

'Mental Test' for Jane Newton Another Sign of Growing Trend Toward Fascism in U. S.

By CYRIL BRIGGS

The order issued by a Chicago court for a mental examination of the white wife of a Negro worker is a typical expression of the growing fascist tendencies of the American ruling class and its agents and hangers-on. One has only to remember that in Hitler Germany, the Nazi hangmen are today advocating penalties up to execution for so-called "Aryans" who marry Jews, to realize the sinister import of the action of the Chicago court.

The court's action dramatically raises three issues: (1) The question of who are the enemies and oppressors of the Negro people, (2) of the fate of the Negro people under a fascist dictatorship in this country, and (3) of the necessity for the most determined, relentless and united front struggle by Negro and white workers and the masses of the Negro people against fascism.

Enemies of Negro People

Who are the enemies and oppressors of the Negro masses?

This question is daily answered in the experiences of Negro workers with the jim-crow relief bureaus and the departments of city and national governments, in the refusal of state and federal governments to safeguard the constitutional rights of the Negro peoples and to punish the lynchers of Negroes, in the established policy of Big Business of refusing employment to Negroes as clerks, etc., or in any other capacity than porters, messenger boys, scrub women, etc.

It was dramatically answered in the monstrous frame-up of the innocent Scottsboro boys and in the

continued attempts of the Alabama rulers and their courts to legally murder these boys despite overwhelming proof of their innocence.

However, the venomous hatred of the Negro people by the ruling class, its use of its courts and other instruments to maintain the oppression of the Negro people, is even more completely bared in the recent developments in Chicago around the attempt to evict Herbert Newton, Negro Communist leader, from his home at 615 Oakwood Boulevard.

Evicted Because Negro

On the landlord's complaint that Newton was a Negro, Judge Green of the Municipal Court of Chicago, issued an order for the eviction of Newton and his family, and the white woman, Harriet Johnson, with whom they shared the apartment. When the white tenants of the building rallied to Newton's defense and declared a rent strike against the chauvinist landlord, the court ordered the arrest of the leaders of the rent strike.

When the furniture of the Newtons, thrown on the streets by the bailiff and police, was returned to the apartment by white and Negro workers of the neighborhood, the Chicago "Red Squad" was sent into action. It raided Newton's home, and arrested Jane Newton, her baby, and two young white workers found in the apartment.

And now the court and the entire Chicago capitalist press, with the national Hearst newspaper chain leading the pack, have launched a

frame-up campaign against Jane Newton in an attempt to have her legally adjudged insane. She married a Negro, therefore she must be out of her mind—this is the fascist, anti-working class reasoning of the boss courts and other institutions of jim-crow capitalism.

Hearst's Chicago American, leader of the fascist attack on the Chicago Workers School, in a front page story on December 15, declared that "Jane Emery Newton was Chicago's problem today."

What Kind of Problem?

Why is Jane Newton a problem for Chicago's ruling class? The Hearst press answers that her quest for a fuller life has "brought her at 26 to poverty, to Communism, to estrangement from her family, to miscegenation in a third marriage, and to the threshold of jail." (Emphasis mine.—C. B.)

In other words Jane Newton has earned the hatred of the capitalist class and is at the threshold of jail because she dared to espouse the cause of the working class, and further defied the race hatred edicts of the ruling class by marrying a Negro worker!

Can there be any doubt, in the light of these developments, in the light of the experience of other minority groups with fascist dictatorships, that the fate of the Negro masses under a fascist dictatorship in this country would be a tremendous increase in persecution, fiercer national oppression and bloody pogroms that would make their conditions still more horrible?

Fascism is the dictatorship of the most reactionary imperialist elements of capitalism, seeking a way out of the capitalist crisis at the expense and misery of the toilers. Fascism menaces the whole toiling population, and particularly the Negro and Jewish people. To gain a foothold and succeed for a time Fascism must fan all the chauvinist hatreds of the most backward sections of the white population. This is the purpose of the notorious decision by the Chicago court against Herbert Newton and his wife. This is the purpose of the feverish anti-Negro and anti-labor activities of the White Legion and Ku Klux Klan bands in the South which, because of the local strength of the white superiority theories of the ruling class, is a fertile breeding place for Fascism.

It is because the Negro people stand to be crushed by Fascism that they must see the situation clearly, and realize who are their enemies and who are their friends and natural allies in the fight for Negro liberation and against Fascism and imperialist war.

Fascism can be defeated only by the broadest united front struggle of the workers, Negro and white, and all anti-fascists, fighting under the correct leadership of the vanguard of the working-class, the Communist Party. The Communists are the best fighters for Negro liberation, for the day to day demands of the masses, and against Fascism because they are the most relentless enemies of capitalism.