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GOVERNOR DORSEY SAYS CANNOT STOP LYNCHINGS

LYNCHING MUST CEASE!

(By Frank Harris in Pearson's Magazine)

There are times when one would write with blood instead of ink if that were possible; there are shames one cannot discuss, horrors one cannot describe; devil's work that for humanity's sake one must put an end to and then forget.

The other day I read of the lynching of a Negro by a Southern mob. He was bound to a stake; his eyes burned out with a red-hot poker; when the poor tortured creature screamed, some fiend thrust the poker into his mouth and the crowd went on outraging and torturing till death released their victim, and then came women and girl-children to look at the poor mangled, headless body.

A day or two later a man named Prager, supposed to be a German sympathizer, but who it now appears was strongly American in sympathy, was hunted down, caught in a cellar and hanged by a mob in Illinois. North and South men take the law into their own hands and glut their hate by murder, and the protest is sporadic, formal, feeble. Some Senator at Washington went so far as to say that though he didn't approve of lynching, yet the American people would not tolerate traitors in their midst. The poor gentleman seemed utterly unconscious of the fact that each lynching makes hundreds, perhaps thousands, of enemies to America and all that America represents in the world. And these enemies are good men; not bad, and therefore dangerous.

A month ago in Washington I met a Congressman in a hotel who defended lynching—torturing first and murder afterwards—so long as the victim had Negro blood in his veins. "I know the Negro," he said; "you don't; that's the difference between us."

I could not tell him what I thought of him, could not, would not tell him of the loathing I felt, the rage and hatred in me for such fiend's work, and for those who defended it.

There is no excuse for lynching; no palliation, no discussion possible. The worst crime ever committed by an individual is not so vile, cannot so shame and degrade and disgrace our humanity as that crowd-crime when the many murder and torture the one.

Every now and then there are occurrences that frighten the thinker; they are so symptomatic of dreadful, deep-seated mortal disease, that he shudders at the awful inevitable punishment. America will pay for her lynching sooner or later and the price exacted will be frightful.

Atlanta, Ga., May 29.—If any further argument were needed in favor of the adoption by Congress of Representative Lyer's bill to prevent lynching that very argument has been furnished by Governor Dorsey of Georgia, who in a letter to the Colored Welfare League of that State said the surest way to discourage lynching is to encourage the lawless elements of the Negro race that personal outrages and violence, especially against helpless women and children, will provoke prompt retaliation of community vengeance, which is difficult, if not impossible, to control.

The letter was in reply to a protest from the league against the recent lynching of four Negroes in South Georgia, in connection with the murder of a farmer and the wounding of his wife.

This is a conspicuous example of official avowal of incapacity of Bourbon chivalry to intervene even where the victim of the savagery of the mob happens to be a woman. It is an official admission that the Governor of a great state is powerless to enforce the law even when its machinery is entirely in Southern hands.

(From Pittsburgh Dispatch.) WAR AND LYNCHINGS

Changed opinion among Southern people on the lynching habit is the surest approach to an effective remedy for the national shame, and that attitude is hinted as a regional possibility in the startling demand of the Tennessee State Conference of Charities and Corrections for Federal interference. Resolutions adopted by the conference calling upon President Wilson for a proclamation declaring the lynching of Negroes by white mobs a crime against the Nation, and appealing to Congress for legislation empowering the Federal courts to indict and try lynchers, express a viewpoint that is novel in the South. If the conference succeeds in abolishing lynching on a plea of patriotism, because it is more influential with Southerners than the claims of ethics or everyday principles of morality, the country will applaud because the abolition of the evil, not the means of its banishment, is the prime consideration.

If the Tennessee Conference of Charities and Corrections can establish a new viewpoint for that and other Southern States, resting upon the offense against the Nation in deranging national unity and by inference giving comfort to the enemy in brutal evidence of non-solidarity, every champion of law and common justice will join in its call for Federal co-operation. It is one of the most hopeful utterances ever made against the lynching of Negroes by whites, because it speaks right out against a fixed habit of thought in the South which opposes the spirit of democracy that is urging the Nation to victory against the doctrine of brute force. It is cheering in its promise.

EDUCATION OF WHITES AS REMEDY FOR LYNCHING

To the Editor of The World:

Your editorial on "Courage and Energy—How Rewarded?" was splendid. Please keep up the good work by publishing every lynching on the front page of your paper.

But how on earth can we up North here help. Must we sit idle while these atrocities are being committed? If, because of States' rights the United States is not allowed to proceed against lynching by its legal department of Education plan a huge educational campaign in order to civilize the communities where such outrages occur? Americanization work is needed there just as truly as among our foreign-born population.

Something ought to be done to protect the colored women of America as well as the Belgian women. And I for one would be very glad to help as far as I can in any movement which looks toward the elimination of lynching from this Nation of ours.

EVA A. FRANK.

New York, May 21.