

BERKELEY ARTS GROUP QUIZZED ON RED TIE-UP

Paul Robeson Attended East Bay Meetings, Committee Told

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The State senate committee on Un-American Activities yesterday sought to spread on the official record the result of weeks of investigation calculated to expose major front organizations now actively operating in the San Francisco Bay area.

The five senator committee, opening a two-day session in Room 228 of the City Hall, moved right into the operations of the Arts, Sciences and Professions Council of Berkeley, one of five groups under investigation.

But Richard Combs, committee chief counsel had only nominal success with the first two of almost a score of witnesses scheduled to testify before the group.

FIRST WITNESS.

The first witness was Mrs. Alise Hamburg, a trim brunette with touches of gray in her hair, who reluctantly conceded that she was recording secretary for the organization.

A Berkeley housewife, and mother of three children, she married, sometimes with nervous

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 2)

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(Continued from Page One)

laughter, a seemingly endless stream of questions by Combs, all of them touching on her interest, if any, in Communist front activities.

Once, she testified, the Arts group held a meeting at her home at 582 San Luis Road, at which John Howard Lawson, one of the "Hollywood Ten" accused of Communist activity, was present.

OTHERS THERE.

Also present, she added "were a number of people we thought it would be nice to have there." That, she pointed out, was several years ago.

She was present, too, Mrs. Hamburg testified, when Paul Robeson, the singer, appeared at the home of Mrs. Helen Freenland Gibbs in Berkeley.

At one point, she interrupted the proceedings to ask Combs if she might read a prepared paper. Combs had no objection, and she began to read:

"The fact that the Burns Committee has called be before it is an indication of the mounting hysteria of our times. I am the mother of three children, I have been a good citizen. But now one must swear he is not a Communist. . . ."

MORE QUESTIONS.

She read on briefly. When she finished, Combs resumed his questioning, reading off a number of names previously identified before the committee as Communists, or members of Communist Front groups. A few, she said, she knew casually.

Once, after Combs had recalled a series of occasions at which varied types of meetings had been held over a period of years, and asked if she had been present, the witness exclaimed:

"My, you people have excellent records!"

Combs thanked Mrs. Hamburg with cool politeness, and went on

with more questions. After fifty minutes, the witness was excused. By her side throughout was Attorney Joseph Landissman of Oakland.

"We are seeking to show," Combs explained during a recess, "that the East Bay Arts Group supported Communist Front activities."

Chairman Hugh Burns had to warn the next witness, Torben Deirup of 1629 Joseph Street, Berkeley, that "this committee under State law has the power to cite you for contempt—and each refusal constitutes a separate count."

REFUSES.

That was after Deirup, a tanned young man in a blue sports blazer, monotonously refused, on the advice of Attorney Richard Gladstein, to answer questions "on the grounds I may incriminate myself."

Deirup answered only four of dozens of questions—his name, address, status as a television repairman, and the fact he owns a car. To all else, including the question, "Were you ever a member of the Communist Party?" he refused to answer.

Other groups whose activities will be probed include the Committee for Democratic Far Eastern Policy; American Russian Institute, 101 Post Street; California Labor School, 321 Divisadero Street; and East Bay Civil Rights Congress, Oakland.

The committee includes Senators Hugh Burns, Nelson Delworth, Clyde Watson, Nathan Coombs and Earl Desmond.

Forty pickets, bearing anti-Communist signs, paraded briefly during the morning session.



RED HEARING—Mrs. Alise Hamburg, left, is shown being questioned by Richard Combs, right, counsel for the State Senate Un-American Activities Committee, at hearings here yester-

day. In the center is Leona Hansen, committee secretary. Mrs. Hamburg told the committee of several meetings of allegedly Red front organizations in Berkeley.

—San Francisco Examiner Photo.

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