

November 15, 1961

REGISTERED
SPECIAL DELIVERY

The Honorable Charles M. Teague
179 Ojai Avenue
Ojai, California

Dear Mr. Teague:

I am writing you officially as Chairman of the Democratic Party's "Operation Support" in Santa Barbara County to seek a clarification of your position on the John Birch Society.

As you know, the activities and statements of the John Birch Society and its leaders have assumed great public importance. Robert Welch's vilification of such outstanding Americans as Dwight D. Eisenhower, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Earl Warren has gravely concerned patriotic and responsible citizens. The distortions of truth and misinformation contained in the Society's publications serve to undermine reasonable political discussion. Both the words and the deeds of the Society leave serious doubt about its devotion to democracy and human freedom.

Deeply impressed by the dangers inherent in the Society's program, distinguished leaders in your District and across the Nation have spoken forcefully in opposition to it. Thomas M. Storzo, editor and publisher of the Santa Barbara News-Press, was first to condemn vigorously the Society's principle that "to fight Communism at home, we must throw democratic principles and methods into the ashcan and adopt the techniques of the Communists themselves." He has been joined by many others, including both the Governor and Attorney General of the State of California and such leaders of your own Party as the senior Senator from California and the recently defeated candidate for President of the United States.

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By comparison with the statements of these men, your views on the Birch Society, expressed formally last April, seem vague and vacillating. You said you found the Society's anti-Communist objectives "commendable." You said you were not sure whether Mr. Welch had stated that three former Presidents of the United States and others "are or were Communists, or Communist sympathizers," or whether the Society was run along "dictatorial lines." You said that the Society's secrecy "doesn't shock me."

While you clearly stated that you were not a member of the Birch Society, you left in doubt the degree to which you would support and accept support from it. Because of the seriousness of this issue, it is impossible to rest easy with such an ambiguous stand.

When you issued your statement last April, you said there had not been time to study the matter fully. As a responsible legislator, you have undoubtedly done so in the last six months. It should now be possible for you to let the people know where you stand. Speaking for the opposition Party in this District, I am requesting that you do so.

Sincerely yours,

CS
Carl F. Stover