

Lefkowitz Urges Law to Curb Activities of Minutemen in State

By EMANUEL PERLMUTTER

Attorney General Louis J. Lefkowitz yesterday called the ultra-right Minutemen a potential threat to the state and urged legislation to make paramilitary activity in such organizations a felony punishable by up to 15 years in jail.

In a report to Governor Rockefeller, Mr. Lefkowitz said that a nine-month investigation by his office had disclosed "shocking evidence of violence and potential guerrilla warfare" by the Minutemen's members in 33 counties.

He said members of the group had told his investigators that they would not hesitate to assassinate "such Communist sympathizers" as Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, Chief Justice Earl Warren, Governor Rockefeller and others.

"The Minutemen are a potential threat to the peace and security of New York State and other states," Mr. Lefkowitz said. "Training, reading, thinking and living guns, bombs and violence, they are actively preparing for a private war."

Members in 15 States

"Minutemen are prepared to fight 'the conspiracy' they alleged is fostered by our President, Vice President, the United States Supreme Court, the Governor of New York and its Senators as well as the Mayor of New York City."

Mr. Lefkowitz said the organization's members included policemen, National Guardsmen, members of the armed forces, doctors, teachers, employees in sensitive industries and public employees.

He did not give an estimate of its membership, but said there were members in New



Louis J. Lefkowitz

York and at least 14 other states.

His report to the Governor detailed field maneuvers of the Minutemen, their arms and explosives, bombing plots and propaganda.

He said hearings on the ultra-rightists had been held in this city, Syracuse, Albany, Utica, Rochester and Buffalo, and that 150 witnesses had been questioned and voluminous documentary evidence examined.

The legislation recommended by Mr. Lefkowitz would be an amendment to the state's Military Law. It would provide the following:

"Any person who assembles or conspires to assemble with one or more persons as a paramilitary organization for

the practice with any weapon actual or simulated, or other dangerous or deadly instrument or appliance, or explosive device or instrument of chemical warfare is guilty of a class C felony."

The proposed amendment would define a paramilitary organization as one that is not an agency of the United States Government or of New York State. Excepted would be groups recognized as "Historic military orders" or old guards.

The state inquiry was ordered by Governor Rockefeller on last Jan. 3, as an aftermath to raids on the Minutemen by local and state policemen the

previous October. The raids were directed by former District Attorney Nat H. Hentel of Queens.

Twenty men were arrested in the metropolitan area and upstate on charges ranging from unlawful possession of firearms to conspiracy to commit arson. Fifteen were indicted and are awaiting trial in Queens.

Arsenals of weapons were seized, including one million rounds of ammunition, 125 rifles, 10 pipe bombs, mortars, machine guns, a bazooka, grenades and grenade launchers.

In discussing the Minutemen, Mr. Lefkowitz asserted in his report that it was nationwide in scope and that new members were constantly being recruited.

He said copies of his report had been sent to the Secretary of Defense, the United States Attorney General, the Governors of the states involved and the district attorneys of the New York City counties, the metropolitan area and many upstate areas.

Mr. Lefkowitz said his investigation of the Minutemen would continue.