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Uncovering a Danger Spot in U. S.

Two Newspapers Lauded for Exposing John Birch Society as Fascist Threat

A substantial public service was tendered the Nation by the staunchly conservative Santa Barbara News-Press and the Los Angeles Times by exposure of the dangers of the "secret, cell-organized John Birch Society, which sought to block its fascism with anti-communism.

The organizer of this secret society, Robert Welch, a New Englander, reportedly had said in letters and in a book so extreme his supporters have sought to withdraw all copies from circulation, that Dr. Milton Eisenhower, the late Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, and Allen Dulles, then and now head of the United States Central Intelligence Agency, were members of the Communist underground. Mr. Welch also has denounced every President since Roosevelt, including Dwight D. Eisenhower and John Kennedy, as dupes of, or members of the Communist conspiracy. Others of like prominence and undisputed loyalty were equally slandered.

The more extreme followers of the late Senator Joe McCarthy have joined in. They apparently are supplying the secretly organized society with new direction. It is believed to be the McCarthy followers who had the preposterous book withdrawn. They hope, according to the best information, to take over the existing secret cells and use them "more intelligently."

The two California newspapers, one a small daily in Santa Barbara, and the other the nationally known Los Angeles Times, correctly estimated the John Birch Society, and all like it, to be as dangerous as communism. Former Vice President Nixon has publicly joined in condemning the John Birch Society.

Such activity offers a blueprint to disaster in America.

This Birch group, in a number of communities, already has carried out orders. Its members have infiltrated a few local PTA's, civic clubs, church boards of deacons or vestries, and other community organizations.

Here and there across the country, Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions Clubs have been assailed by some articulate, aggressive persons who took over the microphones at the conclusion of meetings and launched into a somewhat wild, extreme denunciation of local leaders as Communists or fellow travelers. PTA groups have been thrown into disorder and confusion by similar tactics. Vestries and other church governing groups, women's guilds and chapters, have begun to be surprised by persons engaged in character assassination of the ministers or church leaders.

This is according to the society's secret plan, which is to make Americans fear one another and afraid to talk.

Postcards have begun to

appear in the mail damning democracy and praising fascism.

This group, though not numerically large, seeks to give the impression of many by making a lot of noise. Like all fascist or semi-fascist groups, they seek to impose the silence of fear and doubt. They are trained in the art of flooding a person or organization with mail or telephone calls.

The late Huey Long once said that fascism would come to this country, but it would appear in another guise. It would come wrapped in the flag claiming to be a savior of democracy.

The attorney general of California, who is conducting an investigation of the fanatic groups of the right, who, of course, are as dangerous as communism, gave six tests which will enable Americans to determine whether an organization advocates extremist doctrine:

1. Does the organization attack churches and schools with blanket accusations?

2. Does it attack other traditional American institutions with wild, unsupported charges?

3. Does it label everyone with whom it disagrees politically as un-American or subversive?

4. Does it try to rewrite modern history by blaming American statesmen for wars, communism, depression and other world ills?

5. Does it resort to brute force pressure tactics such as anonymous phone calls and letter-writing?

6. Do the spokesmen of the group appear more interested in the size of their money collections than in the principles they purport to espouse?

"Apply these six tests," he said, "and you will avoid en-

tangling memberships with such groups as the American Nazi Party, the Communists, the Ku Klux Klan, the John Birch Society, the Cinema Education Guild, the Muslims and others of that type."