

Jersey City's 'Red Plot' dw Collapses 7/9/40

Stevens, Miss Freeman Freed After Frantic Frame-up Attempt

(Special to the Daily Worker)

JERSEY CITY, July 8. — Another gigantic "red plot" went up in smoke today when Rand Stevens and Ruth Freeman, held in jail eight days on \$10,000 bail each, were released with suspended sentences.

The two were arrested early on the morning of July 1 while driving through here on their way back to New York from a fishing trip. It is when they stopped to inquire directions that three policemen came upon them with questions and arrested them under the "disorderly persons" law of this state.

On the basis of what was found in the car, police released wild stories for newspaper consumption of "fifth column" suspicion and a "Communist plot." The FBI and New York City police also rushed into the case with extensive "investigation."

The "clue" that brought the sweeping inquiry was a scrap book found in the car in which newspaper and magazine clippings of various industrial establishments and dams were pasted; a box of 23 caliber bullets; fishing tackle, a spaniel dog, a rag and some lists with addresses of people.

BAIL KEPT HIGH

Judge Botti demonstratively placed each on \$10,000 bail. When Rand asked him why the bail is so high on a disorderly persons charge, the judge sneeringly ad-

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vised him to appeal to a higher court if he doesn't like it.

Efforts by attorneys Solomon Golat of Newark and Thomas Tumulty, of this city, to get bail lowered, were unsuccessful and the two spent in prison the entire week and the holiday which commemorated the proclamation of this country as a free and democratic nation.

At yesterday's trial before Judge Botti, the FBI and New York police were conveniently absent, while the Jersey City police brought its star legal talent to defend arrest of the two.

That the "red plot" blew up like a bubble was already apparent on the day after the arrest when Director of Public Safety Daniel W. Casey admitted to reporters that "there is nothing to it."

It developed that the scrap book was compiled by a student in economic geography Mrs. Freeman taught some time ago, who was so proud of his product that he presented it to her.

The bullets, it was established, are effective only for squirrels, and

possibly rabbits.

A money bag with the number of a bank upon it had been lying in the car for months, used as a windshield wiper.

Police made no claim that the fishing tackle was a basis for their suspicion.

The spaniel got some attention in court yesterday when attorney Golat asked the arresting officer if the animal had "given a satisfactory account of its presence" and whether its license was investigated.

After some four hours of wrangling in the court Judge Botti ruled that the police had grounds to suspect that the two "failed to give a satisfactory account of themselves." Defense attorneys argued that some unlawful purpose against people must be proven if their account is deemed unsatisfactory. But attorneys for the other side claimed such ground was not necessary under that law.

The judge and the city's attorneys were pressed hard against the legal wall, but the formal sentence had to be imposed otherwise it would stay on the record that two persons, who are absolutely innocent of any unlawful act, were held in prison for eight days, placed on \$10,000 bail each and then acquitted.

The dog and other clues to the great "red plot" were returned to Stevens and Mrs. Freeman following the trial.