

Grand Jury Use Called Intimidation

By Tom Hall

An attack on the Nixon Administration for allegedly using federal grand juries to intimidate people actively opposed to its foreign and domestic policies was made today.

The charge was made by the National Lawyers Guild Grand Jury Defense Office, formed here last June.

The charge came as the first of 11 persons subpoenaed were scheduled to start appearances before the Grand Jury here.

Government officials have refused to disclose the subject of the investigation to witnesses, their attorneys and the press.

One witness, David Grabill of Venice, scheduled to appear tomorrow, was present at the conference but refused to give either his age or occupation.

Asked if he was a member of the Weatherman, a splinter group of the Students for a Democratic Society, he declined comment.

Meanwhile, attorney Paul Halvonik, director of the National ACLU grand jury program, was awaiting a hearing before Federal District Judge Robert Peckham.

He is seeking a one week delay in the proceedings because the 11 witnesses came from all over the country.

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He and other attorneys wish a chance to confer with them.

Unfairly Picked

Halvonik also said he is prepared to file a motion to quash the subpoenas on the grounds that the Federal Grand Jury is unfairly picked and discriminates against non-white and

Spanish surnamed persons, because they are not selected.

At the press conference, Barbara Hyland, a guild office legal worker, referred to other grand jury investigations which, she said, were aimed at preventing anti-war demonstrators from protesting.

A colleague, Marty Fessler, a law student, said the timing of the inquiry "is not accidental."

"It is one month before an election and in the midst of an intensified American bombing campaign in Indochina," he said. "Nor was the selection of San Francisco as the location accidental."

He noted that a large scale anti-war demonstration is planned here for Oct. 14.

Climate of Fear

"We believe," he said, "the purpose of these inquiries is to suppress dissent and create a climate of fear that discourages people from talking to each other, thinking with each other and trusting each other."

Halvonik's papers revealed that the subpoenaed witnesses are, in addition to Grabill, Mark Alter of Portland, Ore., Howard Berg of Minneapolis, Minn., Karen and Phillip Craven of San Juan, Puerto Rico, Robert L. Sussman of Redwing, Colo., Stuart V. Widgerson of Hackensack, N.J., and David Rosenberg, no home town given.