

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/PRIVACY ACTS SECTION  
COVER SHEET

**SUBJECT: KENNETH BURKE**

CASE ORIGINATING

YORK, NEW YORK

100-11720

REPORT MADE AT

WHEN MADE PERIOD FOR

RE:

BY

NEW YORK CITY

12/10/41

WHICH MADE

10/3, 4, 6, 7,

14, 15, 16, 28,

29; 11/13, 16,

17-20/41

TITLE

CHARACTER OF CASE

LEAGUE OF AMERICAN WRITERS

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED

INTERNAL SECURITY - C

HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 4-12-86

BY 9105

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

The League of American Writers, 391 Fourth Ave., N.Y.C., was established at the Congress of American Revolutionary Writers at N.Y.C. on 4/24 to 4/27/35. Signers of the call for the initial Congress included such known Communists as EARL BROWDER, CLARENCE BATHORY, and ALEXANDER TRACHTENBERG. Subsequent congresses have been held in N.Y.C. in 1937, 1939, and 1941. Complete details on each congress furnished. This organization has been Communist influenced since its origin and has changed its program with the Communist Party change in line. Financial background indicates its principal contributors during the past year have been DONALD ODGEN STEWART, LILLIAN HELLMAN, and CORLISS LAMONT. It has its principal chapters in N.Y.C., Hollywood Cal., and San Francisco, Cal. The Hollywood chapter publishes a monthly magazine called, "The Clipper." The League is now planning a national magazine to be called the "Direction." This organization operates an Exiled Writers Committee and a Writers School in N.Y.C. and Hollywood. Aims, purposes, and constitution set out. Background of national officers furnished. Complete national membership of 637 members secured and set out.

- P -

REFERENCE:

Report of Special Agent [redacted] dated August 2, 1941 at New York City

Approved and

Forwarded:

Copy of this Report

Bureau (encl.)

Los Angeles (encl.)

All other Field Divisions

New York (1 NY 100-15966)

1 NY 100-15967)

San Francisco (encl.)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED  
DATE 11-12-82 BY SP-7  
FOIPA #200, 860 b7c

CASE ORIGINATED

YORK, NEW YORK

100-11720

REPORT MADE AT

WHEN MADE PERIOD FOR

RE:

BY

NEW YORK CITY

12/10/41

WHICH MADE

10/3, 4, 6, 7,

14, 15, 16, 28,

29; 11/13, 14,

17-20/41

TITLE

CHARACTER OF CASE

LEAGUE OF AMERICAN WRITERS

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED

INTERNAL SECURITY

9800

HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

6/10/92 3335/4

DATE 4-12-86 BY 9105

SYNOPSIS OF FACTS:

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REFERENCE:

Report of Special Agent [redacted] dated August 2, 1941 at New York City

Approved and

Special Agent

Copies of this Report

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- 4 New Orleans (encl.)
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- New York (1 NY 100-15966
- 1 NY 100-15967)
- 2 San Francisco (encl.)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
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DATE 11/2/82 BY SP-8

## DETAILS:

ORIGIN AND HISTORY

The following information concerning the origin of this organization is taken from a review of the New York files from "The Red Decade" by EUGENE LYONS, and from literature published by the League of American Writers. Although the origin has been previously set out in the reference report of Agent Starr, this information is again being furnished for the benefit of each of the Field Offices receiving copies of this report.

0/s  
b7C  
According to the information set out in "The Red Decade," the League of American Writers was launched by the First Congress of American Revolutionary Writers. The Congress was held in Mecca Temple, New York City, on April 24 through 27, 1935. It is pointed out that ~~EARL BROWDER~~ was well to the fore in the organizational stages, and ~~ALEXANDER TRACHTENBERG~~, head of International Publishers and one of the Communist Party leaders, was busy moving the scenery and prompting the actors. ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ presided and was selected as chairman of the League. CORLISS LAMONT brought greetings from the Friends of the Soviet Union. Representatives were present from the Young Pioneers and from the Communist Youth organizations. The center of the stage of activity was held by the Communist Party functionaries ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ CLARENCE HATHAWAY, ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~ ALEXANDER TRACHTENBERG, M. J. OLGIN, and others. According to "The Red Decade" there was no attempt to conceal the Moscow influence upon this organization at the First Congress.

The "National Republic," February, 1935, lists the following individuals who signed the Call for this First Writers Congress:

b7C  
~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
MAXWELL BODENHEIM

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
EARL BROWDER (national secretary of the Communist Party)  
BOB BROWN

~~\_\_\_\_\_~~  
KENNETH BURKE  
ERSKINE CALDWELL  
~~\_\_\_\_\_~~

emphasize the following issues:

To fight against imperialist war and Fascism; to defend the Soviet Union; to develop and strengthen the revolutionary labor movement; against negro discrimination and persecution; against persecution of minority groups and foreign born; solidarity with colonial people in their struggle for freedom; against the influences of capitalistic ideas in American liberalism; against imprisonment of revolutionary writers and artists as well as all other class war prisoners.

The "National Republic" further states that the immediate purpose of the League at the time of its organization was to attempt to counteract the anti-Communist campaign which at that time was taking a toll in the Communist ranks.

ols The pamphlet, "What the League of American Writers Is," published by the L.A.W., states that since the 1935 congress the L.A.W. has conducted congresses in New York City in 1937 and 1939. Books have been published about all three congresses, namely, "The American Writers Congress," "The Writers in a Changing World," and "Fighting Words." In 1941 another congress was held, however, this time it was held in conjunction with the American Artists Congress and the United American Artists, C.I.O.

The Second Congress of American Writers  
June 4 to 6, 1937

4c This Congress was held in New York City on the above dates. The bulletin published by the L.A.W. dated April and May, 1937, which invited the writers of America to this second congress, pointed out the dangers of Fascism; the growth of Fascism in the United States; and the effect a Fascist regime would have on literature and labor. It further stated that as a result of the 1937 congress it was hoped that a national organization of American writers could be established with the following aims:

First, to provide a center for the cultural activities of American writers in general, and a link between writers now separated by age or place of residence;

Second, to help in raising cultural standards by the discussion of literary problems;

Third, to arrange lectures and conferences and issue a magazine;

Fourth, to maintain friendly relations with the writers of other countries by contact with their organizations, and also by encouraging the translation of important works;

015 Fifth, to defend the political and social institutions that make for peace and encourage a healthy culture, and specifically, to defend the democratic right to education, to freedom of thought and expression;

Sixth, to effect an alliance for cultural defense between American writers and all progressive forces in the nation.

This bulletin then set out the program to be followed at the Second Congress and stated that several committees were functioning to make the congress a success. It is noted that the individuals serving on these committees were the following:

LEO HUBERMAN

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

MURIEL NEEPER

GENE WILSON TAGGART

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

KENNETH BURKE

The following members of the executive council were elected:

b7c

[REDACTED]

JOHN HOWARD LEBRON

[REDACTED]

JOHN HOWARD LEBRON

[REDACTED]

0/s [REDACTED] was appointed temporary national organizer to tour the Middle West, North West, and Southern Pacific areas during June and July, 1937 addressing groups of writers in the principal centers, aiding in the preliminaries for regional conferences, and generally undertaking organization wherever possible.

The Third Congress of American Writers  
June 2, 3, 4, 1939

EUGENE LYONS, in "The Red Decade" states that at the time of this congress the L.A.W. was not aware of what was going on in Europe, for at that very time secret negotiations between Moscow and Berlin were coming to a head. However, despite this situation the Call for the congress listed among the aims, "cooperation of this country with other nations and peoples opposed to Fascism including the Soviet Union which has been the most constant defender of people."

"The Red Decade" states that of the 72 signers for this 1939 Call, at least fourteen were generally known to be members of the Communist Party, while the others were names that had become fixtures on Stalinist manifestos and whitewash documents. The complete list of signers to the Call is set forth below.

**WANNENYCKEBOOKS**

KENNETH BURKE  
ERSKINE CALDWELL

GEORGE DILLON,  
MONTGOMERY, DE PER

GUY ENDORSE  
HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD  
HENRY PRATT FAIRCHILD

LILLIAN HELLIGAN

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

## ALERT !!

## REFERENCES

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## MURINE NUCLEOP

VINCENT S. [REDACTED]

~~UPON SINGL. IN~~

DONALD OGDEN STEVENS

CHANDLER, R. W. 1973. *Journal of Fish Biology* 5:1-12.

CARL VAN DYKE

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS

ELLA WINTER

RICHARD WRIGHT



b7C

"The Red Decade" describes the 1939 congress as simply another Communist mass meeting with the usual greetings from the writers of Russia, praise of Moscow, and resolutions embodying every inch of the Party Line. Before the opening of this congress, several people had resigned from the L.A.W. protesting against the Communist domination. Among these were [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Occupying a front place in the activities of this congress were THOMAS MANN and LOUIS BROMFIELD, while in the background DOROTHY PARKER, HAYWOOD BROWN, and VINCEY SHEPARD and their crowd pulled the strings. [REDACTED] spoke for the British equivalent of the L.A.W. [REDACTED] held out for an organization called the International Association of Writers for the Defense of Culture, and [REDACTED] brought greetings from the Philippine Islands League.

Subsequently a number of members withdrew from the executive board of the L.A.W. and also the honorary president, THOMAS MANN and four of the ten vice-presidents. According to EUGENE LYONS, writer of "The Red Decade," the reason for their withdrawal was the same admitted by [REDACTED] when he withdrew and that is "that the Communists dominated the L.A.W."

A copy of the book entitled, "Fighting Words," edited by DONALD OGDEN STEARNT and containing information about the 1939 congress, has been secured by the New York Office and, along with other L.A.W. literature, is being furnished to the Bureau with this report. It is noted that the index of this book lists the following individuals as contributors to the material published and discussed in the 1939 congress:

b7C

[REDACTED]

BURKS, KENNETH

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

ELMER, ALBERT

[REDACTED]

MEMBERS

Through a confidential source it was possible for the New York Office to secure the national membership of the League of American Writers. This list is being set out here alphabetically by name and geographically by state for the information of the other Field Divisions.

## ALABAMA



## CALIFORNIA



Barry, John D.

2536 Baker Street  
San Francisco, California

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

MISSOURI

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

NEBRASKA

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

NEW JERSEY

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

b7c

Burke, Kenneth

[REDACTED]

Andover  
New Jersey

[REDACTED]

Gae, Wanda

[REDACTED]

R.F.D.#1  
Hunterdon County

[REDACTED]

Nearing, Scott

[REDACTED]

P.O. Box 516  
Ridgewood, New Jersey

[REDACTED]

Williams, William Carlos

9 Ridge Road  
Rutherford, New Jersey

TO : DIRECTOR, JR, FBI (100-1110)

AUG 9 1954

FROM : SAC, NEWARK (100-22690)

SUBJECT: WALTER LOWENFELS, was.  
IS - C

b7C On 7/8/54, [redacted] USPO, Egg Harbor, N.J., confidentially advised that the USPO, Egg Harbor, N.J., was holding 156 pieces of first and second class mail for additional postage. He stated that all the mail was contained in identical envelopes which bore stateside and foreign addresses. He then stated that the Egg Harbor Postmaster had examined a representative number of the second class mail as authorized under postal regulations and after finding typewritten matter contained within was holding the entire lot for additional postage.

[redacted] stated that inasmuch as the Egg Harbor Postmaster had advised him that in her opinion the printed matter contained within the envelopes she had inspected was of a subversive nature he was bringing the situation to the attention of the Bureau.

[redacted] USPO, Egg Harbor, N.J., was contacted this same date and confidentially advised SA [redacted] that about 5:30 p.m. on 7/7/54, an individual driving a dark blue automobile bearing Pennsylvania license 9 N 936, who has been identified by the postal clerk on duty as WALTER LOWENFELS, deposited at the post office 156 pieces of mail, the majority of which were entered as second class mail. She stated that at the time he deposited the mail, subject was asked by the clerk on duty whether any written matter was contained within the envelopes and subject had claimed such was not the case. According to [redacted] all the envelopes were identical in shape, size and color and bore the return address: Whittier Press, Box 5405, Kingsessing Station, Philadelphia 43, Pa.

REGISTERED MAIL

cc: 3 PHILADELPHIA  
1 ALBANY  
1 ALBUQUERQUE  
1 BOSTON  
1 CHICAGO  
1 INDIANAPOLIS  
1 KANSAS CITY  
1 LOS ANGELES  
1 LOUISVILLE  
1 MILWAUKEE  
1 NEW HAVEN  
1 NEW YORK

ENCL. 1 (Bureau)

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED  
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

DATE 5/16/83 BY SP-6 [redacted]

COPIES DESTROYED

23 JUN 25 1973

cc: 1 PITTSBURGH  
1 SAN FRANCISCO  
1 WASHINGTON FIELD

RECORDED - 6 12 AUG 11 1954

53 AUG 20 1954

INDEXED - 6

o/s [ "and there came a dark night in the hot Pennsylvania summer. It was in the country, where LOWENFELS had gone to live. He had suffered a heart attack and was resting in a small cottage. In the dark summer midnight, agents of the FBI surrounded his little cabin. Then they charged. Brutally they aroused the sick man, forced him to dress hastily, then kidnapped him in a car. They drove for forty miles and finally at dawn dragged him into a court of justice - a court held at the milkman's hour, a court where seven other persons were being charged with him for the crime of being 'alleged Communists'."

b7C Through [REDACTED] cooperation, the following names and addresses were obtained from the above mentioned correspondence:

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

b7C [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
KATHERINE ANNE PORTER  
117 E. 17th St.,  
New York, N.Y.  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

b7C  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
KENNETH BURKE  
Andover, N.J.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Miscellaneous, CALIFORNIA

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
CALIFORNIA  
[REDACTED]

XXXXXX  
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Section 552

Section 552a

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☐ (b)(2)

☐ (b)(7)(B)

☐ (j)(2)

☐ (b)(3)

☒ (b)(7)(C)

☐ (k)(1)

☐ (b)(7)(D)

☐ (k)(2)

☐ (b)(7)(E)

☐ (k)(3)

☐ (b)(7)(F)

☐ (k)(4)

☐ (b)(4)

☐ (b)(8)

☐ (k)(5)

☐ (b)(5)

☐ (b)(9)

☐ (k)(6)

☐ (b)(6)

☐ (k)(7)

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

THIS CASE ORIGINATED AT **NEW YORK**

FILE NO.

REPORT MADE AT <b>NEW YORK</b>	DATE WHEN MADE <b>8/10/56</b>	PERIOD FOR WHICH MADE <b>4/16, 18, 5/2-4, 21-23, 31/5/54, 18-22, 26, 29/7/17, 23-27, 30, 31/56</b>	REPORT MADE BY [REDACTED] <b>b7c</b>
TITLE <b>LILY MARY BATTERHAM BURKE, was: Lily Mary Batterham, Mrs. Kenneth Duva Burke</b>			CHARACTER OF CASE <b>SECURITY MATTER - C</b>

## SUMMARY REPORT

BURKE resides at 135 West 10th Street, NYC, and is unemployed. Reportedly BURKE was employed at JSSS [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] BURKE reported as a CP club member in 1956; subscribed for "Daily Worker" and or "The Worker" in 1948, 1951, and 1952; registered ALP 1949-52 and 1954, and signed CP Nominating Petition in 1945. Foreign travel and description set forth.

- P -

## DETAILS:

I. BACKGROUNDa. Birth Data

The records of the Passport Office, United States Department of State, Washington, D.C. were reviewed on May 21, 1956, by SA [REDACTED] **b7c**. These records reflect that LILY MARY BURKE was born on July 4, 1891, at Asheville, North Carolina.

DECLASSIFIED BY SP3 [REDACTED]  
ON 3-20-96 **b7c**

b. Marital Status

On June 21, 1956, SA [REDACTED] examined the records of the Marriage License Bureau, COPIES DESTROYED **b7c**

238 OCT 31 1953

APPROVED AND FORWARDED: <b>882</b>	SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE	DO NOT WRITE IN THESE SPACES	
COPIES OF THIS REPORT 4 - Bureau (RM) 3 - New York (100-124793) <b>62 SEP - 6 1956</b>		100-124793-41	97 TS RECORDED - 93 INDEXED - 93 SUBV CONTROL EX-100

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Borough of Manhattan, New York City. These records revealed that LILY MARY BATTERHAM was married to KENNETH DUVA BURKE on May 17, 1919, in New York City. This marriage was her first, according to the records. Her mother is listed as ELEANOR ANN FORESTER and her father as HARRY BATTERHAM, both born in England.

The Passport records, which have been referred to previously, reflect that KENNETH BURKE and LILY MARY BURKE were divorced in November, 1933.

c. Present Residence and Employment

On July 30, 1956, by the use of a suitable pretext a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation determined that BURKE resides at 135 West 10th Street, New York City, and is unemployed.

d. Past Employment

[redacted] who has furnished reliable information in the past, advised on March 9, 1956, that BURKE was employed in the library of the Jefferson School of Social Science (JSSS). On July 25, 1956, however, the informant was of the opinion that BURKE was no longer employed by the JSSS.

The JSSS has been designated by the Attorney General of the United States pursuant to Executive Order 10450.

II. AFFILIATION WITH THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

a. Evidence of Communist Party (CP) Membership

[redacted]

NEW YORK

# PEACE RALLY

CARNEGIE HALL

Friday, May 12 8 p.m.

Report by **DR. LINUS PAULING**

**On The Oslo Conference To Stop  
The Spread Of Nuclear Weapons**

This Conference, initiated by Dr. Pauling and sponsored by Albert Schweitzer, Bertrand Russell, Philip Noel-Baker and others, is being held in Oslo, Norway, May 2-7, and will be dedicated to the issue of nuclear disarmament and world peace.

Also:

**MRS. A. HELEN PAULING****JAMES HIGGINS** (Editor, York Gazette & Daily)**PHILIP MORRISON**, Chairman**Entertainment**

Tolson \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parsons \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mohr \_\_\_\_\_  
 Belmont \_\_\_\_\_  
 Callahan \_\_\_\_\_  
 Conrad \_\_\_\_\_  
 DeLoach \_\_\_\_\_  
 Evans \_\_\_\_\_  
 Malone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Rosen \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tavel \_\_\_\_\_  
 Trotter \_\_\_\_\_  
 W.C. Sullivan \_\_\_\_\_  
 Tele Room \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ingram \_\_\_\_\_  
 Gandy \_\_\_\_\_

REC-60

b7c

The Washington Post and Times Herald \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Washington Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Evening Star \_\_\_\_\_  
 New York Herald Tribune \_\_\_\_\_  
 New York Journal-American \_\_\_\_\_  
 New York Mirror \_\_\_\_\_  
 New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
 New York Post \_\_\_\_\_  
 The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Worker \_\_\_\_\_  
 The New Leader \_\_\_\_\_  
 The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_

Date 5/8/61  
**"National Guardian"**  
 Page 10

EX-113

REC-60

NOT RECORDED  
 191 MAY 12 1961

56 MAY 16 1961

# Sponsors who support this rally include—

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