

Guide to
the Microfilm Edition
of the
FBI File on the
National Negro Congress

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Description of the Microfilm Edition of the FBI File on the National Negro Congress

The National Negro Congress (NNC) was first proposed at a national conference in Washington in May 1935 in an effort to unite organizations and people of all races to fight for social and economic justice for blacks. The NNC held its first national convention in Chicago in February of the next year. Originally, it was a coalition of white and black leaders in the civil rights movement; however, the NNC was accused of being heavily influenced by members of the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA). A. Philip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters served as the first president but refused to continue in that position at the third national convention, held in Philadelphia in 1940, because of the Communist domination of the NNC that split the organization in that year. Max Yergan, who later admitted Communist party membership, succeeded Randolph as president. The NNC continued throughout the 1940s, although its membership declined gradually after 1942, and it apparently ceased to exist in late 1947.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) first became interested in the NNC in the late 1930s, but the bulk of the documents reproduced in this publication dates from 1940, when the NNC opposed Franklin D. Roosevelt's program of rearmament and aid to Britain and France. The FBI files continue into the 1950s, when the Bureau discovered the need to correct information in the NNC file relating to the Negro Association of America (NAA), a group thought to be affiliated with the NNC; the Bureau learned that the NAA was completely fictitious and had been nothing more than the product of an informant's imagination in 1941.

The documents reproduced here were drawn from the Washington files of the FBI and have been released under the Freedom of Information Act; certain documents or portions of documents have been deleted by the FBI pursuant to provisions of that legislation. The material has been filmed in the exact order

and condition in which it was released, although every effort has been made to publish the most legible copies available.

The files are in approximate chronological order, and the FBI did not index documents. The Roll Notes is not a complete inventory of the files; it is, however, an indication of the types of material or specific documents that may be particularly worthwhile for research. The FBI kept a companion clipping file (entitled Section Sub A), which also is reproduced.

ROLL NOTES

Section 1:

May 1936 - February 1941 Roll 1, 0001-0276

Accusation of ties to the CPUSA

Reports of program of NNC

Regarded as internal security matter with investigation coordinated through the New York office

Press reports

FBI field reports including undeveloped leads

List of endorsers of NNC

History of NNC

Reports on organizations believed affiliated with NNC

Membership of national executive board

NNC pamphlets including *Democracy and the Negro People*
Today, Let Us Build a National Negro Congress, Official
Proceedings of the National Negro Congress

Section 2:

February 1941 - May 1941 Roll 1, 0278-0533

FBI field reports including undeveloped leads

Press reports

Information on NNC taken from Communist publications

Report on proceedings of third NNC convention and constitution

Minutes of the administrative committee of the national executive board, 5/25/40

Financial statement, 4/40

Membership of the national executive board

Copies of NNC News Letter

Reports on related organizations including the Negro Achievement Association of America

Reports on affiliated organizations and list thereof

Reports on Negro Achievement Association of America

History of NNC conventions and structure, aims, and personnel

Report on New England Congress for Equal Opportunity

Special Meeting of Negro Commission of C.E.C. and the Section
Committee Harlem Section

Membership of specific local executive boards

Section 3:

May 1941 - September 1941 **Roll 1, 0535-0806**

FBI field reports including undeveloped leads

Handbills

Planned demonstration of 6/41

Reports on related organizations

Laboratory report

Minutes of special meeting of the Negro Commission of
CEC, 10/19/35

Memoranda

Section 4:

September 1941 - May 1942 **Roll 1, 0808-1012**

FBI field reports including undeveloped leads

Report on demonstration of Citizens' Committee Against Police
Brutality, 9/14/41

Reports on related organizations

Excerpts from *Negro Liberation* by James A. Allen and *Old Jim*
Crow Has Got to Go by Henry Winston

Excerpts from Communist publications

Sponsors of 1941 Massachusetts conference

Information concerning National Conference of Negro
Youth, 9/41

Section 5:

May 1942 - January 1943 **Roll 1, 1014-1297**

FBI field reports including undeveloped leads

Aims, officers, and executive board members of NNC

The National Negro Congress Reports to the People

Report on Negro Work, material for the Negro Commission

NNC handbills

List of affiliated organizations

Report on the Service Flag ceremonies, 10/4/42

Article on NNC appearing in *The Communist*, 6/40

Section 6:

February 1943 - June 1943 **Roll 1, 1299-1517**

FBI field reports including undeveloped leads

Handbills

10-Point Victory Legislative Program of NNC

List of national officers and executive board members

"Draft Prospectus, Eastern Seaboard Conference on the Problems
of the War and the Negro People"

Pamphlet on the Eastern Seaboard Conference, 4/43
List of delegates to National Conference of Colored Youth, 11/41
Report on Philadelphia Council of NNC
Report on Detroit Council of NNC
Report on Eastern Seaboard Conference
Report on Washington, D.C., Council of NNC
NNC sponsors
Congress Vue, 4/43

Section 7:

June 1943 - February 1944 **Roll 2, 0001-0245**

FBI field files including undeveloped leads
Report on Midwest Conference of NNC, 5/43
The Negro People in the Fight for Freedom, report of the Eastern Seaboard Conference
"The Negro and the Fight for Victory," address of Edward E. Strong
Africa in the War
Handbills
Africa and America
Reports on Chicago Council of NNC
Report on Indianapolis Council of NNC
Report on New York Council of NNC

Section 8:

February 1944 - November 1944 **Roll 2, 0247-0567**

NNC news release no. 142
FBI field reports including undeveloped leads
Blank petition to impeach heads of War and Navy Depts. for discrimination
Report on Chicago Council of NNC
NNC news release no. 149
Report on Cleveland Council of NNC
Material relating to 1944 political campaign
Report on Washington, D.C., Council of NNC
Report on Detroit Council of NNC

Section 9:

November 1944 - February 1946 **Roll 2, 0569-0896**

FBI field reports including undeveloped leads
Reports on Washington, D.C., Council of NNC
Material relating to 1944 political campaign

Program of NNC
Reports on New York Council of NNC
Reports on Chicago Council of NNC
Reports on Detroit Council of NNC
Report on National Council of Negro Youth
Minutes of the national executive board meeting of NNC
including financial information, 1/14/45
Activities regarding FEPC and anti-poll tax bill
Authorization for technical surveillance at the Detroit office
of NNC

Section 10:

March 1946 - November 1946 **Roll 2, 0898-1121**

FBI field reports involving undeveloped leads
Reports on Detroit Council of NNC
Reports on Washington, D.C., Council of NNC
Material relating to FEPC and minimum-wage bills
NNC national convention
Death Blow to Jim Crow
Technical surveillance of NNC national convention
Report on Chicago Council of NNC
NNC petition to UNESCO against discrimination in United States
Reports on New York Council of NNC
"The Oppression of the American Negro, the Facts"
Technical surveillance of Detroit branch
Technical surveillance of Philadelphia branch
Report on Los Angeles Council of NNC

Section 11:

November 1946 - December 1948 **Roll 2, 1123-1378**

Continuation of technical surveillance in Philadelphia
Report on Detroit Council of NNC
CIO councils ordered to disassociate from NNC
FBI field reports including undeveloped leads
Continuation of technical surveillance in Detroit
Report on Chicago Council of NNC
Report on New York Council of NNC
Handbills
Report on Washington, D.C., Council of NNC
Program of NNC
Report on Philadelphia Council of NNC
Reports on St. Louis Council of NNC

Report on Los Angeles Council of NNC
Report on New Haven Council of NNC
Reports on San Diego Council of NNC
Merger of NNC and Civil Rights Congress
Minutes of national board of NNC, 11/22/47
Report on Negro Youth Congress
Constitution of NNC

Section 12:

March 1949 - February 1961 Roll 2, 1380-1496
A Petition to the United Nations on Behalf of 13 Million
Oppressed Negro Citizens of the United States of America
Threat against the governor of Mississippi
FBI field reports
Negro Association of America established to have been a
fictitious organization
Dissolution of NNC

Section Sub A:

March 1936 - March 1952 Roll 2, 1498-1839
Case of Robert Lee Perkins alleging slavery in Louisiana
Newspaper clippings