

PATRICIA COATSWORTH DEFENSE COMMITTEE
Joan Wallach, Chairman
1218 St. James Court
Madison, Wisconsin

September 29, 1964

Dear Friend,

Mrs. Patricia Sopiak Coatsworth has been indicted for conspiracy to violate the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1952 (Title 8, Section 1185 (b) of the U.S. Code). She has not been indicted for breaking that law, but for conspiring to break it. Criminal conspiracy is a crime for which the maximum penalty is five years in prison and ten thousand dollars fine. Her indictment, filed by a Federal Grand Jury in the Eastern District of New York on September 22, 1964, cites a talk given by Mrs. Coatsworth before a Unitarian Church gathering in Detroit last Fall. Mrs. Coatsworth gave talks before university, church and civic groups in the mid-west after returning from a two month trip to Cuba in the Summer of 1963. At each of these gatherings Mrs. Coatsworth publicly stated that a second group of American students would go to Cuba in the Summer of 1964 and that she was helping to organize it as a member of the Student Committee for Travel to Cuba.

Mrs. Coatsworth, a native of the Detroit area, attended the University of Michigan where she was a major in Social Studies. She plans to enroll at the University of Wisconsin in January. Mrs. Coatsworth went to Cuba in the Summer of 1963 in order to see and evaluate Cuba for herself and to contest the travel ban. She believes the ban is a "cultural barrier" and an "infringement of civil liberties."

The point at issue in this case is whether or not the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1952 (better known as the McCarron-Walter Act) makes it a crime for United States citizens to travel to Cuba without special permission, then Mrs. Coatsworth may be guilty of "conspiring" to break the law by helping to organize the trip made by 84 American students to Cuba last summer.

The McCarron-Walter Act specifies in Section 1185 that United States citizens in time of war or national emergency may neither leave nor enter the country unless they bear valid passports. And that's all it says. All of the students who made the trip to Cuba which Mrs. Coatsworth helped to organize carried ordinary valid United States passports. They did not have the State Department's special permission to go, but the law does not require it.

Mrs. Coatsworth will be arraigned in the Federal District Court of Eastern New York (Brooklyn) on October 1, 1964. No date has yet been set for her trial. Mrs. Coatsworth's case and that of her eight co-defendants involves prolonged litigation. This is a very costly process.

The Patricia Coatsworth Defense Committee believes that the indictment of Mrs. Coatsworth is a violation of civil liberties. The committee has been formed to raise money to help pay for Mrs. Coatsworth's legal defense. The principle at issue in this case involves the right of all Americans.

Your help is needed:

- (1) Send contributions to the defense fund. Make checks payable to the Patricia Coatsworth Defense Committee.
- (2) Support and endorse the work of the Defense Committee.

Sincerely,

Joan Wallach, chairman

I am willing to allow the committee to use my name in support of its effort to raise money for the legal defense of Mrs. Patricia Coatsworth.

Name _____ Address _____

Occupation _____