

AMENDING SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES CONTROL ACT OF 1950 1411

It is perhaps symptomatic of the problems spawned by modern technology that we, here on Capitol Hill, received an offer by a commercial firm a year or so ago to "sweep" our offices to ensure that we were not being "bugged." Every week one may find in the newspapers advertisements for commercial firms which will erect security barriers on the one hand, or penetrate other security barriers on the other. Elsewhere one can find firms that will specialize in other subtle intricacies of the intelligence profession.

While these commercial threats are serious, one must recognize that the expertise so advertised can be far more perfectly accomplished by national governments, which can professionalize to the greatest possible degree the arts of espionage, sabotage, and subversion. Instances of foreign-supported clandestine and covert activity in America are legion, and this country has had to learn some painful lessons at the hands of our enemies.

It is an unfortunate fact of the present day that we are faced with a continuing and constant problem of anti-American activity within our borders, some of it readily visible, other less so. Among the most important targets in this activity are manufacturing facilities which are related to our national defense. The advantages which can accrue to our enemies through successful penetration of these activities are great. Generally one may expect that the goal of such a penetration will include the gathering of vital information, although in conditions of international tension or war, the primary goal might be sabotage. In either case, the loss to our national defense effort is unacceptable, and the detection of such enemy effort after the fact will not repair the damage that has been done.

It should be abundantly clear that the miniaturization of destructive weapons, the refinement of toxic chemicals, the ubiquity of copying machines and miniature cameras, and other technological advances have given the single agent a tremendous potential for damaging activity. Instruments of mass destruction can now be carried in a briefcase, while atomic secrets can be carried away on the head of a pin. Espionage can go undetected forever, and sabotage cannot always be traced.

In the face of such threats, it is clearly in the national interest to investigate most carefully the relative risks to our national security that may be posed by the employment of persons of questionable mental stability or loyalty in defense facilities. It is not enough that we just keep records of certain persons, or to prosecute espionage cases after the fact. Our national defense and the most basic good judgment require that we have the legal means to avoid catastrophe.

I would emphasize, Mr. Chairman, the *preventive* nature of this legislation. The activities of enemy agents or misguided individuals in this area do not lend themselves to remedy, and the damage done may well be irreparable. Appropriate legislation should be enacted. The barriers must be carefully drawn, constitutionally correct, and strictly enforced. If our country is to have a reliable national defense, it is fundamental that we must provide for the security of our defense industries.

STATEMENT OF FRANCIS W. STOVER, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE, VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES, WITH RESPECT TO H.R. 15626 WHICH WOULD AMEND THE SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES CONTROL ACT OF 1950 TO AUTHORIZE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO DENY EMPLOYMENT IN DEFENSE FACILITIES TO CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS, TO PROTECT CLASSIFIED INFORMATION RELEASED TO UNITED STATES INDUSTRY, AND RELATED MATTERS

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the invitation to present the views of the Veterans of Foreign Wars with respect to H.R. 15626, which would plug some of the loopholes in the Subversive Activities Control Act of 1950 caused by recent court decisions and greatly strengthen the act in other areas.

My name is Francis W. Stover and my title is director of the National Legislative Service of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars strongly supported the legislation which finally became the Subversive Activities Control Act of 1950.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars has, down through the years, supported liberalizing amendments to this act which have strengthened and improved the effectiveness of this most important law.