

Police Records Show Up Bridges Case Witnesses

SAN FRANCISCO—With the prosecution already half finished in the Harry Bridges deportation case, it has not as yet been able to produce a witness who could get through cross-examination with his credibility unharmed.

Taking the witnesses in the order of their appearance, the score goes like this:

1. Major Lawrence A. Milner, secret agent for the Oregon National Guard: Admitted perjury in an earlier case; saved himself from similar admissions in the Bridges case only by persistent inability to understand questions put by defense attorneys and the trial examiner; now faces possible prosecution for contempt by the solicitor of the Department of Labor on a reference from the trial examiner, Dean James Landis.

A Convicted Forger

2. John L. Leech, expelled Communist, refused to admit authenticity of signature on affidavit stating he had been offered up to \$10,000 for testimony smearing Bridges two years ago; he and wife and seven children living in comparative luxury past two years; admitted previous conviction for cashing forged money order.

3. Leech's wife, Mary, briefly gave testimony similar to her husband's.

4. John Layton Leppold, twice expelled from a local maritime union for anti-union activity; proudly claimed the title of "No. 1 red-baiter of the waterfront"; could not say Bridges was a Communist, except that he had once opposed a motion to picket the Soviet consulate.

A Racketeering Lawyer

5. Aaron Sapiro, one-time labor attorney; indicted with Al Capone in Chicago for racketeering; involved in the formation of mysterious "associations" in eastern cities; disbarred in Federal court in New York state for jury tampering; admitted bitter personal enmity against Bridges.

6. Photostatic copy of an asserted membership book in the Communist Party, made out to "Harry Dorgan." This book, heralded for years as proof Bridges is a Communist, was introduced for identification only, the prosecutor stating he would not use it as evidence since he had been unable to prove its authenticity.

The defense attorneys say that if this is the best the prosecution

can do, there will be plenty of fireworks when the defense gets its innings and completes exposure of the stories the prosecution witnesses are telling. Several shady characters operating in the background of the case are to be dragged to light to prove the defense contention that the case is a frame-up conceived by employer interests and connived at by certain police and Federal officials.

Each day the defense attorneys take to the hearings five big suitcases filled with card files. No sooner is a name or an incident mentioned than they turn to their files. The records of meetings, trips, events and persons for years back is at their fingertips. Using these files, they ask the questions to expose the calibre of the witnesses testifying against Bridges.