



LEERY OF CAMERAS - To Dennis Cataloni of the Hyde Park section of Boston, Mass., all cameras, big and small, spell X-ray machines, doctors and hospitals. When asked for his picture on his third birthday, his reaction is understandable. At the age of five months he lapsed into a coma. A hole was found in his heart and it was patched. Since then he has been in and out of hospitals. When Dennis is five years old he will undergo open heart surgery.

(UPI Telephoto)

Many Object To Birch Society's Surreptitious Means

By HELEN B. SHAFFER
(Editorial Research Reports)

Washington—When members of Congress, and finally the general public, began to hear about the John Birch Society a few months ago, curiosity and amazement were the initial reactions.

Who was John Birch and what was his society?

How could anyone believe, as the leader of this organization was said to do, that General Eisenhower was a Communist or that Chief Justice Warren should be impeached? As it turned out, belief that the former President had Red proclivities was said not to be shared by many of the followers of the retired candy manufacturer, Robert H. W. Welch, who founded the John Birch Society. But the rain of letters descending on Congress indicated surprising distrust of the Chief Justice. All this got the society a lot of publicity.

And it soon came out that John Birch was a missionary from Georgia who had been murdered by a Communist in China, and that the society bearing his name had been started over two years ago. More important, it appeared that the group had drawn support from citizens of prominence over the country.

The John Birch Society is primarily interested in rooting out any tendencies toward communism in the United States. But many persons would describe its views as to what constitutes or borders on communism as fanatic. It calls, for example, for repeal of the federal income tax and the social security laws, and withdrawal of this country from the United Nations and NATO, and for termination of foreign aid.

Few Americans would challenge the right of individuals to propose any of these things. But many Americans object to the John Birch Society's seeking by surreptitious means to shake public confidence in government leaders and to weaken support of policies closely related to national security.

Earlier Societies

Secret societies have flourished in America for a long time. Most of them have been formed to promote good fellowship or to satisfy a taste for elaborate ritual. The secret societies with political objectives that crop up periodically often are organized by people with strong opinions who are too impatient to try to get them into effect by ordinary political means.

Perhaps the earliest secret society to make a big dent in American political life was the Sons of Liberty, organized in colonial times. It agitated for independence in boldsterous ways that intimidated British officials and kept pro-British colonists on edge. In the mid-1850s the Know-Nothings, really a secret patriotic society called the Order of the Star Spangled Banner, gained political strength by exploiting anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant and aggressively pro-American beliefs. The Ku Klux Klan and its famed night riders became a powerful influence in the South during Reconstruction days. When revived after World War I, the Klan had an inglorious career exhorting

Negroes, Catholics and foreigners.

The decade preceding World War II gave birth to ostensibly pro-American organizations secretly devoted to the cause of Hitlerism, but investigators exposed most of them before Pearl Harbor. When hot war gave way to cold war, congressional inquiries centered on Communist groups. Their activities were so thoroughly gone into by Congress and the courts that not much was left of the secrecy that once shrouded Red methods of espionage and subversion.

Unless a secret society conspires to overthrow the government by force, unless it cites to riot, or unless it commits some other offense against law and order, there is little that a democratic government can do about it. The rights of dissent and free association are protected by the Constitution. It doesn't matter that a secret society may have ultimate goals inimical to the public good.

No other politically motivated secret group is subject to controls as severe as those put on Communist organizations. The Internal Security Act of 1950, still in litigation, requires Communist groups to register with the Department of Justice and to submit full information about themselves. Various states have laws requiring organizations of other kinds to disclose membership rolls and details of their financing.

Disclosure laws used to be uniformly sustained by the Supreme Court, but the Court took a new tack in 1958. A decision that year relieved the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People of having to disclose names of its members in Alabama. This ruling, throwing out an obviously harassing regulation, was widely hailed for the protection it gave to freedom of association.

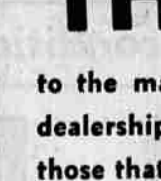
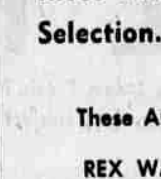
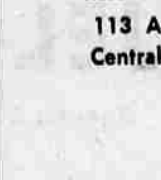
On the other hand, some persons think the long-range danger presented by political action groups operating in semi-secrecy demands stronger measures of public control than now exist, strong enough at least to force groups like the John Birch Society to work in the open.

Drugs May Be Used For Cancer Cure

New York (UPI)—Dr. Austin Smith, president of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers association, has predicted that a drug will be the cure for certain types of cancer.

"In the next two decades expect the drug industry to develop agents which actually will cure cancer," he said. "It cannot be forecast that all types of cancer will be subject to cure by drugs, but many of them will."

Dr. Sidney Farber, a cancer specialist at Harvard university, noted that the time has come for research centers to treat all cancer victims with medicinal as well as with surgery and radiotherapy. He told public health officials at a recent meeting that chemicals have lengthened the life of cancer sufferers, some of whom had cancer that was too advanced even for surgery.

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