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## **State Archives Releases ‘California Witch Hunt’ a new 3-Part Digital Exhibit focuses on the CA Un-American Activities Committee**

**SACRAMENTO** - The California State Archives has released a new three-part digital exhibit that focuses on Jack Tenney, the first chairman of the California Un-American Activities Committee (CUAC). In 1941, Tenney sought and received authorization from the California legislature to chair the committee, which would go on to investigate thousands of Californians he believed to be subversive. Tenney served as chairman of the committee from 1941 to 1949. Tenney used staff, investigators, attaches, and an extensive network of individuals and organizations to build a massive file of index cards tracking the activities and questioning the loyalty of some of America's most famous directors, musicians, architects, labor leaders and actors of the day, including:

- Lauren Bacall
- Humphrey Bogart
- Charlie Chaplin
- Ronald Reagan
- John Steinbeck
- Orson Welles

[‘California Witch Hunt’](#) is the State Archives’ most ambitious digital exhibit yet. The three-part exhibit provides a narrative of Tenney’s rise and fall in state government. The exhibit includes scores of photographs, letters, reports and formerly secret documents that are now available through the State Archives. The State Archives collaborated with the Los Angeles Public Library and other sources to provide a more complete picture of the committee's activities. This State Archives exhibit is the latest to be hosted online in partnership with Google Arts and Culture.

[‘California Witch Hunt’ Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), [Part 3](#)

“While the California Un-American Activities Committee conducted scores of public hearings in the 1940's, the public has waited a long time to gain access to the committee documents that detail the inner workings of the committee,” said Secretary of State Alex Padilla. “The committee operated in the shadows for years, it spent hundreds of thousands of dollars, and it ruined the careers and lives of many California citizens—yet no one targeted by the committee was ever convicted of subversion,” Padilla added.

“California Witch Hunt’ is a stark reminder of what happens when power goes unchecked. I imagine most Californians are largely unaware of the California Un-American Activities Committee. I am tremendously proud of Former Chief Deputy Bill Mabie and the State Archives for their efforts in assembling this exhibit which provides greater transparency to a sordid period of California history,” Padilla said.

Former Chief Deputy Secretary of State Bill Mabie conducted the research necessary—combing through formerly disparate archival records—to bring the ‘California Witch Hunt’ exhibit to life.

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