

LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

By HARRIS ELLSWORTH
Congressman, 4th Oregon District

There is considerable difference, I find, between being a private citizen who hates Communists and being a member of Congress who hates Communists but who has a part of the responsibility for the passage of laws designed to deal adequately with the Communist menace. As a private citizen, I want to see the Communists and fellow-travelers who would turn our country over to Russia slapped down in every way possible. But, as a member of Congress, I must always be aware of the fact that laws we pass must affect all citizens equally; that once a law is passed which gives the Executive Branch of the Government certain powers, the Congress has no control over the administration of the law; and that, if we pass any law which would give a bad executive powers he should not have, great damage would be done our people and our government before such a law could be repealed.

The Mundt Bill, which was recently passed by the House of Representatives, implements a popular idea. It would control and virtually drive out of existence (theoretically) Communists and Communist front organizations. With that idea most of the people in the country agree. The House passed the bill by the overwhelming vote of five to one. I regret that I could not vote for this popular measure partly because the pressure campaign carried on by many of the opponents of the Mundt Bill has been extremely repulsive to me.

The reason I voted against the Mundt Bill is that, in the future, such a law could easily be used by the political enemies of loyal and innocent people to smear and persecute them. The bill says, "It shall be unlawful for any person to ATTEMPT IN ANY MANNER (emphasis mine) to establish in the United States a totalitarian dictatorship the direction and control of which is to be vested in, or exercised by or under domination or control of, any foreign government, foreign organization, or foreign individual; to perform or attempt to perform any act with intent to facilitate or aid in bringing about the establishment in the United States of such a totalitarian dictatorship." Violation of these and several other provisions of the bill are punishable by a fine of not more than \$10,000, or imprisonment for not more than ten years, or both. It is my belief that, not only the portion of the bill just quoted, but several other paragraphs in it could some time be misused by the Executive Branch of the Government to destroy political enemies and perpetuate itself in power.

Sedition Act Cited

In the year 1798, problems faced by our young republic were quite similar to our present problems. France had helped us to win freedom from England, but by 1798, France, under the Directory, had infiltrated agents into the United States, had succeeded in controlling a number of newspapers, and was otherwise behaving very much as Russia is attempting to behave now. H. C. Lodge, in his book, "Alexander Hamilton," says: "Hamilton believed, and so wrote to Washington, that there was a party in the country ready to 'new model' the Constitution on French principles, to form an offensive-defensive alliance with France, and make the United States a French province. He felt, in short, that there was a party in America ready for confiscation and social confusion." If reference were made to Russia instead of France, the same statement would apply today.

The Federalists, under the leadership of Hamilton, were in con-

trol of Congress in 1798, and so, in an effort to curb the influence of a foreign power, the Alien and Sedition Acts were passed. The abuse by the executive and the courts of the great power conferred by those Acts aroused the wrath of the people and ended in the destruction of the Federalist party, but not before many men were arrested, fined or imprisoned.

I do not mean to imply that the Mundt Bill is a repetition of the Sedition Act. It is not. The Mundt Bill is a statesmanlike document, skillfully drawn, but its objective is close to being identical with that of the Alien and Sedition Acts, and the circumstances under which it is now being considered are somewhat similar to those of 1798.

Several competent authorities, including Governor Dewey of New York, have expressed the opinion that we already have laws enough with which to cope with the Communist menace. He stated, I believe, that there are 27 applicable federal laws. If these federal statutes and applicable state laws are enforced, there is no need, as I see it, for the Congress to yield to the emotional tension of the present and pass legislation such as the Mundt Bill.

Soviet Union Admits Scriptures From U. S.

PHILADELPHIA, May 24—(AP) The Russians have permitted 25,000 scriptures from this country to enter the Soviet Union, says Dr. George D. Dilworth, secretary of the Atlantic agency of the American Bible Society.

The Bible Society executive told the Philadelphia annual Methodist conference, an additional 200,000 portions of the bible were sent to the Soviets following a request from the Russian orthodox church.

Bishop Fred P. Corson said it was the first time in a decade "to my knowledge" that the Russians have permitted scriptures from other countries to enter the Soviet Union.

No Heart for Dunning, Tax Collector Resigns

CONSHOHOCKEN, Pa., May 24—(AP)—A 26-year-old war veteran who lost both legs in World War Two didn't have the heart to press people for their unpaid taxes so he resigned as tax collector.

Audrey Holland, named West Conshohocken's tax collector for life, said "lots of those who were behind in their payments were my friends and my buddies."

"I just didn't have the heart to dun them," she said.

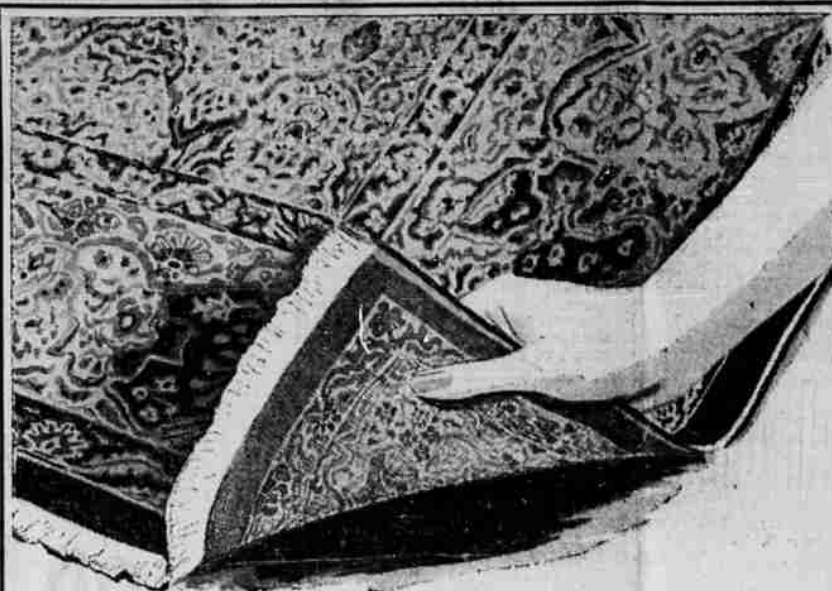
Unpaid taxes in Holland's district amounted to \$1,275.

NOTICE

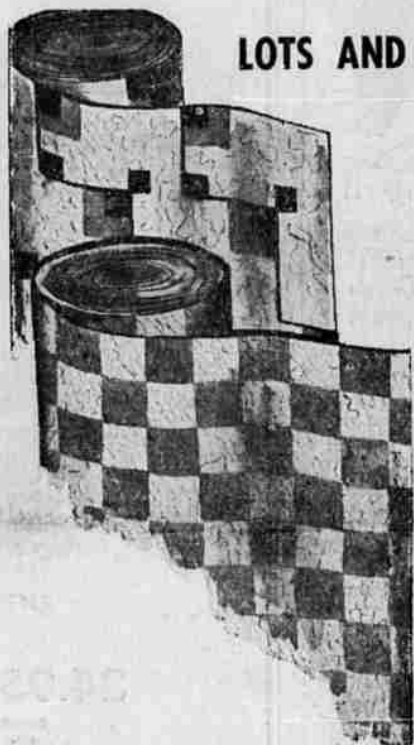
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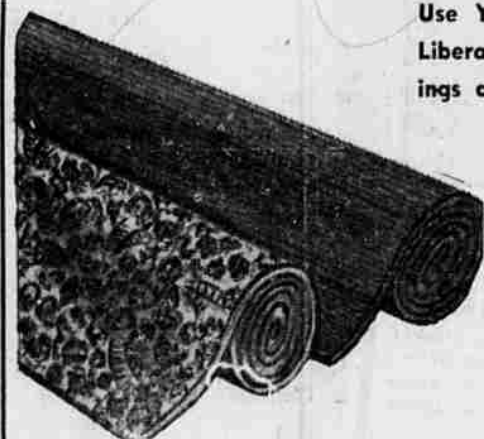
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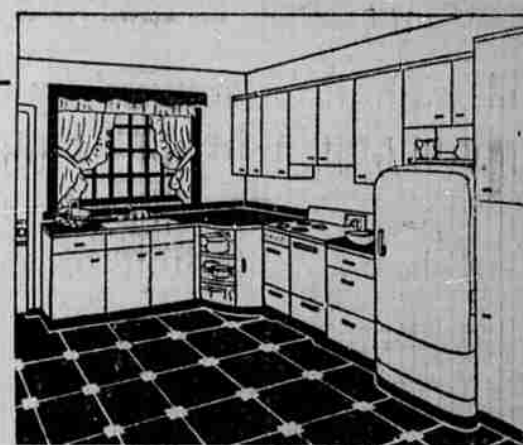
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