

I said that part of the problem is that "You folks, you intelligent citizens, when there is a hearing, you do not appear and you do not say anything about.

"If you did, I am sure that the congressional committees, the Senators, and the Representatives, as the case may be, will be impressed."

And here is the reaction that I got, right or wrong. Those who are Government employees, either District or Federal, said that they were afraid to come here. They did not know how the Hatch Act would apply to them.

They said they were afraid of reprisals either at the home location or in their offices. They were interested, and they would liked to have said something, but they were just afraid to do it.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I am sure that they have no fears on that score. They are American citizens just the same as everybody else.

Certainly the Hatch Act does not apply—

Mr. NORWOOD. Well, there was that situation and it was amazing to me, the lack of understanding.

They were afraid that in their testimony they may say something that was contrary to Government policy or that might be interpreted as trying to tend to influence somebody unduly.

I tried to convince them that this did not apply but that fear was there and they were not going to take a chance.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I have been in Government many, many years, and I have found many Government employees, both in politics and elsewhere, who are always happy to hide behind governmental immunity.

And I have always thought that Government employees, once they get locked in under the Hatch Act or under the civil service, they are scared to express themselves because it is just much easier to go along that way.

Mr. NORWOOD. That is true. They just were not going to take a chance, and I think that these people who were talking were sincere in their belief, right or wrong.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sure they were. One of the difficulties in this field, and I think we must face it. We are all trying to work to help strengthen our law enforcement agencies, but certainly we must do it within the Constitution.

There are certain constitutional safeguards of which we are well aware, and we are guided by those.

You cannot just write any kind of a law you want and expect to get this problem solved, because the laws you write must pass constitutional tests.

There is no need of us passing laws when they are not going to be upheld by the courts.

This is one of the real problems that we have.

But I do appreciate your statement and your appearance here, Mr. Norwood.

I have at all times urged every citizen, Government employees, and those who think they are under the Hatch Act and those who do not, to take a more active part in Government on every possible level because this Government can be just as effective as the citizens who make it.

I would like to ask you this one question.