

OPENING STATEMENT

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SENATE PERMANENT SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS
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Today we begin a series of hearings into the outbreak and proliferation of terroristic and criminal bombings which have occurred in the United States. This investigation is a part of and continues the Subcommittee's inquiry into riots and civil and criminal disorders.

The Committee on Government Operations was authorized and directed by the Senate to make a full and complete study and investigation of riots, and that authority was delegated to this Subcommittee. Our jurisdiction in this field includes investigation of riots themselves, violent disturbances of the peace, vandalism, civil and criminal disorder, insurrection, and the commission of crime in connection therewith. We also have the duty of seeking to determine the immediate and long-standing causes, the extent and effect of such occurrences and crimes, and measures necessary for their immediate and long range prevention, for the preservation of law and order, and for the maintenance of domestic tranquillity within the United States.

The increased incidence of bombings and arson which have plagued the nation during the last year and a half clearly indicates that the United States is experiencing a phenomenon unparalleled in our history.

Bombings, terrorism and sabotage are not subjects which have been historically and traditionally familiar to the American people. In the recent past, however, public consciousness of the serious threat created by these crimes has been aroused to some extent by headlines telling us almost daily about terrible explosions which have caused deaths, injuries and extensive property damage. Certain examples come to mind--the explosion which severely damaged the headquarters of the nation's largest police department in New York City; the blasts in numerous skyscrapers in that city; the fire-bombing of Latin American

embassies in Washington, D. C., and the detonation of a "bomb factory" occupied by known revolutionaries dedicated to violence. These and a great number of similar incidents, when viewed collectively, portend a very grave danger to our internal security and our peaceful way of life. The bombings and the attempted bombings must be stopped if we are to enjoy a tranquil society and insure the safety of our citizens.

In order to provide the Congress with essential facts upon which to base its consideration of necessary legislation in this field, the Subcommittee will examine in depth three separate aspects of the bombings and terrorism that have plagued our nation in recent months. We will hear testimony about the patterns and incidence of bombings, both explosive and incendiary, which have occurred in the United States since January 1, 1969, and develop the facts associated with certain major examples, including attacks against Federal and local government property, police departments, and large industrial concerns.

Secondly, we will hear testimony about the sources and types of printed material which instructs individuals in the manufacture of explosive and incendiary devices and the manner of distribution of such material. This printed matter includes reproductions of U.S. Army manuals which are available from certain mail order houses, articles printed in so-called "underground" newspapers, and documents which are secretly circulated among extremist organizations.

Approximately one year ago this Subcommittee held hearings on the activities of four major extremist organizations--the Students for a Democratic Society, the Black Panther Party, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, and the Republic of New Africa. More than twenty exhibits in those hearings showed clearly that members of these groups distributed newspapers, books and pamphlets containing details on making incendiary and explosive bombs, ranging from simple Molotov cocktails to highly sophisticated devices made of dynamite or nitroglycerine. We have developed evidence in this current inquiry which

will show that other extremist groups such as the American Nazi Party and the Minutemen are also distributors and disseminators of such material.

In my view, the circulation of printed instructions on bomb-making and tactics on guerrilla warfare constitute a serious and challenging threat to our society.

The third aspect of the problem to be examined in these hearings relates to the substantial clandestine traffic in explosives. Testimony will disclose how dynamite and other explosives get into the hands of the bombers. Witnesses will testify about sales, thefts, transportation and control of such materials.

I am deeply concerned about reports of substantial increases in thefts of dynamite and other explosive products. Our preliminary inquiry indicates that both state and Federal regulations relating to the manufacture, transportation, storage and sale of explosive materials may be inadequate in a number of respects. Certainly they should be subject to searching examination in order to determine whether more stringent and exacting security measures should be imposed. New or revised Federal statutes may be considered necessary to keep such deadly weapons from criminals and malcontents. As an example of the need for further public protection, it should be noted that in some states it is illegal to buy firecrackers and fireworks while sticks of dynamite may be purchased without difficulty.

In order to develop fully the facts on these three aspects of the bombing problem, the Subcommittee will hear testimony from officials of the Departments of the Treasury, Justice, Defense, the Post Office, and the General Services Administration. We also will have as witnesses local officials whose jurisdictions have been most seriously affected by waves of bombings and arson. These include New York City and Seattle, and the States of California, Illinois and Iowa. Representatives of the explosives industry and other concerned groups also will testify.

The large chart in the hearing room shows the startling and disturbing statistics relating to a nation-wide survey of bombings which was undertaken by the Department of the Treasury at the Subcommittee's request. The first witness, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Eugene Rossides, will explain the statistics shown on the chart.

Before we call Mr. Rossides to testify, I wish to emphasize that the act of setting off a bomb is one of the most cowardly and heinous crimes committed. In no sense of the word can such an act be viewed as legitimate dissent. The bombers have as their objectives the breakdown of the democratic process and the destruction of our society. They seek to prevent due process of law, and if they continue their nefarious deeds with any degree of success, they can hinder and do great damage to our opportunities to improve race relations. They can cause tremendous over-reaction and repression. These criminals must not be permitted to succeed in their efforts to achieve these goals.

I hope that the factual information and revelations made during this investigation will make the Congress and the public keenly aware of the gravity of the threat, and also provide the bases for necessary legislation to effectively and adequately deal with the problem.