a terrible lot to learn about people."

"Communists," he added, "peculiarly are too much the victims of the very society they are trying to change. This too often finds expression in intolerance and narrowness. I mean, general intolerance, in an imperious way of working.

"What it amounts to is that they are narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant and frightened of new ideas which don't fit into their own, whether these ideas are right or wrong."

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FBI/DOJ

Reds All Wrong, Wright Quits 'Em

It took a long time for Richard Wright, the Negro writer, to learn his lesson.

Where, until recently, he was one of the high priests of the Communist Party staunchly defending Red ideology as the only possible political philosophy for his race, today he was hurling epithets at his former Communist comrades.

"Bigoted! Intolerant! Narrow-minded!," were a few of the choicest labels applied to all Communists by the author of "Native Son" and other books.

REDS LIVE A LIE.

Wright's abrupt about-face from the left to the right was revealed in an article written for the August "Atlantic Monthly" under the title of "I Tried to Be a Communist."

Elaborating on the article Wright discussed why he "took a walk" on the Communist Party back in 1940 after discovering that the Reds live a lie to their ideals

At the same time Wright advised all members of his race to take a walk with him. He described the Communist Party position on the American Negro as a "lamentable regression" and declared that the "militancy on the Negro question has passed into the hands of right-wing Negroes."

"HAVE LOT TO LEARN.

"I do not regard the Communists today as effective instruments for social change," Wright said. "The Communists have a terrible lot to learn about people.

"Communists peculiarly are too much the victims of the very society they are trying to change. This too often finds expression in intolerance and narrowness. And I mean general intolerance in an imperious way of working.

"What it amounts to is that they are narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant and frightened of new ideas which don't fit into their own, whether these ideas are right or wrong."

"They tried to tell me how I should react as a Communist," he said. "But our attitudes were irreconcilable."

Wright got an idea of what Communists think of "racial equality" in 1935 when he attended a Communist party writers' congress in Carnegie Hall. Wright had come on from Chicago by hitchhiking with several members of his race.

"I asked about housing accommodations and all white members of the Communist Party looked embarassed," he said. "I waited while one white Communist called another white Communist to one said and discussed what should be done to get me, a black Chicago Communist, housed."

One of the white Communists went out and returned "frantic-eyed and sweating" to announce he had had no luck.

"I'm going to call someone I know,' he said, desperately. "Say, how about a nickel for the phone?"

Wright, disgusted, resolved to sleep standing up on the sidewalk until, he said, a white woman Communist took pity on him and took him to ther home where she introduced him to her husband.

100-41674

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Mr. Wland
Mr. Crowl
Mr. Doyle
Mr. B. C. Brown
Mr. Charters
Mr. Gurnville
Mr. Kirkland
Mr. Mally
Mr. Stanley
Miss Tyler
Property Clerk
Training Div.

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PITTSBURGH COURIER

AUGUST 5, 1944 EDITION

It took Richard Wright of "Native Son" fame, from 1933 to 1944 to discover that Communists are "narrow-minded, bigoted, intolerant and frightened at new ideas which don't fit into their own." He has also discovered at this late date a "lamentable regression" in the Reds position on the American Negro. The story is told in the August Atlantic Monthly. Their militancy on the Negro has vanished, he charges.

* * *

ALL THIS WAS obvious to honest, alert minds from the beginning. As agents of a foreign government, secretly committed to the overthrow of American institutions, the Reds are only loyal to Stalin and his Asiatic Tammany. They dumped the Scottsboro racket when it was no longer profitable, abandoned the "Black and White" film to speed U. S. recognition and have now soft-pedaled agitation for equal rights because it might interfere with the war effort. They have double-crossed everybody.

* * *

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FBI/DOJ

Broadway

AUGUST 28, 1944

By DANTON WALKER

The Home Front

General Douglas MacArthur is in line for a Cabinet post (probably Secretary of War) if F. D. R. gets his Fourth Term. . . . Vice President Wallace, due to start actively campaigning for Roosevelt next month, will be rewarded with the No. 1 food job of the world, as head of a commission to create a permanent United Nations relief setup. . . . Anna Roosevelt Boettiger may become official secretary for her father; even now, those who formerly approached Harry Hopkins for Presidential favors must now see Mrs. Boettiger. . . . James Byrnes, the "Assistant President," will quit his war mobilization post after the election and accept a $100,000 job with Ben Cohen's law firm. . . . France will get an Ambassador from the U. S, some time next month, and Norman Armour is highest on the list of candidates at present. . . . Diplomatic Rumor of the Week is that Hitler has been out of Germany since Aug. 1, and a double will soon oblige by being assassinated. . . . Lloyd's of London now offers 6 to 5 that Germany surrenders unconditionally before Oct. 31.

Jon Hall

Anna Boettiger

* * *

Donald Nelson's mission to China is to iron out differences between Allied chieftains in that sector. Upon his return, he will be groomed to replace a prominent New Dealer, now out of favor. . . . Mme. Kung, wife of the Minister of Finance, is now the most influential lady in China. . . . Col. Carlos P. Romulo, Pulitzer Prize winner, is due to succeed Joaquin Miguel Elizalde as Resident Commissioner of the Philippines. . . . Judge Juvenal, Marchisio, who has been loaned by the local Domestic Relations Court to American Relief for Italy, departs for Rome shortly. . . . The present United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration is on the verge of liquidation. . . . On the heels of the liberation of France, a new French Purchasing Commission will buy $200,000,000 worth of supplies in this country. . . Another by-product of France's release will be an outbreak of Broadway musical comedies with a Paris background. . . . Washington has proof of secret Nazi war prisoner camps where thousands are held, without possibility of outside relief.

* * *

Sidney Hillman is due to be given the air by F. D. R. "right after the election," according to a prominent Chicago Democrat whose entire political future depends on a Fourth Term. . . Richard Wright, author of "Native Son," has started an uproar with his two-part serial in the Atlantic Monthly called "I Tried to Be a Communist." . . . Plan for a Federation of Catholic States of Europe, with the okay of Stalin and Churchill, has been submitted to the Pope. . . . William Bullitt is said to be the unofficial liaison officer for communications between Vatican City and Moscow. . . . Dr. Floyd Black, president of the American College of Istanbul, played an important role in negotiations for Bulgaria's withdrawal from the war. . . . Brig. Gen. William O'Dwyer, now in Italy, notifies New York friends that he'll retire from politics when his terms as Brooklyn District Attorney is over. . . . Lieut. Dave Hopkins, son of Harry, is back here for a new assignment.

N.Y. Daily News. 8/28/44

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A Disservice to the Negro People

by James W. Ford

Richard Wright, author of the popular novel, Native Son, has written two articles for the Atlantic Monthly entitled "I Tried to Be a Communist." I have just finished reading these articles. They are a conglomeration of anti-Communism and anti-Semitism, hidden behind the cry that the Communists stood in the way of his creative writing. They are also against the interest of the Negro people and they reveal a lack of understanding of social problems. Referring to a time when he was called upon to accept an assignment to head a committee against the high cost of living, Wright says:

"I was in the midst of writing a novel and he (the Communist) was calling me from it to tabulate the price of groceries. . . . I gritted my teeth as the daily value of pork chops was tabulated, longing to be at home with my writing."

This clearly reveals Wright's whole outlook and attitude.

Wright's shameful manner of writing about Negroes is disgusting and damaging to their dignity. He refers to his failure to organize a theatre among Negro actors in Chicago. These actors, sensing how the dignity of Negroes should be upheld, protested against one play Wright submitted. Referring to this incident, Wright says: ". . . . a delegation of Negro men came to my office and took out their pocketknives and flashed them in my face." Wright, expressing contempt for these Negro actors, hides behind what he terms Communist inspired actions against him.

CARICATURE

Wright caricatures Negroes, whether in the Communist movement or outside, as if they were children.

But what Wright has done is a bad turn to the Negro people. Objectively it is an act to isolate and divert them from their best allies in the labor and progressive movement. If it had not been for the Communist Party and the progressive labor movement and the militancy and the fortitude of the Negro people, where would we be today? . . . . I recall a similar circumstance with Wright, like the one he complains about in Chicago, but was in Harlem in the days of the unemployed struggle. I was secretary of the Harlem Division of the Communist Party. Wright was a reporter for the Daily Worker assigned to Harlem to write about the problems of the people. We were in the midst of serious struggles of the unemployed.

CENTER OF STRUGGLE

The Communists of Harlem were in the center of these struggles trying to organize them. We wanted Wright to aid these struggles with his writings. We sought to put him to writing about pork chops, high rents, crowded houses, child welfare and relief. Wright was dissatisfied with this assignment. He hid it, however. But he complained to a number of people, never to our committee directly, that he did not want to write for the Daily Worker.

This revealed again a fundamental weakness in Wright. Not having previously had direct contact with mass struggles, this work could have equipped him still more for creative writing, which the Communists did not want to stifle but to aid!

He did not understand that writing for the Daily Worker would have afforded him a broad platform to reach masses of people. It showed failure on his part to grasp the role of an artist to serve effectively the interests of the people by writing about their problems, inspiring them and helping them to better prepare and organize their struggles.

N. Y. EXPERIENCE

The explanation of this weakness is that Wright never identified himself with his people. He preferred to be aloof from them, isolated from them and left alone "at home with his writing."

It seems strange that Wright in his Atlantic Monthly articles did not mention his experiences in New York where he was honored and respected by the Communist Party and he himself seemed proud of the Communist Party's appreciation of him.

I understand the two articles which appeared in the Atlantic Monthly were taken from a forthcoming autobiopraphy. I have not read this book and do not know whether or not he deals with his New York experiences there. There were certainly a number of significant incidents here that could throw more light on Wright's charges. That is why the absence of them in these two articles seems so strange to me.

From my knowledge I know that the cry that the Communists tried to hold him down is not what prompted Wright to do what he did.

Reading Wright's articles in the Atlantic Monthly, no fair-minded person could lay them aside feeling that Wright has made a case of himself, unless it is a rationalization of his own weaknesses. A few things are clear. What Wright did is like making a bargain to get into the good graces of those who have an anti-Communist axe to grind.

Does Wright think that the highest achievements of the artist is the Westbrook Pegler type of red-baiting, labor-baiting, Negro-baiting an anti-Semitic slanders?

Now we are faced with a crucial election when the Negro people are trying to choose between progress and reaction. There are people who are trying to confuse and divide the people. Wright's act fits right into this pattern. But the Negro people are discerning and they will repudiate these methods as they have done in the past.

CLIPPING FROM THE DAILY WORKER

DATED SEP 5 1944

FORWARDED BY N. Y. DIVISION

100-41674-30
F.B.I.
SEP 26 1944
N.Y.C.
FILE
[redacted]
67C

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 12/22/88 BY DPIAGSC
289882

IMMEDIATE ACTION

JP

REQUEST INFORMATION FROM THE F.B.I., NEW YORK, ON THE FOLLOWING:

FILE NO: 296513

SECTION: DISAFFECTION SQUAD:

DATE: 3 Oct 1944

FBI
ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 5-25-01 BY 39063 EEW/gw/LW
#942928

NAME AND ALIASES WRIGHT, RICHARD N.

HOME ADDRESSES (for the past three yrs.) (?) Lefferts Place Bklyn NY; Chicago, Ill.

BUSINESS ADDRESS (for the past three yrs.) Author of "Native Son" Contributor "New Masses"; Daily Worker; Sponsor Writers School 381 4th Ave NYC

EMPLOYED BY

AGE BORN PLACE

DESCRIPTION: COLOR C HEIGHT WEIGHT EYES HAIR

REMARKS: (Include any other data that will assist in identifying person.)

HEADQUARTERS SECOND SERVICE COMMAND
OFFICE OF DIRECTOR, SEC. & INTEL. DIV.
GOVERNORS ISLAND, NEW YORK

JWB

FOR USE OF F.B.I.

REFERENCES: 100-41674 * 100-41674 [redacted] 67C

Information reflected in files furnished to: A. E. Walen G-2

DATE 5 Oct 44

BY [redacted] 67C
Special Agent

FORM #13

IMMEDIATE ACTION

FBI
OCT 5 1944
N.Y.C.
POINTED TO FILE

100-41,674-31 Ame

RSS:KW
100-52054

New York, New York
November 3, 1944

MEMORANDUM

Re: VITO MARCANTONIO
INTERNAL SECURITY (C)

In a tribute to ANNA BAKER, former secretary of the International Labor Defense, appearing in the form of a pamphlet entitled "Equal Justice and Democracy in the Service of Victory" published in September 1944 by the I. L. D., the following individuals were listed as officers and members of the national committee of the I. L. D. These individuals listed below are all located in New York City.

President VITO MARCANTONIO

Vice President ROBERT WILKERSON

[redacted]

Secretary LOUIS COLMAN

[redacted]

Treasurer ROBERT W. DUNN

[redacted]

National committee members:

Dr. JOSEPHINE TRUSLOW ADAMS

[redacted]

WILLIAM ALEXANDER

[redacted]

ROSE BAKER

[redacted]

Dr. PEDRO ALBIZU CAMPOS

[redacted]

CHARLES COLLINS

[redacted]

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED 289882
DATE 12/22/88 BY SP1 AGJC

b7C

F. B. I.
NOV 25 1944
N. Y. C.

b7C [redacted]

100-41674-32

KEMO
100-82054

New York, New York
November 5, 1944

EUGENE P. CONNOLLY
[redacted]

JUAN ANTONIO CORNEJER
[redacted]

THELMA M. DALE
[redacted]

Dr. ELLA V. DOBS
[redacted]

MORRIS FRAZER
[redacted]

FREDERICK FIELD
[redacted]

DOROTHY K. FUHR
[redacted]

NEW GOLD
[redacted]

b7c

JOHN GOODMAN
[redacted]

ABNER GREEN
[redacted]

ANGELO HERNDON
[redacted]

GERHAR KAYE
[redacted]

GEORGE KLEINMAN
[redacted]

CLIFFORD T. McAVOY
[redacted]

NYNO
100-52084

New York, New York
November 2, 1944

GEORGE E. MURRAY
[redacted]

FREDERICK W. MYERS
[redacted]

SAMUEL A. NEUBERGER
[redacted]

PROFESSOR WALTER RAUTENSTRAUCH
[redacted]

PAUL ROBESON
100-25857

AARON SCHNEIDER
[redacted]

JOSEPH P. SELLY
[redacted]

SASHA SMALL
[redacted]

b7c

FERDINAND G. SMITH
[redacted]

MARK STEVENS
[redacted]

RICHARD WRIGHT
100-41674

DR. MAX YERGAN
~~100-260112~~

b7c [redacted] Special Agent

cc - 100-41674

OPCA-20 (12-3-96)

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

☐ Deletions were made pursuant to the exemptions indicated below with no segregable material available for release to you.

Section 552		Section 552a
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1 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-15

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

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NY 100-41674-33

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FBI/DOJ

NOV 25 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED EXCEPT WHERE SHOWN OTHERWISE

Re: RICHARD WRIGHT
SECURITY MATTER - C
100-41674

The captioned individual, who resides at 11 Revere Pl, Bklyn, N.Y. Brooklyn, is a member of the

of the , according to the records of the Kings County Committee of the Communist Party, 26 Court Street, Brooklyn, New York. (X)(4)

This information was supplied to Special Agents [redacted] and Stephen [redacted], by a reliable and confidential source on May 5, 1944. b7c

In reporting data concerning subject, a temporary confidential informant symbol should be used. The photographic data supporting the allegations is being placed in New York File No. 100-26603-1A206, Page No. 529 (X)(4)

ADDITIONAL DATA:

Note: Richard Nathaniel Wright resided at 11 Revere Pl. Bklyn, N.Y. from July '41 [illegible] Has not resided at that address since 1943.

F. B. I.
NOV 25 1944
N. Y. C.
ROUTED TO | FILE

b7c [redacted]

Classified by [illegible]
Declassify on: OADR 12/22/88

If no case file, open 100 case.

[redacted]
Special Agents

b7c

CONFIDENTIAL

DECLASSIFIED BY 39013 DLW/pw/sb
ON 5-25-01 #942938

100-107637

OPCA-20 (12-3-96)

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☐ (b)(6)		☐ (k)(7)

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☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-35

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-36

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1 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-25

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☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-37

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FBI/DOJ

Federal Bureau of Investigation

United States Department of Justice
New York 7, New York

June 18, 1946

MEMO

RE: RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT;
SECURITY MATTER - C

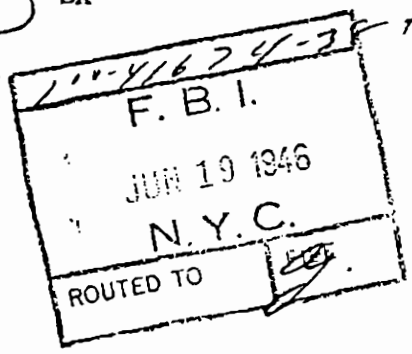
The records of Selective Service Board #178, 44 Court Street, Brooklyn, reflected that as of March 21, 1946, the subject's address was apartment 3F, 82 Washington Place, New York City.

In view of this fact it is suggested that a Security Index Card be appropriately changed and the Bureau advised.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 12/22/88 BY DIAGSC
289882

[redacted] b7c
SA

JTM:VHG
100-41674



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3 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-26

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-39

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FBI/DOJ

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-40

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X No Duplication Fee X
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1 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-7

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-NR dated 8/26/43

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
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1 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-28

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-41

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FBI/DOJ

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

September 23, 1947

MEMO

RE: RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT
SECURITY MATTER - C

Attached hereto is a copy of the report of Confidential Informer [redacted] dated July 2, 1947 concerning the above-captioned subject.

The report reflects that according to [redacted] the Chicago Defender, the subject no longer is of a Marxist frame of mind, having told [redacted] stories concerning the Party that were shocking [redacted]

b2
b7C
b7D

A. C. Burlinson

cc-100-14581

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DATE 12/22/88 BY SP1 ACB SC

ACB:JMK
100-41674

100-41674 1/2

F. B. I.
SEP 23 1947
N. Y. C.

ROUTED TO FILE

July 2, 1947

[redacted]

[redacted] RICHARD WRIGHT was not of a Marxist frame of mind anymore. [redacted] and was indeed very shocked to learn that such things as Wright related goes on in the Party.

b7C
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[redacted]

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DATE 12/22/88 BY SDLAGBS

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...orses Dr. Levi...

Fights Sutherland and C...

By ROBERT G. SPIVACK

Americans for Democratic Action today threw its weight aga... Brooklyn political machine of Kenneth Sutherland, boss of Coney ... Dr. Isaac Levine for leader of the 19th A.D. in the August primarie...

The action, the first of a series of local political indorsements, came as Sutherland, along with ... specialist, is prominent in Brooklyn medical circles.

Sutherland is supporting Prof. Louis Warsoff of Brooklyn Col... the backi... Board.

Raymon... the Borou... the decisi...

THURSDAY, JULY 13, 1950

Compounded

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Savings

MAIN OFFICE ..... Fifth
BAY RIDGE .....
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BEAT THE HEAT!!
PHILCO
Air Conditioners are
EXTREMELY SCARCE!
Save

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ASAC 2
SEC. 1
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From
NY Red Hook News
DATED JUL 13 1950
...ARDED BY N. Y. DIVISION

From "The God That Failed":

WHY I QUIT COMMUNISM

By Richard Wright

The Communist Party fraction in the John Reed Club in Chicago instructed me to ask my party cell—"unit," as it was called— to assign me to full duty in the work of the club. I was instructed to give my unit a report of my activities: writing, organizing, speaking. I agreed and wrote the report.

I went to my first unit meeting which was held in the Black Belt of the South Side and introduced myself to the Negro organizer.

"Welcome, comrade," he said, grinning. "We're glad to have a writer with us."

The time came for me to make my report, and I took out my notes and told them how I had come to join the Party, what few stray items I had published, what my duties were in the John Reed Club.

I finished, and waited for comment. There was silence. I looked about. Most of the comrades sat with bowed heads. Then I was surprised to catch a twitching smile on the lips of a Negro woman. Minutes passed. The Negro woman lifted her head and looked at the organizer. The organizer smothered a smile. Then the woman broke into unrestrained laughter, bending forward and burying her face in her hands. I stared. Had I said something funny?

During the following days, I learned through discreet questioning that I seemed a fantastic element to the black Communists. I was shocked to hear that I, who had been only to grammar school, had been classified as an INTELLECTUAL.

I learned, to my dismay, that the black Communists in my unit had commented upon my shined shoes, my clean skirt, and the tie that I had worn. Above all, my manner of speech had seemed an alien thing to them.

"He talks like a book," one of the Negro comrades had said. And that was enough to condemn me forever as bourgeois.

PARTY DUTIES BROKE into my efforts at expression. The club decided upon a conference of all the Left-Wing writers of the Middle West. I supported the idea and argued that the conference should deal with craft problems. My arguments were rejected. The conference, the club decided, would deal with political questions. I asked for a definition of what was expected from the writers — books or political activity. Both, was the answer. Write a few hours a day and march on the picket line the other hours.

The conference convened with a leading Communist attending as adviser. The question debated was: What does the Communist Party expect from the club? The answer of the Communist leader ran from organizing to writing novels. I argued that either a man organized or he wrote novels. The Party leader said that both must be done. The attitude of the Party leader prevailed and Left Front, for which I had worked so long, was voted out of existence.

RICHARD WRIGHT
The Names They Called Him

The ideas I had expounded at the conference were linked with the suspicions I had roused among the Negro Communists on the South Side, and the Communist Party was now certain that it had a dangerous enemy in its midst. It was whispered that I was trying to lead a secret group in opposition to the Party. I had learned that denial of accusations was useless. It was now painful to meet a Communist, for I did not know what his attitude would be.

I AVOIDED UNIT MEETINGS for fear of being subjected to discipline. Occasionally, a Negro Communist—defying the code that enjoined him to shun suspect elements—came to my home and informed me of the current charges that Communists were bringing against one another. To my astonishment I heard that Buddy Nealson had branded me a "smuggler of reaction."

Buddy Nealson was the Negro who had formulated the Communist position for the American Negro; he had made speeches in the Kremlin; he had spoken before Stalin himself.

"Why does Nealson call me that?" I asked.

"He says that you are a petty bourgeois degenerate," I was told.

"What does that mean?"

"He says that you are corrupting the Party with your ideas."

I sought an appointment with Buddy Nealson. He was a short, black man with an ever ready smile, thick lips, a furtive manner, and a greasy, sweaty look. He suffered from asthma and would snort at unexpected intervals.

"They tell me you write."

"I try to," I said.

"You can write," he snorted. "I read that article you wrote for the New Masses about Joe Louis. Good stuff. First political treatment of sports we've yet had. Ha-ha."

I waited.

"Dick," he began, "we're short of forces. We're facing a grave crisis."

"The Party's always facing a crisis," I said.

His smile left and he stared at me.

"You're not cynical, are you, Dick?" he asked.

"No," I said. "But it's the truth. Each week, each month, there's a crisis."

"You're a funny guy," he said, laughing snorting again. "But we've a job to do. We're alerting our work. Fascism's the danger, the danger to all people."

"I understand," I said.

"We've got to defeat the Fascists," he said, snorting from asthma. "We've discussed you and know your abilities. We want you to work with us. We've got to crash out of our narrow way of working and get our message to the church people, students, club people, professionals, middle class."

"I don't know if I fit into things," I said openly.

"We want to trust you with an important assignment," he said.

"What do you want me to do?"

"We want you to organize a committee against the high cost of living."

I was in the midst of writing a novel and he was calling me from it to tabulate the price of groceries.

"Comrade Nealson," I said, "a writer who hasn't written anything worthwhile is a most doubtful person. Now, I'm in that category. Yet I think I can write. I don't want to ask for special favors, but I'm in the midst of a book which I hope to complete in six months or so. Let me convince myself that I'm wrong about my hankering to write and then I'll be with you all the way."

"Dick," he said, turning in his chair and waving his hand as though to brush away an insect that was annoying him, "you've got to get to the masses of people.

"Dick," he spoke seriously now, "the Party has decided that you are to accept this task."

I went out, angry with myself, angry with him, angry with the Party. Well, I had not broken the decision, but neither had I accepted it wholly.

I ATTENDED THE NEXT UNIT MEETING and asked for a place on the agenda, which was readily granted. When my time came to speak, I said:

"Comrades, for the past two years I've worked daily with most of you. Despite this, I have for some time found myself in a difficult position in the Party. What caused this difficulty is a long story which I do not care to recite now; it would serve no purpose. But I tell you honestly that I think I've found a solution of my difficulty. I am proposing here tonight that my membership be dropped from the Party rolls.

"No ideological differences impel me to say this. I simply do not wish to be bound any longer by the Party's decisions. I should like to retain my membership in those organizations in which the Party has influence, and I shall comply with the Party's program in those organizations. I hope that my words will be accepted in the spirit in which they are said. Perhaps sometime in the future I can meet and talk with the leaders of the Party as to what tasks I can best perform."

I sat down amid a profound silence.

"Is there any discussion on Comrade Wright's statement?" the secretary asked finally.

"I move that discussion on Wright's statement be deferred," Nealson said.

The next night two Negro Communists called at my home. They pretended to be ignorant of what had happened at the unit meeting. Patiently, I explained what had occurred.

"Your story does not agree with what Nealson says," they said.

"And what does Nealson say?" I asked.

"He says that you are in league with a Trotskyite group, and that you made an appeal for other Party members to follow you in leaving the Party."

Perhaps, since I was leaving the Party, I thought, out of my tortured feelings I could fling a spark into this darkness. I would try, not because I wanted to, but because I felt that I had to if I were to live at all.

I would hurl words into this darkness and wait for an echo, and, if an echo sounded, no matter how faintly, I would send other words to tell, to march, to fight, to create a sense of the hunger for life that gnaws in us all, to keep alive in our hearts a sense of the inexpressibly human.

From the book THE GOD THAT FAILED. Copyright 1949 by Richard Wright. Published by Harper & Bros.

TOMORROW: Why Stephen Spender quit Communism.

The Author

Richard Wright was born in 1908 on a plantation 25 miles from Natchez, Miss., of poor Negro parents. Deserted by his father, his mother, a washer-woman brought him up. At 16 he left home and worked for two years in Memphis, where he read H. L. Mencken's "A Book of Prefaces" and decided to become a writer. With $150 in his pocket he went to Chicago and earned his living by odd jobs until the depression put him out of work.

His books are: "Uncle Tom's Children" (short stories), "How Bigger Was Born," "Native Son" and "Black Boy."

New York, New Yo1
November 3, 1950

MEMO:

RE: RICHARD NATHANIEL WRIGHT
SM - C

On 11/1/50 the writer telephonically contacted [redacted] for the purpose of ascertaining WRIGHT'S whereabouts so that he could be interviewed in the case entitled [redacted] Applicant - VOA (N.Y. file [redacted]). [redacted] advised that WRIGHT resides permanently at 14 Rue Monsieur Le Prince, Paris, France, and is not expected to return to the U.S. in the near future.

[redacted], SA

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51 Card previously cancelled. (Nov. 40)

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FBI - NEW YORK
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☐ Information pertained only to a third party with no reference to the subject of your request or the subject of your request is listed in the title only.

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1 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of **HQ 100-157464-32**

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☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-53

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OPCA-20 (12-3-96)

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☐ Deletions were made pursuant to the exemptions indicated below with no segregable material available for release to you.

Section 552		Section 552a
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☐ (b)(3)	☐ (b)(7)(C)	☐ (k)(1)
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2 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-NR dated 3/3/52

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-54

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FBI/DOJ

SAC 67C 12-9-53

SA [redacted] (100-7518)

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF AMERICAN SOVIET
FRIENDSHIP
INTERNAL SECURITY - C

On December 9, 1953, pursuant to a Department request as forwarded to the NYO by Bulet dated, December 3, 1953, an attempt was made to contact LANGSTON HUGHES, Negro poet, and interview him concerning his knowledge of subject organization and his willingness to testify before the SACB in this matter now pending before the Board under the Internal Security Act of 1950. The attempted contact was made at his home at 20 East 127th St., NYC, however, the writer and SA [redacted] were advised by a person who identified himself as WILLIAM HARPER that HUGHES was not at home but was in downtown New York contacting his publishers in connection with one of his books. Mr. HARPER stated that he was HUGHES' uncle and owned the house at 20 E. 127th and that HUGHES resided there with him. [redacted] was appraised of the identity of the Agents and was requested to advise HUGHES to contact the writer at the FBI office at the earliest moment so that the purpose of their visit could be taken up with him. [redacted] disclosed that the telephone number of the residence was listed in his name and that the number was AT (ATWATER) 9-6589 and that HUGHES could be reached through that number.

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On this same date [redacted] for for RICHARD N. WRIGHT, the Negro writer and author of " Native Son", was contacted by the writer in an effort to ascertain if WRIGHT had returned from France and the address where he resided. [redacted] advised that WRIGHT was still abroad and was still residing in Paris, France and intended remaining there for an indefinite period of time. During the conversation [redacted] stated that he was not only WRIGHT's [redacted] He stated that WRIGHT would never be will ing to return to this country and make himself the center of a public controversy as a witness concerning his past affiliations with the Communist Party because of his " extreme shyness " and further WRIGHT's story had been told in the public press and by his own writings and he considered that as the end of the matter. He said further that he doubted that WRIGHT would consider a deposition in the matter and in the event such a thing was considered, the question should be handled through him as he was as close to WRIGHT as a " white man" could be and relied on him in such matter

67C
67D

cc: LANGSTON HUGHES (100-25776)
RICHARD N. WRIGHT (100-41674)

100-41674-55

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED 289882
DATE 12/22/88 BY 0PIAG SC

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SERIALIZED ..... FILED .....
12 DEC 9 1953
FBI - NEW YORK

Director, FBI (100-146964) 12/15/53

SAC, New York (100-7518)

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF AMERICAN-
SOVIET FRIENDSHIP, INC.
IS-C; ISA 1950

Rebulet to Assistant Attorney General WARREN OLNEY III dated 12/3/53, copies of which were furnished to the NYO, requesting the interview of LANGSTON HUGHES and RICHARD WRIGHT.

b7c

Pursuant to Department requests and Bureau instructions as set forth in rebulet, LANGSTON HUGHES, the Negro writer and poet was interviewed by SA'S [redacted] and [redacted] on 12/10/53 at his home at 20 E. 127th St., NYC, in regard to his knowledge and availability to testify concerning the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship and its forerunner, the Friends of the Soviet Union.

At the very outset of the interview a copy of the amended petition of the case of HERBERT BROWNELL, JR., Attorney General of the US, Petitioner versus the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, Inc., Respondent, was made available to Mr. HUGHES for his perusal, and the allegations as set forth therein were discussed with him.

After a review of the petition, Mr. HUGHES advised that he was surprised that he was being approached concerning this organization, inasmuch as he knew nothing about it and could offer no information concerning it. He stated that he had been a "paper member" of the NCASF until approximately one year ago, at which time he was in receipt of a piece of correspondence from the NCASF which indicated that he was considered by that organization as a member. HUGHES said that as soon as he became aware of that fact he immediately wrote the NCASF and requested that they remove his name from their rolls, which he stated they did.

Mr. HUGHES was asked whether or not it was correct that he at one time during the 1930's was a member of the National Committee of the Friends of the Soviet Union, and also a member of the Editorial Council of the publication, "Soviet Russia Today", which at that time was the official publication of the Friends

1 - NY 100-25776 (LANGSTON HUGHES)
1 - NY 100-41674 (RICHARD WRIGHT)

ENCLS. (6)
DET:HP

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED
DATE 12/22/88 BY OPLACS
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100-41674-56

of the Soviet Union. HUGHES acknowledged that fact was probably true, but he had no present recollection of the organization today. He stated that he did recall having contributed several articles to the magazine, "Soviet Russia Today". However, like many other organizations of the "left wing category" of which he had been a member or sponsor in the past years, his relationships with those organizations were merely paper relationships and he had no knowledge of their inner workings or any connection they might have had with the CP. According to HUGHES, his articles which appeared in "Soviet Russia Today" were written for that magazine at the request of its editor, JESSICA SMITH, whom he stated he only knew in a very casual way.

HUGHES volunteered the information that during the 1930's and up until approximately 1946 he had actively participated primarily as a speaker and through offering the use of his name with what he would describe as the left wing groups. However, he stated that he knew nothing of the CP connections of these groups and could offer no information concerning this aspect of these organizations at this time.

HUGHES, in response to a direct question concerning whether or not he was a member of the CP, stated that he had never been a member of the CP, although he would admit having cooperated with the left wing element in this country down through the years. He stated that a fair statement concerning his position as regards the CP and the so called Communist fronts would be that he had been used by the left wing groups to promote the CP line on the Negro question. However, at the same time he himself had made use of the left wing element to further his own position as a writer and poet. HUGHES explained this by stating that a man who writes poetry of any kind has a difficult time obtaining publication and as a as a Negro poet this was even a more difficult job.

HUGHES stated that because of this "Jim Crow situtation" he turned to the left wing press and found it sympathetic and a ready outlet for his writings. He advised that because of this mutual working agreement he had never seriously attempted to curb the use of his name among the left wing groups until approximately 1947. He stated that after World War II he concluded that the Negro interests in this country could be better served and advanced by adopting the program of WALTER WHITE of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and since that time he has attempted to have his name withdrawn from the left wing groups.

In conclusion regarding his activities in the left wing groups, HUGHES volunteered the information that throughout this entire period, which began approximately in 1932 or 1933 after his return from a trip to Russia, he had only once been approached directly to become a member of the CP. He said that during his trip to Moscow, which was made in connection with a proposed production of a Soviet motion picture which never came off, [redacted] the wife of the [redacted] had asked him directly to join the CP in this country. He stated that she could not understand why any American Negro, due to the repression practiced in the US, was not a member of the CP. b7c

HUGHES stated that he did not follow her suggestions and he felt that a study of all his writings as a collective group would in most instances reflect that he was a man of ideas and independent thought and as such could not submit to the disciplined thought processes required of a Communist. HUGHES admitted that during his early youth he had written several poems that might indicate otherwise, particularly the poems, "Good-by Christ" and "One More S in the USA Workers Sons". However, HUGHES stated that he was not proud of these particular works of his and had left them out of an anthology of his poems that he later published.

It should be noted that throughout the interview HUGHES admitted knowing PAUL ROBESON, JAMES FORD, LOUISE THOMPSON PATTERSON, WILLIAM A. PATTERSON, and FERDINAND SMITH. However, he disclaimed any knowledge of their CP membership other than indicating that it was public knowledge that they were considered to be members of the CP. However, he disclaimed to have any personal knowledge of this, although they were at one time or another associates of his.

It should be noted that during the course of the interview the identity and names of officials of the Friends of the Soviet Union and the NCASF such as [redacted] CORLISS LAMONT, THEODORE BAYER, JESSICA SMITH, and [redacted], and others were specifically mentioned to HUGHES and with the exception of CORLISS LAMONT and JESSICA SMITH, HUGHES stated that he did not know these individuals and could furnish no information concerning them. b7c

In regard to JESSICA SMITH and CORLISS LAMONT, HUGHES admitted knowing them and having on occasions been in contact with them for the purpose of social occasions. However, he claimed to lack any knowledge concerning these individuals' CP affiliations.

HUGHES also volunteered the information that during 1937 he had been employed as a correspondent for the "Afro-American" newspaper, but denied knowing anything concerning the CP's activities in Spain in conjunction with the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and its activities during the Civil War in that country. He stated that he had been sent there by the "Afro-American" to write about the Negroes who were then fighting in Spain and that is what he did.

HUGHES during the interview denied that he had ever been suggested as a candidate on the CP ticket in 1936 or 1938 or that he had ever attended any CP meetings for any purpose whatever and that if he had, he was unaware of the fact that they were Party meetings.

HUGHES stated that he was ready to cooperate with the US Government whenever it was felt his cooperation could be of assistance. He stated that he had given proof of this when he testified before Senator McCARTHY'S Committee in March, 1953 concerning the books and writings of his which were found to be on the shelves of the US State Department Centers of Information abroad.

At the termination of the interview Mr. HUGHES thanked the agents for what he termed the courteous manner in which they had spoken to him and stated that they should feel free to contact him in the future for any further questions they might have concerning his past activities.

It is to be noted that rebulet also requested the NYO to interview RICHARD WRIGHT, the Negro writer, and author of "Native Son". It should also be noted that in an effort to locate Mr. WRIGHT, [redacted] for Mr. WRIGHT was contacted, and REYNOLDS advised that RICHARD WRIGHT was still abroad and resides in Paris, France.

b7c
b7D

b7C
b7D

[redacted] stated that WRIGHT permanently resides at 14 Rue Monsieur Le Prince, Paris, France and intended remaining there for an indefinite period of time. [redacted] also noted that he was not only WRIGHT'S [redacted] but [redacted] He stated that he doubted WRIGHT would ever return to this country and make himself the center of a public controversy by testifying concerning his past CP affiliations.

According to [redacted], WRIGHT was extremely shy and inasmuch as he had already told his story to public press and through his own writings, he considered that as an end of the matter. [redacted] also said that he doubted WRIGHT would consider a deposition in the matter. However, in the event such a thing was considered by the Government, the question should be handled through him as WRIGHT relied on him in such matters.

In view of WRIGHT'S absence abroad, the question as to whether or not he should be contacted by the Bureau's representative abroad in Paris, France is being left to the Bureau's determination.

Attached hereto is a blind memo which sets forth in summary the negative contact of LANGSTON HUGHES concerning the NCASF and the FSU, and which also notes the fact that RICHARD WRIGHT now resides abroad.

OFFICE MEMORANDUM - - UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : SAC, New York 67C DATE: 6/7/54

FROM : [redacted] SA (100-[illegible])

SUBJECT: RICHARD WRIGHT
SM-C

On 2/4/54 the BSSI, NYCPD made available reports of [redacted] (conceal identity) who has advised that the person whose name appears above was active in the CP or CP Front Activities in NY in 1941. The original of this material is located in files of the BSSI, NYCPD and photostatic copies of [redacted] reports are maintained in 100-117651-1A1 pages 33. 67C 67D

Specific information furnished by [redacted] concerning the above named individual's activity is set out below.

Informant advised that the above listed name appeared as a sponsor to the Citizens Committee to Free EARL BROWDER. The Headquarters for this committee was located at 1133 Broadway, NYC.

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HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED 289882
DATE 12/22/88 BY SP1 AGS

All C.F. or List Refs.

#12

SEARCHED ... INDEXED ...
SERIALIZED ...
JUN 8 1954
FBI - NEW YORK

ACMcC:MG/CDH

100-416741-57

STANDARD FORM NO. 64

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : SAC, New York (100-41674) (7-6) DATE: 3/18/55

FROM : [redacted] SA (12-16) b7c

SUBJECT: RICHARD WRIGHT
SM-C

b2 b7D

On 2/4/55, [redacted] who was contacted by SA [redacted] made available a copy of the July, 1953, issue of "Ebony". b7c

It was noted that pages 32 through 45 contained an article authored by WILLIAM GARDNER SMITH entitled "Black Boy in France."

In this article is a quote which identified WRIGHT as the origin. "The break from US was more than a geographical change," says WRIGHT. "It was a break with my former attitudes as a Negro and a Communist - an attempt to think over and redefine my attitudes and my thinking. I was trying to grapple with the big problem - the problem and meaning of Western civilization as a whole, and the relation of Negroes and other minority groups to it."

This article is being retained as an exhibit and is located as Serial 1A-8 of NY 100-41674.

If this information is used in a report, it should be suitably paraphrased in order to protect the identity of the source.

1 - [redacted] P&C) (12-16)

b2 b7D

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 12/22/88 BY SP1 AGENT 289882

JJM:KID (2)

100-41674-58

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SERIALIZED ____ FILED ____
MAR 18 1955
FBI-NEW YORK

STANDARD FORM NO. 64

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : SAC New York (100-41674) (12-16) DATE: 6/15/55

FROM : SA [redacted] #13 b7C

SUBJECT: Richard Wright
SM-C

b7C

During the course of the investigation of [redacted] aka, Department of Agriculture, SGE, [redacted] for Richard Wright, advised that Wright currently resides at 14 Rue Monsieur Le Prince, Paris, France, and is not expected to return to the United States.

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DATE 12/22/88 BY SP1 AGS

100-41674-59

SEARCHED ..... INDEXED .....
SERIALIZED ..... FILED .....
JUN 24 1955
FBI - NEW YORK

OFFICE MEMORANDUM UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO: SAC, NEW YORK ([redacted] DATE: 11/1/55

FROM: S[redacted]

SUBJECT: [redacted] wa 67C
SM-C

On 7/14/55, LAWRENCE FAIRBANK testified, under oath, before a public hearing of the US Senate Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and other Internal Security Laws of the Committee of the Judiciary.

A copy of FAIRBANK's testimony before this committee was furnished the NYO as an enclosure with a letter from the Director, FBI, dated 9/1/55. This record has been made a part of the LA section of subject's file.

This record reflects, in part, the following:

NEW YORK TIMES - Subject testified that he has been employed continuously for this paper since February, 1928, with the exception of two years in the military service. Subject also admitted membership in the so-called "Times Group" of the CP from early 1938, to sometime in 1939, for a one year period.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 2/22/82 BY SP1 AGSC 289882

1 - [redacted] (20-9)
1 - NY 100-11720 (LEAGUE OF AMERICAN WRITERS)(7-2)
1 - NY 100-9118 (DASHIEL HAMMETT)(12-8)
1 - [redacted] (20-9)
1 - NY 100-4727 (NEWSPAPER GUILD)(7-2)
1 - NY 100-11352 (NEW YORK TIMES)(7-2)
1 - [redacted] (20-9)
1 - [redacted] 7-5)
1 - NY 100-86727 (REVEREND CLAUDE WILLIAMS)(7-6)
1 - [redacted] 6-)
1 - NY 100-41674 (RICHARD WRIGHT)(12-16).

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PCM:cjl

(12)

100-41674-60
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FBI - NEW YORK

67C

NEWSPAPER GUILD OF NY - Subject testified that he has been a member of this group since its inception in 1933.

MILTON KAUFMAN - Subject testified that this person and another person, unnamed and now deceased, recruited his wife and himself into the CP during the year 1938. Subject also testified that he attended a "meeting of Communist Party members of the NEWSPAPER GUILD and some other sympathizers, fellow travelers, or trusted person, friends of Party members who would be invited to the meeting". Subject testified that KAUFMAN was, "on the platform. I believe he was presiding." KAUFMAN testified that this meeting was held at the Roosevelt Hotel, NY, and that about 50 persons attended.

LEAGUE OF AMERICAN WRITERS - Subject testified that he taught "Labor Journalism" at a "Writers' School", operated by the L.A.W. for two terms of about 10 weeks each in either 1938 or 1939. Subject testified in answer to a question if he knew of any "known Communist connected with the courses at the Writers' School?", that "to the best of my knowledge now, I did not know that any teacher in the school was a Communist, nor did I care, frankly."

DASHIEL HAMMETT - Subject testified in relation to this person that he did not know "whether he was connected with the School. He was connected with the L.A.W., surely." Subject testified that he did not know HAMMETT as a Communist.

RICHARD WRIGHT - Subject testified in relation to this person that he did not know his connection with the Writers' School, but that WRIGHT was connected with L.A.W. Subject testified that he did not know WRIGHT as a Communist.

MYRA PAGE - Subject testified in relation to this person that she was a teacher at the Writers' School. Subject also testified that he does not remember knowing her.

Letter to the SAC, NY
NY [redacted] 67C

EDWIN SELVEN - Subject testified in relation to this person that he did not remember him as being connected with the Writers' School, but remembers that he was connected with the L.L.W. Subject also testified that he did not know that SELVEN was a Communist.

ROBERT WOOD - Subject testified in relation to this person that, while he, [illegible], was teaching at Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas, the summer of 1937, WOOD was a guest lecturer at this school for about a week. Subject also testified that WOOD was a Communist organizer in the State of Oklahoma.

ARVAMNO CLAUDE WILLIAMS - Subject testified in relation to this person that he, WILLIAMS, was the Director of the Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas, during the summer of 1937.

BEATRICE OPPENHEIM WALDMAN - Subject testified in relation to this person that she is his wife, and that she became a member of the CP at the same time he did, early 1938.

2-3

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : SAC, NEW YORK (100-41674) DATE: 2/20/58

FROM : SA, [redacted] #13 b7C

SUBJECT: RICHARD WRIGHT
SM - C

b7C
b7D

This is to record that [redacted] for subject, advised SA [redacted] on 2/20/58 subject continues to reside at 14 Rue Monsieur Le Prince, Paris, France. [redacted] stated WRIGHT gives no indication that he ever intends to return to the United States.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED 289882
DATE 12/22/88 BY SPLAGJC

100-41674

SEARCHED ____ INDEXED ____
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FBI — NEW YORK

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100-41674-61

OPCA-20 (12-3-96)

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8 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-39

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
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1 Pages were not considered for release as they are duplicative of HQ 100-157464-40

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

☒ The following number is to be used for reference regarding these pages:
NY 100-41674-63

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FBI/DOJ

5-2 4-30

SAC, NEW YORK [redacted] 4/25/58

SA [redacted] (7-3) CONFIDENTIAL

67C [redacted]

SM - SWP

Classified by SOIACBC
Declassify on: OADR 12/28/88
289882

On 4/11/58, [redacted] wife of the [redacted] the apartment dwelling at [redacted] NY, who is in a position to furnish reliable information (conceal per request), made available to the writer correspondence which had been received and discarded by [redacted], who reside at this address. (X)

This correspondence, postmarked 3/4/57, consisted of an airmail letter directed to [redacted] New York, USA" and bore the return address of [redacted] Paris VIII, France". (X)

The enclosed correspondence is set forth verbatim, as follows: (X)

"April 2, 1957

67C "Dear [redacted]

(X) "Yours was the first letter we got from our New York comrades and I must say that we showed our appreciation by waiting almost a month to answer it, but then you know how things are. By the way, this is me [redacted] writing, as [redacted] just can't stand writing letters I've got to make up for both of us.

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED 289882
DATE 12/29/88 BY SOIACBC

67C
1- [redacted] (#7-3)
1- [redacted] (#7-3)
1- [redacted] (#7-3)
1- NY 100-97078 (SWP, NY LOCAL) (#7-3)
1- NY 100- (RICHARD WRIGHT)
1- NY [redacted]

AJC:mcs
(6)

Indexed
List 100- if or subs refs
[illegible]

100-41674-64

CONFIDENTIAL

SEARCHED [illegible] INDEXED [illegible]
SERIALIZED [illegible] FILED [illegible]
APR 28 1958
FBI - NEW YORK

NY [redacted]

CONFIDENTIAL

We very interested in the news about a march on Washington by the negroes and I hope you'll let us know how it is progressing since we're kind of isolated from news of that sort here.

67C

"It's true as [redacted] said that there is no McCarthyite atmosphere here, but since France is a capitalist country too there are other things to make up for it. For example; the police. You just can't imagine what happens here when students or anyone else holds a simple meeting or rally here. They mobilize the entire police force, which is divided into different types -the ordinary gendarmes (cops), motorcycle cops with machine guns, and a special type who comes equipped with machine gun and bayonet. We've witnessed several minor demonstrations already, and at each one they send out about ten truckloads of police armed with machine guns and bayonnets. And these are not major strikes but demonstrations for example by students and teachers for a wage increase and for scholarships. Another thing is that the police have files on every single person as every Frech citizen is required to carry an identity card from the police and is required to notify them of every change of address. To register in a hotel here, you must present this identity card, or in our case a passport. But there are contradictions: two of the french comrades we know are school teachers, although they are both well known leftists and people are not afraid to read 'Humanite' in public (one often sees well dressed business men reading the cp paper).

"The racial situation is even more interesting. The Puerto Ricans and Negroes of Paris are the Algerians who live in squalid quarters, do all the menial, dirty work, and in general are considered outcasts. But not on racial grounds, but because the are revolting against French imperialism and doing a damn good job at it too. Then there are the Africans. There are thousands of Africans here studying at the Sorbonne. Since most of them come from wealthy families in Africa and are sponsored by the French gov't they present no economic problem to the Frech. As long as the french colonies of black Africa are NOT in a

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period of revolt, the french consider these people as French and on the whole they are treated very well. However, in terms of finding housing we have had some very unpleasant experiences with prejudice here. We are given addresses by a certain committee for foreign students who tries to find housing for you. The first person we visited refused to talk to us altogether, although we had all the proper papers from the comm. The second was very nice on the surface, but didn't give us a definite answer. We later found out that she told the comm. that he analyist thought it would be too upsetting to have a negro in the house. In discussing this with the head of the comm. he told us that this is unfortunately very common and that they find it difficult to place African and Oriental students. However, there is one diff. between this and America, and that is that if a negro has money there is no restaurant or hotel that he will not be accepted in. The case of Richard Wright, whom we have seen personally, is a good example. He has a fabulous apartment, is invited in the best circles, etc.

"Enough for the philosophical part of the letter, and now for a little news...

[redacted] and I are both going to school trying to learn French. Besides that we spend most of our time trying to find a place to live. Right now we are in one tiny little hotel room with no heat or hot water. Every time we want to wash we have to heat water on a little alcohol stove we have and other inconvenient things like that. But that is not unusual here - unless you have money or alot of children (for city projects) the housing facilities are real primitive. These places are hundreds of years old, and nothing much has been changed. A private toilet in ones apartment is an unusual thing, and refrigerators are hardly anywhere to be seen except in fancy shops.

"But I think I'm giving you a very gloomy picture of life over here. Actually we both love it for many reasons. People seem to be more human here and less concerned with gadgets and making money. Then, notwithstanding my previous

remarks, it is much easier here for an interracial couple. We know several others with children, and they are all much happier over here than in the states. Of course there is the beauty of the place - Paris is really something special, and now that spring is here, its just a pleasure to walk around the streets. We haven't begun to see all the museums yet there are so many. There is a much freer cultural exchange between east and west here, and one has the chance to see stuff from the whole soviet world, including China (by stuff I mean plays and ballets, etc.).

"The french comarades have really been nice to us - they are among our best friends here. [redacted] has also got quite a few friends that he knew in the states. Most of them belonged to a certain organization and for some mysterious reason have lost their passports. It is funny to function among these people. They don't even know who there own 'enemy' is. They are all convinced we are members of their org. and don't hesitiate to say nasty things about our org. And this is after we have held discussions with them, clearly giving our views, but without the lable. However, most of them of fine people, and its good to have them in a foreign country.

b2c

"One more thing: 'Salt of the Earth' has started to play here again in 3 regular movie theatres, one of which played it for a continuous run of 7 months last year. I finally got to see it [redacted] saw it at least six times already) and really loved it, its the kind of film that gives you the courage to really keep on fighting. I also appreciated the part on the 'woman question' - a terriffic handling of a problem which is not too widely understood (what do you thing, [redacted])

"Please send our regards to everyone you can think of - we just can't write everybody, but I certainly don't mind (in fact, I'd appreciate it) if you show this letter to anyone who's interested.

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NY [redacted]

"Hello to those beautiful kids of yours. I hear Elvis is coming to Paris. I guess you'll have to save up the money to send them here too! Seriously though, is there anything that they might like to get from Paris - picture post cards, photos, or something? Write and tell us, OK.

"/s/ Lots of Love to you -

We really miss you!

[redacted]

Don't mind all the typing errors. "

b7c

The above correspondence is being place in the 1A exhibit section of [redacted]

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1. Two photos of RICHARD WRIGHT with neg. Indexedgmj. Sub'm. by SA [redacted] Obt'd. from DW.
2. An article from the Atlantic Monthly dtd. Aug. 1944 entitled "I tried to be a Communist". See Ser. 29.
3. An article from the Atlantic monthly dtd. Sept. 1944 entitled "I Tried to be a Communist." See Ser. 29.
4. Eight prints and one neg. of subj. Richard Wright. Indexed.
5. One photo of Richard Wright, 1941. Obt'd. from unknown source. Sub'm. by SA [redacted] 2/16/45. Indexed. b7c
6. Specimens of handwriting of subj. Richard N. Wright. Obt'd. from conf. source, by SA [redacted] 3/15/45. Sub'm. by SA [redacted] 4/16/45. Not to be returned (photographic copy)
7. SI card of subj. See Ser. 44.

ABOVE RETYPED FROM ENVELOPE BLOCKSTAMPED OCT. 2, 1946.

8. "Black Boy" in France" Ebony July 1953.
9. 4/17/58. Neg + 5 photos of Richard Wright and b7c
10. 4/17/58 " " " " [redacted]

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AUGUST 1944

THE Atlantic

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I TRIED TO BE A COMMUNIST

by RICHARD WRIGHT

1

ONE Thursday night I received an invitation from a group of white boys I had known when I was working in the post office to meet in one of Chicago's South Side hotels and argue the state of the world. About ten of us gathered, and ate salami sandwiches, drank beer, and talked. I was amazed to discover that many of them had joined the Communist Party. I challenged them by reciting the antics of the Negro Communists I had seen in the parks, and I was told that those antics were "tactics" and were all right. I was dubious.

Then one Thursday night Sol, a Jewish chap, startled us by announcing that he had had a short story accepted by a little magazine called the *Anvil*, edited by Jack Conroy, and that he had joined a revolutionary artist organization, the John Reed Club. Sol repeatedly begged me to attend the meetings of the club.

"You'd like them," Sol said.

"I don't want to be organized," I said.

"They can help you to write," he said.

"Nobody can tell me how or what to write," I said.

"Come and see," he urged. "What have you to lose?"

I felt that Communists could not possibly have a sincere interest in Negroes. I was cynical and I would rather have heard a white man say that he hated Negroes, which I could have readily believed, than to have heard him say that he respected Negroes, which would have made me doubt him.

One Saturday night, bored with reading, I decided to appear at the John Reed Club in the capacity of an amused spectator. I rode to the Loop and found the number. A dark stairway led upwards; it did not look welcoming. What on earth of importance could happen in so dingy a place? Through the windows above me I saw vague murals along the walls. I mounted the stairs to a door that was lettered: THE CHICAGO JOHN REED CLUB.

I opened it and stepped into the strangest room I had ever seen. Paper and cigarette butts lay on the floor. A few benches ran along the walls, above which were vivid colors depicting colossal figures of workers carrying streaming banners. The mouths of the workers gaped in wild cries; their legs were sprawled over cities.

"Hello."

I turned and saw a white man smiling at me.

"A friend of mine, who's a member of this club, asked me to visit here. His name is Sol ——," I told him.

"You're welcome here," the white man said. "We're not having an affair tonight. We're holding an editorial meeting. Do you paint?" He was slightly gray and he had a mustache.

"No," I said. "I try to write."

"Then sit in on the editorial meeting of our magazine, *Left Front*," he suggested.

"I know nothing of editing," I said.

"You can learn," he said.

I stared at him, doubting.

"I don't want to be in the way here," I said.

"My name's Grimm," he said.

I told him my name and we shook hands. He went to a closet and returned with an armful of magazines.

"Here are some back issues of the *Masses*," he said. "Have you ever read it?"

"No," I said.

"Some of the best writers in America publish in it," he explained. He also gave me copies of a magazine called *International Literature*. "There's stuff here from Gide, Gorky —"

I assured him that I would read them. He took me to an office and introduced me to a Jewish boy

---

RICHARD WRIGHT is an American Negro whose schooling carried him through the grammar grade and who has been educating himself ever since. His novel, *Native Son*, which was widely discussed in the year of its publication (1940), and his forthcoming autobiography, which will appear later this year, proclaim him as one of the most forthright and eloquent authors of his race. This is the first of two installments.

who was to become one of the nation's leading painters, to a chap who was to become one of the eminent composers of his day, to a writer who was to create some of the best novels of his generation, to a young Jewish boy who was destined to film the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia. I was meeting men and women whom I should know for decades to come, who were to form the first sustained relationships in my life.

I sat in a corner and listened while they discussed their magazine, *Left Front*. Were they treating me courteously because I was a Negro? I must let cold reason guide me with these people, I told myself. I was asked to contribute something to the magazine, and I said vaguely that I would consider it. After the meeting I met an Irish girl who worked for an advertising agency, a girl who did social work, a schoolteacher, and the wife of a prominent university professor. I had once worked as a servant for people like these and I was skeptical. I tried to fathom their motives, but I could detect no condescension in them.

2

I WENT home full of reflection, probing the sincerity of the strange white people I had met, wondering how they *really* regarded Negroes. I lay on my bed and read the magazines and was amazed to find that there did exist in this world an organized search for the truth of the lives of the oppressed and the isolated. When I had begged bread from the officials, I had wondered dimly if the outcasts could become united in action, thought, and feeling. Now I knew. It was being done in one sixth of the earth already. The revolutionary words leaped from the printed page and struck me with tremendous force.

It was not the economics of Communism, nor the great power of trade unions, nor the excitement of underground politics that claimed me; my attention was caught by the similarity of the experiences of workers in other lands, by the possibility of uniting scattered but kindred peoples into a whole. It seemed to me that here at last, in the realm of revolutionary expression, Negro experience could find a home, a functioning value and role. Out of the magazines I read came a passionate call for the experiences of the disinherited, and there were none of the lame lispings of the missionary in it. It did not say: "Be like us and we will like you, maybe." It said: "If you possess enough courage to speak out what you are, you will find that you are not alone." It urged life to believe in life.

I read on into the night; then, toward dawn, I swung from bed and inserted paper into the typewriter. Feeling for the first time that I could speak to listening ears, I wrote a wild, crude poem in free verse, coining images of black hands playing, working, holding bayonets, stiffening finally in death. I felt that in a clumsy way it linked white life with black, merged two streams of common experience.

I heard someone poking about the kitchen.

"Richard, are you ill?" my mother called.

"No. I'm reading."

My mother opened the door and stared curiously at the pile of magazines that lay upon my pillow.

"You're not throwing away money buying those magazines, are you?" she asked.

"No. They were given to me."

She hobbled to the bed on her crippled legs and picked up a copy of the *Masses* that carried a lurid May Day cartoon. She adjusted her glasses and peered at it for a long time.

"My God in heaven," she breathed in horror.

"What's the matter, Mama?"

"What is this?" she asked, extending the magazine to me, pointing to the cover. "What's wrong with that man?"

With my mother standing at my side, lending me her eyes, I stared at a cartoon drawn by a Communist artist; it was the figure of a worker clad in ragged overalls and holding aloft a red banner. The man's eyes bulged; his mouth gaped as wide as his face; his teeth showed; the muscles of his neck were like ropes. Following the man was a horde of nondescript men, women, and children, waving clubs, stones, and pitchforks.

"What are those people going to do?" my mother asked.

"I don't know," I hedged.

"Are these Communist magazines?"

"Yes."

"And do they want people to act like this?"

"Well —" I hesitated.

My mother's face showed disgust and moral loathing. She was a gentle woman. Her ideal was Christ upon the cross. How could I tell her that the Communist Party wanted her to march in the streets, chanting, singing?

"What do Communists think people are?" she asked.

"They don't quite mean what you see there," I said, fumbling with my words.

"Then what do they mean?"

"This is symbolic," I said.

"Then why don't they speak out what they mean?"

"Maybe they don't know how."

"Then why do they print this stuff?"

"They don't quite know how to appeal to people

yet," I admitted, wondering whom I could convince of this if I could not convince my mother.

"That picture's enough to drive a body crazy," she said, dropping the magazine, turning to leave, then pausing at the door. "You're not getting mixed up with those people?"

"I'm just reading, Mama," I dodged.

My mother left and I brooded upon the fact that I had not been able to meet her simple challenge. I looked again at the cover of the *Masses* and I knew that the wild cartoon did not reflect the passions of the common people. I reread the magazine and was convinced that much of the expression embodied what the *artists* thought would appeal to others, what they thought would gain recruits. They had a program, an ideal, but they had not yet found a language.

Here, then, was something that I could do, reveal, say. The Communists, I felt, had oversimplified the experience of those whom they sought to lead. In their efforts to recruit masses, they had missed the meaning of the lives of the masses, had conceived of people in too abstract a manner. I would try to put some of that meaning back. I would tell Communists how common people felt, and I would tell common people of the self-sacrifice of Communists who strove for unity among them.

The editor of *Left Front* accepted two of my crude poems for publication, sent two of them to Jack Conroy's *Anvil*, and sent another to the *New Masses*, the successor of the *Masses*. Doubts still lingered in my mind.

"Don't send them if you think they aren't good enough," I said to him.

"They're good enough," he said.

"Are you doing this to get me to join up?" I asked.

"No," he said. "Your poems are crude, but good for us. You see, we're all new in this. We write articles about Negroes, but we never see any Negroes. We need your stuff."

I sat through several meetings of the club and was impressed by the scope and seriousness of its activities. The club was demanding that the government create jobs for unemployed artists; it planned and organized art exhibits; it raised funds for the publication of *Left Front;* and it sent scores of speakers to trade-union meetings. The members were fervent, democratic, restless, eager, self-sacrificing. I was convinced, and my response was to set myself the task of making Negroes know what Communists were. I got the notion of writing a series of biographical sketches of Negro Communists. I told no one of my intentions, and I did not know how fantastically naïve my ambition was.

3

I had attended but a few meetings before I realized that a bitter factional fight was in progress between two groups of members of the club. Sharp arguments rose at every meeting. I noticed that a small group of painters actually led the club and dominated its policies. The group of writers that centered in *Left Front* resented the leadership of the painters. Being primarily interested in *Left Front*, I sided in simple loyalty with the writers.

Then came a strange development. The *Left Front* group declared that the incumbent leadership did not reflect the wishes of the club. A special meeting was called and a motion was made to reelect an executive secretary. When nominations were made for the office, my name was included. I declined the nomination, telling the members that I was too ignorant of their aims to be seriously considered. The debate lasted all night. A vote was taken in the early hours of morning by a show of hands, and I was elected.

Later I learned what had happened: the writers of the club had decided to use me to oust the painters, who were party members, from the leadership of the club. Without my knowledge and consent, they confronted the members of the party with a Negro, knowing that it would be difficult for Communists to refuse to vote for a man representing the largest single racial minority in the nation, inasmuch as Negro equality was one of the main tenets of Communism.

As the club's leader, I soon learned the nature of the fight. The Communists had secretly organized a "fraction" in the club; that is, a small portion of the club's members were secret members of the Communist Party. They would meet outside of the club and decide what policies the club should follow; in club meetings the sheer strength of their arguments usually persuaded non-party members to vote with them. The crux of the fight was that the non-party members resented the excessive demands made upon the club by the local party authorities through the fraction.

The demands of the local party authorities for money, speakers, and poster painters were so great that the publication of *Left Front* was in danger. Many young writers had joined the club because of their hope of publishing in *Left Front*, and when the Communist Party sent word through the fraction that the magazine should be dissolved, the writers rejected the decision, an act which was interpreted as hostility toward party authority.

I pleaded with the party members for a more lib-

eral program for the club. Feelings waxed violent and bitter. Then the showdown came. I was informed that if I wanted to continue as secretary of the club I should have to join the Communist Party. I stated that I favored a policy that allowed for the development of writers and artists. My policy was accepted. I signed the membership card.

One night a Jewish chap appeared at one of our meetings and introduced himself as Comrade Young of Detroit. He told us that he was a member of the Communist Party, a member of the Detroit John Reed Club, that he planned to make his home in Chicago. He was a short, friendly, black-haired, well-read fellow with hanging lips and bulging eyes. Shy of forces to execute the demands of the Communist Party, we welcomed him. But I could not make out Young's personality; whenever I asked him a simple question, he looked off and stammered a confused answer. I decided to send his references to the Communist Party for checking and forthwith named him for membership in the club. He's O.K., I thought. Just a queer artist.

After the meeting Comrade Young confronted me with a problem. He had no money, he said, and asked if he could sleep temporarily on the club's premises. Believing him loyal, I gave him permission. Straightway Young became one of the most ardent members of our organization, admired by all. His paintings — which I did not understand — impressed our best artists. No report about Young had come from the Communist Party, but since Young seemed a conscientious worker, I did not think the omission serious in any case.

At a meeting one night Young asked that his name be placed upon the agenda; when his time came to speak, he rose and launched into one of the most violent and bitter political attacks in the club's history upon Swann, one of our best young artists. We were aghast. Young accused Swann of being a traitor to the workers, an opportunist, a collaborator with the police, and an adherent of Trotsky. Naturally most of the club's members assumed that Young, a member of the party, was voicing the ideas of the party. Surprised and baffled, I moved that Young's statement be referred to the executive committee for decision. Swann rightfully protested; he declared that he had been attacked in public and would answer in public.

It was voted that Swann should have the floor. He refuted Young's wild charges, but the majority of the club's members were bewildered, did not know whether to believe him or not. We all liked Swann, did not believe him guilty of any misconduct; but we did not want to offend the party. A verbal battle ensued. Finally the members who had been silent in deference to the party rose and demanded of me that the foolish charges against Swann be withdrawn. Again I moved that the matter be referred to the executive committee, and again my proposal was voted down. The membership had now begun to distrust the party's motives. They were afraid to let an executive committee, the majority of whom were party members, pass upon the charges made by party member Young.

A delegation of members asked me later if I had anything to do with Young's charges. I was so hurt and humiliated that I disavowed all relations with Young. Determined to end the farce, I cornered Young and demanded to know who had given him authority to castigate Swann.

"I've been asked to rid the club of traitors."

"But Swann isn't a traitor," I said.

"We must have a purge," he said, his eyes bulging, his face quivering with passion.

I admitted his great revolutionary fervor, but I felt that his zeal was a trifle excessive. The situation became worse. A delegation of members informed me that if the charges against Swann were not withdrawn, they would resign in a body. I was frantic. I wrote to the Communist Party to ask why orders had been issued to punish Swann, and a reply came back that no such orders had been issued. Then what was Young up to? Who was prompting him? I finally begged the club to let me place the matter before the leaders of the Communist Party. After a violent debate, my proposal was accepted.

One night ten of us met in an office of a leader of the party to hear Young restate his charges against Swann. The party leader, aloof and amused, gave Young the signal to begin. Young unrolled a sheaf of papers and declaimed a list of political charges that excelled in viciousness his previous charges. I stared at Young, feeling that he was making a dreadful mistake, but fearing him because he had, by his own account, the sanction of high political authority.

When Young finished, the party leader asked, "Will you allow me to read these charges?"

"Of course," said Young, surrendering a copy of his indictment. "You may keep that copy. I have ten carbons."

"Why did you make so many carbons?" the leader asked.

"I didn't want anyone to steal them," Young said.

"If this man's charges against me are taken seriously," Swann said, "I'll resign and publicly denounce the club."

"You see!" Young yelled. "He's with the police!"

I was sick. The meeting ended with a promise from the party leader to read the charges carefully and render a verdict as to whether Swann should be placed on trial or not. I was convinced that something was wrong, but I could not figure it out. One afternoon I went to the club to have a long talk with Young; but when I arrived, he was not there. Nor was he there the next day. For a week I sought Young in vain. Meanwhile the club's members asked his whereabouts and they would not believe me when I told them that I did not know. Was he ill? Had he been picked up by the police?

One afternoon Comrade Grimm and I sneaked into the club's headquarters and opened Young's luggage. What we saw amazed and puzzled us. First of all, there was a scroll of paper twenty yards long — one page pasted to another — which had drawings depicting the history of the human race from a Marxist point of view. The first page read: *A Pictorial Record of Man's Economic Progress.*

"This is terribly ambitious," I said.

"He's very studious," Grimm said.

There were long dissertations written in longhand; some were political and others dealt with the history of art.. Finally we found a letter with a Detroit return address and I promptly wrote asking news of our esteemed member. A few days later a letter came which said in part: —

> DEAR SIR:
>
> In reply to your letter, we beg to inform you that Mr. Young, who was a patient in our institution and who escaped from our custody a few months ago, has been apprehended and returned to this institution for mental treatment.

I was thunderstruck. Was this true? Undoubtedly it was. Then what kind of club did we run that a lunatic could step into it and help run it? Were we all so mad that we could not detect a madman when we saw one?

I made a motion that all charges against Swann be dropped, which was done. I offered Swann an apology, but as the leader of the Chicago John Reed Club I was a sobered and chastened Communist.

4

THE Communist Party fraction in the John Reed Club instructed me to ask my party cell — or "unit," as it was called — to assign me to full duty in the work of the club. I was instructed to give my unit a report of my activities, writing, organizing, speaking. I agreed and wrote the report.

A unit, membership in which is obligatory for all Communists, is the party's basic form of organization. Unit meetings are held on certain nights which are kept secret for fear of police raids. Nothing treasonable occurs at these meetings; but once one is a Communist, one does not have to be guilty of wrongdoing to attract the attention of the police.

I went to my first unit meeting — which was held in the Black Belt of the South Side — and introduced myself to the Negro organizer.

"Welcome, comrade," he said, grinning. "We're glad to have a writer with us."

"I'm not much of a writer," I said.

The meeting started. About twenty Negroes were gathered. The time came for me to make my report and I took out my notes and told them how I had come to join the party, what few stray items I had published, what my duties were in the John Reed Club. I finished and waited for comment. There was silence. I looked about. Most of the comrades sat with bowed heads. Then I was surprised to catch a twitching smile on the lips of a Negro woman. Minutes passed. The Negro woman lifted her head and looked at the organizer. The organizer smothered a smile. Then the woman broke into unrestrained laughter, bending forward and burying her face in her hands. I stared. Had I said something funny?

"What's the matter?" I asked.

The giggling became general. The unit organizer, who had been dallying with his pencil, looked up.

"It's all right, comrade," he said. "We're glad to have a writer in the party."

There was more smothered laughter. What kind of people were these? I had made a serious report and now I heard giggles.

"I did the best I could," I said uneasily. "I realize that writing is not basic or important. But, given time, I think I can make a contribution."

"We know you can, comrade," the black organizer said.

His tone was more patronizing than that of a Southern white man. I grew angry. I thought I knew these people, but evidently I did not. I wanted to take issue with their attitude, but caution urged me to talk it over with others first.

During the following days I learned through discreet questioning that I had seemed a fantastic element to the black Communists. I was shocked to hear that I, who had been only to grammar school, had been classified as an *intellectual.* What was an intellectual? I had never heard the word used in the sense in which it was applied to me. I had thought that they might refuse me on the ground that I was not politically advanced; I had thought they might say I would have to be investigated. But they had simply laughed.

I learned, to my dismay, that the black Communists in my unit had commented upon my shined shoes, my clean shirt, and the tie I had worn. Above all, my manner of speech had seemed an alien thing to them.

"He talks like a book," one of the Negro comrades had said. And that was enough to condemn me forever as bourgeois.

5

In my party work I met a Negro Communist, Ross, who was under indictment for "inciting to riot." Ross typified the effective street agitator. Southern-born, he had migrated north and his life reflected the crude hopes and frustrations of the peasant in the city. Distrustful but aggressive, he was a bundle of the weaknesses and virtues of a man struggling blindly between two societies, of a man living on the margin of a culture. I felt that if I could get his story I could make known some of the difficulties inherent in the adjustment of a folk people to an urban environment; I should make his life more intelligible to others than it was to himself.

I approached Ross and explained my plan. He was agreeable. He invited me to his home, introduced me to his Jewish wife, his young son, his friends. I talked to Ross for hours, explaining what I was about, cautioning him not to relate anything that he did not want to divulge.

"I'm after the things that made you a Communist," I said.

Word spread in the Communist Party that I was taking notes on the life of Ross, and strange things began to happen. A quiet black Communist came to my home one night and called me out to the street to speak to me in private. He made a prediction about my future that frightened me.

"Intellectuals don't fit well into the party, Wright," he said solemnly.

"But I'm not an intellectual," I protested. "I sweep the streets for a living." I had just been assigned by the relief system to sweep the streets for thirteen dollars a week.

"That doesn't make any difference," he said. "We've kept records of the trouble we've had with intellectuals in the past. It's estimated that only 13 per cent of them remain in the party."

"Why do they leave, since you insist upon calling me an intellectual?" I asked.

"Most of them drop out of their own accord."

"Well, I'm not dropping out," I said.

"Some are expelled," he hinted gravely.

"For what?"

"General opposition to the party's policies," he said.

"But I'm not opposing anything in the party."

"You'll have to prove your revolutionary loyalty."

"How?"

"The party has a way of testing people."

"Well, talk. What is this?"

"How do you react to police?"

"I don't react to them," I said. "I've never been bothered by them."

"Do you know Evans?" he asked, referring to a local militant Negro Communist.

"Yes. I've seen him; I've met him."

"Did you notice that he was injured?"

"Yes. His head was bandaged."

"He got that wound from the police in a demonstration," he explained. "That's proof of revolutionary loyalty."

"Do you mean that I must get whacked over the head by cops to prove that I'm sincere?" I asked.

"I'm not suggesting anything," he said. "I'm explaining."

"Look. Suppose a cop whacks me over the head and I suffer a brain concussion. Suppose I'm nuts after that. Can I write then? What shall I have proved?"

He shook his head. "The Soviet Union has had to shoot a lot of intellectuals," he said.

"Good God!" I exclaimed. "Do you know what you're saying? You're not in Russia. You're standing on a sidewalk in Chicago. You talk like a man lost in a fantasy."

"You've heard of Trotsky, haven't you?" he asked.

"Yes."

"Do you know what happened to him?"

"He was banished from the Soviet Union," I said.

"Do you know why?"

"Well," I stammered, trying not to reveal my ignorance of politics, for I had not followed the details of Trotsky's fight against the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, "it seems that after a decision had been made, he broke that decision by organizing against the party."

"It was for counter-revolutionary activity," he snapped impatiently; I learned afterwards that my answer had not been satisfactory, had not been couched in the acceptable phrases of bitter, anti-Trotsky denunciation.

"I understand," I said. "But I've never read Trotsky. What's his stand on minorities?"

"Why ask me?" he asked. "I don't read Trotsky."

"Look," I said. "If you found me reading Trotsky, what would that mean to you?"

"Comrade, you don't understand," he said in an annoyed tone.

That ended the conversation. But that was not the last time I was to hear the phrase: "Comrade, you don't understand." I had not been aware of holding wrong ideas. I had not read any of Trotsky's works; indeed, the very opposite had been true. It had been Stalin's *National and Colonial Question* that had captured my interest.

Of all the developments in the Soviet Union, the way scores of backward peoples had been led to unity on a national scale was what had enthralled me. I had read with awe how the Communists had sent phonetic experts into the vast regions of Russia to listen to the stammering dialects of peoples oppressed for centuries by the tsars. I had made the first total emotional commitment of my life when I read how the phonetic experts had given these tongueless people a language, newspapers, institutions. I had read how these forgotten folk had been encouraged to keep their old cultures, to see in their ancient customs meanings and satisfactions as deep as those contained in supposedly superior ways of living. And I had exclaimed to myself how different this was from the way in which Negroes were sneered at in America. .

Then what was the meaning of the warning I had received from the black Communist? Why was I a suspected man because I wanted to reveal the vast physical and spiritual ravages of Negro life, the profundity latent in these rejected people, the dramas as old as man and the sun and the mountains and the seas that were taking place in the poverty of black America? What was the danger in showing the kinship between the sufferings of the Negro and the sufferings of other people?

6

I SAT one morning in Ross's home with his wife and child. I was scribbling furiously upon my yellow sheets of paper. The doorbell rang and Ross's wife admitted a black Communist, one Ed Green. He was tall, taciturn, soldierly, square-shouldered. I was introduced to him and he nodded stiffly.

"What's happening here?" he asked bluntly.

Ross explained my project to him, and as Ross talked I could see Ed Green's face darken. He had not sat down and when Ross's wife offered him a chair he did not hear her.

"What're you going to do with these notes?" he asked me.

"I hope to weave them into stories," I said.

"What're you asking the party members?"

"About their lives in general."

"Who suggested this to you?" he asked.

"Nobody. I thought of it myself."

"Were you ever a member of any other political group?"

"I worked with the Republicans once," I said.

"I mean, revolutionary organizations?" he asked.

"No. Why do you ask?"

"What kind of work do you do?"

"I sweep the streets for a living."

"How far did you go in school?"

"Through the grammar grades."

"You talk like a man who went further than that," he said.

"I've read books. I taught myself."

"I don't know," he said, looking off.

"What do you mean?" I asked. "What's wrong?"

"To whom have you shown this material?"

"I've shown it to no one yet."

What was the meaning of his questions? Naïvely I thought that he himself would make a good model for a biographical sketch.

"I'd like to interview you next," I said.

"I'm not interested," he snapped.

His manner was so rough that I did not urge him. He called Ross into a rear room. I sat feeling that I was guilty of something. In a few minutes Ed Green returned, stared at me wordlessly, then marched out.

"Who does he think he is?" I asked Ross.

"He's a member of the Central Committee," Ross said.

"But why does he act like that?"

"Oh, he's always like that," Ross said uneasily.

There was a long silence.

"He's wondering what you're doing with this material," Ross said finally.

I looked at him. He, too, had been captured by suspicion. He was trying to hide the fear in his face.

"You don't have to tell me anything you don't want to," I said.

That seemed to soothe him for a moment. But the seed of doubt had already been planted. I felt dizzy. Was I mad? Or were these people mad?

"You see, Dick," Ross's wife said, "Ross is under an indictment. Ed Green is the representative of the International Labor Defense for the South Side. It's his duty to keep track of the people he's trying to defend. He wanted to know if Ross has given you anything that could be used against him in court."

I was speechless.

"What does he think I am?" I demanded.

There was no answer.

"You lost people!" I cried, and banged my fist on the table.

Ross was shaken and ashamed. "Aw, Ed Green's just supercautious," he mumbled.

"Ross," I asked, "do you trust me?"

"Oh, yes," he said uneasily.

We two black men sat in the same room looking at each other in fear. Both of us were hungry. Both of us depended upon public charity to eat and for a place to sleep. Yet we had more doubt in our hearts of each other than of the men who had cast the mold of our lives.

I continued to take notes on Ross's life, but each successive morning found him more reticent. I pitied him and did not argue with him, for I knew that persuasion would not nullify his fears. Instead I sat and listened to him and his friends tell tales of Southern Negro experience, noting them down in my mind, not daring to ask questions for fear they would become alarmed.

In spite of their fears, I became drenched in the details of their lives. I gave up the idea of the biographical sketches and settled finally upon writing a series of short stories, using the material I had got from Ross and his friends, building upon it, inventing. I wove a tale of a group of black boys trespassing upon the property of a white man and the lynching that followed. The story was published in an anthology under the title of "Big Boy Leaves Home," but its appearance came too late to influence the Communists who were questioning the use to which I was putting their lives.

My fitful work assignments from the relief officials ceased and I looked for work that did not exist. I borrowed money to ride to and fro on the club's business. I found a cramped attic for my mother and aunt and brother behind some railroad tracks. At last the relief authorities placed me in the South Side Boys' Club and my wages were just enough to provide a bare living for my family.

Then political problems rose to plague me. Ross, whose life I had tried to write, was charged by the Communist Party with "anti-leadership tendencies," "class collaborationist attitudes," and "ideological factionalism" — phrases so fanciful that I gaped when I heard them. And it was rumored that I, too, would face similar charges. It was believed that I had been politically influenced by him.

One night a group of black comrades came to my house and ordered me to stay away from Ross.

"But why?" I demanded.

"He's an unhealthy element," they said. "Can't you accept a decision?"

"Is this a decision of the Communist Party?"

"Yes," they said.

"If I were guilty of something, I'd feel bound to keep your decision," I said. "But I've done nothing."

"Comrade, you don't understand," they said. "Members of the party do not violate the party's decisions."

"But your decision does not apply to me," I said. "I'll be damned if I'll act as if it does."

"Your attitude does not merit our trust," they said.

I was angry.

"Look," I exploded, rising and sweeping my arms at the bleak attic in which I lived. "What is it here that frightens you? You know where I work. You know what I earn. You know my friends. Now, what in God's name is wrong?"

They left with mirthless smiles which implied that I would soon know what was wrong.

But there was relief from these shadowy political bouts. I found my work in the South Side Boys' Club deeply engrossing. Each day black boys between the ages of eight and twenty-five came to swim, draw, and read. They were a wild and homeless lot, culturally lost, spiritually disinherited, candidates for the clinics, morgues, prisons, reformatories, and the electric chair of the state's death house. For hours I listened to their talk of planes, women, guns, politics, and crime. Their figures of speech were as forceful and colorful as any ever used by English-speaking people. I kept pencil and paper in my pocket to jot down their word-rhythms and reactions. These boys did not fear people to the extent that every man looked like a spy. The Communists who doubted my motives did not know these boys, their twisted dreams, their all too clear destinies; and I doubted if I should ever be able to convey to them the tragedy I saw here.

7

Party duties broke into my efforts at expression. The club decided upon a conference of all the left-wing writers in the Middle West. I supported the idea and argued that the conference should deal with craft problems. My arguments were rejected. The conference, the club decided, would deal with political questions. I asked for a definition of what was expected from the writers — books or political activity. Both, was the answer. Write a few hours a day and march on the picket line the other hours.

The conference convened with a leading Communist attending as adviser. The question debated

was: What does the Communist Party expect from the club? The answer of the Communist leader ran from organizing to writing novels. I argued that either a man organized or he wrote novels. The party leader said that both must be done. The attitude of the party leader prevailed and *Left Front*, for which I had worked so long, was voted out of existence.

I knew now that the club was nearing its end, and I rose and stated my gloomy conclusions, recommending that the club dissolve. My "defeatism," as it was called, brought upon my head the sharpest disapproval of the party leader. The conference ended with the passing of a multitude of resolutions dealing with China, India, Germany, Japan, and conditions afflicting various parts of the earth. But not one idea regarding writing had emerged.

The ideas I had expounded at the conference were linked with the suspicions I had roused among the Negro Communists on the South Side, and the Communist Party was now certain that it had a dangerous enemy in its midst. It was whispered that I was trying to lead a secret group in opposition to the party. I had learned that denial of accusations was useless. It was now painful to meet a Communist, for I did not know what his attitude would be.

Following the conference, a national John Reed Club congress was called. It convened in the summer of 1934 with left-wing writers attending from all states. But as the sessions got under way there was a sense of looseness, bewilderment, and dissatisfaction among the writers, most of whom were young, eager, and on the verge of doing their best work. No one knew what was expected of him, and out of the congress came no unifying idea.

As the congress drew to a close, I attended a caucus to plan the future of the clubs. Ten of us met in a Loop hotel room, and to my amazement the leaders of the clubs' national board confirmed my criticisms of the manner in which the clubs had been conducted. I was excited. Now, I thought, the clubs will be given a new lease on life.

Then I was stunned when I heard a nationally known Communist announce a decision to dissolve the clubs. Why? I asked. Because the clubs do not serve the new People's Front policy, I was told. That can be remedied; the clubs can be made healthy and broad, I said. No; a bigger and better organization must be launched, one in which the leading writers of the nation could be included, they said. I was informed that the People's Front policy was now the correct vision of life and that the clubs could no longer exist. I asked what was to become of the young writers whom the Communist Party had implored to join the clubs and who were ineligible for the new group, and there was no answer. "This thing is cold!" I exclaimed to myself. To effect a swift change in policy, the Communist Party was dumping one organization, then organizing a new scheme with entirely new people!

I found myself arguing alone against the majority opinion and then I made still another amazing discovery. I saw that even those who agreed with me would not support me. At that meeting I learned that when a man was informed of the wish of the party he submitted, even though he knew with all the strength of his brain that the wish was not a wise one, was one that would ultimately harm the party's interests.

It was not courage that made me oppose the party. I simply did not know any better. It was inconceivable to me, though bred in the lap of Southern hate, that a man could not have his say. I had spent a third of my life traveling from the place of my birth to the North just to talk freely, to escape the pressure of fear. And now I was facing fear again.

Before the congress adjourned, it was decided that another congress of American writers would be called in New York the following summer, 1935. I was lukewarm to the proposal and tried to make up my mind to stand alone, write alone. I was already afraid that the stories I had written would not fit into the new, official mood. Must I discard my plot-ideas and seek new ones? No. I could not. My writing was my way of seeing, my way of living, my way of feeling; and who could change his sight, his sense of direction, his senses?

8

The spring of 1935 came and the plans for the writers' congress went on apace. For some obscure reason — it might have been to "save" me — I was urged by the local Communists to attend and I was named as a delegate. I got time off from my job at the South Side Boys' Club and, along with several other delegates, hitchhiked to New York.

We arrived in the early evening and registered for the congress sessions. The opening mass meeting was being held at Carnegie Hall. I asked about housing accommodations, and the New York John Reed Club members, all white members of the Communist Party, looked embarrassed. I waited while one white Communist called another white Communist to one side and discussed what could be done to get me, a black Chicago Communist, housed. During the trip I had not thought of my-

self as a Negro; I had been mulling over the problems of the young left-wing writers I knew. Now, as I stood watching one white comrade talk frantically to another about the color of my skin, I felt disgusted. The white comrade returned.

"Just a moment, comrade," he said to me. "I'll get a place for you."

"But haven't you places already?" I asked. "Matters of this sort are ironed out in advance."

"Yes," he admitted in an intimate tone. "We have some addresses here, but we don't know the people. You understand?"

"Yes, I understand," I said, gritting my teeth.

"But just wait a second," he said, touching my arm to reassure me. "I'll find something."

"Listen, don't bother," I said, trying to keep anger out of my voice.

"Oh, no," he said, shaking his head determinedly. "This is a problem and I'll solve it."

"It oughtn't to be a problem," I could not help saying.

"Oh, I didn't mean that," he caught himself.

I cursed under my breath. Several people standing near-by observed the white Communist trying to find a black Communist a place to sleep. I burned with shame. A few minutes later the white Communist returned, frantic-eyed, sweating.

"Did you find anything?" I asked.

"No, not yet," he said, panting. "Just a moment. I'm going to call somebody I know. Say, give me a nickel for the phone."

"Forget it," I said. My legs felt like water. "I'll find a place. But I'd like to get my suitcase somewhere until after the meeting tonight."

"Do you really think you can find a place?" he asked, trying to keep a note of desperate hope out of his voice.

"Of course I can," I said.

He was still uncertain. He wanted to help me, but he did not know how. He locked my bag in a closet and I stepped to the sidewalk wondering where I would sleep that night. I stood on the sidewalks of New York with a black skin and practically no money, absorbed, not with the burning questions of the left-wing literary movement in the United States, but with the problem of how to get a bath. I presented my credentials at Carnegie Hall. The building was jammed with people. As I listened to the militant speeches, I found myself wondering why in hell I had come.

I went to the sidewalk and stood studying the faces of the people. I met a Chicago club member.

"Didn't you find a place yet?" he asked.

"No," I said. "I'd like to try one of the hotels, but, God, I'm in no mood to argue with a hotel clerk about my color."

"Oh, hell, wait a minute," he said.

He scooted off. He returned in a few moments with a big, heavy white woman. He introduced us.

"You can sleep in my place tonight," she said.

I walked with her to her apartment and she introduced me to her husband. I thanked them for their hospitality and went to sleep on a cot in the kitchen. I got up at six, dressed, tapped on their door, and bade them good-bye. I went to the sidewalk, sat on a bench, took out pencil and paper, and tried to jot down notes for the argument I wanted to make in defense of the John Reed Clubs. But the problem of the clubs did not seem important. What did seem important was: Could a Negro ever live halfway like a human being in this goddamn country?

That day I sat through the congress sessions, but what I heard did not touch me. That night I found my way to Harlem and walked pavements filled with black life. I was amazed, when I asked passers-by, to learn that there were practically no hotels for Negroes in Harlem. I kept walking. Finally I saw a tall, clean hotel; black people were passing the doors and no white people were in sight. Confidently I entered and was surprised to see a white clerk behind the desk. I hesitated.

"I'd like a room," I said.

"Not here," he said.

"But isn't this Harlem?" I asked.

"Yes, but this hotel is for white only," he said.

"Where is a hotel for colored?"

"You might try the Y," he said.

Half an hour later I found the Negro Young Men's Christian Association, that bulwark of Jim Crowism for young black men, got a room, took a bath, and slept for twelve hours. When I awakened, I did not want to go to the congress. I lay in bed thinking, "I've got to go it alone . . . I've got to learn how again . . ."

I dressed and attended the meeting that was to make the final decision to dissolve the clubs. It started briskly. A New York Communist writer summed up the history of the clubs and made a motion for their dissolution. Debate started and I rose and explained what the clubs had meant to young writers and begged for their continuance. I sat down amid silence. Debate was closed. The vote was called. The room filled with uplifted hands to dissolve. Then came a call for those who disagreed and my hand went up alone. I knew that my stand would be interpreted as one of opposition to the Communist Party, but I thought: "The hell with it."

(To be continued)

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THE Atlantic

A LETTER TO GOVERNOR DEWEY . Gerald Johnson

Dewey is a fighter. That we know. But have his lieutenants and the Republican Party back of him the determination to give this country the constructive peace which Harding never gave us?

BOOK PUBLISHING IN RUSSIA . . . Robert Magidoff

NBC'S famous commentator in Moscow has written the inside story of Russian authors and publishers.

WHO REFORMS THE CRIMINAL? Judge John F. Perkins

How much can we do to cure the criminal? How much can we rely on discipline and reason?

THE PRESS CAN STILL BE FREE . . . . Ralph McGill

The fighting Editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*, one of the great liberals of the South, has this to say about our newspapers.

THE ATLANTIC REPORT on the WORLD TODAY

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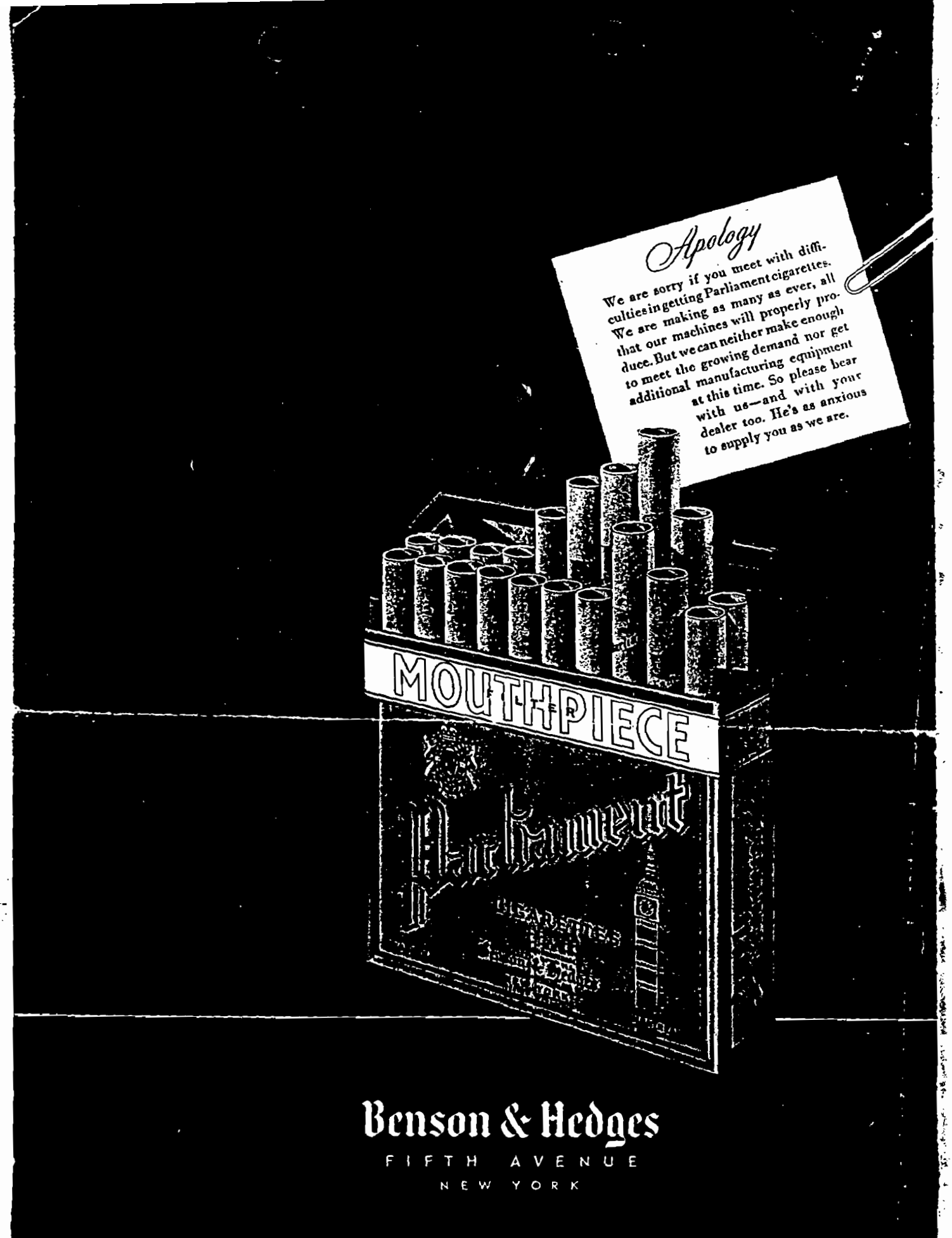
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Wright

17. If you are taking any course of training or study, give:
Type of course: None
School
Date you expect to complete course

YOUR PRESENT JOB (If you are now working or if you have a job)

18. Title of Your Present Job: Author, Journalist
19. Length of experience at this type of work: Yrs. 10 Mos.
Date began: 1937

20. Duties of Your Present Job: I write fiction articles, historical volumes, poems, plays, etc.

21. Product(s) you work on or process or service you perform: Writing
22. Machine(s) operated or tool(s) used (if any): Typewriter, Ediphone

23. Present Employer:
Name of company or proprietor: Self-employed
Address of place of work: 1 Middagh St Brooklyn Kings N.Y.

Business: (Give specific kind of farm, factory, store, public utility, school, or other single business or business where you work)
Division or branch in which you work

JOB FOR WHICH YOU ARE BEST FITTED (Describe the kind of work you think you are best fitted to do at present. This job may not be the same as your present job given above. If none, write "none.")

24. Title of Job for Which You Are Best Fitted: Fiction and Narration
25. Length of experience at this type of work: Yrs. 10 Mos.
Date began: 1937

26. Is this job the same as your present job? ☐ Yes. ☐ No. If "No," fill in item 27.

27. Duties of Job for Which You Are Best Fitted: Writing

JOB FOR WHICH YOU ARE NEXT BEST FITTED (Describe the kind of work you think you are next best fitted to do. If none, write "none.")

28. Title of Job for Which You Are Next Best Fitted: None
29. Length of experience at this type of work: Yrs. ___ Mos. ___
Date began:

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31. Duties of Job for Which You Are Next Best Fitted: None

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Salem

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Date of Birth 9/4/08
Place of Birth Natchez, Miss.

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BLACK BOY

America's most famous Negro author finds freedom, relaxation living in voluntary exile in Paris with wife and two children

BY WILLIAM GARDNER SMITH

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NEARLY EVERY AFTERNOON around three o'clock, a slightly-bent brown man walks cheerily along the Rue Monsieur le Prince in Paris, on his way to the Monaco or Procope cafes. Camera-carrying tourists, passing by, pause and nudge each other. "Look! There goes Richard Wright!"

The world-famous author of *Native Son*, *Black Boy*, and most recently, *The Outsider*, is not a particularly tall man—he's about five feet, eight inches in height—but he's the biggest American living in France today in a non-official capacity. To the French, he is one of the foremost living American writers. To the tourists, he is a famous personality, the man who shocked a generation with his naked, bitter outcry against a racial condition. Privately, and among his circle of friends, Richard Wright is a man whose entire soul is wrestling every moment with complicated problems—those of race, of society, and of his own voluntary exile.

Several years ago, the French press was filled with a story which was later reprinted around the world. Wright was allegedly dining with Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt at the UNESCO restaurant in Paris. Mrs. Roosevelt turned to him and asked: "Dick, why are you living over here in Paris like this?"

"So that," Wright was said to have replied, "I can have lunch with you like this, Mrs. Roosevelt."

Wright says that the story is not true. However, there can be no doubt that Richard Wright is a fugitive from America's race problem. For the past seven years, his refuge has been his seven-room apartment on the Left Bank. If he can swing it, he plans to remain there for the rest of his life.

Richard Wright admits he is an exile. He wants never again to be turned away from a restaurant, never again to ride a Jim Crow tram. There are many such today in Paris—artists, entertainers, students, ex-GIs. Some fool themselves by never admitting, even to themselves, that they have made their final choice; some find relief from guilt in constantly "talking The Problem" in the comfort of sidewalk cafes. All want to live their lives out here.

There is a price one must pay for exile. It is by mail, from now on, that Richard Wright must communicate with his aging mother in Mississippi, by mail that he must talk to his brother in Chicago and his uncles and aunts in California and Ohio. Exile is not so much the loss of one's country as the loss of the friends of one's youth, the abandonment forever of places which ring bells of memory. It is a matter of starting life all over again, without umbilical cord, without roots.

Only through what he reads, and what he hears from visitors, and from the painful memories inside himself, will Wright be in touch with America's race problem. And yet, he will continue to write about America's Negroes for years to come.

In his study, Richard Wright stands before his huge collection of books which he brought with him from America when he went to France to stay in 1947.

"People think," he says, "that because I'm here, I'm out of touch with the States. I find that the reverse is true; I see the States in better perspective from a distance. The outlines of the Negro struggle, and the shape of the whole society, become more sharply defined."

He feels no guilt about leaving the States for good. "Every Negro in America carries all through his life the burden of race consciousness like a corpse on his back. I shed that corpse when I stepped off the train in Paris. Half a lifetime is long enough to carry it. I don't intend to pick it up again."

People write him: "When are you coming back to the States? You're needed here in the fight."

"What fight?" Wright replies. "I fight with words. They know no national boundaries."

He has no intention of shedding his American citizenship. "But I am like many writers before me and during my time, who have felt freer to deal with the subjects they were born with while in exile."

Richard Wright looks conservative. He dresses quietly—"in my international wardrobe: the tie from Rome, socks from England, suit from France, nylon shirt made in the United States and bought in Germany." He has a broad sense of humor and laughs raucously, soft brown eyes twinkling behind rimless glasses. His face is full and his neck is short, so that his head seems, at times, to be sitting on his shoulders. A lover of argument, an endless talker (voice still rich with the Southern accent bred in his youth), he seems jolly and easy-going, not at all like a man capable of having written *Black Boy* or *Native Son*.

When he first came to France, the people of his neighborhood used to stop him occasionally on the street. "You're Richard Wright, aren't you?" They had seen his pictures in the newspapers; some had read his books. They watched him closely; in those days, there were not too many Americans living in the city, and the people were curious.

There were things the French liked and things they did not like. Wright was a brown man, first of all, which was a point in his favor; and he was a writer which was,

Wright family has dinner in their home in typical French style with one of their two maids serving food. Even Wright's two daughters, Rachel and Julia, eat six courses—soup, *hors d'œuvres*, main dish, salad, cheese, dessert, followed by coffee and *digestif*. Wine overflows on table although Wrights still indulge in U. S. habit of drinking water.

of course, good. The butcher and grocer watched what food he bought, to see if he was civilized enough to eat properly (in France, one is not civilized if one does not have a good palate); the wine merchant saw what wines Wright took, and compared notes with the other storekeepers. So far so good.

But Wright bought a big Oldsmobile, and the French began to frown; he was "showing off" his "American wealth" as the French saw it. And many a morning, Wright would come downstairs to find that people had spit—and worse—on the shiny car. Finally, Wright took the car to a shop and traded it in for a Citröen, a French car. ("The Olds burned up too much gas anyway; besides, it was too big for these tiny streets.") The neighbors smiled and nodded with approval. "Now you are truly French!" his butcher told him.

Truly French he is. He has learned to "slow down" the pace of his life, no longer finds it difficult to sit for hours, simply chatting or thinking, at the sidewalk cafes.

Days, he likes to wander through his beautiful adopted city, choosing the narrow, quaint streets, or the broad, fashionable, bustling boulevards, according to his mood. Sometimes he wanders along the Seine, stopping at the bookstalls, looking for "finds" (Recently, he picked up first editions of James Weldon Johnson's *God's Trombones* and Claude McKay's *Banjo*.) Sometimes he goes to the Left Bank Bookstore, across from Notre Dame, where George, the bearded, bohemian young American proprietor, invites him to come in back for a cup of coffee or tea.

There are cafes and cafes, to suit all moods. When he has finished a book, and the weather is fine, Wright likes to drag a

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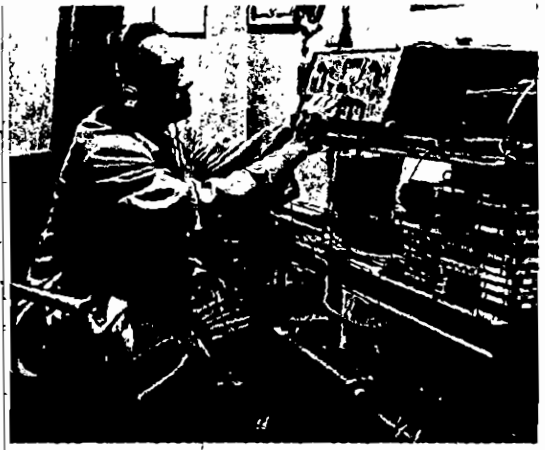

Toying with his tape recorder. Wright enjoys time away from his typewriter. Recorder is his favorite hobby. He has a large collection of old jazz and blues numbers which he plays on recorder for entertainment of family and friends.

BLACK BOY IN FRANCE *Continued*

friend to the staid Deux Magots, at St. Germain-des-Pres, where he talks a mile a minute about writing, writers and the shapely "people" passing by. At the ancient Procope, which looks more like a living room than a cafe, he chats with French authors like Jean Paul-Sartre. At the Monaco, he becomes involved in heated arguments, mostly about world problems, with Americans, English and Canadians living in Paris.

There he teases Americans who are frightened by the revolutionary storms brewing all over the world. "Don't worry about a thing. When the Africans and Chinese have conquered the world and are going around persecuting all you white people you just come to me and I'll tell them you're friends of mine and you'll be all right. Don't worry about a thing. I'll look out for you." The Americans smile—rather sickly smiles . . .

Sundays, frequently he and his white wife, Ellen, go for walks with their two children (both girls) in the Luxembourg Gardens, around the corner from where they live. Wright has fun with his youngest daughter, Rachel, who, born in France, speaks only French, knows hardly any English. Rachel, age four, is a French citizen, and will be able to choose between French and

At sidewalk cafe. Wright talks about world affairs with friends Mercer Cook, Jr., (left), son of Howard University French professor, and Ollie Harrington, Pittsburgh Courier cartoonist. Girl in center is Canadian and other girl French.

...her desk. Wright's wife, Ellen, works on her own business as a literary agent. ... in partnership with the wife of a French deputy, sells manuscripts in Eng-... France and America—many of them translations from French.

American nationality when she reaches the age of 21. Julia, 11, speaks both French and English perfectly. Sometimes she gets in arguments with other bi-lingual children, and jumps back and forth between English and French with perfect ease. She was born in America, but her only memory of the States is as one long avenue of drug stores. Wright and Ellen both speak French, though with accents.

Gertrude Stein Invited Him To Paris

IT WAS BACK in 1945 that Richard Wright wrote a very favorable review of a book by Gertrude Stein, the famous American expatriate living in Paris, who befriended and aided such famous artists as Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Pablo Picasso. Every other reviewer had said that Miss Stein's book was "unintelligible." Wright wrote that he had read it to a group of Negro workers, and that they had "understood it perfectly."

From Miss Stein came a letter: "Dear Richard, it is obvious that you and I are the only two geniuses alive in this era."

Out of that letter grew up a friendship between Wright and Miss Stein which led finally to an invitation, in the name of some

In bookshop backroom, Wright talks about literature with American proprietor named George. Parisian writers frequently meet there in afternoon for tea and chat about latest literary movements. Wright is lionized by group.

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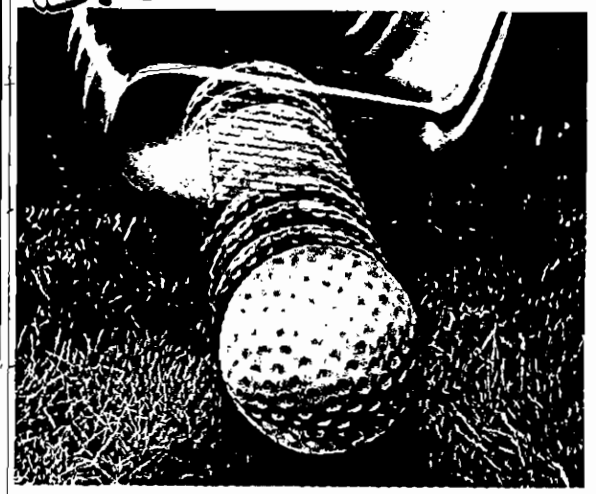

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BLACK BOY IN FRANCE *Continued*

French writers, to Wright to come to Paris for an extended visit.

"I'd always wanted to visit France. I wanted to move for a while into a non-racist atmosphere." His desire to depart had been intensified a couple of months previous to the invitation, when an owner refused to sell him a house in Vermont because he was a Negro.

In May, 1946, Wright left his apartment at 82 Washington Place in Greenwich Village, and, with his wife and child, set sail. When they arrived in Paris, they were met by Gertrude Stein, some French writers, two limousines and a battery of French reporters.

"I could tell a difference immediately between France and America. I could *feel* the difference in the air!"

They stayed at a hotel, where Miss Stein had booked a room. But they were going to "stay a while," and wanted an apartment. Wright wandered into a candy store. The proprietor looked at him. "Didn't I see your picture in the newspapers?"

"Yes." Wright asked about an apartment.

The proprietor winked. "For *you*, I know of an apartment!"

It was on the Boulevard St. Michel, in the heart of the student quarter, and the Wrights moved in. The hustle and bustle of the street enchanted them. They lived the lives of celebrities: a reception was given in their honor, they were invited everywhere, Wright made speeches, was given the key to the city.

Six months passed—the length of time the Wrights had decided to stay. They did not dread the return to the States; time and distance had dulled painful memories, and a certain nostalgia had set in. Tearful goodbyes, a three-week look at London—then the return, aboard the Queen Elizabeth. There, before them, was the New York City skyline. Home. A good, warm feeling, in the pit of the stomach, after all.

Before leaving the States, Wright had purchased a new house on Charles Street in the Village; into this the family moved. They contacted friends. Wright began to play with ideas for a new book. The old and comfortable routine again.

But something was wrong, something made Wright uneasy. He could not decide, at first, just what it was; then he put his finger on it—"the coldness of the people." Why did they not smile in the stores, in the restaurants? Why were they rushing so, always chasing money so? Why didn't they relax and take a drink?

Seated before his typewriter, supposedly working, Wright would find himself staring out of the window over the rooftops—and seeing in his mind's eye the haunting, picturesque grey rooftops of the Paris he had left. Walking through Central Park in Spring, his thoughts would wander to the fantastic formal beauty of the Luxembourg Gardens. New York's avenues made him think of Paris' tree-lined boulevards. He would, of a restless summer afternoon, walk into a soda fountain for a Coke, and something inside would cry for the slow-motion peace of a Paris cafe, where a man could sit for hours over an *aperitif*.

Wright said to Ellen, "Let's go back to Paris."

She nodded. In July, 1947, they sailed again.

Settle In Strange New World

THEY SAILED into a stormy sea of French political agitation—the period of the great General Strikes. Workers and the special police patrolled the streets, scowling at each other. Frequently, there were eruptions. No subways ran; industries were closed, gas and water were periodically cut off; garbage stood uncollected in the streets and rats feasted after midnight.

Into this electric atmosphere came the Wrights, determined to cut a clearing in the strange new world and settle down to a new life.

They were staying with French friends. First item on the agenda was to find an apartment. They managed to get one on the outskirts of the city. Then, through amazing luck, they found the one in which they now live. Excited by the newness of everything around them, they wandered through second-hand shops and bargain centers, collecting original furniture for the

Strolling along book stalls on left bank of Seine, Wright finds free atmosphere he stops to browse and pick up occasional rare books. He has completed new novel to follow publication of his newest book, *The Outsider*.

BLACK BOY IN FRANCE *Continued*

new home. Americans, they were not used to the low temperatures at which the French keep their buildings; they called in workmen and had a central heating system installed. When they were fairly well settled, they transferred Julia, then five, to a French private school, one of the best in the country.

They explored. Ellen had had a little French in school, Richard none, but they made themselves understood through a combination of sign language and pidjin English. They found enchanting, but baffling, the maze of narrow, winding streets of the Latin Quarter. Wright, on his way to the grocer, would have to stop a policeman to ask directions; on the way back, he'd ask the same policeman how to get home. A walk around the corner was enough to get one lost.

Getting from one end of the town to the other was a problem, for taxis were scarce, due to the gas and metal shortage which followed the war. Whenever a taxi appeared, five or six people would sprint toward it. Frequently the Wrights bumped heads over the back seats with people who were rushing to enter the other side.

Socially, Richard Wright associated with some of the foremost intellectuals and artists of France. His associates included Andre Gide, Gaston Monmerville, Albert Camus, Jean Paul-Sartre, Claude Bourdet and Leopole Sengor. The Italian Culture Association invited him to Italy, where he gave a series of lectures on Negro literature in the United States. "I got invitations to lecture in Poland and Czechoslovakia, but I didn't go." He helped launch the famous magazine, Presence Africain, and became the patron of some of the little magazines like New Story.

When Rachel was born, a French citizen (because she was born on French soil), Wright became a "privileged resident," as the French call it. It is the next thing to being a French citizen.

He was now a fixture in Paris. Americans, particularly Negro Americans, looked him up when in the city, and his guest list included Julian Black, Elmer Carter, Charles S. Johnson, Dorothy Maynor and E. Franklin Frazier.

When his car came, Wright set out, with some trepidation, to master the difficult art of driving in Paris—a city where there is no speed limit and few traffic lights, where no driver obeys any rules and where driving is more a proof of courage than anything else. Motorists at intersections dash at each other like pilots in the dogfights of World War I, seeing which one will "give way" first. "You drive in Paris at your own risk," says Wright. But he has learned how to fight for every inch of space like everybody else.

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BLACK BOY IN FRANCE *Continued*

Wright with manuscripts, seeking advice and criticism. When he was flooded, Wright used to hand some of the manuscripts to his wife. "See what you think of this." Eventually, Ellen got the idea of becoming an agent for writers whose work she liked. With Helen Bokanovsky, co-translator of *Native Son* into French and wife of a French deputy, she went into the business, which is now thriving. She sells novels, stories and articles in England, America and France.

Summers, the Wrights pack their bags and climb into their car and motor through the little villages of France, stopping whenever it takes their fancy. They have also visited England, Italy and Switzerland. Only once did Wright revisit America: as a stop over on his way from Argentina, where he had played the hero role in the film version of his own novel, *Native Son*—"that was the director's idea; a bad idea." For the rest, he has remained on the Continent, and mostly in France.

Paris Move Was Political Change, Too

THE WRIGHTS breakfast in bed. Richard works comfortably in his long, narrow den, lined with books, and containing a cot on which he may lie down, when he is tired, and relax by listening to music (good jazz and some classics) on his tape recorder. Their lease on their apartment is for life and it is a fantastic bargain: they need pay only $180 *per year!*

Their children do well in their vigorous French, Latin, science, music and mathematics courses.

Wright's former books continue to sell in nearly every country in the world (in America alone, *Native Son* sold a total of 553,220 copies, *Black Boy* 878,318, and *The Outsider* is going strong). There seems no reason why, barring war or a natural catastrophe, the Wrights should not continue to live a pleasant life in Paris—"a city I could die in!" as Wright says.

"The break from the United States was more than a geographical change," says Wright. "It was a break with my former attitudes as a Negro and a Communist—an attempt to think over and re-define my attitudes and my thinking. I was trying to grapple with the big problem—the problem and meaning of Western civilization as a whole, and the relation of Negroes and other minority groups to it."

Out of this thinking and self-searching grew the idea for Wright's latest novel, *The Outsider*. "It's the way novels are born for me. It can't be said that I write books; books happen with me. I become deeply involved with certain problems. The way I attack them, and think them through, is by writing books."

When he begins to write a book, the first thing Wright does is ask himself: "What is the total impression I want to make on the reader?" This "total impression" becomes the whole point of the book—every chapter, every episode must contribute to this total effect. His is the intense school of Dostoievsky and Kafka, rather than the more diffused school of Tolstoy, Dickens or Herman Melville.

He thinks of a story which will get over the desired total impression, and in which he can utilize all of the traditional devices of the story-teller—suspense, surprise, movement and characterization.

The next step is to sit down in front of the all-mighty typewriter and write as rapidly as possible a first draft of the novel in its absolute essentials.

He breathes then, for a while. The book in its main lines is safe now, there on paper, and he is free of that dread terror of all writers—that the idea, the story, will somehow escape the mind before it can be committed to paper. When he is calm again, and cold, Wright does a second draft, weaving in atmosphere and background, amplifying the characters, until he feels that "everything is in."

"Usually, there's too much in." So he does a third draft, to "squeeze out the water." A fourth draft follows, for "polishing."

"A book for me is finished," Wright says, "when I can read it over and feel that there's nothing more I can do to it." Sometimes

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Sewing lessons are given two Wright girls by seamstress who comes to house once a week to mend clothes and make dresses, draperies and other odds and ends. ous musician Saint-Saens once lived in apartment now occupied by Wrights.

Quiet evening at home is spent by Wright family, with girls doing their homework, Richard reading a book and Ellen sewing. Wright's wife is a Brooklyn girl whom he married in 1940. When Wright is working, he sometimes puts in 14 hours a day.

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BLACK BOY IN FRANCE Continued

his books never reach the fourth draft; he abandons them somewhere along the line. In his apartment is a stock of uncompleted manuscripts five feet high.

He is against the book-a-year philosophy. "Each writer has only a few books in him. He should save his energy for them."

He has now completed a new, short novel. This one—"like all my future books, I think"—will take up aspects of the problems broached in *The Outsider*.

In several years of exile, Wright has come to some new conclusions about the world in which we live. One of the most important is this: "The Industrial Revolution, and the dislocations caused by it, are the chief causes of our present woes."

He thinks that "Communism, Fascism and Naziism are only experimental attempts of modern man to find a new system of organization for modern industrial life. The first item on the agenda of modern man is the organization of modern life. Societies must guarantee to men that man can remain human, despite the factory system."

"America," he adds with a smile, "can start by guaranteeing some humanity to its own Negroes."

He likes the feeling of racial solidarity he finds among colored peoples in Europe, thinks that "the position of American Negroes, as the most advanced of minorities, is being challenged by other peoples; I think the Africans, for example, are forging ahead."

He wishes for some kind of inter-communication among Negro writers, thinks that the State Department is "silly" to send its Edith Sampsons abroad, to talk to Europeans, because "the Europeans laugh at what she says."

On the Negro problem in general, he says, "I definitely do not share the widespread, facile optimism voiced by so many Negro leaders. The problem of the Negro is a complicated one, reaching into economics, sociology, psychology. It will not be solved until other, general problems are solved also."

What he calls the "growing alliance" between white leaders and Negro leaders disturbs him. The benefits bestowed upon a "few" Negro leaders are, he feels, "a way of obscuring the basic problem, rather than attempting to solve it fundamentally. The mass of Negroes are not helped by the appointments of a few Negroes to good posts. This trickery is going to lead to some unpleasant surprises when the Negro youth and underprivileged workers begin to make themselves and their needs felt."

As for himself, Wright will remain in exile, "bringing up my children to feel free and dignified," writing of the Negro and of man in the modern age. His writing will continue to be a thinking aloud over issues, "posing the problems and the questions as to their solutions—posing them only, not answering them."

Walking through Paris streets. Wright pauses on a bridge back of Notre Dame. He does not believe in writing books too often, decries the book-a-year philosophy. "Each writer has only a few books in him. He should save his energy for them."

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If you have trouble with plates that slip, rock and cause sore gums—try Brimms Plasti-Liner. One application makes plates fit snugly without powder or paste, because Brimms Plasti-Liner hardens permanently to your plate. It relines and refits loose plates in a way no powder or paste can do. Even on old rubber plates you get good results six months to a year or longer. YOU CAN EAT ANYTHING! Simply lay soft strip of Plasti-Liner on troublesome upper or lower. Bite and it molds perfectly. Easy to use, tasteless, odorless, harmless to you and your plates. Removable as directed. Plasticizer included. Money back if not completely satisfied. If not available at your drug store, send $1.25 for reliner for 1 plate.

PLASTI-LINER INC., Buffalo 11, New York—Dept. 22-U

BRIMMS PLASTI-LINER
THE PERMANENT DENTURE RELINER

HOT WATER QUICK!

New Portable Pocket-Size Water Heater

Plugs in water; wire in socket . . . heat in minutes! Hot Water! Thermostat can be hidden, washing, shaving, etc. Heats small quantities very hot! (Heating good of large quantities depends on quantity, time & ambient temperature). Popular priced Stainless Steel model, $3.95. Heat one of you'll find your friends want it, too. Order it on approval for only $1.98 plus tax. Or, we will send one to you for only $1.98 plus tax. SEND NO MONEY! Pay postman $1.98 plus postage. Federal Tax, C.O.D. postal charges. Satisfaction guaranteed or return within 10 days for refund. SOLO-QUOTE, 404 W. Broadway, Dept. C-41, CHICAGO 10, ILL.

AGENTS DISTRIBUTORS WRITE. REGULAR PRICE $2.95—LIMITED TIME only $1.98

CHILDREN SLEEP AWAY THESE CONSTIPATION WORRIES!

Next Day Happy, Ready to Play When Tummy Ache Goes Away

When constipation occasionally upsets little stomachs, children often act up, have tantrums, or sulk because they feel miserable, can't eat or sleep right. That's why wise mothers give Syrup of Black-Draught whenever youngsters are sluggish, suffer fussy digestive upset, sour stomach, or bad breath from constipation. They know its wonderful laxative action can help sweeten such sour stomach, too! Then how a child's disposition improves!

Laxative-Stomach Sweetener Works Overnight!

Syrup of Black-Draught tastes honey-sweet as children take it eagerly. Made of nature's pure vegetable herbs—selected to act thoroughly, but gently. No harsh griping. Given at bedtime, brings comforting relief in morning—thus helps sweeten sour stomach too. Your child virtually sleeps away these constipation worries! Next day youngsters laugh and play! No wonder 17,000,000 bottles have been sold. Get Syrup of Black-Draught from druggists. Works wonders for a child's good nature!

ADULTS For constipation try regular Black-Draught. Laxative-stomach sweetener, famous since 1840. Familiar Powder, Granulated or convenient new Tablet form.

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File No. 100-41674-1A Ind

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