

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT  
to  
Annual Meeting  
of the  
AMERICAN COALITION  
January 24, 1939

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

It is my privilege and duty as President of the American Coalition to submit for your consideration a report of the operations of our Society during the past year. What has been accomplished by the Society is your accomplishment.

I feel, however, that thanks are particularly due to Mr. Walter S. Steele, the Chairman of your Committee on National Security for the enormous amount of work he has done and the great ability which he demonstrated in placing a comprehensive picture of the radical situation in the United States before the Dies Committee.

The thanks of the Coalition are also due to the Honorable Bainbridge Colby, Second Vice-President of the Coalition, for his extraordinarily effective appearance before a Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary of the United States Senate in opposition to a proposed amendment to the Constitution of the United States, introduced by Senator Norris. The failure of that amendment to receive the approval of Congress in the last session should be a matter for sincere congratulations to every citizen of the United States who believes that hasty and ill-considered changes of our fundamental law undertaken in the heat of political campaigns is not only undesirable but a great menace to our institutions.

You will recall that at our last annual meeting the officers of the Coalition were authorized to oppose with the utmost vigor at their command Senate Bill S.2970 providing for the reorganization of the Government of the United States with enormous concentration of power in the hands of the Chief Executive. Fortunately, for the nation, there was a general uprising of public sentiment against this measure. The Senators and members of the House of Representatives who opposed

and ultimately stopped this effort on the part of the Administration to obtain dictatorial powers deserve well the gratitude of the Republic.

It was fortunate indeed that the effort to eliminate many distinguished and able public servants from political life by reason of their opposition to this pernicious measure failed almost completely in its accomplishment. It is to be regretted that the only important victim of the purge, the Hon. John J. O'Connor, former Chairman of the Rules Committee, failed to have complete non-partisan support in his campaign for reelection. Our organization being non-partisan in its character could, of course, in no way participate in any of these campaigns, but now that they are over, they certainly are a fair subject of comment by patriotic citizens.

I do not think it is necessary for me to take up your time to discuss in any detail the general nature of the literature which has gone out from our headquarters in pursuance of the policies which you have authorized and which are in accord with the purposes for which the American Coalition was founded.

In your behalf I did address a letter to the proper authorities urging an appeal in the Strecker deportation case. Whether or not our efforts along this line were in any way effective is, of course, impossible to say, but, nevertheless, you will get some satisfaction from the fact that an appeal has been taken to the Supreme Court.

Also, on your behalf, we have issued public appeals against any breakdown of the barriers restricting immigration into the United States on the basis of sentimental appeals for refugees. I wish to call your attention to the fact, and I trust you will not allow the membership of the constituent societies of the Coalition or the public to forget, that the immigration laws now on the statute books were placed there for the purpose of preventing submergence of our country by a wholesale migration of refugees following the World War and the Russian

Revolution. The situation which we face today is virtually identical with that so courageously and ably met by your Senators and members of the House of Representatives in 1917, 1921 and 1924.

It is very shocking to those of us who believe in a government of laws rather than in a personal autocratic and arbitrary conduct of public affairs, that the Secretary of Labor of the United States should have put herself above the law in the administration of the existing statutes. It is my opinion, and I think it is shared by many, that there should be a congressional investigation of the administration of our immigration laws with a view to ascertaining if there are not adequate grounds for the impeachment of the Secretary of Labor.

On the occasion of our last annual meeting, I brought to your attention the fact that the Government of the United States was taking positions in matters relating to foreign affairs which have little or no concern to the people of the United States. It is doing so more and more emphatically. This should be a matter of grave and immediate concern to all our people. These matters have been discussed on various occasions with your Executive Committee, and I think, it is fair to say, it is the unanimous opinion of all those who attended these discussions that there is general condemnation of the practice of high government officials commenting on the policies of foreign nations. You and I as individuals may hold strong views in respect to these policies, and we have the right to express them but when important officials of our Government express opinions on the foreign and domestic policies of other nations, which do not concern the American people, they place us, as a nation, in an un-neutral position. They violate the cardinal principle for the conduct of foreign relations laid down by George Washington in his Farewell Address. I say now, as I have said many times before, that every American citizen, and particularly every member of Congress, should reread Washington's Farewell Address on the conduct of foreign relations and exert their

influence on the Executive Branch of the Government for the conduct of our foreign affairs along the lines laid down by the Father of our Country.

Without hesitation, I say to you and to the American people who may be interested in the activities of the American Coalition, that the Patriotic Societies of America and their memberships are emphatically opposed to participation in wars over causes which do not directly affect the interests of our people and the safety of the Republic.

It is my hope that this annual convention of the American Coalition will take appropriate action in opposition to American intervention in foreign controversies, and also upon all measures which tend to undermine the Constitution of the United States and the free institutions bequeathed to us as a trust by the Founders of this nation.

May I say in conclusion that I hope you agree with me that the accomplishments of the American Coalition in the past year have amply justified the existence of our organization.

John B. Trevor