For ten days and nights the Citizen’s Protective Emergency Committee of some sixty business and professional leaders, have been in almost continuous session, striving and working to avert what we regard as an impending crisis in our city.

Industry after industry has been before us with stories of the pathetic situation of their employees content, and their desire to be unmolested – even petitioning their employers to protect them and their families from violence.

We are confronted with mobs roaming our streets, ravaging property, and threatening the lives of working people.

There is no quarrel between employee and employer. “Forceouts” by intimidation is not an honest effort in the interest of any man or woman who works.

No organization founded upon brutal force is of value to any man. We do not contend against the free right to affiliate with any organization; but we do contend that every worker has the right to not affiliate with an organization. Our contention is for the free, unmolested right to work – the inalienable right of everyone. It is their birthright! God spare the day this right is denied in our fair city!

We have only praise for the fine courageous police who, we believe, will enforce any law they are told to enforce. We contend such orders have not been given.

Group after group have appealed to the City Manager in vain. The representatives of the hotels have been before us many times begging us to help them get police protection. It is common knowledge that food and laundry was shut off from the hotels; their property damaged; delivery trucks threatened away, and yet we understand no orders were given to prevent violence until after violence had occurred.

Group after group have begged the City Manager to stop these mobs and the beating up of law-abiding peaceful workmen building homes in our city. He has known these mobs are attacking little groups of men – or even a lone, defenseless laborer, and has repeatedly refused to permit the police to turn a hand until destruction and personal violence had already taken place.

He knows full well this is idle talk and beating about the bush thus playing into the hands of the lawless element. No worker or store or even your very home is immune if this lawlessness is permitted to run riot.

All we demand is law and order and the free right to work. No citizen can disagree with the fairness of the questions presented to the City Manager, the head of our
Police Department. All of these matters were urged upon him by our committee of sixty men with no assurance on his part that he would enforce the law to provide the protection the situation demands.

No law is more specific than the law prohibiting intimidation and threats of violence. Yet can you name a single instance of arrest? Or, even a word from our City Manager demanding such law violation cease. You have even read in the papers that men arrested in the act of destroying property and beating innocent men, were promptly released.

This lawlessness reaches every man, woman and child in our city. Every laborer, every craftsman, every clerk – everyone who toils, may be a victim tomorrow. It may be your child or mine. Will Kansas City rise up and demand our rights under the laws of a civilized community?

This voluntary meeting here today is an answer for all our people, even including the great mass of legitimate union labor who, I honestly believe, strongly condemn the barbarous and brutal attacks on the fair name of labor in this town, which labor has done so much to make our city great, and of which we are all so proud.

Shall we sit supinely still and let an avalanche of disorder rule this town? Or, shall we demand our plain, simple, undeniable right as citizens, to live in peace, and to build a greater and greater city?

Personally, I am willing to fight to the last ditch with every dollar I have, to keep my beloved town free of destruction, property depredation; personal violence; intimidation and threats of violence.

The J.C. Nichols Company Records (KC106) – Speech JCN047

Arguably Jesse Clyde Nichols (1880-1950) was the single most influential individual to the development of metropolitan Kansas City. Moreover his work, ideas, and philosophy of city planning and development had far-reaching impact nationally – so much so that the Urban Land Institute has established the J.C. Nichols Prize for Visionary Urban Development to recognize a person or a person representing an institution whose career demonstrates a commitment to the highest standards of responsible development.

Nichols’ objective was to “develop whole residential neighborhoods that would attract an element of people who desired a better way of life, a nicer place to live and would be willing to work in order to keep it better.” The Company under Nichols and his son, Miller Nichols (1911- ), undertook such ventures as rental housing, industrial parks, hotels, and shopping centers. Perhaps the most widely recognized Nichols Company developments are the Country Club District and the Country Club Plaza Shopping Center, reportedly the first shopping area in the United States planned to serve those arriving by automobile rather than trolley car.

The J.C. Nichols Company Records (KC106) contains both personal and business files concerning J.C. Nichols' private and business life. Included are personal correspondence, family related material, and speeches and articles written by him. Business and financial files pertain to actions of the Company, including information about different developments and the securing of art objects; and printed materials produced by and about the Company.