

The
American Coalition

ORGANIZED IN 1929



Why It Was
Organized
AND
What It Does



MAY 1940

THE American Coalition, now composed of representatives from 115 patriotic, civic and fraternal societies of the United States, is the outgrowth of informal cooperation between a number of these societies which commenced in 1927 for the purpose of defending the Immigration Act of 1924, then under vicious attack. This was known as the Citizens' Committee on Immigration Legislation. It was this committee which carried on the campaign to defend the National Origins Principle of the Immigration Law. The success which attended this effort resulted in the expansion of its operations for the general defense of American institutions by the formation of the American Coalition.

The purposes of the organization, as stated in its constitution, are:

1. To keep America American.
2. To promote undivided allegiance to the United States.
3. To defend the nation against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and advocate the maintenance of an adequate Army and Navy, and other agencies or measures necessary for the National Defense.
4. To expose and combat the political and economic fallacies of socialism and communism.
5. To resist efforts of unassimilated or hyphenated groups to use the Government of the United States for the furtherance of the policies of foreign governments, states, peoples or organizations.
6. To advocate restriction upon immigration into the United States; registration of aliens; deportation of undesirables, and other laws or policies tending to establish racial and political solidarity in the United States.
7. To preserve and maintain the Constitution of the United States, and to oppose amendment thereof by other than constitutional means.

8. IN GENERAL, to promote patriotism; to encourage historical, economic and social research into the origin and development of American institutions; to arouse among our youth a sense of civic and national responsibility, and to disseminate accurate information of an educational character upon all these matters of concern to the nation.

The work of the Coalition has consisted of a careful investigation and examination of all important legislation pending before Congress, which the Coalition believes to be of interest to the constituent societies. This legislation has been in the fields of immigration restriction, military and naval appropriations, communist activity, pacifist propaganda and allied matters. The Coalition has sought to oppose legislation which it believed was against the best interests of the country, and to uphold legislation which was designed to further its security and progress. This work has entailed considerable effort towards educating and influencing public opinion.

During the past years, many specific immigration and deportation measures have been passed or defeated by Congress through the public interest aroused by the Coalition. One outstanding proposal of this character was defeated through its sole effort. In 1932, the Coalition rallied a wide interest in opposition to the so-called Griffin Bill which sought to grant citizenship to pacifist aliens who refused to take the oath to bear arms in defense of this country in exchange for the grant of naturalization. This mobilization of patriotic opposition resulted in complete rout of the proposed legislation.

Another successful effort was made in 1934 when adherence of the United States to the World Court Protocol was being urged. The American Coalition was the only organization which felt it worthwhile to undertake the fight against this proposal. Having commenced the struggle a mobilization of public indignation resulted in its defeat.

The Coalition made the only organized effort to defeat the Norris Amendment to the Constitution in February, 1938. This measure would have changed the Constitution of the United States to make easier its amendment. The

proposition was fundamental and threatened to promote revolutionary changes in the structure of our Government without the delay essential for mature consideration by all the people.

After the testimony of the witnesses from the Coalition was taken, the Judiciary Committee of the Senate rejected the amendment. A very large audience mobilized through the efforts of the Coalition proved the public interest. It is safe to say nothing would have been known of the hearing if the Coalition had not notified its friends.

The work of the Coalition on the Supreme Court Packing Plan, as well as on the first Reorganization Bill, was of far-reaching influence, although the Coalition does not pretend to take full credit as it may properly do in certain other instances.

These two issues came to a head at a time when the public had become more conscious of what was happening to our beloved country, and many committees were organized throughout the nation for the specific purpose of assisting in defeating these two measures.

The Coalition, always opposed to aggressive war, has taken part in all the battles for adequate national defense, fighting the pacifist and radical forces consistently, and with ever-increasing necessity.

The Coalition has urged the adoption of legislation which would make it a crime to advocate overthrow of the Government by force and violence. So far this effort has failed. On the other hand, the Coalition's efforts in behalf of such measures probably aided in killing consideration of a bill which would have greatly weakened existing statutes covering the circulation of seditious material through the mails.

The Coalition has taken an active part in preventing the enactment of legislation to condone illegal entry of aliens and to nullify the Act which provides the machinery for excluding and expelling aliens who are members of anarchistic and similar classes.

In general, the function of the Coalition has been and is that of a watch dog against pernicious legislation. The Coalition watches all bills which concern the safety of Constitutional Government and basic American institu-

tions. It notifies when the occasion warrants it, patriotic organizations and citizens when important hearings are scheduled.

The American Coalition maintains an office in Washington as its headquarters. In charge of the office is Mrs. William Sherman Walker, the Executive Secretary of the Coalition, with a staff of three subordinates. Through this office many hundred thousand copies of literature have been, and are being, distributed. A general information service on legislative matters is maintained for the information of correspondents of the Coalition, and when resources permit, meetings are organized for the promotion of the program to which the organization is committed.

The Coalition now consists of 115 cooperating patriotic, civic, and fraternal organizations. The President, and one authorized representative from each organization, form the Board of Directors of the Coalition. The President and the Executive Committee, or under certain conditions, the directors have authority to call and organize meetings of the Coalition, to appoint committees, and to perform whatever duties may be necessary in carrying out its objectives and purposes; and it is expressly provided in the Constitution, under which the Coalition operates, that representation in the Coalition by any Society "shall involve no infringement of the independence, individuality, control, and activities, of such Society."

The object in enlisting the cooperation of this large number of organizations under the Coalition is to more effectively accomplish the patriotic work provided for in the Constitutions of each of these independent organizations. Instead of 115 separate committees representing each individual organization working independently of each other, the Coalition furnishes a clearing house through which the representatives of these patriotic, civic, and fraternal societies, with their vast membership, can concentrate their activities in a single combined effort to uphold and defend our liberties as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and our system of Government as defined in the Constitution of the United States.

It is not intended, or even expected, that any society,

because of its cooperation with the Coalition, shall relax in any branch of its individual patriotic work or special interests. The cooperative connection of any organization in the work of the Coalition in no way interferes with or infringes upon its absolute and complete independence.

It will be found, from a review of the work accomplished through the Coalition during its existence, that the plan has proved most beneficial in carrying forward and accomplishing the objects and purposes of the cooperating organizations. The work accomplished by the Committees of the Coalition has been most effective, and has supplemented to a large extent the activities of committees of the constituent organizations. On occasion, it relieves these committees of much correspondence or the trouble and expense of traveling long distances to appear before the Committees of Congress in approval or disapproval of legislation, when this work can be effectively accomplished through the combined efforts of the representatives of the cooperating organizations in the Coalition in Washington.

In great emergencies, the Coalition, of course, calls for a united effort by all of the constituent bodies and welcomes the cooperative appeal on Capitol Hill of the representatives of every agency in or out of the Coalition in behalf of or in opposition to measures which gravely concern the preservation of American institutions in the United States.