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Panel Reports Birch Society Dedicated But Not Dangerous

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — The John Birch Society was described Wednesday as dedicated but not dangerous by a California legislative committee in a report that warned of "a fresh new crop" of hate groups in California.

It reiterated that "the largest hate group the world has ever seen" — the Communist party — still is hard at work in the state and must be watched, despite the relatively small number of party members, perhaps 2,000 here and 10,000 to 15,000 in the nation.

The Senate fact-finding subcommittee on un-American activities also charged Communists infiltrated some peace groups. And it had a good word for the Negro supremacist Black Muslim sect.

It rebuked attempts to lower the University of California ban on Communist speakers, complaining that:

"Under the guise of academic freedom, apostles of the class struggle unite in a chorus of indignation at any attempt to hold an anti-Communist school, and at

the same time participate in the activities of a score of Communist front organizations."

Sixty-one of the report's 202 pages were devoted to the Birch Society.

The committee found the society "a right, anti-Communist, fundamentalist organization.

"We have not found the society to be either a secret or a fascist organization, nor have we found the great majority of its members in California to be mentally unstable, crackpots, or hysterical about the threat of Communist subversion."

Peace movements came in for criticism of their "naivete" and subversion by Communists.

It tabbed the Women's International Strike for Peace, student peace union — with chapters at Southern California high schools,

junior colleges and colleges—and the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy as groups serving Red purposes and guided by long-time Communist-front organizers.

The new hate groups, the committee said, normally are small but in close contact with similar groups around the country.

It called the national States Rights party, with headquarters at Birmingham, Ala., "more potentially dangerous than any of the American Nazi groups."

Touching briefly on the Black Muslim Negro supremacy group, the committee commented:

"While it is true that the Black Muslim movement has preached a hatred of white people, there is no question about its accomplishing much good for many of its own members."

The Dallas Morning News

Published daily by A. H. Belo Corp., Communications Center, Dallas, Tex. Member of the Associated Press

Subscription Rates:

In Texas, \$23.40 a year, 45c a week, \$1.95 a month. (Subject to state tax.) Outside Texas but within the U.S. and its possessions, \$2.25 per month. Second class postage paid at Dallas, Texas

Dallas News Bureaus:

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AUSTIN, Drawer RR, Capitol Station, Greenwood 8-5729.
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COMMISSION EXHIBIT 1045