

Mr. HAYES. It is available to every American citizen in good standing.

Mr. PATMAN. Who determines whether an individual has the necessary qualifications to become a member of ABC?

Mr. HAYES. The courts.

Mr. PATMAN. The courts? You don't carry this to court.

Mr. HAYES. We haven't had occasion to at this time.

Mr. PATMAN. I know, but someone must receive the fee, for instance, and someone must be accepted as members. Who in your organization accepts them as a member in good standing?

Mr. HAYES. The trustees.

Mr. PATMAN. The trustees, three of you.

Mr. HAYES. Correct.

Mr. PATMAN. Well, if there is just one present, who does it?

Mr. HAYES. This is an act that all three trustees must pass on.

Mr. PATMAN. They must pass on.

Mr. HAYES. Right.

Mr. PATMAN. Do you accept members who are not American citizens?

Mr. HAYES. No.

Mr. PATMAN. I note that the membership application requires a pledge of secrecy from the members. We have, for example, received a letter from an accounting firm which says as follows:

For some time we have been trying to secure some factual information about the aims and purposes of Americans Building Constitutionally, and so far we have been unsuccessful in getting any written material which contains the kind of factual information which we would like to have.

Why is it necessary for ABC to operate in secrecy?

Mr. HAYES. Who wrote the letter, Mr. Chairman, if I might ask?

Mr. PATMAN. Well, it is an accounting firm. What difference does it make? In fact, we could get you up a number of letters like this.

Mr. HAYES. I imagine so.

Mr. PATMAN. And the question is whether or not you operate in secret, and why is it necessary to operate in secrecy?

Mr. HAYES. Who is the letter addressed to, Mr. Chairman? ABC isn't hiding.

Mr. PATMAN. It is addressed to you.

Mr. HAYES. It is addressed to me?

Mr. PATMAN. No; it was addressed to me.

Mr. HAYES. Oh.

Mr. PATMAN. But they have been trying to get the information from you, and they have been unable to do it.

Mr. HAYES. The question that arises in my mind is why didn't they contact me.

Mr. PATMAN. My information is that they did contact you.

Mr. HAYES. Not to my knowledge.

Mr. PATMAN. The question is why is it necessary to operate in secrecy.

Mr. RAY. Would you clarify that question, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. PATMAN. I don't think it needs any clarification.

Mr. RAY. The only requirement of secrecy to my knowledge is that they don't reveal the trust instrument.