

# BRIDGES' DEFENSE SMASHES THROUGH GOVERNMENT CASE

*Pilot 7/24/39*  
SAN FRANCISCO—A spy and agent provocateur, an ex-Communist with a police record, an expelled union official, and a lawyer disbarred in New York state—these were the unsavoury witnesses produced by the government against Harry Bridges as his deportation hearings rolled into the second week.

Beyond the word of these characters not a scrap of substantial evidence has been produced to prove that the West Coast labor leader is or ever was a member of the Communist Party and has advocated overthrow of the government by violence, as the prosecution charges.

Last week Bridges took the stand for half a minute to answer two questions: "Are you an alien?" and "Are you now a member of or affiliated to the Communist Party, or have you ever been so at any time?"

To the first question Bridges answered, "I am," and to the second, "No."

### Spy Is First Witness

Opening gun for the government was Major Lawrence A. Milner, secret operative for the Oregon National Guard, who wound up his testimony under a cloud of perjury and faced possible prosecution.

Next came John L. Leach who underwent a gruelling cross-examination after his truthfulness was made questionable by sensational disclosures of a \$10,000 bribe offer if he would testify Bridges was a Communist.

This week the government put John Leppold on the witness stand.

Leppold said that he had been expelled from the Marine Cooks & Stewards of the Pacific Coast because he was "anti-Communist."

As an "anti-Communist" Leppold was expelled by trial committees on nine counts, including such charges as knocking off Stewards and putting Stewardesses and himself on the job to avoid payment of overtime by the Dollar Steamship Company.

Leppold testified that he didn't know whether or not Bridges was a Communist. He was so bad as a witness the trial had to be stopped for half a day.

### Disbarred Lawyer Next

This phoney was followed by Aaron Sapiro, a lawyer who was disbarred in New York in 1937 after he was acquitted of a charge of tampering with the jury in a mail fraud case. Sapiro went to California where he put his talents at the disposal of Harry Lundberg and Edward Vandellour, State head of the AFL.

The SUP booted him out and

*over*