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May 13, 1942.

The President,

The White House.

My dear Mr. President:

Proceeding under Public No. 135, 77th Congress, the Federal Bureau of Investigation has investigated charges of sub-  
versive affiliation or unlawful advocacy made against Mr. Murry W. Latimer, Chairman of the Railroad Retirement Board, and has transmitted its report to the Attorney General. Since Mr. Latimer is executive head of the employing agency, the Attorney General has referred the report to the Interdepartmental Committee with the suggestion that the Committee review the same and submit its recommendations to you.

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The Interdepartmental Committee has reviewed the report and finds no evidence of subversive affiliation or unlawful advocacy. The report indicates clearly that the charges are not substantiated. The Committee therefore recommends that no further action be taken, that Mr. Latimer be informed, and that the Federal Bureau of Investigation be advised accordingly.

Respectfully,

Edwin D. Dickinson, X  
Executive Secretary.

x10  
x B.F. Justice

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Respectfully,

Edwin D. Dickinson,  
Executive Secretary.

JOHN EDGAR HOOVER  
DIRECTOR



Federal Bureau of Investigation  
United States Department of Justice  
Washington, D. C.

MAY 7 1942



PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. UGO CARUSI  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Please be advised that an investigation was conducted under Public Law No. 135, 77th Congress, concerning Mr. Murray W. Latimer, Chairman of the Railroad Retirement Board. Mr. Latimer's name appeared on the active indices of the American Peace Mobilization.

Inasmuch as Mr. Latimer is employed as Chairman of the Railroad Retirement Board, I am furnishing you a copy of the report of Special Agent Oscar J. Keep dated April 1, 1942 at Washington, D. C., which reflects the results of the investigation in this case.

As this Bureau is definitely charged with the responsibility of reporting the results of all investigations conducted under Public Law No. 135, 77th Congress, I would appreciate your official comment as to the ultimate disposition of this case.

Very truly yours,

*J. E. Hoover*  
John Edgar Hoover  
Director x10-10

FOR DEFENSE



BUY  
UNITED  
STATES  
SAVINGS  
BONDS  
AND STAMPS

MURRAY W. LATIMER  
RAILROAD RETIREMENT BOARD

Report of Special Agent Oscar  
J. Keep dated April 1, 1942 at  
Washington, D. C.

DETAILS:

AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

I. PERSONAL HISTORY

A.

The personnel file on MURRAY WEBB LATIMER in the Personnel Office of the Railroad Retirement Board reflects that he is forty-one years of age, having been born in Clinton, Mississippi, on January 6, 1901. Mr. LATIMER graduated from Mississippi College with a B.A. degree in 1919 and received a degree of M.B.A. from Harvard University in 1924. Mr. LATIMER also did three years of graduate work in Economics at Harvard and Columbia Universities. He is married, his wife's maiden name being EDITH SONN. Mr. LATIMER is a legal resident of New York County, New York. He is an American citizen.

B.

Mr. LATIMER'S employment record as set out in his personnel file is as follows:

Employed at the Bank of Clinton, Clinton, Mississippi, Planter's Bank, Shaw, Mississippi, and Hanover National Bank, New York City, from 1919 to 1922. Section Supervisor, Bureau of Business Research, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, from 1923 to 1925. Instructor in Finance, Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, from 1924 to 1925. Chief Statistician, Industrial Relations Counselors, Inc., New York City, from January, 1926, to July, 1934. On leave of absence from Industrial Relations Counselors, Inc., during 1933 and 1934, when was employed as member of the staff of the Committee on Government Statistics and Information Services. Special Agent of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States Department of Labor and, from December, 1933, to July, 1934, was Consultant to the Federal Coordinator of Transportation in Charge of Pension Investigations. Also a member of the Advisory Committee to the Secretary of Labor after July, 1933. As a member of the staff of Industrial Relations Counselors, Inc., was Consultant on Pensions, Equities, and related matters for a number of industrial corporations and acted as Counsel for the Committee on Pensions and Unemployment Insurance of the New York Building Congress. Mr. LATIMER was appointed Chairman of the Railroad Retirement Board on July 21, 1934, for a two year term by the President, the appointment being confirmed by the Senate. Following a holding of the original Railroad Retirement Act unconstitutional and the passage of the Railroad Retirement Act of 1935 by the Congress, Mr. LATIMER was appointed Chairman of the Railroad Retirement Board by the President on October 30, 1935, the appointment to be effective from August 29, 1935, for a term of five years. The appointment was submitted to Congress on January 6, 1936, and was confirmed by the Congress on February 11, 1936. In this position Mr. LATIMER receives a salary of \$10,000 per annum.

## II. BASIS FOR INVESTIGATION

From a highly confidential source of information, hereinafter designated as T-1, it was reported that Mr. LATIMER'S name appeared in the active indices of the American Peace Mobilization, known since the German invasion of Russia during the summer of 1941 as the American Peoples Mobilization.

## III. RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION

Confidential source of information T-1 further reported that the name of Mrs. MURRAY WEBB LATIMER also appeared in the active indices of the American Peace Mobilization.

Another highly confidential source of information, hereinafter designated as T-2, reported that Mrs. LATIMER'S name likewise appeared in the active indices of the Washington Committee for Democratic Action.

The Special Committee Investigating Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, Honorable MARTIN DIES, Chairman, was contacted for any information in their files with regard to Mr. LATIMER. The Committee had no information with regard to Mr. LATIMER'S membership in the American Peace Mobilization. As a matter of possible interest, however, it should be noted that according to the Committee's files, Mr. LATIMER was a sponsor of the Washington Friends of Spanish Democracy as shown by the letterhead of that organization on June 30, 1938. The Dies Committee's files further indicated that Mrs. EDITH LATIMER, wife of MURRAY WEBB LATIMER, was a member of the Washington Committee for Democratic Action, and a sponsor of the National Women's Unemployment Conference of the Daughters of the American Depression.

Another confidential informant, hereinafter designated as T-3, who maintains a large file of confidential information with regard to Federal employees, reported that, from information appearing in his file, Mr. LATIMER was a sponsor of the Friends of Spanish Democracy and also a sponsor of the Modern Forum of the American League for Peace and Democracy. T-3 added that Mr. LATIMER'S activities in the first mentioned organization were in 1938 whereas he participated in the last mentioned organization in 1939.

Confidential sources of information, hereinafter designated as T-4 and T-5, each of whom maintain large files of confidential information with regard to residents of the District of Columbia, were contacted but it was ascertained that no information pertinent to this investigation appeared in their files with regard to Mr. LATIMER.

Likewise, another confidential source of information, hereinafter designated as T-6, who maintains large files of information with regard to residents of the District of Columbia, advised that no information pertinent to the instant investigation appeared in his files with regard to Mr. LATIMER.

In the vicinity of Mr. LATIMER'S residence at 2911 Albemarle Street, N. W., a neighbor, hereinafter designated as confidential source of information T-7, said that, in his opinion, Mr. LATIMER was a Communist. T-7 admitted that he knew Mr. LATIMER only slightly but said that he had seen mail addressed to LATIMER from some organization which stated it desired LATIMER'S help in regard to some sort of picketing. This informant also said that he had observed mail addressed to Mr. LATIMER'S wife from the League of Women Shoppers. T-7 said that both Mr. and Mrs. LATIMER had very little to do with their neighbors and that although occasionally friends stopped by to see them they kept pretty much to themselves. T-7 admitted that he had nothing further on which to base his conclusion with regard to Mr. LATIMER'S Communism other than that set out above.

Other neighbors, hereinafter designated as T-8 and T-9, stated that they had had no contact with Mr. LATIMER and thus were in no position to furnish any information with regard to him. Both T-8 and T-9 reported that so far as they knew the LATIMERS were not friendly with anyone in the neighborhood.

At the Railroad Retirement Board an associate of Mr. LATIMER, hereinafter designated as T-10, said that Mr. LATIMER was the son of a college professor and had all the impracticable ideas of a college professor for social gains. This informant stated that while he did not believe LATIMER was actually a member of the Communist Party and while LATIMER himself denied any sympathy for the Communist movement, nevertheless LATIMER'S beliefs were very largely identical with the Communist Party Line. It was the opinion of T-10 that Mr. LATIMER could be correctly described as a "parlor pink". The informant stated that LATIMER believed in State Socialism or Communism. He advised that so far as he knew Mr. LATIMER was active in no organizations. He mentioned, however, that LATIMER'S friends and associates were people who held substantially the same ideas as those held by LATIMER. The informant stated that LATIMER was a very brilliant economist and statistician.

Another associate of Mr. LATIMER who formerly was employed at the Railroad Retirement Board, hereinafter designated as T-11, stated that he had found Mr. LATIMER to be a very brilliant research man but a person who was very hard to know. T-11 said that Mr. LATIMER seldom carried on any social conversation and seldom spoke concerning any subject for which reason it was hard to know what he believed. This informant mentioned, however, that he had heard that LATIMER was connected with some Spanish aid group. Aside from that activity, he said, he knew of nothing else with which LATIMER was connected and knew nothing to indicate any Communistic activity on LATIMER'S part. The informant pointed out that he himself was not close

enough personally to LATIMER to know his views except to know that he was a New Dealer and very liberal.

A confidential source of information hereinafter designated as T-12, who likewise has been associated with Mr. LATIMER at the Railroad Retirement Board, said that he had known LATIMER very well since 1934. This informant characterized Mr. LATIMER as an extreme liberal, although he added that there had never been any indication that LATIMER was a Communist or sympathetic toward Communism. T-12 said that it was his opinion, however, that LATIMER might go beyond liberal thought in some ways in order to achieve an end which he considered desirable for the underprivileged. In other words, the informant said, Mr. LATIMER believed that the end justified the means when it resulted in the uplift of the lower levels of society. T-12 continued that he himself was a liberal and had been considered liberal in viewpoint all of his life, but said that LATIMER went much further in that direction than he himself did.

T-12 advised that he could furnish no information with regard to any organizations with which Mr. LATIMER might be active. He recalled that some time before there had been some newspaper comment with regard to an organization in which Mr. LATIMER was alleged to be active, but said that he could not recall the details of that comment or the name of the organization involved.

This informant mentioned that he also knew Mrs. LATIMER and knew that she had been active in various organizations, although he could not recall the names of any of them. He said that Mrs. LATIMER was a Jewess, and that as pure speculation he believed she was probably interested and active in refugee relief and Jewish welfare groups, although he could not be sure.

Informant T-12 concluded by stating that he believed LATIMER supported the principles of the American form of government, although he was ultra-liberal and must be described as an extreme liberal.

A confidential source of information hereinafter designated as T-13, who has a wide acquaintance among Communists in the District of Columbia, advised that informant had no information whatever with regard to Mr. LATIMER.

A confidential source of information hereinafter designated as informant T-14, who holds a highly responsible position in the Federal Government, upon interview advised that he has been acquainted with Mr. LATIMER for a number of years. The informant advised that Mr. LATIMER prepared most of the statute relating to old age pensions now included in the Social Security Act, and that LATIMER was also instrumental in drafting the Railroad Retirement Act and similar social legislation. Informant stated

LATIMER has been a statistician with considerable experience, and that his employment prior to coming to Washington was with an organization financed by the Rockefeller Foundation, and that LATIMER made extensive studies of the retirement plans used by the Standard Oil Company and by various railroad companies. Informant stated that LATIMER has a conservative background as the son of a Southern college professor; however, informant stated that he has observed LATIMER has had contacts in Washington, D. C. with persons whom the informant described as extremely liberal. Informant stated that he has never heard LATIMER make any statement which would indicate to him that LATIMER advocates the overthrow of the Federal Government, and he said that LATIMER has confined his liberal ideas to a large extent to fiscal matters. As an illustration of this point, the informant stated that at one time LATIMER advocated paying old age pensions to all persons in the United States of a designated age, regardless of their need for such compensation. Informant stated that he has no information regarding the possible membership of LATIMER in any organization; however, that he is aware that Mrs. LATIMER is considered to be more liberal than her husband in her economic viewpoint, and the informant stated he thought she has been connected with organizations in Washington which are considered more "to the left" than organizations which might be joined by her husband. Informant stated that he regards LATIMER as a loyal American citizen.

A confidential informant hereinafter designated as informant T-15, who holds a highly responsible position in the field of transportation in the Federal Government, upon interview advised that he had been acquainted with MURRAY LATIMER for a number of years. Informant stated that he has no information regarding any organizations to which LATIMER may belong; however, he stated that he has had considerable contact with LATIMER and regards him as a loyal American citizen and as not having associated with any un-American organizations.

A confidential source of information hereafter designated as informant T-16, who holds a highly responsible position in the Federal Government, upon interview advised that he has been associated with LATIMER since the latter came to Washington approximately eight years ago. This informant stated that LATIMER has been regarded as extremely liberal in matters of fiscal policy; however, informant stated that he has never noticed any activity on the part of LATIMER which would indicate that he carries his liberal views into political matters. Informant stated that he has no information regarding LATIMER's possible membership in any organization; however, he stated that LATIMER is not the "joiner type" and he considers LATIMER as a loyal American citizen.

A confidential informant hereinafter designated as informant T-17, who is a former Government official and who formerly held a high Government position, upon interview advised that he was connected with the President's Committee on Economic Security, to which MURRAY LATIMER was a Technical Assistant. The informant stated that he is not personally acquainted with

LATIMER, but that no information has come to his attention regarding the activities of LATIMER which would indicate to the informant that LATIMER is not a loyal American citizen.

#### IV. INTERVIEW WITH EMPLOYEE

On March 13, 1942, Mr. LATIMER appeared at the Washington Field Office, of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and was interviewed with regard to his activities. He furnished the following question and answer statement under oath.

Washington, D. C.

March 13, 1942

Statement of MURRAY WEBB LATIMER made in the presence of Special Agent R. F. RYAN and Stenographer MARTHA CARTER, Federal Bureau of Investigation. Questions by Mr. RYAN.

- Q. Mr. LATIMER, the Federal Bureau of Investigation was empowered by the 77th Congress of the United States under Public Law 135, to investigate the employees of the Federal Government who are alleged members of subversive organizations or who advocate the overthrow of the Federal Government and make a report to Congress. The purpose of this interview is to allow you an opportunity to answer questions concerning information which has been received by the Federal Bureau of Investigation about alleged activities on your part. The questions I am about to ask you may be answered if you so desire and you will be given an opportunity to make any statement of your own which you feel will fairly present your side of the question. A copy of a report of the investigation, incorporating your statement, will be furnished to the agency which employs you. Do you have any objection to making this statement under oath?
- A. None whatever.
- Q. Will you raise your right hand please? Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?
- A. I do. May I ask one question? Since I am the head of the agency in which I am employed, I presume I will be furnished with a copy of my own investigation?
- Q. A copy goes to your agency. I am not familiar with the name of the person to whom it is directed.
- A. Well, I have seen all of the investigations made in the agency of which I am head thus far.
- Q. Will you state your full name, please?
- A. MURRAY WEBB LATIMER.

- Q. Where do you live?
- A. 2911 Albemarle Street, N. W. My legal residence is in New York City.
- Q. What is your position with the Railroad Retirement Board?
- A. I am Chairman.
- Q. Mr. LATIMER, are you now or have you ever been a member of any organization which advocates the overthrow of the Federal Government?
- A. I have not.
- Q. Are you now or have you ever been a member of any organization which advocates disloyalty to the Federal Government?
- A. I am not.
- Q. Mr. LATIMER, are you now or have you ever been a member of the American Peace Mobilization, which is presently known as the American Peoples Mobilization?
- A. I have not been a member or contributed to it directly or indirectly or have I any knowledge of it.
- Q. Mr. LATIMER, are you now or have you ever been a member of the Washington Committee for Democratic Action?
- A. I have not and I have no knowledge of that organization beyond seeing its name in the papers. I can list in about five minutes all the organizations with which I am now or have ever been connected if you want them—membership or otherwise.
- Q. Mr. LATIMER, at this time you may make any statement of your own which you think is pertinent to this inquiry if you so desire. It is not required that you list the names of the organizations to which you belong but if you care to do that you may have that privilege.
- A. Since I have never belonged to very many organizations, it is fairly short order, although I believe, with the exception of the Downtown Athletic Club of New York, that all the organizations of which I am now a member or of which I have ever been a member, are listed in my biography in "Who's Who in America." As a matter of record, it is perhaps of no good importance. I wish to state that I am and always have been a loyal citizen of the United States; that I have never been a member of any organization which has advocated the overthrow of the United States Government by force or violence or by any other means, and I have not

been connected with any organization directly or indirectly which has advocated the overthrow of the United States Government, or I have not in any way sympathized with any such organization which has those aims. I don't think there is much more that I need add.

Q. Alright, thank you very much. Mr. LATIMER, do you care to have the opportunity of returning and reading a typewritten transcript of this interview?

A. Since I have read a number of interviews conducted by you and have found them substantially accurate, judging from the fact that apparently no corrections have been necessary, I don't think that I need take the time to come down to read the record.

- CLOSED -