

# Grand Jury Probes Fifth Column Activity In Los Angeles Area

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## Ex-Communist Tells of Getting 3,000 in Hollywood Into Anti-Nazi League

By the Associated Press.

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 7.—The county grand jury dug into evidence concerning fifth column activity in Southern California today as, specifically, it sought to determine the circumstances surrounding a 1935 water front slaying.

With District Attorney Buron Fitts predicting that evidence would show "boring from within" by members of the Communist party, one of the first witnesses summoned was John Leech, former Los Angeles organizer for the Communist party and more recently a witness before the Dies Committee on Un-American Activities.

The prosecution said Mr. Leech told the grand jury that Communists organized the Hollywood anti-Nazi League as a rich source of funds from motion picture figures. It was announced also that among 45 witnesses summoned are Film Comedian Lionel Stander and Director Herbert Biberman, husband of Actress Gale Sondergaard.

The district attorney's office said Mr. Leech told the grand jury that "because of Hitler's anti-Semitic program, the Communist party conceived the idea of playing on the fears of the Jewish people and getting them into the party." He said membership of the Anti-Nazi League grew to 3,000 in Hollywood, and at the time of the Hitler-Stalin pact had its name changed to the Hollywood League for Democratic Action.

Mr. Leech was quoted as saying that Communist case workers in the California Relief Administration used relief funds for recruiting party members, and that Communist Leader Earl Browder had instructed him to arrange for infiltration of party members into the "Epic movement, with the backing of which Upton Sinclair won the 1934 Democratic nomination for Governor, in the hope of developing a farmer-labor party."

The prosecution said another witness was Clyde Champion, former Communist, who said that Brittain Webster was among a group of men brought to his home shortly after John Riley, a member of the A. F. L. Sailors' Union, was fatally beaten five years ago.

Mr. Webster, charged with Mr. Riley's murder, has filed suit for \$65,500 damages against several district attorney's deputies, charging false imprisonment.