

To Free Angelo Herndon

TWO MAJOR defense cases, involving nearly every issue confronting the working-class movement today in their ramifications, are being taken to the United States Supreme Court this fall by the International Labor Defense.

The Scottsboro case will go there a second time, unless the Alabama State Supreme Court grants a re-hearing in October—which is unlikely unless the enormous pressure is brought upon it.

The conviction of Angelo Herndon, 20-year-old Negro organizer of white and Negro unemployed in Atlanta, having been confirmed by the Georgia State Supreme Court, will also be taken to the “court of last illusions.”

Meanwhile, State Solicitor John A. Hudson, former deacon, and still a pillar of the Methodist Church in Atlanta, has announced his intention of sending Herndon to begin serving his 18-20 year sentence on the Georgia chain-gang even pending the appeal. Under Georgia law, which is concerned primarily in feeding its convict-labor system with vic-

tims, and with the suppression of the militant labor movement, there is no legal barrier to this act of barbarism.

A stay of execution has been granted until August 3. Bail has been set at the huge sum of \$15,000 in cash or Liberty Bonds.

On top of this, the expenses of the Scottsboro and Herndon appeals alone will amount to another \$15,000.

NEW MASSES readers are familiar with the horrors of the Georgia chain-gang, as described by John L. Spivak and other writers. What special tortures and death-traps are in preparation in these camps for a Negro who is also a militant working-class leader who has defied the officials of the state, can perhaps be better imagined than described.

In the case of Herndon also, not only the struggle for national liberation of the Negro people, all the issues involved in Scottsboro, but the fight for existence of trade-unions and of all workers organizations are directly at stake.

The drive against the revolutionary movement in Atlanta, inaugurated by

Hudson following the Georgia Supreme Court decision in the Herndon case, his announcement that he will “burn Communism out of Georgia,” and demand the death penalty for every “agitator” every organizer, every advocate of unity between Negro and white, on this same basis, show the clear connection between the fight against growing Fascism and the fight to free Herndon.

The most important thing at the present moment is to secure the release of Herndon on bail, and the I. L. D. has opened a drive for this purpose. Certificates which guarantee the return of these loans as soon as the bail is released are being issued by the I. L. D.

THE NEW MASSES endorses this drive whole-heartedly, and urges all its readers to dig into whatever reserves of cash and Liberty Bonds the depression has left them, and put them into the Herndon bail fund. They should be sent to the national office of the I. L. D., Room 430, 80 East 11th Street, New York City, which will send out the certificates to all who loan these sums.