THE COLUMBIA RECORD

Columbia, South Carolina

JOHN A. MONTGOMERY
Editor

H. HARRISON JENKINS
Associate Editor

The U.S. And World Affairs

10-A

Thursday, March 10, 1966

Moscow Must Welcome The John Birch Society

"HE SEEMS EMINENTLY QUALIFIED — HE'S BEEN CALLED A KOOK FROM COAST TO COAST"

By URBAN WHITAKER
Dept. of International
Studies, USC

Most Americans do not approve of the following statement: "Democracy is merely a deceptive phrase, a weapon of demagoguery, and a perennial fraud." The overwhelming majority of Americans also reject this observation about our country: "A republican form of government or of organization has many attractions and advantages, under certain favorable conditions. But under less happy circumstances it lends itself too readily to infiltration, distortion and disruption."

Especially do Americans disagree with the author of these statements when he concludes that it is necessary to "operate under completely authoritative control at all levels" with "smoothly functioning direction from the top."

And Americans are likely to conclude that the writer of those words is at least pro-Communist when he asks his friends to join him to "organize fronts—little fronts, big fronts, temporary fronts, permanent fronts, all kinds of fronts."

Robert Welch

The author of all those un-American phrases, however, is not a Communist. He is Robert Welch, founder of the John Birch Society. All of the quotations are taken, word for word, from the "Blue Book" of the Birch Society, pages 159 and 86. The book is full of this kind of argument. Welch says that the Society "is to be a monolithic body" (page 158), that it "will operate under completely authoritative control at all levels," (p. 159) and that it will not entertain even "honest differences of opinion" if they lead to "raging debates." (p. 161).

When one reads the entire Blue Book it becomes quite clear why the Birch Society resembles a communist society. Time and again Robert Welch heaps praise upon the communists for their authoritarian and totalitarian methods. And he calls upon his followers to adopt similar tactics.

Agreement

It is no surprise, therefore, that we so often find the communists and the right wing extremists agreeing with each other and opposing the United States. (As they do, for example, with respect to adequate financing for United Nations peacekeeping activities.) It is not that the John Birchers are leftists. Rather it is that the communists—on many vital issues—are right wingers. We've fallen into the sloppy (and dangerous) habit of believing that communism is a purely left wing disorder. It simply isn't true. Theoretically the communists believe in some radical economic ideas. But, in practice, they have adopted the harshest reactionary policies with respect to such basic democratic ideals as freedom of speech, press, religion, etc. They — and our own home grown right wingers—don't like the United Nations, oppose the U. S. foreign aid program, and distrust the freedoms of expression which are the very life blood of a democratic society.

The danger in referring to the communists as leftists is that it tends to discredit the legitimate left—both here and everywhere else in the world. It is a double tragedy because: (1) it is in fact the left which sponsors the programs of orderly democratic change which are so desperately needed in so many parts of the world; and (2) it is the left which is most effectively and vigorously opposed to communism.

Free Speech

It is well past time for us to recognize that nearly every inch of territory the communists control today was won from right wing dictators. The communists can be thankful for the openings which were given to them by Hitler, Chiang Kai-shek and Batista.

No doubt they are delighted with the John Birch Society, too. For it is just such "monolithic" and "authoritarian" right wing philosophies that have made it possible for the communists to gain a foothold on the globe today. Moscow must welcome the Birchers and any others who reject democracy as a "fraud."

It is, after all, democracy which is the most effective enemy of communism. The communists have never conquered a country which had full freedom of speech—and they will never make headway against us as long as we preserve that cherished American tradition. We should keep these facts in the fronts of our minds today and decisively reject those often well-meant but awfully misguided suggestions that we make dissent illegal on vital questions like the war in Viet Nam.

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

by Robert Lee Humber

The Conference on International Cooperation, summoned by President Johnson to meet in Washington for four days, from September the twenty-eighth to October the first, 1965, to explore "every conceivable approach to peace" was unique in American history, creating a historic precedent for attendance and for coverage of subject matter. The President proclaimed it "the assignment of the century."

It constituted the most mammoth joint-effort of government officials and private citizens ever organized in our country to study the multiple aspects of human progress and peace, embracing twelve hundred fifty official representatives to the Conference, twenty-two federal agencies, five hundred organizations, ninety corporations, eighty-nine educational institutions and foundations, with a record accreditation of over four hundred members of the press, totaling nearly five thousand individuals. It was described by the President as a "town meeting of leaders of the nation."

From its origin, the United States has always sanctioned the principle of conferences as a desirable method of ventilating public issues and of seeking practical solutions to social problems, but in recent years this procedure has been accelerated by the remarkable patronage of our government. In 1964, the United States participated in six hundred twenty-nine conferences, or almost two per day, and during the three year period, 1963-1965, it sent delegates actually to more conferences than it had done for the entire first one hundred fifty years of our history.

International conferences often finalize their agreements in treaties. Between 1776 and 1963, covering a span of one hundred eighty-seven years, the United States negotiated 5,823 treaties, of which the preponderant number of 4,541, or 78%, was ratified in the brief period since World War II. At the present time, over 25,000 treaties are reputed to be in operation seeking to reconcile and coordinate the diverse interests of peoples and to bind the world together in peace. The intricate involvements of modern society, consolidating the economic, social and political life of nations, make mandatory an effective modus operandi congenial to the well-being and security of mankind. Cooperation by individuals within nations and across national frontiers point the way to man's survival. The Washington Conference declared, in the report of its Committee: "Cooperation is an eleven letter word meaning action for mutual benefit."

Members of the Conference heard stirring and challenging addresses by Vice-President Hubert H. Humphrey, Chief Justice Warren. Dean Rusk, Ambassador Goldberg and other notables in public life.

The scope of the deliberations of the Conference was unrestricted; it was, in fact, encouraged to penetrate any frontier and to pursue any inviting trail. The President proclaimed: "I have called this Conference for one reason: I am determined that the United States shall actively engage its best minds and boldest spirits in the quest for a new order of world cooperation." The Vice-President expressed his conviction that we need to make "big blueprints" as well as to take "small and practical steps." Ambassador Goldberg gave undisputed credentials to the architects of The Great Society, when he reminded his rapt audience that "the founding fathers of this country were unashamed idealists and visionaries not afraid to dream." Dean Rusk intoned a serious appeal to his responsive audience, when he declared: "What the leaders of the world need today are your prayers and not your imprecations, because these are difficult questions."

All sorts of people — the pioneers, the scouting parties, the belligerent crusaders, the unconverted and those who were nostalgic of the status quo ante — closed ranks, ignited their enthusiasm, pooled their critical understanding of world conditions and evolved techniques to solve the ills now afflicting the body politic. Their knowledge of mankind's heroic efforts through the centuries to climb up the steep acclivities of civilization to its eternal summits of freedom and peace only deepened their ardor to make certain that this occasion would become truly eventful by recording, at least for once, the unflinching fidelity of this generation to objectives epochally great. No stops on the organ were sealed, the overtones of earnestness were prevalent in every meeting and a deep sense of compelling duty and unselfish dedication lighted the torches even of the obscure. During those purposeful days the fellowship of kindred spirits generated a firm reassurance that through bold, realistic planning in our day, the future of the human race could be indefinitely enriched and made triumphantly secure.

The accent was on effective measures to be taken to eradicate the abnormalities of our present social structure, to equalize opportunities for all human beings to experience self-improvement and to mobilize the full resources of man to attain his infinite potential.

The Conference was divided into thirty workshops, each committed to the investigation of a specific area of public interest, as widely divergent in character as urban development is to space exploration, as communication is to population explosion, as arms control is to culture, or as meteorology is to youth activities. A panel of recognized authorities presented a carefully prepared resumé of its previous research on a given subject, conducted over a period of six months, with well defined proposals for public discussion and debate. Microphones were provided members of the audi-