

SW  
4/23/39

# Civil Rights In U.S. Face Worst Peril In 20 Years

## Reactionary Rampage In Congress Threatens Citizen's Liberties

By Jack McEvoy

(Special to the Sunday Worker)

WASHINGTON, D. C. April 22.

—The present Congress has before it the greatest collection of anti-civil rights bills in nearly twenty years. Many of these measures are perennially introduced, and are not newcomers to the hopper. But there is a big difference. This year the extent of their backing in Congress and their purposes are widened.

The Southern Tories have joined up with the Republicans in a real drive to get these measures through. The bills that are getting most consideration come straight out of the poison-bowls of the Dies Un-American Committee.

Ostensibly aimed at the non-citizen, and riding on an artificially created and well-organized agitation against aliens, many of these measures would directly rob citizens of precious rights of free speech and assemblage, introduce Hitler's methods of oppression to the United States.

Fingerprinting and registration of all non-citizens is proposed in a number of measures introduced by various Congressmen and Senators, led by Senator Robert Reynolds and Congressman Joe Starnes of Alabama (a member of the Dies Committee), and Howard Smith of Virginia. Of course the special persecution of aliens involved is in itself desired by the fascist-minded authors of these bills. Insofar as it regards aliens, it is, in their minds, a first step toward deporting all of them.

### SINISTER PURPOSE

But behind this purpose is one even more sinister, of direct and vital interest to every American. As the sponsors of these bills well know, it would not be possible to administer such a law unless every person in the United States were similarly fingerprinted and registered. And that, known as the Domestic Passport System, is what they are after: government registration of the entire population, with compulsion of carrying a registration card at all times.

What a wonderful opportunity for making blacklists of union members and workers, or blacklists for political purposes!

Even if only non-citizens were to be registered, it would help the fascists a great deal in their reac-

# ANTI-CIVIL LIBERTY LEGISLATION IN CONGRESS THREATENS TO WIPE OUT RIGHTS OF CITIZENS

(Continued from Page 1)

tionary purpose. Every person would have to be able to produce either proof of citizenship, or a registration card. Raids on meetings could be conducted, and all participants held until they could show one or the other.

The Dempsey Bill, which has already passed the House and is now before the Senate, is another good example. While it is fascist even in its surface pattern—calling for the deportation of all non-citizens who believe in or belong to an organization which advocates "any change in the American form of government"—its real purpose is even more destructive. Under this bill, all non-citizen members of the American Federation of Labor or the Congress of Industrial Organizations could be deported, because those bodies have endorsed the Child Labor Amendment. The same would apply to many religious organizations. What the Dies gang, who fathered and mothered the Dempsey Bill, intend to accomplish is to put a gag on all organizations.

prevent them from endorsing progressive legislation for fear of making their membership deportable.

## CONCENTRATION BILL

The Sam Hobbs Concentration Camp Bill, introduced by the Alabama legislator, brings to the United States the fascist pattern of the concentration camp. It provides for imprisonment for life without trial of aliens who are ordered deported and who cannot obtain passports. Once that principle is established, the reactionaries figure, it will be a comparatively simple matter to include among those who may be imprisoned without trial group after group of those who oppose them.

This bill has been favorably reported by the House Judiciary Committee, and will come up in the House for initial action on May Day. Around minority views filed by Congressman Emanuel Celler of New York, a member of the Judiciary Committee, a good fight can be organized in the House against its passage. The minority views clearly demonstrate the fascist purpose of the bill, and its unconsist-

tionality. With sufficient pressure from their constituents, enough Congressmen can be rallied to this fight to defend it.

Marvin Dies himself is the acknowledged sponsor of three bills (and no one knows just how many others introduced by other Congressmen). The first of these is aimed at non-citizens. It would deport any who advocate changes in the social system, or who advocate "a radical forward any class of people in the United States on account of . . . economic conditions or social status of such class." It is a shotgun bill designed to catch anyone who doesn't agree with the Dies Committee definition of Americanism.

The second Dies bill would enforce government regulation—registration, filing of membership and contribution lists, etc.—on all organizations coming under that definition.

The third Dies bill, a federal equivalent of the McNaboe and De-Varney bills in New York state, would bar persons, under this definition, from direct or indirect employment by the Federal government. That

includes WPA and industrial jobs let out under government contract. The infamous criminal syndicalism laws of the various states, under which only union men and women have ever been prosecuted, are embodied into federal measures in several bills. One now before the House is the omnibus bill of Smith

of Virginia, which carries almost every other anti-civil rights proposal introduced. It is being considered seriously by the House Judiciary Committee. Among other things, it contains provision for arrest without warrant of persons "suspected" of being deportable aliens. And who is to stop a cop from "suspecting" that every leader on a given picket line is deportable?

With the reactionary bloc in Congress on the rampage, the danger of passage of these and many other similar measures is very great, unless there is developed a real movement, crystallized and channelized in a roaring protest movement addressed to Congressmen and Senators by the voters in their districts. There is a determined drive, backed by the American Coalition,

the Dies Committee, the Associated Farmers, and every other fascist and vigilante outfit in the country, to push these measure through at the present session of Congress. Their pressure is well-oiled and operating at high speed. It is well-organized and misses no opportunity to make itself felt on Capitol Hill. The labor and progressive forces, to defeat them, should be organized quickly and effectively around these issues of civil rights vs. fascism in America.

SW 44237