

P.S.F.

Bloch, Louis

Subject File

Box 118

1 item

MARITIME LABOR BOARD
WASHINGTON

ROBERT W. BRUÈRE, CHAIRMAN
LOUIS BLOCH
CLAUDE E. SEEHORN

PSF
Bloch

THE WHITE HOUSE
DEC 2 12 00 PM '38
RECEIVED

December 1, 1938

The President
The White House

My dear Mr. President:

I am taking the liberty of writing to you regarding the accusation which was made against me by Harper Knowles, a discredited California red-baiter, before the Dies Committee. Knowles told the Committee that I formerly belonged or still belong to the "professional group of the Communist Party of San Francisco". This wholly false statement about me was made while I was en route to the Pacific Coast on official business.

When I reached San Francisco, I air-mailed a registered letter to Congressman Dies, a copy of which I am enclosing. Apparently, no publicity was given to this letter. I have not as yet learned whether it was inserted in the record of the hearings before the Committee as I had requested.

Because you have honored me with an appointment to the Maritime Labor Board, I feel that I ought to assure you personally that there is not an iota of truth in Knowles' assertion about me.

Yours respectfully,

Louis Bloch
Louis Bloch

Enclosure

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C
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P
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REGISTERED
VIA AIR MAIL

Hotel Whitcomb
San Francisco, California
October 28, 1938

Honorable Martin Dies, Member
House of Representatives
United States Congress
Washington, D.C.

Dear Congressman:

While en route to San Francisco, on official business, I read a newspaper account to the effect that a certain Mr. Harper Knowles, whom I have never met, testified before your Committee that I was a member of some "Communist professional group."

I desire to state most emphatically that I am not and never was a Communist or a member of any Communist organization. I yield to no one in my firm devotion and loyalty to the Constitution of the United States and to our form of government. Prior to my coming to Washington, in January, 1937, I was for about 15 years a respected official of the State of California; and no one, to my knowledge, has ever accused me of Communist affiliations or leanings.

In all fairness, I respectfully request that this letter be made a part of the permanent public record of your Committee and that you give it such publicity as in your judgment will be fair to me as a citizen and a public official.

Respectfully yours,

(signed)

Louis Bloch

Dr. Louis Bloch

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

December 7, 1938.

Dear Joe:-

What can I reply to this? In other words, was Mr. Bloch's letter to Dies, dated October twenty-eighth, actually put into the record and was any publicity given to it?

Very sincerely yours,

Honorable Joe Starnes,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

JOE STARNES
Fifth District
ALABAMA

MEMBER
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE
WAR
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

December 8, 1936

Honorable Franklin D. Roosevelt
The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

My dear Mr. President:

This acknowledges yours of the 7th instant
with enclosure.

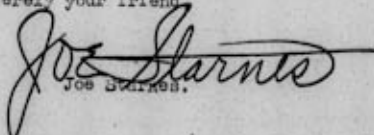
I find upon checking with the secretary of
the special committee that Mr. Bloch's letter is in the commit-
tee files but has not been actually put into the record. I am
unable to find what publicity was given to it. The secretary
informs me that the Chairman had instructed him to keep the
letter in the file until a policy should be adopted by the com-
mittee as to what action should be taken with reference to this
and other communications which have been received.

If Mr. Bloch desires to appear in person
before the Committee and make a denial of the statements made
by Knowles I will be glad to arrange with the Chairman for a
time for him to appear.

I am returning herewith enclosures which
you forwarded with your letter.

When I can be of service please command me.

Sincerely your friend


JOE STARNES

JS:ems

22

320

December 9, 1938.

*Dies Committee
files*

Dear Joe:-

Thank you for yours of December eighth. It is as I feared. Apparently Mr. Bloch's letter, which constitutes a general and specific denial of certain unsubstantiated opinion evidence, was not put into the record of the Dies Committee and given due publicity, even though Dr. Bloch specifically (and rightly) asked that such action be taken.

You have suggested that Dr. Bloch might desire to appear in person before the Committee and make further denial. It seems to me that if I were Dr. Bloch I would take no such action. He has made a reasonable request in making his denial - the request has not been acceded to - and he, therefore, stands in the position of an American citizen who has been unwarrantably persecuted by a Committee of the Congress without being given an opportunity to answer the persecution.

Very sincerely yours,

Honorable Joe Starnes, *
House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

JOE STARNES
Fifth District
ALABAMA

MEMBER
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE
WAR
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

January 2, 1939

Hon. Franklin D. Roosevelt, President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

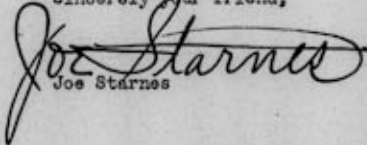
This is a belated acknowledgement of your letter of December 9, with reference to Dr. Bloch's letter. I left Washington on the tenth prior to the receipt of your letter, and it was not handed to me until after the Christmas Holidays. Hence the delay in replying.

I am happy to advise you that Dr. Bloch's letter to the Chairman of the Special Committee Investigating Un-American and Subversive Activities is being published in the record along with letters from other prominent Government Officials whose names were mentioned in the hearing by witnesses.

The Committee was interested only in facts with reference to un-American and subversive activities. By bringing such activities to light we feel that an intelligent public opinion will demand remedial action.

With kindest personal regards and every good wish for the New Year, I am

Sincerely your friend,


Joe Starnes

JS:LW

320

January 9, 1939.

*this committee
folder*

PERSONAL

Dear Joe:

Thank you for yours of January second. I am glad to know that Dr. Bloch's letter will be published in the record of the Special Committee, even though such publication does not, of course, catch up with the original slander. Frankly, I cannot pass unheeded your statement that "the Committee was interested only in facts with reference to un-American and subversive activities". Neither you nor I -- nor for that matter the American public -- ought to be willing to give the name "facts" to hundreds of pages of testimony which under every rule of Anglo-Saxon evidence is only opinion or hearsay evidence.

x3245
x340

Such evidence, I believe, is admitted in investigations in Germany and Russia but I am sorry to see it beginning in my own country.

Very sincerely yours,

Honorable Joe Starnes, <
House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

FDR/dj

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 10, 1938.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR

TO READ AND RETURN

F. D. R.

Letter from Louis Bloch, Maritime Labor Board, Washington, D. C., 12/1/38 to the President, in re accusation which was made against Dr. Bloch by Harper Knowles, a discredited California red-baiter, before the Dies Committee. Knowles told the Committee that Dr. Bloch formerly belonged or still belongs to the "professional group of the Communist Party of San Francisco". Advises that this is a wholly false statement and wishes to assure the President that it is not true. Attaches copy of his letter of 10/28/38 to Cong. Dies in re above. Accompanying above papers are President's letter to Cong. Joe Starnes, 12/7/38 (Personal and Confidential), asking what reply to make and whether the letter was put into the record, letter from Cong. Joe Starnes, 12/8/38 (Personal and Confidential) to the President, in reply to the President's letter, and carbon of President's letter to Cong. Starnes of 12/9/38 thanking for Mr. (over)

Starnes letter of 12/8/38 in re above matter.
The President feels that Dr. Bloch should not
appear in persons before the Dies Committee
and make further denial of the accusation.



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

December 15, 1938.

My dear Mr. President:

I have read this file with interest. Since I am speaking on the activities of the Dies' Committee in the near future, I have taken the liberty of having photostatic copies made for my own files. If it is not agreeable to you, please advise me and I will either destroy them or send them to you.

Sincerely yours,

Harold G. Fries

Secretary of the Interior.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

12/19/38

MEMO FOR MAC

Tell Ickes he can keep photostatic
copies in his files.

F. D. R.

December 19, 1938

PERSONAL

My dear Mr. Secretary:

With reference to your note of December fifteenth the President has asked me to tell you that it will be quite all right for you to retain the photostatic copies of the Bloch correspondence in your files.

With all good wishes for a happy holiday season,

Sincerely yours,

M. H. McINTYRE
Secretary to the President

The Honorable
The Secretary of the Interior,
Department of the Interior,
Washington, D. C.

January 9, 1939.

PERSONAL

Dear Joe:

Thank you for yours of January second. I am glad to know that Dr. Bloch's letter will be published in the record of the Special Committee, even though such publication does not, of course, catch up with the original slander. Frankly, I cannot pass unheeded your statement that "the Committee was interested only in facts with reference to un-American and subversive activities". Neither you nor I — nor for that matter the American public — ought to be willing to give the name "facts" to hundreds of pages of testimony which under every rule of Anglo-Saxon evidence is only opinion or hearsay evidence.

Such evidence, I believe, is admitted in investigations in Germany and Russia but I am sorry to see it beginning in my own country.

Very sincerely yours,

Honorable Joe Starnes,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D. C.

JOE STARNES
FIFTH DISTRICT
ALABAMA

MEMBER
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEES:
WAR
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C.

January 4, 1939

Hon. Marvin McIntyre, Secretary to the President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mac:

Please get the enclosed to "the boss." At my request the letter of Mr. Bloch has been included in the record. Also Mr. Ickes' letter is being included in the record.

The message today was fine.

Best wishes for the New Year!

Sincerely your friend,


Joe Starnes

JS:LW