



Commission No. 1080

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Boston, Massachusetts

May 22, 1964

In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

Reference is made to memorandum dated May 7, 1964, at Washington, D. C.

The 1964 Staff Directory for Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Cambridge, Massachusetts, lists Harold R. Isaacs as Research Associate at the Center for International Studies at MIT.

The current Greater Boston Directory lists Harold R. Isaacs as residing at Newton, Massachusetts.

On May 21, 1964,

MIT, advised the records reflect the following regarding Born 1910, New York City. Before coming to MIT, he specialized in Far Eastern affairs, was a correspondent in the Far East, and a special writer for the on Far Eastern affairs. He commenced employment at MIT August 20, 1953, as a in the Center for International Studies and is so employed at the present time. During this period of time, he has also been employed as a in the Economics Department at MIT. stated that the Center for International Studies is endowed to a great extent by the United States Government. She said that much of work takes him away from MIT and consists of international travel and concentration on study in India.

On April 4, 1950, who resided in China from 1931 to 1936, furnished the following information concerning his activities in China:

At the age of twenty-one he obtained a job in the Merchant Marine on a ship going to China, and left this ship at a Chinese port in 1931. He remained in China for the next five years, the first two or three years being in Shanghai, where he edited a weekly newspaper in English called, "The China Forum."

Re:

stated that his observations had convinced him, as it had most observers, "of any human feeling" in China, that the Chinese people were being exploited by foreign business interests, as well as by their own government, and that the only hope for the betterment of their condition lay in the fulfillment of the program of the Chinese Communists.

said that he was, therefore, openly sympathetic toward the communists, espoused the communist doctrines in his paper, and developed numerous contacts among Chinese Communists who operated an underground and also distributed his paper.

stated that while his sympathies were completely with the Chinese Communists at this time, he never joined the Communist Party in China.

He recalled that _____ correspondent for the _____ was an ardent supporter of the Chinese Communists, but he was unable to say that she was a Party member or whether there was any organized cell of the Communist Party existing for Americans or other foreigners.

He stated that the sentiments of _____ and of himself were those generally prevailing among journalists and other "disinterested persons" in China.

stated, however, that he gradually came to learn that the Chinese Communists were deceitful and were playing politics, and he became increasingly estranged from them, eventually denouncing them as corrupt politicians.

He recalled that after his denunciation of the Chinese Communists, he was subjected to a barrage of vilification, and was publicly denounced by _____ as a paid agent of the Japanese Government.

He further stated that while in China, he had been an inexperienced, youthful idealist, and he felt there were doubtless many things going on behind the scenes in the group of foreigners in Shanghai who were sympathetic to communism, of which he was unaware.

Re:

On January 18, 1951,
following information:

furnished the

When he first arrived in China, early in 1931, became extremely friendly with one who was then a British citizen residing in China as a journalist. According to had had the distinction of being expelled from the Communist Party for Trotskyite deviations, before Trotsky, himself, was expelled. He stated that had been a member of the Communist Party until about 1926 or 1927, but had been expelled because he had criticized the Comintern for giving up the idea of world revolution. When Leon Trotsky was expelled from Russia a short time later because of this same criticism of the Russian Communist Party, quite naturally became a fervent adherent.

According to maintained friendly social relations with a pro-Soviet group of Caucasians in Shanghai despite his known Trotskyite opinions and it was chiefly through that Isaacs became acquainted with a number of friends.

According to he was converted to the principles of the Fourth International (Trotskyism) by in 1932 or 1933, and because of his attacks on what he believed to be the "cynical motives" of the Chinese Party, he became estranged from the circle of friends he had made in Shanghai; however, he still maintained friendly relations with some of the Chinese Communist leaders.

stated that he was a regularly active member of the Socialist Workers Party and in that capacity has contributed articles to their press.

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

stated that he had written an article in the April 4, 1936, issue of self-described as a Socialist Workers Party newspaper, under the pseudonym of

Re:

stated that his Chinese name had been and that he had had this name printed on his calling cards in Chinese characters when he was in China.

stated that he broke with the Trotskyite movement in 1940 and since that time, has refused to speak to him.

On February 7, 1952, furnished the following information:

He stated he had received an advance copy of a book entitled "The Shanghai Conspiracy" by Major General C. A. Willoughby, published by E. P. Dutton and Company, New York. He stated that one of the end papers of this book carried a chart purporting to diagram the travels of Comintern agents, Communist Party members, sympathizers and the like and had noticed that there was listed under this chart the names of the persons to whom it referred. Carried on this list was his own name and his wife's maiden name,

stated that so far as the text mentioned his activities, it was correct although repetitious, and stated that he had never denied that for a short period after his arrival in China he had been a wholehearted supporter of the program of the Chinese Communists. He stated, however, that his disillusionment with the Chinese Communists and his criticisms of them which were available in his published works had not been taken into account by the author of the book. He also felt that the listing of his name in the end paper of the book in a broad category, from which it was impossible to tell whether the person was listed as an espionage agent, a Comintern agent, or merely a sympathizer of the Chinese Communists, was extremely unfair and possibly libelous.

stated that he was particularly bitter over the inclusion of his wife's name in this list. He stated that he had had an attorney request the publishers as to the basis for such statements and the publishers had replied that they had letters written either by him or his wife which were the basis for such listing.

Re:

stated that his wife's political sympathies have paralleled his own. He stated that she had never been a member of the Communist Party nor had he in any country in the world although she shared his early sympathy for the program of the Chinese Communists.

stated that he had consulted a prominent attorney in New York, to explore the possibilities of suing the author and publishers of "The Shanghai Conspiracy," because of the statements contained in the book, and at the present time, discussions are going on between the publishers and his attorney.