

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : The Director

DATE: June 23, 1945

FROM : D. M. Ladd

SUBJECT: RICHARD BRANSTEN, with aliases  
Internal Security - C

- Mr. Tolson ✓
- Mr. E. A. Tamm
- Mr. Clegg
- Mr. Coffey
- Mr. Glavin
- Mr. Ladd
- Mr. Nichols ✓
- Mr. Rosen
- Mr. Tracy
- Mr. Mohr
- Mr. Carson
- Mr. Hendon
- Mr. Mumford
- Mr. Jones
- Mr. Quinn Tamm
- Tele. Room
- Mr. Nease
- Miss Beahm
- Miss Gandy

Reference is made to my memorandum of June 8, 1945, summarizing all information available relative to Richard Bransten who is preparing a biography of former President Herbert Hoover.

The New Haven Office has now advised that subject's wife, Ruth McKenney Bransten, has purchased the residence at 48 Canal Street, Westport, Connecticut, from one Ava B. Booth, the wife of Henry Booth for \$26,500. The deed was registered in the office of the Town Clerk, Westport, Connecticut at 11:09 a.m. on June 15, 1945.

Richard Bransten has advised Local Selective Service Board 25A, Fairfield, Connecticut, that he is moving to 48 Canal Street effective July 2, 1945. He stated he would be traveling from June 15 to July 2 from his address in Los Angeles and could be reached during that period in the event of an emergency through his mother, Mrs. Charles Bransten of 2275 Broadway, San Francisco, California.

You will recall that Richard Bransten owned a residence on Easton Road, Westport, Connecticut. It has now been ascertained that this property was sold by Bransten on April 10, 1944, to Lester and Shirley Krieger of Brooklyn for \$16,500.

The New Haven Office has been instructed to initiate an active investigation upon the arrival of the Branstens at Westport, Connecticut and to furnish the Bureau immediately with any information it may receive reflecting the progress being made by Bransten on the Hoover biography.

The technical surveillance which was maintained on the Bransten residence in Los Angeles has been discontinued in view of their removal from their residence and authorization is being sought to install a technical surveillance at their new residence at Westport, Connecticut.

RECORDED & INDEXED

57

EX-64

100-80069-105  
*[Handwritten signatures and initials]*

57 JUL 3 - 1945 234

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Origin of case: NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT NY File No. 100-1128 be

Report Made At New Haven, Conn.	Date Made 9/21/45	Period 6/21-23; 7/4, 5, 14, 16, 21, 28; 8/4, 11, 20, 25; 8/6, 10-12/25	Report Made By HAROLD E. MEYER
Title RICHARD BRANSTEN, was.		93777 FEDERAL SECURITY - C	

Synopsis.

RICHARD BRANSTEN and RUTH HICKENEY presently reside 48 Canal Street, Westport, Connecticut. That residence purchased by the latter for \$26,500. Both continue actively engaged in profession as writers. Subject known to have completed 5th Chapter, biography of HERBERT HOOVER. Recently received assistance from GEORGE SELDES, publisher of "IN FACT" magazine, concerning one phase. SEYMOUR BAKST, research assistant, continues to provide BRANSTEN with data. Subject attended only one professional group, CPA meeting at Norwalk, Conn.; one session State CPA Convention 7/22/45 as a guest; one session State CPA Convention 8/12/45 - both Bridgeport, Conn.; also several sessions of the National CPA Convention, NYC, 7/26, 27/45, on a "NEW MASSES" press card. Was disappointed and returned to Westport before conclusion thereof; is reported to have been elected to the State Board of the Connecticut CP but disqualified as ineligible. Reported to have been assigned by ANDREW ONDA, State Secretary, CP, to assist in organization of the small "Workers Group", CP, Norwalk, Connecticut. Also subject and wife reported to have given up politics and were urged by subject's mother to give up the Party, as it was believed their work would benefit. Subject and wife critical of "DAILY WORKER" policy and of the editors and policy of "NEW MASSES", Communist publication. Both are known to have composed letters and articles critical of "DW" and the present "desertion" role of "NW", and have attempted to force a change in "NW" editorial policy by resigning as contributing editors. Have also prepared correspondence to

COPIES DESTROYED 12-1-58

Approved	SAC	100-80068-129	REC-10
COPIES 7114		SEP 25 1945	EX-30
5 - Bureau			
1 - New York (Info-Encl.)			
1 - Los Angeles (Info-Encl.)			
1 - San Francisco (Info-Encl.)			
5 - New Haven			

NH  
100-1128

WILLIAM Z. FOSTER in that regard. Numerous associates, business and correspondent contacts in Connecticut, New York and California set forth.

- P -

REFERENCE: Bureau File #100-80068 93779  
Bureau Letter to New York, 6/2/45.  
Letter to Bureau from Los Angeles, 6/19/45.  
Bureau Letter 6/25/45.  
Letter to Bureau from Los Angeles 7/12/45.  
Report of Special Agent Fred G. Dupuis, dated 7/12/45 at Los Angeles, California.  
Teletype to Bureau, 7/21/45.  
Bureau letter to Los Angeles, 7/27/45.  
Letters to Bureau from Los Angeles dated 8/24/45 and 8/25/45.

DETAILS: AT WESTPORT, CONNECTICUT:

The subject is considered a key figure in CP activities in the area of the New Haven Field Division.

RESIDENCE AND EMPLOYMENT

The records of the Town Clerk reflect in Book of Deeds, Vol. 51, Page 307, that property on Easton Road, Westport, formerly owned by RICHARD BRANSTEN was sold to LESTER and SHIRLEY KRIEGER, Brooklyn, New York on April 10, 1944 for the sum of \$16,500. It was noted that a mortgage on this property by RICHARD BRANSTEN was held by one EDWARD L. GREENBERG. Witnesses to the signing of the warranty deed at the exchange of the property to the KRIEGERS, were JOHN P. LIZAK and JOSEPH J. KANABAY, both of Chicago Illinois.

On June 15, 1945, deed was registered with the office of the Town Clerk which indicated that RUTH MCKENNEY BRANSTEN of Brentwood, California, had purchased the residence and property at 48 Canal Street, Westport from AVA B. BOOTH, wife of one HENRY BOOTH. The transaction was handled through the HARPER -- WOOD COMPANY, INC., a real estate agency, Taylor Place, Westport and attorney for RUTH MCKENNEY and the subject was HERWARD WAKE, same address. The property was purchased at a reported amount of \$26,500.

Subject Invited to Speak At Mass Meeting  
Camp Unity -- Wingdale, New York

RUTH McKENNEY told Confidential Informant T-2 that BEATRICE — last name unknown to the informant — who is possibly connected with the "New Masses" magazine, had attempted to obtain the services of *her* and BRANSTEN to speak before a large mass meeting at Camp Unity at Wingdale, New York on a date subsequent to July 26th. BRANSTEN stated that he had offered a number of excuses to decline this request but had finally advised the above individual that both would decline because in substance they were not in accord with "New Masses" policy as "New Masses" had not come out with a strong enough policy and in view of the fact that BRANSTEN was to attend the National CPA Convention before taking any further action, his future activities in the Party would depend on what transpired at the National Convention and his attitude towards it.

Subject's Position In Regards To "Politics"

Confidential Informant T-3 stated that BRANSTEN had apparently advised his mother, MRS. CHARLES BRANSTEN of 2275 Broadway, San Francisco, 15, California, that he and RUTH McKENNEY had decided to forego future activity in politics. According to the informant, MRS. BRANSTEN had in correspondence dated Saturday August 11, 1945 to RICHARD and RUTH BRANSTEN made the following statement: "I am happy and relieved that you both have decided to give up politics. I then wish you would go further and resign from the party and keep yourselves free from any labels and obligations. I think your work will benefit by it, you wouldn't then have to think, 'I musn't say this or that as it might conflict with Party ideas.'" This copy of correspondence furnished by the informant is retained in the New Haven file.

"Workers Group" -- CP and CPA  
Norwalk, Connecticut

Confidential Informant T-2 was advised by BRANSTEN that RUDOLF GILLESPIE, upon the recommendation of ANDREW ONDA had advised him of the date of the next meeting of the above group which had been inactive during the "unsettled" state of the party. Following the State Convention of the CP August 12, 1945, Confidential Informant T-10 was advised by RUDOLF GILLESPIE that he had been told by ONDA that BRANSTEN had been assigned to the Norwalk Workers Group of the CP. ONDA had further advised that BRANSTEN would be able to assist in strengthening an organization of that group which is composed mostly of Negroes.

Miscellaneous Communist Activities  
And Contacts in Connecticut

93786

RUTH BRANSTEN advised Confidential Informant T-2 that she had invited Mrs. GUNNAR (ESTHER) MICKELSON to the Bransten residence on the evening of July 14th and others to be present would be MAX and GRACE GRANICH, MILDRED GILMAN, RUTH YOUNGMAN, HELEN and GEORGE SELDES, CLARA and LOUIS SCALA.

Mrs. BRANSTEN said that the affair was to be in the nature of an outdoor barbecue for approximately 20 guests in celebration of the BRANSTEN's homecoming to Connecticut and was to be a closed affair.

It will be noted that the MICKELSONS are reported Communists. GUNNAR MICKELSON is a former CIO organizer from Milwaukee and reported to be acquainted with influential and high ranking Communists and very friendly with GEORGE SELDES. MICKELSON is presently employed as a script writer for soap operas and other national radio programs. MILDRED GILMAN is believed to be identical with MILDRED G. WOELFORTH, reported left-wing writer and former member of the LAW, who is in frequent contact with the BRANSTENS and the SELDES. RUTH YOUNGMAN is a resident of Westport, Connecticut. HELEN and GEORGE SELDES, CLARA and LOUIS SCALA are considered key Communists in the New Haven Field Division.

This Informant stated the subject made arrangements for medical care and treatment from Dr. BARNET FINE, a resident of Stamford, Connecticut. It is to be noted that Dr. FINE is a known and registered member of the CP and CPA in that city and at least one recent meeting of the Stamford Professional Group of the CPA was held at his residence. According to information appearing in the New Haven files, he is the personal physician of a predominant number of Stamford, Connecticut Communists.

RUTH BRANSTEN told the informant that MRS. IVY BRIDGE, an old friend of the BRANSTENS had invited Her and RICHARD BRANSTEN to attend an Authors Tea to inaugurate a Book Collection Drive for Russia through the Stamford Chapter of Russian War Relief to be held August 27th at Stamford Connecticut. According to the informant RICHARD BRANSTEN had declined the invitation giving as the reason, "We usually try to avoid that sort of thing." The informant was advised by RUTH BRANSTEN that a social gathering would be held on the night of August 17th at the Bransten residence, to include mutual friends, GOLDIE and LARRY HILL, who were formerly managers of a book shop and who now reside at Prospect Shore ~~Stamford~~; and RUTH and AL —possibly ALLAN and MRS. GREEN of Westport, Connecticut. ALLAN GREEN is a known member of the State Council of the "Independent Citizens Committee of Arts, Sciences and Professions, Inc." an organiza-

X  
tion with headquarters in New Haven, which the Connecticut Communists are attempting to control. The informant stated that another gathering at the NICKELSON's residence to include the BRANSTENS and GEORGE and HELEN SELDES was planned for August 15th, the purpose of which was to discuss the end of the war.

This informant was advised by BRANSTEN that some business scheduled at the residence of JOHN and IVY BRIDGE in Stamford, Connecticut for August 19th had to be cancelled due to the unexpected illness of RUTH MCKENNEY. It will be noted that JOHN and IVY BRIDGE are key Communists in the area of Stamford, Connecticut. JOHN BRIDGE is professor at the Columbia University, New York City and associated with a committee in that city aiding MORRIS U. SCHAPPEES.

The informant stated further that BRANSTEN had advised him that RUTH MCKENNEY's nervous breakdown had resulted in her hospitalization and that it was due to the fact that she had been taking Bonzedrine for the past three years. She planned to be under the care of a physician in New York City. The informant stated on August 19, 1945 that MAX and GRACE GRAMICH, whom BRANSTEN stated he had not seen for some time, were to visit at the BRANSTEN residence on that date.

RUTH BRANSTEN told the informant at a later date that she was making plans for a gathering to be held at the residence of GUNNAR NICKELSON September 1, 1945 at which the BRANSTENS, HELEN and GEORGE SELDES and a Dr. GUMPERT (phonetic) would be present. The latter had been visiting at the BRANSTEN residence. On August 31st GEORGE SELDES told RUTH BRANSTEN, according to the informant that on August 30th he and HELEN SELDES had received a telegram from VERA CASPARY, who apparently had returned to the U. S. from ENGLAND. VERA CASPARY had indicated a desire to visit the SELDES Labor Day weekend. SELDES stated that GENE WHITAKER (possibly Mrs. EUGENIA FOSTER WHITAKER) a girlfriend, of HELEN's was also planning to visit the SELDES the same weekend. GEORGE SELDES stated that he had had to advise both parties however, to postpone these visits due to the illness of HELEN SELDES, who was on the verge of a nervous breakdown. According to the informant, BRANSTEN appeared to be very interested in this information.

It will be noted that VERA CASPARY and EUGENIA FOSTER WHITAKER are both subjects of Internal SECURITY - R investigations in regard to their reported connections with the Comintern Apparatus.

Confidential Informant T-3 stated the BRANSTENS had received a communication from CLAUDE COCKBURN of 5 Hamilton House, Hall Road, L

Position Concerning The "Daily Worker"

Confidential Informant T-3 stated that RUTH MCKENNEY or RICHARD BRANSTEN had attempted to compose a letter to the editors of the "DAILY WORKER" on the 25th of July. This letter was very critical of the editors decision to discontinue the pre-convention political discussions which had appeared up until that date. The informant stated that apparently after several attempts a letter was composed and addressed to ADAM -- (possibly ADAM LAPIN of the "DAILY WORKER") in which it is pointed out that numerous efforts had been made to compose a satisfactory critical letter to the editor of the "WORKER" with negative results, which dealt with the same subject matter.

Position Concerning "NEW MASSES"

On August 6, 1945, BRANSTEN advised T-2 that he had been asked by JOSEPH NORTH to attend a meeting regarding "NEW MASSES" magazine to be held in New York City but had declined advising NORTH that he had no new ideas other than those which he had already given NORTH. At a later date BRANSTEN told the informant that ESTHER \_\_\_\_\_ (office secretary at "New Masses") had requested that he attend an important meeting at the offices of "New Masses" at New York City on the morning of August 22nd but BRANSTEN had declined giving the reason that his wife was ill and he was unable to make it. Confidential Informant T-3 stated that on August 17, 1945 that the subject or his wife had composed a letter to the editors of "New Masses" which they desired made public in the columns of "NEW MASSES". This letter dealt with the issue of "NEW MASSES" for the week of August 14th and characterized the magazine as defunct in type and in fact; that the editorial policy was supine, trivial and dishonest and full of fatal lassitude; that articles were stale re-hashers of material originally appearing in the "DAILY WORKER" and that the magazine section was nauseatingly bankrupt, and declining from that high standard.

The informant stated that under date of August 19, 1945, correspondence was prepared to the editor of the "New Masses" by RICHARD BRANSTEN, which pointed out a continuing criticism of the editorial policy of "NEW" and further criticised what BRANSTEN and his wife considered to be the "desertion" role of NEW MASSES and that "NEW MASSES" while bankrupt, was also reflecting the bankruptcy of the Party. The correspondence indicated that RUTH MCKENNEY and the subject desired to state publicly their disagreement and decision to disassociate themselves from "A magazine which is not only not fulfilling its function but actually holding back the progressive movement." BRANSTEN stated, "As Communists, we can pursue no other course."

The letter indicated that 8 or 10 attempts had been made to express their complete disagreement and that a large number of letters had been written and disposed of prior to making this decision and that instant letter was for the editors alone and not for publication and indicated that an enclosed letter was to be published.

93729

BRANSTEN stated, "If this means violent attacks on us personally and assassination of us and still accomplishes the end of making a strong magazine then it is worth while." The informant, . . . was provided with a copy of the following letter, which bore no date and was addressed "Comrades" signed by the initials R.H. and B.H. (RUTH McKEENEY and BRUCE HINCHON) which the informant believed to have been composed after the date of August 21st, possibly for the purpose of enclosing with the foregoing letter, offering their resignation effective immediately, as contributing editors of "New Masses" and with the further request that their names be removed from the masthead. The letter states that BRANSTEN since before 1942 had been critical and offered many protests and on many occasions had been on the point of resignation. His reasons for this action and a list of his objections he stated were too long to state, but that he would illustrate 9 points from the last two or three issues of "New Masses." They are as follows:

- "1. "NEW MASSES" did not raise the question of the crime of dropping the Atomic bomb on defenseless women and children and a civilian population in feudal slavery, nor did "NEW MASSES" point out that it should have been tested on the Imperial palace and that the dropping of two bombs was a crime against humanity and the meriting of the war.
- "2. "NEW MASSES" did not make clear that the atomic bomb was political, an attempt to put the Soviet Union in the position of hurrying into the war precipitously and that if the Atomic bomb was dropped a few hours before the Soviet Union announced time of entry into the Japanese War to misrepresent Soviet participation and that it was not shown that the bomb represents the foreign policy of imperialist expansion by the U.S. and an attempt to blackmail the Soviet Union.
- "3. "New Masses" did not show that the United States use and possession of the Atomic bomb was to isolate the Soviet Union and the . . . democratic forces in the world and that "NEW MASSES" did not make an issue of the gloating that the United States could now destroy the World and the Soviet Union.
- "4. That the "New Masses", although protesting for the record the U.S. backing of CHIANG KAI-SHEK and the danger of Civil War in



China, "New Masses", however, had not called for action or demonstrations and had not talked of forcing imperialists to back down.

93750

- "5. "NEW MASSES" does not admit that the United States is an Imperialist Nation; that "New Masses" is not Marxist but tired Liberals.
- "6. "NEW MASSES" did not raise alarm over appointment of General MacArthur to Supreme Allied Commander to direct post surrender Japan; nor did "NEW MASSES" point out that General MacArthur had only a year ago for his personally selected press agent, PHILIP LaFOLLETTE and was known to be politically involved with such groups as the American Nationalists, Christian Fronters and other anti-semantic, anti-Roosevelt, anti-Progressive and pro-Fascist forces in this country.
- "7. "NEW MASSES" has not raised the alarm of the lay offs following the war, nor has it suggested militant immediate intractable action locally in the shops, mills and mines..
- "8. That New Masses is continually writing in such a fashion that it is on the "record" correctly perhaps, but the effect is to lull the readers into a false sense of security.. It doesn't urge Americans to fight now with every weapon against their own imperialism and it takes no action to save the country from fascism.
- "9. That "New Masses" has nothing to offer on the cultural front, is too timid to convince and to lacking in creativeness, has Philistine views, lack of ideas and lack of concern with ideas."

This letter pointed out that it was the writers' hope that in the future they should again be associated with "NEW MASSES", its heritage, its traditions and its future, but that it was now in doldrums, has forgotten the past and is afraid of the future; fails to talk to the people and to express confidence in the people; appears to be afraid to fight for a better world; to anxious to excuse the errors of imperialism to apologize for the role of the Soviet Union. The letter pointed out that the writers' had taken this action as they had not been able to convince the editors of their view point from within the "NEW MASSES" organization and further pointed out that it was their hope that "in the future "NEW MASSES" would resume the struggle for a better life and a world of dignity and peace and socialism."

This informant provided copies of correspondence of RICHARD BRANSTEN dated August 21, 1945 addressed "Dear Comrade Foster" enclosing a letter by RUTH MCKENNEY and BRANSTEN to "NEW MASSES" (Apparently the preceding letter). This two page letter attempts to explain the decision of BRANSTEN and his wife in resigning as editors of "NEW MASSES" in the light of "NEW MASSES" "desertion" of its role, and points out the reflections in "NEW MASSES" of the faults of the CPA and CP, as well as the economic and political aspects of the Truman Administration and the anti-Soviet, anti-democratic policy followed by the Government and the State Department's policy. A paragraph of this letter is quoted as follows:

"I write this to you because I know you are always open to discussion and ideas.....I cannot presume more than to call to your attention the questions worrying so many of us. We are afraid--after the experience of the past year and one half--that we are still carrying over the incorrect and villainous approach of Browderism. I note your warning against "leftism" but I am afraid that at the moment that is not the danger; the danger rather is in changing the vocabulary by continuing our tendency to be over-cautious, impressed with possibilities to deal with the ruling class, over-awed by the power of American imperialism."

This informant also furnished a six page article possibly written by this subject or RUTH MCKENNEY, as a result of the reading of the August 28, 1945 issue of "NEW MASSES" pointing out the opinions of the writer of certain data appearing in that issue of "NEW MASSES" and again resigning as contributing editors of "NEW MASSES" effective immediately. E

The informant furnished also numerous copies of attempts by the subject and RUTH MCKENNEY which the informant stated was written by RUTH MCKENNEY at preparing an article severely criticizing "NEW MASSES" and its editorial policy. The indecision in the attempt at composition of this article is evidenced by the numerous changes in the title, several of which are as follows: "Save The New Masses", "Arguments Pro-Bono, The one-Sided", "Rise Up Outraged 'NEW MASSES' Readers", "Threshing Out A Few Little Differences With The Board Of Editors Of the 'New Masses' Magazine," "To arms! Rise Up, Outraged 'New Masses' readers!"

The above article, similar to the article mention immediately above was severely critical of the contents of the August 28, 1945 issue of "New Masses" and concludes that "New Masses" magazine as of September 1945 in the opinion of the writers is morally, politically and financially bankrupt.

Confidential Informant T-3 states that he is uncertain as to the actual mailing or forwarding of any of the above articles of correspondence including the resignations on the part of the subject and his wife to the "DAILY WORKER", "NEW MASSES" or WILLIAM Z. FOSTER.

MISCELLANEOUS ACTIVITIES,  
CORRESPONDENTS, ASSOCIATES,  
BUSINESS AND OTHER CONTACTS

93792

Contacts Within The New York  
Field Division

T-3 furnished a copy of a three-page mimeographed pamphlet entitled "Needed, A magazine of Progressive Writing and Culture" by Lawrence BARTH of 60 Horton Street, New York 14, New York. This pamphlet pointed out the writer's recommendations and specifications for a progressive magazine of the arts and culture and cites the author's opinion of the present status of progressive literature now on the retail market. This pamphlet is being forwarded as an enclosure to the New York Office.

The informant advised that RICHARD BRANSTEN received correspondence from the Southern Conference for Human Welfare - New York Committee, Murray Hill Hotel, 112 Park Avenue, New York City, under date of August 3rd. This correspondence enclosed a copy of "The Southern Patriot" which is the official organ of the National Headquarters of the above organization located at Nashville, Tennessee. Also provided was an envelope and a one page copy of typewritten correspondence from GRACE GRANICH, 339 E. 16th Street, New York City, addressed to Mr. and Mrs. BRANSTEN, postmarked July 6, 1945. The above is forwarded to the New York Field Division as an enclosure.

Also furnished by the informant was a copy of typewritten correspondence dated July 24, 1945 on the letterhead of "NEW MASSES" signed " " (JOE NORTH). According to the informant this correspondence apparently enclosed for BRANSTEN the "NEW MASSES" press card by which he obtained admission to the CPA National Convention, July 26th and 27th in New York City. This correspondence is forwarded to the New York Office as an enclosure.

Confidential Informant T-2 was advised by BRANSTEN that ESTHER \_\_\_\_\_ (Secretary in the offices of "New Masses" magazine New York City) did not attend the National Convention. She also had advised him that she had accumulated a lot of material upon which BRANSTEN believed she had done a wonderful job as it had been forwarded to him. BRANSTEN had filed all of this material away for future use and told the informant that he intended to write a book on it some time. He did not advise the informant as to the nature or content of this material.

This informant stated that on August 18, 1945, BRANSTEN met a Mr. DOLLOP or STOLLOP of New York City at the Westport depot and having made previous arrangements with GEORGE SELDES, went immediately to the SELDES' residence. 93753

The informant was unable to state if the above was identical with an individual, CARROLL — whom BRANSTEN stated had also contacted him and the latter individual he reported was a writer from one of the west coast states who recently arrived in New York, his wife and children remaining on the West Coast. CARROLL — was reported to reside at the Somerset Hotel on 47th Street, New York City and was employed in New York. He is also reported to be acquainted with DICK REYNOLDS, who is employed on the New York Daily Mirror. This informant stated that on August 24, 1945, RUTH MCKENNEY advised she had invited one ANATOLE VOLKOV of the USN, Hotel Governor Clinton, New York City and his girlfriend to visit the BRANSTEN residence on August 26, 1945.

Contacts within the Los Angeles  
Field Division

*Son of N.G. Selman*

Confidential Informant T-3 provided a copy of a pamphlet entitled "HMI — Today and Tomorrow" which is a report on the work, purposes and policies of the Hollywood Writers Mobilization of which BRANSTEN appears to be a member. This source also advised that BRANSTEN was tendered a statement dated July 1, 1945, by KATZ, GALLAGHER and MARGOLIS, attorneys at law, 111 W. 7th Street, Los Angeles 14, California, reflecting professional services rendered in the amount of \$208.50. This informant also provided correspondence from ELIZABETH GERSTLEY of 717 North Crescent Drive, Beverly Hills, California under date of July 5, 1945, which is being forwarded to the Los Angeles Field Division as an enclosure.

In connection with the GERSTLEYS, Confidential Informant T-2 learned from BRANSTEN that he and RUTH MCKENNEY had received a communication from JAMES GERSTLEY, July 20, 1945, when it was stated was a relative of BRANSTEN. The latter advised that at that time GERSTLEY was residing at the Statler Hotel, Washington, D. C. and GERSTLEY had indicated a desire to visit the BRANSTEN'S residence on July 22, 1945 as he intended to be in New York over that weekend returning to Washington, D. C. the following Sunday evening. BRANSTEN forwarded an affirmative reply to GERSTLEY and as a result BRANSTEN stated he visited their residence on July 21 over night. On that evening the informant stated GEORGE and HELEN SELDES also visited their residence. The informant stated BRANSTEN had indicated he had inquired of GERSTLEY concerning the whereabouts of

ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN and according to GERSTLEY the latter was in Maine. BRANSTEN stated that he had agreed as he had previously been advised FLYNN was in Maine by Mother BLUER. On a later date RUTH MCKENNEY told the informant that GERSTLEY had apparently attended to business matters in Washington, D. C. which appeared to be successful for GERSTLEY and that the latter had indicated he and his wife, ELIZABETH, might visit the BRANSTENS later in the year. This informant further stated that on August 17th BRANSTEN in a communication to GERSTLEY and his wife stated that he and RUTH were relieved and happy over the newspaper account of a court decision, congratulated GERSTLEY and insisted that the GERSTLEYS visit the BRANSTENS during the autumn.

93794

Confidential Informant T-3 provided a copy of correspondence dated July 12, 1945 from GEORGE WILMER forwarded to RICHARD BRANSTEN from the NAT C. GOLDSTONE AGENCY, in which it was pointed out that WILMER had been successful in negotiations concerning BRANSTENS story "The Four Bonnie Browns" and that contracts from Paramount studios would be ready for BRANSTEN within a few days. Reference report indicates that GEORGE WILMER is a known CPA member in Los Angeles, California, associated with the NAT GOLDSTONE AGENCY. This copy of correspondence is forwarded to the Los Angeles Field Division as an enclosure.

BRANSTEN advised T-2 on August 17th that he had finally received the contracts previously mentioned from GEORGE WILMER, however, due to technical difficulties arising from proper signature and notarization he had had to communicate with WILMER on that and subsequent dates for appropriate instructions in concluding the signing thereof. This informant stated that prior to July 16, 1945 BRANSTEN had sold their Brentwood residence at Beverly, California as BRANSTEN had stated on that date he had made a special request for payment for this property from the Bank of America, North Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, California.

T-3 provided a copy of typewritten correspondence addressed to BRANSTEN by one KAY — (last name unknown) dated July 17, 1945, in which the writer expressed personal opinions concerning the unsettled state of the CPA and indicated that she had joined the CPA within the past year and one half in Hollywood, California. This individual indicated she had received a check from RICHARD BRANSTEN and that she had been accumulating all the letters published in the "Worker" and requested instructions from BRANSTEN concerning the type of these letters which he might wish her to retain. The informant stated that no purpose was set out in this correspondence, which is forwarded to the Los Angeles office as an enclosure.

T-3

The informant also provided three pages of mimeographed data relative to the Screen Writers Guild from one EMILET LAVERY which was addressed to all members of the Screen Writers Guild. One portion of this correspondence was labeled "Confidential" and was a brief statement concerning the Esquire pictures, LOUIS BERLOFF, and a Mr. KOVACS, and was signed by HOWARD ESTABROOK, Secretary. This correspondence is forwarded to the Los Angeles Field Division as an enclosure.

93795

Also being forwarded to the Los Angeles Field Division are two copies of mimeographed correspondence dated August 3rd, and 17th, 1945 signed by EMIL FRIED, President of the 59th Assembly, District Club, CP, Los Angeles, California on the letterhead of that organization; and a throwaway entitled "1945 Daily 'Peoples World' Drive." Also forwarded to Los Angeles as enclosure is a copy of correspondence dated August 22, 1945 from one NORA HELGREN, 1201 N. Mansfield Avenue, Hollywood 38, California. This correspondence was addressed to RICHARD BRANSTEN and referred to one "IVOR" and apparently referred to British politics and the cable address "Wakadai Kinross". Also furnished by the informant and included as one of the above enclosures, is a copy of correspondence dated August 31st, from one BARBARA HYERS, Executive Secretary of the Hollywood Welfare Association, c/o JOSEF MISCHEL of 1422 North Kingsley, Los Angeles 27, California. This typewritten correspondence was addressed to RUTH McKIMBY and RICHARD BRANSTEN and solicited contributions for the above mentioned organization.

This informant further advised that RICHARD BRANSTEN had received correspondence from one BARTLEY CRUM listed in reference report as the attorney for LOUISE BRANSTEN.

#### Contacts within The San Francisco Field Division

Confidential Informant T-3 provided four copies of undated correspondence from LOUISE BRANSTEN, 3 copies of which are typewritten with two of the typewritten copies on the letterhead of the American-Russian Institute for Cultural Relations with the Soviet Union, San Francisco, California. The third typewritten letter is dated Saturday, only. The fourth item of correspondence is handwritten on personal stationery bearing the return address of 2626 Green Street, San Francisco, California, and is signed, "LOUISE". All of the above mentioned letters deal with personal matters of no interest to this investigation and are accordingly forwarded herewith as enclosures to the San Francisco Office.

The informant advised also that the BRANSTENS had received corres-

100-1128

from Lt. Commander John W. DINKELSPIEL and Mrs. JOHN DINKELSPIEL, both of  
350 Oregon Avenue, Palo Alto, California.

P E N D I N G

93796

ENCLOSURE SHEET

Enclosures to the New York Field Division

One Three page mimeographed pamphlet entitled "Needed, Magazine of Progressive writing and Culture" by LAWRENCE BARTH, #93787

One copy of typewritten correspondence from GRACE GRANICH, 339 East 16th Street, New York dated Friday, only, together with an envelope postmarked July 6, 1945.

One copy of "New Masses" letterhead dated July 24, 1945 beginning "Dear Bruce" and ending "In Haste, Joe."

Enclosures to the Los Angeles Field Division

One pamphlet entitled "Hollywood Today And Tomorrow" concerning the Hollywood Writers Mobilization, its work, purposes and policies dated 1945 Hollywood, California.

Three pages of handwritten correspondence dated July 3, 1945 addressed "Dear Richard and Ruth" one page of which is signed, "Love, Sis" and the other page and the signature on the balance of the letter is "much love, Jim", including two envelopes #1, postmarked July 5th and #2 postmarked August 25, 1945, all of which is from JAMES and ELIZABETH GERSTLEY 717 North Crescent Drive, Beverly Hills, California.

One copy of typewritten correspondence dated July 12, 1945 on the letterhead of the NAT G. GOLDSTONE AGENCY beginning, "Dear Richard" and ending "Sincerely, George".

A one page typewritten letter dated July 17, 1945, beginning "Dear Richard" and ending "Best to you and Ruth - Kay".

Three pages of mimeographed correspondence in the nature of a report from EMMET LAVERY, to all members of the Screen Writers Guild, regarding the Hollywood Reporter, the last page of which is signed with the name HOWARD ESTABROOK, Secretary".



## Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Director, FBI

FROM : SAC, New Haven

SUBJECT: RICHARD BRANSTEN, was.  
INTERNAL SECURITY (C)  
Bureau File 100-80068

DATE: 2/19/47

Reference is made to New York Field Division letter to the Bureau dated February 18, 1947 advising that BRANSTEN together with his wife RUTH MCKENNEY BRANSTEN, submitted a manuscript at Boston, Massachusetts to the Houghton Mifflin Company entitled "The Life of Herbert Hoover" approximately one month ago. New York letter of reference likewise stated that the aforesaid information was being furnished to the Bureau, New Haven and Boston Field Divisions in order that the Boston Field Division might be instructed to take any action desired in connection with obtaining further information relative to the said manuscript.

Instructions to the Boston office in this matter will be left to the discretion of the Bureau.

cc: Boston

JFS:gml  
100-1128

EX-1

RECORDED 100-80068-191  
&  
INDEXED  
2-26 1947

MAR 1 - 1947

# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Form No. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT

BUREAU

REPORT MADE AT <b>LONDON, ENGLAND</b>	DATE WHEN MADE <b>6/15/55</b>	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE <b>4/15, 22, 28; 5/9, 23; 6/3, 8/55</b>	REPORT MADE BY <b>JOHN A. CIMPERMAN AB</b>
TITLE <b>RICHARD BRANSTEN, was.</b>			CHARACTER OF CASE <b>INTERNAL SECURITY - R</b>

**SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:**

Mr. and Mrs. Richard BRANSTEN interviewed by T-1 at London, England. Both admit close social relations with Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Gregory SILVERMASTER in Washington, D.C. during 1941-44, when Richard BRANSTEN represented "New Masses", but stated they have no knowledge of SILVERMASTER's espionage activities or membership in the Communist Party. Both unable to recall Victor PERLO. Information concerning other personalities set out.

*Case previously closed serial 268  
Case was reopened  
to handle lead for Dept  
serial 273. Lead handled.  
Dept advised of results.  
Case to be closed  
RJT*

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 7/26/96 BY SP8BJL/C

-RUC-

AGENCY Wash. Home, 7/1, info  
REQ. REC'D  
TIME FORW. 6-29-55  
HOW FORW. 0-24 0-24 0-24  
BY H. H. [unclear]

*1 cc to Dept by letter  
6-30-55  
H.H. [unclear]*

+

APPROVED AND FORWARDED:  <i>[Signature]</i>	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES
		100-80068-278
COPIES OF THIS REPORT 6 - Bureau (100-80068) 2 - London (100-919)		JUN 24 1955 <i>[Signature]</i>
		RECORDED-95 INDEXED-95

UNRECORDED COPY FILED IN 100-80068-278



United States Department of Justice  
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Washington, D. C.  
June 15, 1955

Re: RICHARD BRANSTEN, was.

Richard BRANSTEN, who resides at 22 Gloucester Walk, London, W.8, England, was interviewed by T-1, a confidential informant not available to testify, in London, England, on June 3, 1955, regarding Nathan Gregory SILVERMASTER and his activities, but he again professed ignorance of any espionage activities on his (Silvermaster's) part.

BRANSTEN stated he knew SILVERMASTER before he joined the Communist Party, but saw him infrequently. From May, 1941 to March or April, 1944, when living in Washington, D. C. and working for "New Masses", he claims he saw SILVERMASTER about once a week. He again reiterated that SILVERMASTER was considered by him as being one of the most learned men he had ever met and, in fact, considers him a genius. He described him as an authority on Marxism and actually looked to him (Silvermaster) in preference to the Communist Party for guidance or clarification on various points on Marxism. He states that to his knowledge, SILVERMASTER was not hostile to the Communist Party; that SILVERMASTER disagreed with some party issues and presented to him the proper view. By way of illustration, he states that SILVERMASTER disagreed with E. VARGA (ph.), the Russian economist, who published articles on the Capitalist Crisis of 1934. Later, according to BRANSTEN, all others disagreed with the Russian's interpretation of this crisis and generally followed the views previously expressed by SILVERMASTER.

Regarding SILVERMASTER's associates, BRANSTEN stated that SILVERMASTER associated with people in all walks of life, some of whom are mentioned hereinafter. He states this included not only high government officials, but also people in the second level of the government service and who actually did the job. He states SILVERMASTER was a gregarious individual and did considerable entertaining at his home. The dinners were all pleasant social gatherings attended by the above-described classes of people in government service, some of whom he had never met before, nor since. He also stated that he does not know whether any of them were Communists, but is inclined to believe they were not.

BRANSTEN states that SILVERMASTER knew that he (Bransten) was a Communist and, as a consequence, always felt that SILVERMASTER was rather chary of his presence. He also stated that during this period (1941-1944) when Russia was an ally of the United States in the war, the Communist Party, and he particularly, were not exactly ostracized by people in the government service and others, as they are at the present time. He further stated that at the dinner parties given by SILVERMASTER, the SILVERMASTERS, since they and others knew he (Bransten) was an open Communist, usually invited people who would not be embarrassed by his presence, or that of his wife Ruth BRANSTEN, who was also an open and declared Communist. Other guests were usually people who already knew them (Branstens).

He states that this was the usual pattern for inviting guests to these dinner parties when they, the BRANSTENS, were guests. He admitted that occasionally they appeared at these dinners at the last minute as unexpected guests, and on such occasions, which were infrequent, he stated same could not be held to the detriment of any of the others in attendance as nobody had advance knowledge of their coming. By way of further explaining his position and that of the SILVERMASTERS, he repeated that it should be borne in mind that the Communists were not exactly outcasts during the war years, and, further, that his wife, Ruth BRANSTEN, already had a great reputation as a writer, which tended to make both of them not only a curiosity on account of their being open Communists, but also as acceptable guests.

Since BRANSTEN has already previously been interviewed in some detail regarding the SILVERMASTERS, it was not felt necessary at this stage to again go over the same ground. It was felt, however, that the above should be included, and also the fact that BRANSTEN was most emphatic in stating that he knew nothing of SILVERMASTER's possibly being engaged in espionage activities, or possibly being a member of the Communist Party.

BRANSTEN was also questioned regarding the following individuals whose names have previously appeared in this case:

GEORGE SILVERMAN

BRANSTEN stated that, as he recalls, SILVERMAN was an expert on something, and is inclined to believe that he was employed by the Library of Congress. He states that he met SILVERMAN once or twice, but was never in his (Silverman's) house, nor did he consider SILVERMAN as a friend. To his recollection, BRANSTEN states he would class SILVERMAN as a Liberal or Left New Dealer.

HARRY WHITE

BRANSTEN states he met Harry WHITE through Gregory SILVERMASTER, and during the period when WHITE was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. BRANSTEN states that it was valuable for him to know WHITE in connection with obtaining information for subsequent publication in "New Masses" magazine. He states that he saw WHITE at dinner parties given by the SILVERMASTERS on two or three occasions and, to his recollection, had WHITE at his (Bransten's) house for dinner on one occasion. He states that although WHITE appeared friendly, their relations were strictly social. He claims it was impossible to get anything out of WHITE and when he saw WHITE at the formation of UNO in San Francisco in 1945, WHITE at that time treated him rather cold and frosty, and as a consequence, BRANSTEN dropped him as a contact, or news source. He claims that WHITE acted rather timid toward him. He knew nothing of WHITE's possible affiliation with the Communist Party and considered him as a vacillating Liberal.

VICTOR PERLO

BRANSTEN states that he was unable to recall Victor PERLO.

CHARLIE KRAMER

BRANSTEN states that Charlie KRAMER was also known as KRIVITSKY, if he is the same person he has in mind, and was with the Library of Congress. BRANSTEN states he knew KRAMER for several years between 1941 and 1944, but was unable to recall the extent of their social activities, nor could he recall ever being in KRAMER's house as a guest. He did state that KRAMER was most difficult to obtain information from, and was apparently scared to death of him (Bransten) because he (Bransten) was a Communist. He is inclined to believe that KRAMER was not a Communist as, of all the people KRAMER met, BRANSTEN feels that he (Bransten) was the one individual KRAMER was the least anxious to see. Whether KRAMER knew PERLO is unknown to BRANSTEN.

JOHN ABT

Regarding John ABT, BRANSTEN states he knew this person in New York City and described him as a good friend of Lee PRESSMAN. He states that he met ABT at the UNO formation in San Francisco in 1945, but had nothing to do with him. He was unable to provide any information regarding his possible membership in the Communist Party.

BRANSTEN was also interviewed regarding the following individuals, all of whom he stated he was unable to recall:

Henry MAGDOFF  
Edward FITZGERALD  
Donald WHEELER  
Allan ROSENBERG  
Sol LESHINSKY  
Harold GLASSER.

BRANSTEN stated that during the entire period of his residence in Washington, D. C. (1941-44), he was with "New Masses" magazine. In his position as correspondent, he explained that it was necessary for him to have numerous contacts, or news sources, and it is for this reason that he met and knew as many people as he did.

Mrs. Ruth McKenney BRANSTEN was also interviewed by T-1 on June 8, 1955, in the presence of her husband, Richard BRANSTEN. She readily admitted her membership in the Communist Party from about 1935 or 1936 until her expulsion, together with the expulsion of her husband, in 1946. She states that during that period, she always openly declared herself as a member of the Party, and much to the annoyance of Party officials. She claims, however, that she was

not a good party member and that she did not attend Party meetings regularly. During the latter stages of her career as a Communist, she stated she discussed her desire to resign from the Party with her husband, but that he persuaded her not to do so. Mr. BRANSTEN, who was present during the interview, confirmed this, stating that he continued paying her Party dues because it would not look right if she resigned while he was still a member.

Mrs. BRANSTEN informed T-1 that she lived with her husband in Washington, D.C. from May, 1941 until January, 1944. During this time, she states that she was a member of the Communist Party in that city, and it was during this period that they saw much of the SILVERMASTERS socially and met many people through them.

NATHAN GREGORY SILVERMASTER

Mrs. BRANSTEN informed T-1 that she first met the SILVERMASTERS shortly after she married Richard BRANSTEN in 1937. She next saw them in 1938, after her husband returned from a visit to Spain. She stated they did not become real or close friends of the SILVERMASTERS until they (Branstens) went to Washington, D. C. in 1941.

Mrs. BRANSTEN stated that from 1941-1944, during the period of their residence in Washington, they were intimate friends of the SILVERMASTERS and dined at each others homes, but most frequently at the SILVERMASTERS, at least once a week. She states that she became very fond of Helen SILVERMASTER and saw her much oftener as she (Mrs. Bransten) was not working so hard then. She also stated that Helen SILVERMASTER, as did Nathan, knew she was a Communist, but claimed that she and Helen never discussed Communism, nor did Helen appear to pay much attention to her (Mrs. Bransten's) political affiliations. She states that she and Helen usually spent all their time talking about scandals and that during dinners at the SILVERMASTER's home, she and Helen spent most of the time in the kitchen.

Regarding Nathan Gregory SILVERMASTER, Mrs. BRANSTEN described him as a man of great gifts who was very highly regarded. She stated SILVERMASTER had a great analytical mind, was a deep thinker, and she considered him as being very valuable to the government. She also considered him a practical New Dealer and one who was interested in immediate reforms. She further informed that SILVERMASTER was anti-Hitler; that he was passionately for democracy; and stated that she is certain SILVERMASTER was not a Communist. However, being White Russians, she states the SILVERMASTERS still retained a Russian atmosphere in their home and continued celebrating Russian Easter and Russian New Year.

Mrs. BRANSTEN further informed T-1 that they met many people at the SILVERMASTERS (who loved to entertain), but was unable to recall all their names. She did state, however, that she is sure none of the guests they met

at the SILVERMASTERS were Communists, nor did they (Branstens), excepting one occasion, have any Communist guests at their (Bransten's) home when the SILVERMASTERS were also invited. This one exception, Mrs. BRANSTEN stated, was when Paul ROBESON, the well known Communist singer, visited their home in Washington, D.C. Mrs. BRANSTEN states that she invited the SILVERMASTERS to their home to meet ROBESON, but did not give any advance warning as to who would be there. On the following day, Mrs. BRANSTEN states that Helen SILVERMASTER called her, saying that the evening was rather embarrassing and also mentioned that her husband, Nathan Gregory SILVERMASTER, should not meet people like this.

Mrs. BRANSTEN further informed that in their conversations, Nathan Gregory SILVERMASTER appeared to ignore her. She states that SILVERMASTER answered her questions by directing his reply and attention to her husband, Richard BRANSTEN. Apart from light conversation, she states that SILVERMASTER and her husband frequently discussed New Deal matters, with her husband defending the Communist side. She was unable to recall any discussion in which SILVERMASTER defended the Communist point of view, or in any way indicated that he might possibly be a Communist.

Mrs. BRANSTEN was also unable to furnish any information regarding SILVERMASTER's espionage activities, stating that she had no knowledge thereof.

#### WILLIAM LUDWIG ULLMANN

Mrs. BRANSTEN informed T-1 that she only knew ULLMANN through the SILVERMASTERS, with whom he lived. She believes he was employed by the Treasury Department and was said to be competent in his work. She states that ULLMANN was a difficult person to understand or cultivate. He was present at most of the conversations, but seldom said anything and usually retired to the kitchen. He appeared to be greatly interested in photography and secretly worshipped Helen SILVERMASTER. She stated she is of the opinion ULLMANN was not a Communist. She did not know any of his associates, saying that his life centered around the SILVERMASTERS and their friends.

#### GEORGE SILVERMAN

Mrs. BRANSTEN states SILVERMAN's name sounds familiar. She probably met him, but states that at the moment she is unable to recall him.

#### HARRY WHITE

Mrs. BRANSTEN states she met WHITE and his wife at the SILVERMASTERS and knew them well. She states they (Branstens) visited the WHITES at their home about five times, but that they, to her recollection, never invited the WHITES to their home. She indicated the reason they never invited the WHITES was because she was sure they would refuse, as they (Branstens) were open Com-

munists and the WHITES would probably feel that such association would be dangerous to their reputation. Apart from their visits to the WHITES, Mrs. BRANSTEN states they usually saw the WHITES at the SILVERMASTERS.

Mrs. BRANSTEN expressed the opinion that Harry WHITE was not a Communist. She stated that WHITE was too "stuffy" and that his wife, a distinguished intellect, was mad over psychotherapy.

ALBERT KAHN

Mrs. BRANSTEN, like her husband, also believed that this person is identical with Albert E. KAHN whom they saw practically everywhere they traveled. She described him as being "the scourge of the world" and had no use for him. She also stated that they never saw him at the SILVERMASTERS and, to her knowledge, KAHN was not a Communist. She recalled that he was active in Israeli groups, but was unable to further elaborate.

MAURICE HALPERIN

Mrs. BRANSTEN states that she recalls this name, but knows nothing of him.

LOUIS ADAMIC

Mrs. BRANSTEN states she met ADAMIC once at a writers' Congress, but is unable to recall the date or place. She also stated she knew him by reputation only.

LEE PRESSMAN

Mrs. BRANSTEN states that the PRESSMANs were good friends whom they saw about once a week in Washington, D. C., either at their home or the PRESSMAN's home. She described Mrs. PRESSMAN as very child conscious. While visiting at the PRESSMAN's, she states they met a lot of Communists and trade unionists, but stated that to her knowledge, PRESSMAN was not a Communist. If anything, she states that PRESSMAN was very much to the "Left." Mr. BRANSTEN confirmed these statements.

Mrs. BRANSTEN was also questioned regarding the following persons, but she had no recollection of them:

Lauchlin CURRIE  
Sol ADLER  
William TAYLOR  
Irving KAPLAN  
Sonia & Bela GOLD  
Julius J. JOSEPH  
Duncan LEE  
Peter RHODES  
Helen TENNEY  
Mary PRICE.



Mrs. BRANSTEN was also questioned regarding the following additional individuals, but she also claimed to have no recollection of them:

Victor PERLO  
Charlie KRAMER  
Henry MAGDOFF  
Edward FITZGERALD  
Donald WHEELER  
Allan ROSENBERG  
Sol LESHINSKY  
Harold GLASSER.

Mrs. BRANSTEN recalled the name John ABT, but states she knows nothing about him.

SOURCE:

T-1 is SA John A. Cimperman, who has been given a "T" symbol pursuant to instructions in Bulets to Legat Attache, Paris, 6/23/53 and 7/1/53, entitled "TESTIMONY BY BUREAU REPRESENTATIVES ABROAD".

NOTE:

Both Mr. and Mrs. Richard BRANSTEN appeared cooperative. Mr. BRANSTEN continues refusing to volunteer any names, but states he will gladly answer any specific questions put to him. He did not appear resentful to being questioned and willingly brought his wife to the office of the Legat Attache several days later in order that she also might be questioned along the same lines.

Mrs. BRANSTEN, on the other hand, is rather difficult to question. She has a tendency to veer from the main point and on a number of occasions her husband had to intercede in bringing her back to the right track.

Both were found to possess a good sense of humor. They willingly related their general experiences in the Party, but still show sympathy for members of the Norwalk (Connecticut) group, often referring to them as "those poor people". Although preferring not to volunteer any information, it is felt they will answer any further questions the Bureau would like put to them. It is also felt, however, that any further questioning should be confined to one or two sittings only. This, for the reason that continued questioning over an extended period presents the risk of questions being asked in the House of Commons similar to the questions asked in the Owen Lattimore and Cort cases.

If and when they will return to the United States is not known. They are currently working on a book which they expect to complete in a month or so. When seen on June 8, 1955, they indicated they may go to Switzerland.

REFERENCE:

Bulets 4/4/55 and 4/22/55 to Legat Paris;  
London cable 4/28/55;  
Bulet 5/3/55 to Legat London.

ADMINISTRATIVE PAGE

# FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

CONFIDENTIAL

FORM NO. 1

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **SAN FRANCISCO**

REPORT MADE AT <b>WASHINGTON, D. C.</b>	DATE WHEN MADE <b>JUL 8 1954</b>	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE <b>12/1/53-6/30/54</b>	REPORT MADE BY <b>WILLIAM G. SHAW</b>	<b>PCN</b>
TITLE <b>CINRAD</b>			CHARACTER OF CASE <b>INTERNAL SECURITY - R</b>	

**SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:**

Security information developed during course of FBI investigations of Atomic Energy Applicants and Employees coming within the jurisdiction of the Washington Area Security Operations, AEC, Washington, D. C., set forth.

P\*

*Handwritten notes:*  
 Pg 145 were removed for declassification  
 + see volume  
 7-16-57  
 3042 PWT-JAR  
 286-1840CV

*Handwritten notes:*  
 #291701  
 Auibozsuegic  
 1924/15

COPIES DESTROYED 5-11-59

APPROVED AND FORWARDED: <i>F. W. L. Evans</i>	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES		
COPIES OF THIS REPORT		<b>-4956</b>		
⑤ - Bureau (100-190625) 2 - San Francisco (100-16980) (RM) 2 - Washington Field (100-13401)		JUL 8 1954 RECORDED - 120 INDEXED - 2 EX. 107 EX. 127		
<b>67 COPY IN FILE</b>				

PROPERTY OF FBI - This confidential report and its contents are loaned to you by the FBI and are not to be distributed outside of agency to which loaned.

CONFIDENTIAL

*Handwritten:* 7-23-54

T-35 stated that HARRY LEVY is an associate of DIRK STRUIT, a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who was mentioned during the trial of the Communist Party leaders in New York City as a theoretical Marxist who was active in Communist Party matters.

Final determination has not been reached concerning the granting of "Q" Clearance to [redacted].

b6  
b7c

JAMES MACK GERSTLEY

On a PSQ dated November 17, 1958, submitted by GERSTLEY in connection with his duties as President of the Pacific Coast Borax Company, the following background information was noted:

Date of Birth: November 11, 1907, at  
London, England

Residences: 1249 North Wetherly Drive,  
Los Angeles, California  
(1937 - 1941)  
717 North Crescent Drive  
Beverly Hills, California  
(1941 to date)

Employment: Pacific Coast Borax Company  
Los Angeles, California  
Executive (since 1933)

Membership in  
Organizations: Jewish Community Council  
Los Angeles, California  
(member since 1952)  
American Association for the  
United Nations  
Beverly Hills, California  
(member since 1950)

Wife: ELIZABETH L. GERSTLEY, age 40  
717 North Crescent Drive  
Beverly Hills, California

Arrest Record: Anti-Trust Indictment  
(September 14, 1944)  
Fined \$10,000

Confidential Informant T-38, of known reliability, advised that MAX and GRACE FRALICH were expected to be present

WFO 100-13401

at a celebration being held subsequent to September 16, 1945, at the residence of RICHARD and RUTH BRANSTEN of West Port, Connecticut, on which date JAMES GERSTLEY was reported to arrive from overseas. T-38 stated that GERSTLEY was a relative of RICHARD BRANSTEN, who in turn was friendly with MAX and GRACE GRANICH.

Confidential Informant T-39, of known reliability, advised that in 1932 GRACE GRANICH was in Moscow, Russia, working for the Comintern and was involved in the international aspects of Communist work. T-39 stated that she was very active in the Communist Party - USA for many years and also indicated that her husband, MAX GRANICH, was a Communist Party member but less active in the Communist Party than Mrs. GRANICH.

Confidential Informant T-40, of known reliability, advised that during the early 1940's the name of JAMES M. GERSTLEY, 1249 North Wetherly Drive, Los Angeles, California, appeared in the active indices of the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties.

The National Federation for Constitutional Liberties has been designated by the Attorney General pursuant to Executive Order 10450.

T-38 advised that JAMES GERSTLEY, a relative of RICHARD BRANSTEN, visited overnight at the BRANSTEN home on July 21, 1945. T-38 stated that during this visit GERSTLEY in answer to an inquiry from BRANSTEN regarding the whereabouts of ELIZABETH GURLEY FLYNN, Communist Party - USA National Functionary, replied that FLYNN was in Maine. T-38 added that in September, 1945, the BRANSTENS were planning a celebration at their residence to honor JAMES GERSTLEY, who had just flown in from overseas.

Confidential Informant T-41, of known reliability, advised in June, 1944, that RICHARD BRANSTEN, who is also known as BRUCE MINTON, and RUTH BRANSTEN, who is also known as RUTH MCKINNEY, were listed as members of the Northwest Section of the Los Angeles County Communist Party.

On December 16, 1950, RICHARD BRANSTEN advised the New Haven Office of the FBI that he and his wife RUTH had been expelled from the Communist Party in September, 1946.

WFO 100-13401

The subject attached an appendix to his PSQ in which he stated that in the late 1930's or early 1940's his wife or he may have given money to the American League Against War and Fascism, but did not know whether, if money was donated, same constituted becoming a member of this organization.

The American League Against War and Fascism has been designated by the Attorney General pursuant to Executive Order 10450.

T-38 advised that during the summer of 1945 JAMES MACK GERSTLEY had visited RICHARD BRANSTEN and RUTH McKENNEY BRANSTEN in West Port, Connecticut, at the same time GEORGE SELDES and his wife were guests in the BRANSTEN home.

The 1949 report of the California Senate Committee on Un-American Activities identified GEORGE SELDES as the editor of "In Fact," a Communist front weekly publication. The 1948 report of the above Committee identifies HELEN SELDES in 1939 as National Officer of the League of Women Shoppers, a Communist front organization.

Confidential Informant T-42, of known reliability, advised in October, 1943, that the subject was known to be a friend of JOSEPH L. HABER.

Confidential Informant T-43, of known reliability, advised in April, 1948, that JOSEPH HABER and his wife were very active members of the Westwood Club, Sixteenth West Congressional District of the Los Angeles County Communist Party.

Confidential Informant T-44, of known reliability, advised in 1948 that the name of ELIZABETH L. GERSTLEY, Beverly Hills, California, appeared in a list maintained by the Director of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare of persons who were known to contribute generously to "liberal causes."

The Southern Conference for Human Welfare has been cited by the HCUA as a Communist front.

The subject in his PSQ claims membership in the Jewish Community Council, Los Angeles, California, since 1952.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
FOI/PA  
DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET  
FOI/PA# 1366115-0

Total Deleted Page(s) = 2  
Page 1 ~ Referral/Direct;  
Page 2 ~ Referral/Direct;

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
X Deleted Page(s) X  
X No Duplication Fee X  
X For this Page X  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
FOI/PA  
DELETED PAGE INFORMATION SHEET  
FOI/PA# 1366115-0

Total Deleted Page(s) = 4  
Page 1 ~ Referral/Consult;  
Page 10 ~ Referral/Consult;  
Page 85 ~ Referral/Consult;  
Page 86 ~ Referral/Consult;

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX  
X Deleted Page(s) X  
X No Duplication Fee X  
X For this Page X  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX