

Philadelphia Police Arrest Two Socialists In 'Subversive' Hunt

PHILADELPHIA — On Wednesday, July 26th. Officer Hamzik was driving to work along North Broad Street in Philadelphia, when his car was overtaken by a battered Plymouth carrying a large red sticker urging "VOTE SOCIALIST," and a rear seat crammed with leaflets, literature and a mimeograph machine.

The car bore New York plates and carried Niilo Koponen, S.P. state organizer and Joe Swartz, executive secretary of Local Philadelphia.

Hamzik ordered them to stop. He found 2000 leaflets advertising a meeting in Allentown to be addressed by Norman Thomas.

The Socialists were taken to the nearest precinct house, while a more thorough search of the car and its contents was made. They were not allowed to contact an attorney, and a false charge (passing a red light) was placed against them.

They were later released.

This incident is just one in a wave of hysteria that is being swelled by extremists of various kinds. The Philadelphia police have been arresting everyone found circulating leaflets, peace petitions, or found "carrying subversive literature."

The arrest of individuals found carrying the Stockholm Peace Petition and the arrest of two Communists under the circumstances identical to the arrests of Koponen and Swartz was headlined and photographs carried in every Philadelphia paper.

The fact that a similar fate befell anti-Communist individuals remains unknown. Not a single Philadelphia paper mentioned it.

In Pennsylvania the Socialists are contesting the Governorship for the first time since 1938. They have a full slate in the field and are busily organizing branches in areas where no activity has taken place for more than a dozen years.