

Agency Information

AGENCY : FBI
RECORD NUMBER : 124-90143-10174
RECORD SERIES : HQ
AGENCY FILE NUMBER : 100-370750-NR

Released under the John
F. Kennedy
Assassination Records
Collection Act of 1992
(44 USC 2107 Note).
Case#:NW 45838 Date:
11-16-2017

Document Information

ORIGINATOR : FBI
FROM : LA
TO : HQ
TITLE :
DATE : 10/25/1943
PAGES : 27
SUBJECTS :
HERBERT JOSEPH BIBERMAN
JOHN HOWARD LAWSON
DOCUMENT TYPE : PAPER, TEXTUAL DOCUMENT
CLASSIFICATION : Unclassified
RESTRICTIONS : 4; 11(a)
CURRENT STATUS : Redact
DATE OF LAST REVIEW : 01/21/1999
OPENING CRITERIA : INDEFINITE
COMMENTS : RPT

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Party activity and attempting to write scripts, all of which have been very unsuccessful, according to Confidential Source B. However, on September 13, 1943, BIBERMAN finally gained employment, after many vain attempts at other studios, at RKO Studios as a writer. He is working on the picture entitled "International Zone", being produced by MAURICE GERATHY. He is under week-to-week contract at a salary of \$350 per week. This information was obtained from Source K by Special Agent LESLIE WARREN. (S) (u)

ACTIVITIES OF GALE SONDERGAARD BIBERMAN

Records of Source A reflect that prior to the reorganization of the Northwest Section, which occurred about June 1, 1943, GALE SONDERGAARD was "People's World" Drive Director of Branch E, Northwest Section. There has been no indication, according to this source, that this Branch changed its personnel or name as a result of the reorganization, and accordingly, it appears she is presently performing this function in this Branch. [In verification, it is noted that Confidential Source B, on October 6, 1943, advised that GALE BIBERMAN was visiting various people, inviting them to attend the People's World Benefit Party at the home of MORRIS KERNOSKI, 9918 Toluca Lake Avenue, North Hollywood, Sunday, October 10, 1943, from 2:00 to 6:00 P.M. Among those invited by GALE were BEATRICE and SIDNEY BUCHMAN, Mr. and Mrs. RICHARD COLLINS, GUY and HENRIETTE ENDORE, EDWARD and STELLA ELISCU, and HYMAN and RITA KRAFT.] (S) (u)

A surveillance was maintained by Special Agents GEORGE SCATTERDALE and the writer at 9918 Toluca Lake Avenue, Sunday, October 10, from approximately 3:00 to 4:30, but the BIBERMANS were not noted in attendance. It was also learned later from Confidential Source B that neither GALE nor HERBERT BIBERMAN attended, she because her daughter was ill, and HERBERT because he had to work. However, it was noted there were approximately 35 to 50 automobiles in attendance, among them being ones registered to MARJORIE POTTS and ELIZABETH LEACH. BOB ROSSEN, also a member of the Northwest Section, was observed with a woman believed to be his wife, SUE ROSSEN, entering this home. Many other known Communists were at the affair, according to car registrations. (S) (u)

[It was also ascertained through Source B that GALE SONDERGAARD, HERBERT BIBERMAN, REBECCA LASKIN and ANN LASKIN, and EVA BIBERMAN each purchased \$5.00 tickets for the Writers Congress held October 1 to 3 at the University of California at Los Angeles.] This Congress was sponsored by the Hollywood Writers Mobilization which has been described by Confidential National Defense Informant L.A. 1138 as a "front" for the League of American Writers, an alleged Communist-dominated organization. U.C.L.A. also was co-sponsor of this congress. This congress openly drew criticism that it was Communist-dominated, and according to informants was definitely controlled and instigated by the Communist Party to promote their cultural line. (S) (u)

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On October 6, 1943, one REX, believed to be REX INGRAHAM, an official of the Writers War Board in New York City, conferred with GALE SONDERGAARD regarding the Writers Congress. He said he had spoken at one of the panels. The conversation also came around to NORMAN CORWIN, who, GALE stated, had not even called her since he was in town. NORMAN CORWIN, by way of identification, is married to HESTER SONDERGAARD, GALE's sister. There was an indication to Source B that the feelings between the BIBERMANS and NORMAN CORWIN were not cordial, and REX made the statement that CORWIN was not very appreciative after all HERBERT BIBERMAN had done for him in radio work. (C)(u)

According to Confidential Source M, on July 1, 1943, the Young Communist League was in a drive for funds and the leaders of this group were going over names of possible contributors. Informant advised that one of the leaders said that MAX SILVER had suggested that HERBERT and EDWARD BIBERMAN and PAUL JARRICO be contacted for solicitation. Among other names suggested by the leaders of the Young Communist League were FRANK TUTTLE, J. EDWARD BROMBERG, BOB ROSSER, IRVING FISCHER, JOHN GARFIELD, who was described as a former Y.C.L. Organizer, JOHN HOWARD LAWSON, and ORSON WELLES. It is noted that all of these persons have, during the course of this investigation, been contacts of BIBERMAN or LAWSON. This same source advised that on September 29, 1943, it had been learned that GALE BIBERMAN had contributed \$10.00 to the Young Communist League. The informant also ascertained that the Young Communist Leaguers planned to go to Mrs. BIBERMAN and get names from her concerning others in the Hollywood district from whom contributions could be solicited for the Y.C.L. (C)(u)

The bank account of HERBERT BIBERMAN and GALE SONDERGAARD BIBERMAN, examined through Confidential National Defense Informant L.A. 76 by Special Agent ERWIN P. HAIR, reflected a balance on July 31, 1943 of \$5,239.20, and deposits, June 26, \$1,005.15; July 3, \$507.45; July 10, \$507.50; July 17, \$417.00. No pertinent payments were noted. For the month of August, the balance was \$860.66. One deposit on August 2, 1943 was noted of \$124.09. There were no pertinent checks noted.

Confidential Source L revealed the following information concerning Federal Income Tax payments of [redacted] and [redacted] on separate returns filed in [redacted] and [redacted]

JFK Law 11(a)

Income from [redacted]

Of contributions, the following are pertinent:

[redacted]

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In the [redacted] showed total salaries of [redacted] from [redacted] and [redacted]. There were no expenses noted pertinent to instant case; however, contributions included [redacted] to [redacted] and [redacted] to the [redacted]. A [redacted] was also claimed of [redacted] which was described as a [redacted] to the [redacted] made in [redacted] evidenced by a [redacted]. The organization exhausted its funds and dissolved in December, 1940, according to this source. Informant advised that [redacted] was an employee of the organization in [redacted] and received compensation for services. In this connection, the return showed that [redacted] drew a salary of [redacted] from the [redacted].

JFK Law 11(a)

ACTIVITIES OF JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

Records of Confidential Source A reflect that JOHN HOWARD LAWSON was, prior to the reorganization of the Northwest Section, a member of Branch K, Northwest Section, and that subsequent to the reorganization (about June 1, 1943) he was transferred to the Writers Branch, Hollywood-Valley Group. He is also listed on these records as a member of the Section Executive Committee and also as one of the dozen leading people among the writers in the Section. Among others so listed who have been contacts of subject are WALDO SALT, RICHARD COLLINS, BOB ROSSEN, ALBERT MALTZ, LESTER COLE and PAUL JARRICO. These records also reflect that SUE LAWSON, wife of JOHN HOWARD LAWSON, was, prior to the reorganization of the Northwest Section, a member of Branch K, and after the reorganization a member of the Valley Branch. The records do not reflect that SUE LAWSON holds any office in this Branch.

During the period covered by this report JOHN HOWARD LAWSON has been exceptionally active, being on various committees, attending meetings, and participating very actively in the Writers Congress.

On July 31, 1943, LAWSON was in attendance at the "People's World" Benefit Party, sponsored by Branch O of the Northwest Section, and gave a speech for the benefit of the "People's World", according to Confidential Source C. This was one of the largest "People's World" Benefit Parties put on by this Branch of the Northwest Section. LENA HORN, Negro singer, and ELLIOTT SULLIVAN, motion picture actor, also entertained. (e) (u)

On July 24, 1943, surveillance by Special Agents F. HARTWELL SWAFFIELD and DAVID A. MACCULLOCH revealed a meeting at the home of JOHN HOWARD LAWSON,

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to "People's World", carried in the August 3, 1943 issue, page 1, the paper quotes him as hailing the paper's "uncompromising fight for pro-war unity" and "in view of coming events, it is indispensable that the 'People's World' continue to exist, to improve and to grow.

In the August 7, 1943 issue, the "People's World" said 150 delegates and visitors attended the session, and among the "greetings and messages" received were ones from JOHN HOWARD LAWSON and THEODORE DREISER. A provisional drive committee was endorsed consisting of people known to the Los Angeles Field Office as Communist Party members or fellow travelers. The conference also voted to accept the challenge of Alameda County in the "People's World" Fund Drive.

It was ascertained by Special Agent ERWIN P. HAIR through Source U that the regular bank account of JOHN HOWARD LAWSON had a balance on July 21, 1943 of \$2,212.29. The only pertinent item noted was a \$200 check to cash. The last balance in August was \$1,897.76, and no pertinent checks were noted. There were no deposits in either July or August.

Confidential Source L advised that [redacted] Federal income tax payment for [redacted] was [redacted]. His salary was [redacted] based on [redacted] plus [redacted] and from [redacted] according to this source. [redacted] His bad debts totalled, [redacted]

JFK Law II(a)

[redacted] The latter is a reported Communist front organization and reflects subject's financial association in this movement. No pertinent contributions were noted.

[redacted] income tax for [redacted] was [redacted]. His income was from [redacted] in the amount of [redacted]. He also received [redacted] and [redacted] plus income from [redacted]. Pertinent contributions included [redacted] to the [redacted] an alleged Communist Party front organization; [redacted] to the [redacted] an alleged front organization; and [redacted] to the [redacted] and [redacted] to [redacted]. His [redacted] at this time were [redacted] age [redacted] and [redacted] age [redacted] in addition to [redacted]

ENCLOSURE TO BUREAU: One copy of the script of the pageant entitled "DAMN THE TORPEDOES".

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UNDEVELOPED LEADS

THE BOSTON FIELD DIVISION

At Boston, Massachusetts

* Will attempt to locate a criminal record on JOHN HOWARD LAWSON, believed true name JACOB LEVY, it being noted on page 70 of the report of Special Agent JOHN R. VICARS, Los Angeles, dated September 15, 1942, that he admitted being arrested August 27, 1927, in Boston, for picketing the State Capitol in connection with the Sacco-Vanzetti execution.

THE NEW YORK FIELD DIVISION

At New York City

* Will review the indices of the New York Field Division for any information on RHODA RYPINS. An individual by the name of ISAAC L. RYPINS is mentioned in the Los Angeles files as a radical whose writings were banned from the mails in World War I. Possibly RHODA RYPINS is a relative.

* Will review the reports of highly confidential sources intimate with ALEXANDER STEVENS (New York file 100-24753) to ascertain if STEVENS had contact with HERBERT BIBERMAN on February 20 to 25, 1943, and particularly on February 24 and 25, 1943, the specific period in which BIBERMAN is believed to have been in New York.

THE LOS ANGELES FIELD DIVISION

At Los Angeles, California

Will maintain contact with Confidential National Defense Informant L.A. 78 for bank checks on subjects, and also for check on entrance of BIBERMAN's safe deposit box, #820, at this bank.

* Will develop an informant in LAWSON neighborhood for continuous surveillance, it being noted that MARTHA and ELWOOD KAY (employed at Lockheed Aircraft Corporation), 4524 Coldwater Canyon Avenue, reside in a good location and one which we have previously used to advantage.

* Will contact the appropriate officers of the W. T. GRANT COMPANY, 810 South Spring Street, to ascertain the identity and Communistic tendencies of H. A. BARTH.

* Will ascertain subject BIBERMAN's activities prior to his leadership in the American Peace Mobilization through Confidential National Defense Informant L.A. 1138.

Will follow the activities of subjects in the Los Angeles area through confidential informants, spot surveillances and other sources.

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SOURCES

- A Membership records of ELIZABETH LEACH, Organizer, Northwest (movie industry) Section, photostatic copies of which were furnished Special Agents DAVID A. MacCULLOCH and JOHN R. VICARS, July 22, 1943 by a reliable and highly confidential source.
- B [Confidential National Defense Informant L.A. HB-1.] (C) (u)
- C [CNDI L.A. 1357.] (C) (u)
- D Special Agent MARCUS E. BRIGHT, Los Angeles Field Division.
- E Special Agent ARTHUR M. RYHN, Los Angeles Field Division.
- F CNDI L.A. 2722.
- G Los Angeles file 100-1763, entitled "COMMUNIST PARTY, USA, DISTRICT 13, LOS ANGELES FIELD DIVISION; SECURITY MATTER - C."
- H [CNDI L.A.-EE1.] (C) (u)
- I [CNDI L.A. 2529.] (C) (u)
- J Strictly confidential source which furnished this material from the automobile of MARJORIE POTTS.
- K DAVE WISE, Personnel Director, RKO Studios.
- L Bureau letter dated July 8, 1943, with enclosures. Los Angeles file 100-6769-347.
- M [CNDI L.A.-CB 2.] (C) (u)
- N CNDI L.A.-2617.
- O CNDI L.A. 1138
- P [CNDI L.A.-CL 1.] (C) (u)
- Q [CNDI L.A.-XW 7.] (C) (u)
- R ANNE HARDY, 1398 Westwood Boulevard, a close associate of MILTON MERLIN and a contact of many of the Hollywood Communist writers.
- S Mr. CHRISTIANSEN, Bank of America, Los Angeles.
- T [CNDI L.A.-EE 1.] (C) (u)
- U CNDI L.A. 78.

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