

Uncle Sam “Padlocked” How much longer will the American people permit this outrageous and dangerous situation to exist? By Ralph M. Easley Chairman Executive Council, The National Civic Federation. New York City, R. C. A. Tower, August 1, 1931.

UNCLE SAM “PADLOCKED”

HOW MUCH LONGER WILL THE AMERICAN PEOPLE PERMIT THIS OUTRAGEOUS AND DANGEROUS SITUATION TO EXIST?

By RALPH M. EASLEY Chairman Executive Council, The National Civic Federation

Do you realize that, under our federal law, the Government at Washington, representing 125,000,000 people and \$362,000,000,000 of property, is without a scintilla of power to protect the life of our Nation against the destructive forces seeking its overthrow?

Only last April, Congressman Hamilton Fish, Jr., declared at the meeting of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Washington that an organization in New York City was openly soliciting funds for the purchase of machine guns and other munitions to be sent to the outlaw Sandino, who would use them in murdering our citizens. Has that statement been greeted by any expression of surprise or challenge of its verity? Has the press taken it up and demanded of our Government why such an outrageous situation should be allowed to exist? There has been no such demand, so far as I have observed.

Again, it is no secret that the O. G. P. U., the deadly criminal secret police section of the Soviet Government, has an underground organization fanning the fires of revolution in every country of the world including our own. Its operations here which, doubtless with the aid of Moscow gold, have penetrated very high financial, industrial and political circles, include the organized stimulation of unrest as well as of class, racial and religious hatred in every field, the unfortunate depression of the hour beckoning it to enter and do its worst. While several hundred specially trained G. P. U. agents are carrying on this diabolical work throughout the United States, nevertheless little is known about it in Washington. As a matter of fact, some of the officials there thought that when speaking of the G. P. U. I was referring to the G. O. P.

What is the explanation of this astounding state of affairs? Simply this: In 1924, a group of Socialists, Communists and “Left Wing Liberals” protested to the Department of Justice, during the incumbency of Attorney General Harlan F. Stone, that the Federal Government had no right, under our Constitution, to use federal money or power to interfere in any way with the activities

of the subversive forces within the states, since the anti-syndicalist laws were state and not federal statutes. They threatened to enjoin the Department if it repeated its Bridgman (Michigan) assault upon the Communists.

An examination of the matter proved, unfortunately, that the Red groups were right; and the Bureau of Investigation of the Department had to discharge all its under-cover men who had been keeping the Government informed upon every move made or contemplated by the radical elements. From that day to this, the Department's machinery has been "padlocked", so to speak, and, as stated, the Government knows nothing about what is going on in these underground movements.

It should be explained further, for the benefit of those who do not know the situation in Washington, why the other departments are likewise impotent in this connection. The State Department has a Secret Service Bureau, but it is confined to certain international matters, the issuing of passports and so forth. In regard to domestic questions, under which heading the radical activities in this country would be classed, the State Department always depended upon the Department of Justice; consequently, when the latter "closed its doors" in this respect, the State Department did the same. The Treasury Department has an able Secret Service, but it deals with counterfeiting, internal revenue, narcotics, and a large number of other matters—none, however, having to do with radical activities. The War and Navy Departments have no such machinery in peace times nor a dollar of money to spend for investigating along that line, except for the purpose of watching conditions in their own institutions, the Army and Navy.

It was the presentation of this impotency of our Government to the Committee on Rules of the House of Representatives which caused that Committee to report favorably upon the resolution providing for a special Committee to Investigate Communist Activities in the United States. In making his recommendations, Congressman Bertrand H. Snell, Chairman of the Committee on Rules, after stating that, generally speaking, he was opposed to commissions, made this declaration:

"I supposed that the Department of Justice, through its secret service, was following these various communists in America. I supposed that it knew who they were, what they were doing, and whether it was anything that was detrimental to American institutions; but I found on investigation that it has no authority for doing this thing, really knowing nothing definite about it, and that, as a matter of fact, there is no one connected with the Government at the present time who knows the exact situation that exists in regard to what communists may or may not be doing here in the United States. There is not another country in the world but what follows these movements and keeps informed up to the minute."

A similar statement was made by Congressman Charles L. Underhill, as follows:

“Information came to my attention some time ago, about the time of the March disturbances, that these were engineered directly from Russia. I made inquiry at the Department of Justice, the War Department and the State Department and learned, much to my amazement, that not one of these departments had engaged in this particular work of investigation or had had any appropriation of funds for such investigation since 1923—consequently, none had any information as to this question to release to me or to the general public.”

At the first hearing of the Committee to Investigate Communist Activities, held in executive session at Washington, D. C., testimony was given by officials of the Departments of Justice, State, Treasury, War, Navy and Labor. It is an open secret that all testified that their respective departments had no machinery even to keep informed upon radical activities in this country. Furthermore, it developed that there were no laws on the federal statute books enabling them to act even if they had all the facts.

In fact, this situation is so well understood by the Communists that they say openly to their people: “Go the limit! The Federal Government can't do anything and the state governments don't know anything!” And they might truthfully add: “The Federal Government doesn't know anything either about that matter!”

That they *are* “going the limit” is conspicuously shown by their promotion of vicious strikes in industrial centers where unrest can be stimulated and disorder fomented; by their staging of unemployment mass meetings and hunger marches upon state capitols and city halls, to be intensified as winter approaches; and by their venomous and sensational fight against the Scottsboro Negro case verdict which they are trying to make international in scope through the instigation of mob violence against our embassies in all countries.

The Congressional Committee spent over nine months holding hearings throughout the United States in the course of which it developed startling information with respect to the movements of the Communists in our country. Its report contains fourteen recommendations, the most important one covering the helplessness of our Government hereinbefore described.

But, no bill was drafted to present to Congress. Hence, there has been no change since the Department of Justice discharged its under-cover men in 1925 and the Government is still in a perfectly helpless condition.

There are two things that must be done before Congress convenes:

First, a bill must be drafted which will provide for the restoration to the Department of Justice of the power enabling it to deal adequately with those elements which are working to overthrow our Government by force and violence.

Second, our citizens must be aroused to bring pressure to bear upon the Congress to enact this legislation. Otherwise, the American nation will continue to be helpless to protect itself against the would-be sappers of its institutions.

Shall we surrender or shall we fight?

R. C. A. Tower, New York City, August 1, 1931