

Film Figures Charge *news 8/6/40* Politics in Red Probe

By United Press

HOLLYWOOD, Aug. 6—Comedian Lionel Stander and Director Herbert Biberman today said they are willing to answer any questions in connection with an investigation of alleged Communism in the movie industry, but they accused Dist. Atty. Buron Fitts of using the inquiry to further his political ambitions.

Subpenas were issued yesterday for Mr. Stander, Mr. Biberman, his wife, Actress Gale Sondergaard, Writer Samuel Ornitz and his wife, and Playwright Clifford Oets. It was said subpenas have been issued for 50 others, including public officials, Communist Party members, political figures and writers.

CHARGES RED SMEAR

Mr. Stander and Mr. Biberman said they have not been served and summonses would not be necessary because they would go to Mr. Fitts' office any time he asked them.

"I understand the F. B. I. has refused to co-operate with Buron Fitts' latest attempt to smear Hollywood luminaries with a red brush to further his own selfish political ends," said Mr. Stander, the husky-voiced comedian. "If Mr. Fitts wants me to I will go down to his office and he can hand me all the subpenas he wants to."

OPPOSED FITTS' CAMPAIGN

Mr. Biberman said he has been "publicly active in opposing Fitts' re-election. I denounced him on the steps of the City Hall before 20,000 people."

Summonses for the movie figures to appear tomorrow before the grand jury were issued shortly after Mr. Fitts announced an investigation into the slaying of an American Federation of Labor official at San Pedro five years ago. Mr. Fitts charged Communists plotted the slaying of John Riley because he threatened to expose their attempts to take over water front labor.

SUSPECT HELD

Brittain Webster, a longshoreman, was held without ball in connection with the Riley slaying. He was arraigned in Beverly Hills Justice Court after having been secretly detained for 27 hours.

Deputy Dist. Atty. Russell E. Parsons said the investigation of the union official touched off the grand jury inquiry into Communism in Southern California. He said a subpena has been issued for John Leech, former executive secretary of the Los Angeles County Communist Party.



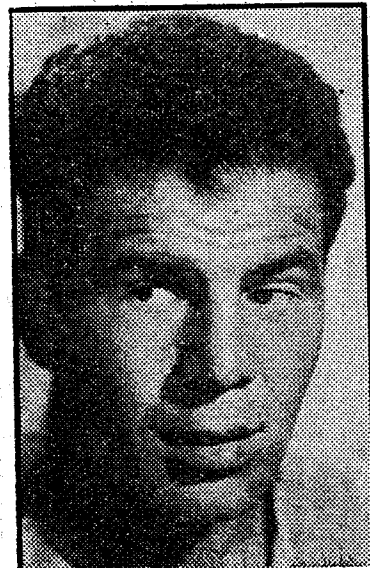
MISS SONDERGAARD



MR. OETS



MR. FITTS



MR. STANDER