

FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE



INTERIM REPORT

March, 1964

The members of your Florida Legislative Investigation Committee are keenly aware of the responsibility imposed upon them by the broad mandate of the 1963 Legislature and have worked diligently to serve fully and well the charge given them and the interests of our state and its citizens.

The Committee is charged by the Act adopted by the Legislature with investigation of "all organizations whose principles or activities include a course of conduct on the part of any person or group which would constitute violence or a violation of the laws of the state, or would be inimical to the well-being and orderly pursuit of their personal and business activities by the majority of the citizens of this state, as well as the extent of infiltration into agencies supported by state funds by practicing homosexuals, the effect thereof on said agencies and the public, and the policies of various state agencies in dealing therewith."

Your Committee has been, and is, particularly mindful that we function for the specific and stated purpose "of reporting to this Legislature of the activities of such organizations to the end that corrective legislation may be adopted if found necessary to correct any abuses against the peace and dignity of the state."

In keeping with that mandate, we anticipate presenting to the members of the 1963 Legislature and for the consideration of the 1965 Legislature, a full legislative program based on careful investigation and factually documented findings in a number of areas of general concern.

At the Committee's organizational meeting in August, the resignations of the staff which had served its predecessor, and which had been temporarily retained to assure continuity, were accepted. Representative Richard O. Mitchell was elected chairman and Senator Robert Williams was elected vice-chairman.

At that organizational meeting, all members concurred that careful study should be given to the course of conduct for this biennium and to the selection of staff to serve to translate the Committee's will to action. In September the Committee spent a full work week in Washington and Chicago conferring with officials of key federal agencies and committees of the Congress having responsibilities in our areas of interest, and with leaders of major private organizations concerned with subversive activities.

On that trip we heard what our subsequent investigations have confirmed: That there exists today a major emphasis on the part of the Communists and their allies to move boldly into the academic and political mainstreams of American thought and life; That this movement gains impetus by the actions of extremists of both left and right whose actions, however sincerely motivated, serve well the purposes of those who would subvert the freedoms which are the American heritage.

We were further made aware of that which our predecessors had come to know well: That the very freedoms with whose preservation we are concerned would be invoked in an effort to either thwart or neutralize constructive activities on our part.

The counsel of wise and experienced individuals caused us to return to Florida with, if possible, a deeper dedication to securing the State of Florida against the thrusts and parries of those who would take advantage of our laws and these times to weaken the structure of our government and the moral forces which sustain it.

We believe, and expect to present public evidence at a later time, that in Florida at present there exists a handful of organizations so obsessed by allegiance to false causes and craven credos as to pose an abuse against the peace and dignity of the state.

We further believe that there are some organizations which, while engaged in activities and espousing beliefs distasteful to many citizens, are operating in a legal and forthright fashion.

Our report, as the hearings which will precede it, will seek to deal fairly with the organizations and individuals in both of these categories, and to be oriented to lasting legislative contributions of meaning to the state.

To achieve this goal, we adopted a new concept of staff organization, providing for an overall staff director coordinating the efforts of a small basic staff and contract investigators serving on an "as-and-when-needed" basis.

After a prolonged and detailed search, which literally encompassed the country and which caused us to interview some half dozen prospects, we found in Florida a staff director possessed of high qualifications. He is John E. Evans, a man well

acquainted with Florida and its people, and possessed of experience at high administrative levels of both the state and federal governments and who has gained a national reputation for his pioneering efforts in the field of Cold War Education.

As legal counsel, the Committee was fortunate to benefit from the dedication of Leo Foster, one of Florida's most distinguished attorneys, whose confidence in our activities is such that he has expressed a desire to serve our needs at no fee for advisory services and only minimal charges should we become involved in litigation.

To serve as chief investigator, the Committee retained C. Lawrence Rice, who retired recently after 28 years service with the Federal Bureau of Investigation where his services, both in and out of this country, particularly well equipped him to make inquiry into matters of interest to the Committee.

Although much time was taken up by the selection of this staff, updating of the Committee's files; establishment of meaningful liaison with law enforcement agencies and other cooperating organizations in and out of Florida; and with the housekeeping chores, such as the development and adoption of the operating budget attached hereto, we have made certain solid accomplishments which we report with pride:

1. We have prepared, and enclose for your study, a well documented report on the nature and extent of homosexuality in Florida -- suggesting both a massive program of public education and steps for legislative action toward realistic laws for its control. In conjunction with a committee of experts we are now assembling, we will continue to develop and refine recommendations for action in this area, and have been gratified to receive support for our educational efforts from such organizations as the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs.

2. We have prepared, and enclose for your consideration, a fingerprint bill, formalizing procedures for the proper identification of all who receive compensation from the state. This measure is as much protection for Florida's employees as for the agencies for which they work, and we commend this measure to your attention and seek your comments on it.

3. We have adopted a set of Rules of Procedure, which are enclosed for your information, guaranteeing to all who appear

as witnesses before the Committee protection in keeping with the guarantees of the Constitution and the freedom of citizenship.

4. We have drawn upon the files of the Committee and the talents of its staff to provide assistance to the State Department of Education, the Board of Control, several institutions in the university system, and a number of law enforcement agencies. Our assistance has been timely and, from the comments we have received, of significant value to the recipients.

5. We have discussed with Superintendent Bailey our concern for a more efficient and effective means of investigating allegations of homosexuality involving teachers in the public school system. The attached copies of correspondence between our staff director and Mr. Bailey reflect the present status of the continuing and cooperative effort we have undertaken with the State Department of Education to assure protection of the innocent and speedy action against the guilty.

The Committee has a broad range of investigative activity underway, adhering to policies adopted during the eight formal meetings it has held thus far in the biennium. Although we have retained a professional staff and determined to leave staff operation generally within their discretion, each member is kept fully informed of the activities of the Committee by means of a weekly staff report; and no new investigations are undertaken or major deviations from policy permitted without full Committee concurrence.

Because we deal with the lives of men and women of our state, and because our inquiry into the activities of certain organizations is subject to misconstruction in the press and in the minds of citizens generally, we have chosen to conduct the investigative phase of our operations without public disclosure of its nature and through executive sessions of the Committee. When supposition is supplanted by fact, we shall air our investigative results through proper public hearings and reports in keeping with our rules. Pending that time, we feel it is far better to be criticized for secrecy than to unjustly malign the name and reputation of even one individual by virtue of our inquiries.

In this year when the Communist Party of the United States feels free to solicit speaking appearances on the campuses of

our universities; when its leaders feel they can, with impudicity, seek to place candidates on our ballots; and when on every hand we see laws flaunted by individuals who believe that the cloak of "civil disobedience" can obviate the necessity of respect for law, we believe there exists a need for our laws to be as staunch as their defenders; to be modified to meet the attacks upon them; and that from this need do we draw the meaning and full justification for this Committee.

FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE

January, 1964

BUDGET

The Committee, prior to staffing, contemplated several proposed budgets, but, because of the uncertainties of staffing and program, did not adopt a specific plan for expenditure of appropriated funds.

The staff reviewed and made limited analysis of the expenditures and proposals of the predecessor to this Committee, and estimated as far as possible those expenses incident to the program proposals developed for the eighteen-month period January 1, 1964, through June 30, 1965.

The budget adopted is the result of these efforts. We believe it to be realistic, that we can live within its bounds, and that there is a good likelihood that some funds will remain at the end of the biennium that will not have been expended if prudent management and careful control are our standards. The budget anticipates total expenditures of \$122,000. We are entering the New Year with just over \$124,000 remaining of the original \$155,000 appropriation. This provides a \$2,000 contingency for unforeseen needs.

1964-65 Budget

STAFF SALARIES

\$ 48,450

Anticipates staff as now constituted, with salaries of Director and Chief Investigator at agreed upon rates, with provision for approximately 6.4% increase for secretarial staff effective July 1964.

CONTRACTURAL SERVICES

16,000

Provides for retention of part-time investigative personnel as necessary, for court reporting of Committee hearings, and for secretarial or other necessary services to meet special needs of the Committee.

STAFF TRAVEL

15,000

Anticipates travel of Director and Chief Investigator, of additional investigative personnel, special witnesses, and others traveling at the behest of the Committee.

COMMITTEE TRAVEL

12,000

Predicated on the likelihood of fourteen Committee meetings and/or hearings during the eighteen-month period (the Legislature will be in session during two of these months, and a meeting in the month following the session is unlikely), for which transportation and per diem will be paid.

LEGAL FEE FUND

10,000

Although the consulting and advisory services of counsel are being contributed, any litigation will entail cost, and prudence dictates provision for such an eventuality.

PRINTING-PUBLICATIONS

\$ 9,000

The preparation and distribution of reports, hearings, and other related publications will enhance the usefulness of the Committee to the people of Florida and others interested in the subjects with which we deal.

COMMUNICATIONS

7,000

Anticipated to cover telephone, telegraph and basic postage costs for the eighteen months.

OFFICE SUPPLIES

2,570

Anticipates standard operating costs of the office, and the provision of such additional equipment as is necessary to modernize and make fully secure the files of the Committee.

UTILITIES AND JANITOR SERVICE

1,980

To meet the costs of electricity, gas (for heating), water, and a \$50 monthly contract-service janitor fee.

CONTINGENCY

2,000

TOTAL

\$124,000