

SUBJECT

FRIENDS OF NEGRO FREEDOM

FILE

61-1397

REPORT MADE AT: Los Angeles, Cal. DATE WHEN MADE: June 6, 1922 PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE: June 6th.

TITLE AND CHARACTER OF CASE: FRIENDS OF NEGRO FREEDOM, Los Angeles, Calif. LESSNER LOCAL #1, S.P. of A. NEGRO COPY PERSONS 2

FACTS DEVELOPED: At Los Angeles, California: ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED DATE 3/17/85 BY SP-6 [signature]

Reference is made to report of Agent relative "CHANDLER OWEN, Radical Negro Activities," Los Angeles, California for March 9th, 1922.

As a result of the enthusiasm evoked among a portion of the negro population of Los Angeles incident to the visit of CHANDLER OWEN, a Branch of the FRIENDS OF NEGRO FREEDOM was organized.

About that time there was also organized a negro local of the SOCIALIST PARTY OF AMERICA in Los Angeles. This local at first known as THE ETHIOPIAN LOCAL, afterwards changed its name to "MESSENGER LOCAL #1," in honor of CHANDLER OWEN, and his publication "The Messenger."

At that time it was thought that the FRIENDS OF NEGRO FREEDOM and "THE ETHIOPIAN LOCAL" were one and the same organization, but through confidential negro sources it has been learned that "The Ethiopian Local" now known as "Messenger Local #1" of the Los Angeles Branch of THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF AMERICA, is a distinct organization and is a live negro radical organization; it meets weekly at No. 1422 East 18th Street, Los Angeles. JOHN Y. PITTS and MRS. PITTS together with GEO. S. GRANT, all negroes, and LOUIS MICHAEL, a Russian-Jew, radical, - heretofore reported, are the leading spirits of the organization. This Local has received much attention and assistance.

COPIES OF THIS REPORT FURNISHED TO: Wash.-3; San Fco.-1; File-2.

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RECORDED
JUN 12 1922
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
HOOVER

(Re: FRIENDS OF NEGRO FREEDOM, -)
 Messenger Local #1, S.B. of A.

heads of the Socialist Party in Los Angeles. L.J. WRIGHT (white) District Organizer and Delegate to the Socialist National Convention at Cleveland, and MISS STEEL J. SHAFER (White), Secretary of the Socialist Party in Los Angeles, Calif., being regular attendants at the meetings of Messenger Local #1.

In spite of this work and encouragement their membership remains small and their principal activities to date have been the passage of a Resolution favoring miscegenation, by abolishing all laws forbidding the intermarriage of whites and negroes, which resolution was forwarded to the National Convention in Cleveland with the request that it be adopted (See report re: Socialist Party of America - Messenger Local #1-- for May 31st, 1922.)

THE FRIENDS OF NEGRO FREEDOM when first organized, consisted of 35 to 40 members, GEO. S. GRANT a member of "Messenger Local #1," is executive Secretary of the "Friends." Meetings are held at the Parish Hall of the Negro Episcopal Church on Paloma St., Los Angeles, Cal. Confidential informant states that at the last meeting held there were present five men and three women; that the treasury is empty and that the Organization is dying a natural death, which demise is being assisted by a little quiet sabotage on the part of the anti-radical, anti-Garvey Negro leaders of Los Angeles.

The following was clipped from the "California Eagle" among the names mentioned on the organization committee are a number of conservatives who "sabotaged" the movement as shown above.--

June 6, 1922.

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(RE: FRIENDS OF NEGRO FREEDOM)
Messenger Local #1, S.P. of A.

"ORGANIZED FRIENDS OF NEGRO FREEDOM"

" An echo from the visit of the Hon. Chandler Owen's visit to Los Angeles was evidenced on Wednesday evening, when at the Christian Church, corner of Birch and 14th St., when the people turned out in large numbers and a branch of the "Friends of Negro Freedom" was tentatively organized. After a short explanation by Mr. Owen of the objects and purposes of such an organization a committee of nine was elected to carry out the details of such organization. Among those selected on this committee were:

X A. C. Richardson, X W.H.Sanders, X V.B.Pitts, X E. Burton Ceruti, X R.G.Lamar, X Mrs. C.A.Bass, X E.L.Dorsey, X W.M.Watson, X W. Grant.

E. Burton Ceruti was designated as Chairman and Mr. Grant and Pitts as Secretaries. The committee will call a meeting in a short time for the purposes of a permanent organization."

Department of Justice

Bureau of Investigation

25 PARK ROW, 14TH FLOOR
NEW YORK, N. Y.

GENERAL INTELLIGENCE
AUG 1 1922
DIVISION

August 9th, 1922.

Director,
Bureau of Investigation,
Department of Justice,
Washington, D.C.

RE: NEGRO ACTIVITIES
N.Y. File No. R-218-A.

Dear Sir:

I am transmitting herewith two circulars, one entitled "Marcus Garvey Must Go," which is a criticism of Garvey and his activities, distributed by "The Friends of Negro Freedom," and the other entitled "The Fight Between Marcus Garvey and the Black Parasites Is On," which undoubtedly emanates from Garvey and his followers, and is a reply to the criticism contained in the circular of The Friends of Negro Freedom.

Very truly yours,

Edward J. Brennan
EDWARD J. BRENNAN
Special Agent in Charge. Read by

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MARCUS GARVEY MUST GO

GARVEY A MENACE TO "NEGRO FREEDOM"

Can Negroes afford to tolerate a Negro Supporter of the Ku Klux Klan?

Will Negroes follow a leader who urges them to surrender all manhood rights in America?

Should Garvey, who is not a citizen, advise Negroes in the United States to surrender their citizenship?

PICKENS, RANDOLPH, BAGNALL, OWEN, DUBOIS, JOHNSON, - all have in the South and spoken with the same fearlessness and courage as they do in the North. To be specific men have spoken fearlessly in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Oklahoma within the last twelve months. Why the GARVEY have to sell out THE NEGROES WHEN IN THE SOUTH?

Moreover, is it not better for a Negro to stay out of the South if he has to sell out the Negroes' rights when there?

Did Garvey reverse his policy for the same reason the Ku Klux Klan was revived - for personal profit?

Is Garvey trying to turn the Negroes' attention to the Ku Klux ISSUE IN ORDER TO MAKE THEM FORGET ABOUT \$600,000.00 WHICH THEY HAVE INVESTED IN THE BLACK STAR LINE, Money that GARVEY in open court ADMITS IS ALL GONE - Sunk in BLACK STAR LINE?

Is it wise for Negroes longer to entrust their money in the hands of a Negro like Garvey who ran through one million dollars supposedly invested in the Black Star Line, several other high finance kindred corporations and like not a cent of which can now be found?

Is Garvey to be considered big merely because he is sharp enough to fool hard working Negro men and women with his talk, collecting large sums of money - or should not his bigness be judged by the way he uses the money collected from these people?

Has Garvey milked the Black Cow dry and now turned to the Ku Klux Klan Cow?

Or has Garvey, having reached the end of his rope in preying upon the Foreign and Northern Negroes - now appealed to the Klan for permission to milk the eight million Negroes in the Southern States, promising in return to keep them submissive to the white man's will?

Should not Garvey at this time be accounting for his Stewardship - explaining to the people the truth about his two indictments by the United States Government for defrauding the poor hard working Negroes of their money and for using the States Mails to defraud - indictments upon which he must yet stand trial?

Why did Garvey fail to publish the interview with Ku Klux Kleagle Clarke after promising to publish it in the World of July 22nd? Was he afraid of Negro public sentiment?

HAS GARVEY THE EAGLE TURNED TO MARCUS THE HAWK?

THESE QUESTIONS CAN BE ANSWERED AND THEY WILL BE BY

William Pickens, A. Philip Randolph, Robert W. Bagnall & Chandler O

FOUR OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARS, NATIONALLY NOTED ORATORS, FAMOUS DEBATERS, DEEP THINKERS, FAITHFUL, UNSELFISH, FEARLESS, DEVOTED AND INCORRUPTIBLE PUBLIC SERVANTS IN THE CAUSE OF NEGRO FREEDOM. MEETINGS HELD UNDER THE AUSPICES OF

"THE FRIENDS OF NEGRO FREEDOM"

EVERY SUNDAY - AUGUST 6, 13, 20, AND 27TH.

AT THE

SHUFFLE INN MUSIC PARLORS

(NORTH EAST CORNER 131ST STREET AND SEVENTH AVENUE

NEW YORK CITY)

3 O'CLOCK SHARP

All invited - Men and Women - White and Colored - Foreigner and Native

AUGUST 6TH - OPENING ADDRESS

BY WILLIAM PICKENS

Field Secretary, N. A. A. C. P.

THE CHAMPION OF NEGRO LIBERTY AND

THE CHAMPION OF NEGRO LIBERTY

AND

The Black Parasites

WHO HAVE LIVED OFF THE INNOCENCE OF THE NEGRO RACE FOR
THE LAST FIFTY YEARS,

IS ON

A NUMBER OF SO-CALLED NEGRO LEADERS, MEMBERS OF SOCIALISTS AND ALLEGED ADVANCEMENT ASSOCIATIONS, HAVE BEEN TRYING TO FOOL THE PEOPLE ABOUT

GARVEY AND THE KU KLUX KLAN

THESE REPTILES KNOW THAT GARVEY IS THE MOST FEARLESS CHAMPION AND DEFENDER OF THE NEGRO RACE, BUT FOR THE SAKE OF DECEIVING THE PEOPLE THEY HAVE BEEN CONDUCTING A CAMPAIGN AGAINST GARVEY TO FEATHER THEIR OWN NESTS.

THE LAZY, FROTHY DEMAGOGUES HAVE NEVER DONE ANYTHING
FOR THE RACE

THEY HAVE BEEN TALKING AND WRITING FOR MANY YEARS AND HAVE ACCOMPLISHED NOTHING. SEE WHAT GARVEY HAS DONE ALL OVER AMERICA AND THE WORLD. THESE ENVIOUS AND MALICIOUS GAS-BAGS HAVE ONLY FOMENTED LYNCHING IN THE SOUTH. THEY HAVE ONLY COLLECTED MONEY FROM PHILANTHROPHIC WHITE PEOPLE TO SELL OUT THE RACE AND TO FEED THEMSELVES WITHOUT ANY SACRIFICE. THE VILLAINS DO NOT MEAN WHAT THEY SAY. SHOW THEM A DOLLAR AND IN FIVE MINUTES IT DISAPPEARS.

THE LAZY GOOD FOR NOTHING NEGRO AGITATORS AND PARASITES HAVE BROUGHT THEIR FIGHT TO HARLEM TO ANTAGONIZE THE UNIVERSAL NEGRO IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION FOR AUGUST.

THE CHALLENGE IS ACCEPTED

IF THE PARASITES HAVE ANY MANHOOD AS GARVEY HAS ALWAYS DONE TO SHOW UP THEIR INSINCERITY, HE INVITES THEM TO MEET HIM ON A PUBLIC PLATFORM AND LET THE PUBLIC DECIDE BETWEEN THEM.

ASK SOME OF THE GAS BAGS ABOUT THE ELEVATOR MEN
AND SWITCH BOARD UNION

LONG LIVE AFRICA!

LONG LIVE THE NEGRO RACE!

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FRIENDS OF NEGRO FREEDOM

2305 SEVENTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

Executive Secretaries, A. PHILIP RANDOLPH and CHANDLER OWEN

RESOLUTIONS OF THE CONVENTION OF THE FRIENDS OF NEGRO FREEDOM

Held May 25 to 30, 1920, at Washington, D. C.

FOREWORD

WE wish to call to the attention of the country that in America, the term "Negro Problem" is a misnomer. No oppressed race within a national group has yet been able *per se* to make itself a problem.

The problem that has been occasioned by the presence of the Negro is only incidentally a race problem, but fundamentally, an economic problem. The Irish problem is not the problem of the Irish race, but simply the labor problem of Ireland. The Hindoo problem is not the problem of the Indian races, but fundamentally the Indo-British-Labor problem. Strictly speaking, the so-called Negro problem is the result of the white capitalist exploiting Negro labor on the one hand, and the white laborer fighting his Negro fellow laborer for the too limited supply of jobs.

(A) Economic:

Ninety-five per cent of Negroes are working people, who earn their living by labor power. They constitute a large part of the creative workers of America. One-tenth of the railway workers, one-third of the workers in the steel and iron industry, forty per cent of the organized coal miners, fifty per cent of the workers in the packing industries are found in their ranks. In fact, they constitute one-seventh of the industrial population of America, and while they form only one-third of the population of the South, according to Albert Bushnell Hart, they produce three-fifths of its wealth.

Within a few years, they bid fair to count far more largely in labor, as the result of the trend of emigration back to Europe. Ex-Director of Public Safety Lee reports that in the cities of Detroit, Cleveland and Buffalo, ninety thousand Poles, not counting other races, have already engaged bookings to return to Europe. Frederick C. Howe, former Commissioner of Immigration at the Port of New York, states that between four and seven millions of foreigners have engaged or are seeking bookings to return to Europe in the next year and a half. When war was declared, withdrawing from production three and a half million workers, a tremendous migration of Negroes Northward and Westward resulted. The imminent migration to Europe of four to seven millions of foreigners will create an unprecedented labor vacuum, and stimulate to a very much larger extent, the migration of Negroes to industrial centers. That these may, with the least possible friction, be adjusted to their new environment, to the best advantage of them and their class, there is the necessity of their being unionized.

(B) High Cost of Living:

1. Housing:

Just as most Negroes work for wages for a living, most of them have to rent

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houses to live in. The migration to the industrial centers, created by the labor vacuum, and steadily increasing, makes acute the problem of the supply in housing.

Meeting the Demand:

This problem is further accentuated by the crystalized law of segregation, limiting the option of Negroes on houses to certain locations known as Negro Districts.

Having poorly organized and limited political power, the Negro finds his houses neglected by the Municipal Government, resulting in poor lighting, filthy streets, low or no sewerage, and bad sanitation—for which he pays the highest rents. To eliminate these evils, we urge the formation of tenants' leagues, on the one hand, and heavy taxation on unimproved urban land, on the other, as a means of forcing such lands into use by driving the owners to build. Thereby, there is provided an increase of houses.

The Tenants' League, by organizing rent strikes, will require owners to give better service, also to reduce rents. Not only is there a limited supply in the housing of Negroes, but the character of available houses is very undesirable. We, therefore, urge upon municipalities a program for the erection of adequate housing at reasonable rentals.

2. Consumption.

At the present time, Negro workers are receiving larger money incomes than ever before. The purchasing power of the dollar, however, determines all real wages. The dollar today is worth approximately thirty cents of its normal purchasing power in 1914. The cost of food, fuel, clothing, transportation and shelter determines the value of one's wages. How can the price of these commodities be reduced?

European countries have successfully solved this problem by the development of the cooperative method. Denmark, Russia, France, England, Holland, Belgium and Switzerland have developed cooperation in both consumption and production. It is the one social remedy that did not fail during the war. Instead it advanced on a large scale. Cooperation may be organized by city blocks, apartment houses, church congregations, fraternal societies, and, in rural districts, by counties or convenient sections. The cooperative, by eliminating the middle man, enables the producer, whether farmer or industrial worker, to secure more for his goods, and at the same time, to reduce the price to the consumer.

We wish to issue a special warning to Negroes to guard against pseudo-cooperatives, or in other words, movements by individuals for private profits, sailing under the guise of genuine cooperatives.

We would suggest that this organization issue a syllabus on the details and methods of cooperation for the use of those who desire specific information.

As an effective means to produce a reduction in the price of commodities, and to secure better and courteous service, we recommend the organization of a Boycott Committee in every local council. This committee shall study the character and function of all business, giving its O. K. to those it approves and condemning those found unsatisfactory according to its standard. We would also strongly recommend that the Boycott Committee protest against a defamation and stigmatization of Negroes on the stage, screen, and in music, through Negro quartettes and jubilee singers. In addition to boycotting, when the Negro is presented in such a light on the stage or screen, the players,

actors or portrayal should be roundly hissed by all Friends of Negro Freedom.

3. Social.

There is the necessity that the masses of the people become familiar with the fundamental problems which concern the Negro race. This implies education. Education, therefore, must be the corner-stone of the Friends of Negro Freedom since an organization is weak or strong in proportion as its membership is poorly or well informed. Col. Ingersoll once said, "To teach the alphabet is to inaugurate a revolution; to build a school-house is to construct a fort."

We, therefore, urge that every local council shall form a forum which shall meet weekly and discuss all vital problems, giving precedence to those which more closely affect Negroes. When forums shall have been organized in several cities, we suggest that a National Chatauqua be instituted to be addressed by the National Officials, various experts and specialists from the universities and municipal departments in those cities and centers. There should also be a monthly official organ as well as press releases.

We would call to the attention of the country that Negro colleges and universities are being dominated by an invisible government, an interlocking directorate which controls the curricula, shapes the policy, and suppresses academic freedom even more ruthlessly than in white colleges and universities. In such institutions, methods are in vogue which tend to create intellectual puppets of the students and intellectual prostitutes of the teachers. The universal protest of those who stand for real education should be made against such conditions.

National Day.

By the setting aside of a National Day for annual celebration, nearly all great movements have given publicity to their work and aroused the enthusiasm of their followers.

The Labor Movement added considerable impetus to its development by setting aside of May 1st for its international holiday. More in point, is the Irish race's setting aside March 17th, St. Patrick's Day, on which they (the Irish) have great parades, mass meetings, etc., to keep before the world the cause of oppressed Ireland and its determination to be free.

We urge that the Friends of Negro Freedom also establish an annual National Day.

The Committee would designate the birthday of John Brown, May 9th, as the day to be observed. On this day, the local councils everywhere should organize a parade with appropriate floats and banners. This should be followed by mass meetings, and, where possible, pageants, in the afternoon and evenings.

On this day a membership drive should be conducted; girls should sell tags and distribute propaganda matter. Buttons should be worn, and two weeks prior to the day, all members of the Friends of Negro Freedom should use on their mail the seals which may be secured from the National Office. Ministers should be urged to preach sermons, papers to write editorials, and instructors to teach the children to revere the day.

4. Political.

We urge that Negroes no longer base their political affiliation on that of their fathers and until they are wholly satisfied that a political party represents their aspirations, their economic and social needs, we suggest that they

maintain a non-partisan attitude, throwing their strength where it shall count most for their interest.

We urge that our councils shall give less attention to so-called good men and more to political organization and the interests of those who compose the organization. Good men may die overnight, but not their organization. A party composed of brewers and distillers could not be relied upon to enact a genuine prohibition law. Undertakers could not be relied upon to enact a law providing burial at cost. Gamblers would not pass legislation penalizing games of chance. Slave holders would not issue and enforce an Emancipation Proclamation. In other words, the beneficiary of a system cannot be relied upon to overthrow that system.

Negroes, who are chiefly workers, should therefore note that parties composed of large land-owners, manufacturers, bankers, railroad magnates, trusts, syndicates and monopolists, cannot represent a race of workers.

Program of Destruction.

Destruction precedes construction. Excavation must go before erection. Disease must be destroyed before health can be developed.

Much of the chief work in the liberation of Negroes calls for the destruction of many deep rooted American institutions. We, therefore, urge the abolition of disfranchisement, the annihilation of peonage, the extirpation of lynching, the elimination of the jimcrow car; in short, the relegation to oblivion of every form of race and color discrimination in every country of the world.

This tersely and succinctly sets forth the salient principles and methods of the Friends of Negro Freedom, a program of thought and action, calmly and dispassionately entered upon by a convention characterized by more light and less heat.

We believe that its pursuit will usher in a new day for an oppressed people. We welcome examination and criticism of its content and method, believing that where attention is given it, without prejudice or prepossession, the inquirer will find it rich in construction,—fraught with bigness and consequence.

R. W. BAGNALL, *Chairman*,
CHANDLER OWEN, *Secretary*,
RICHARD E. LUNDY,
JOHN MORGAN.

Founders		Founders	
Detroit	Rev. R. W. Bagnall	Washington, D. C.	Arthur W. Mitchell
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