Federal Bureau of Investigation
United States Department of Justice
San Francisco, California
June 10, 1941

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Director,
Federal Bureau of Investigation,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

Attached is a custodial detention memorandum prepared on the above named subject.

Very truly yours,

N. J. L. Pieper
Special Agent in Charge

OAE: GC
100-1465
Enc.
CUSTODIAL DETENTION MEMORANDUM

JOHN PITTMAN
1667 Hyde Street
San Francisco, California

ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED

COMMUNIST
U. S. Citizen
S. F. file 100-1465

The name of the above individual is being submitted to the
Bureau for consideration for custodial detention in the event of a
national emergency. The following information is summarized from the
San Francisco file:

Name, address, and nationalistic tendency are given above.

JOHN PITTMAN, colored, is employed as Foreign Editor of
the PEOPLES WORLD, West Coast Communist newspaper, 583 Market Street,
San Francisco. He is probably a U. S. citizen, reportedly born in
Georgia. Investigation on this point is being conducted.

Confidential Informant SF-296 reports that as a member
of the Communist Party from September 1936 to February 1937, he had
occasion to view the records of the Newspaper Guild Fraction of the
Communist Party, and among the names listed was the name of the subject,
who is identified as holding a position at the PEOPLES WORLD newspaper,
a Communist organ. According to this informant, subject attended
Communist Party meetings of the Newspaper Guild Fraction during the
time from September 1936 to February 1937 while this informant was a
member of the Party. Confidential Informant SF-296 further advises that
subject's wife, MERLE PITTMAN, is believed to be white, and quit her
position at the CIA to accept a position at the state headquarters of
the Communist Party, 121 Haight Street, San Francisco.

Confidential Informant SF-2 advises that subject asso-
ciates with BILL SCHNEIDERMAN, secretary of the 13th District of the
Communist Party for the State of California, and that he met with JAMES
W. FORD, Vice-Presidential candidate for the Communist Party in Los
Angeles, California in October 1940.

The San Francisco Police Department under date of March 7,
1941 reports that subject spoke at a mass meeting held in the Mission
Turnvere Hall in May 1935, and under date of October 4, 1937 the
WESTERN WORKER carried an article stating he was elected as a member
of the Executive Board of the San Francisco County Council Committee
of the Communist Party. This report reflects he is a member of the
Northern California Newspaper Guild, and active in organizing negroes
in trade unions; also that he was registered as a Communist from San
Francisco in 1938. Subject writes a daily column in the PEOPLES WORLD,
and it is to be noted that he is outspoken in his opinion in upholding
Russia.

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