

State Mobs Get Attention

(From the Philadelphia Record)

The Sovereign State of Maryland has again kowtowed to a mob bent on lynch-law "vengeance."

A colored man accused of attacking the wife of a Kennedyville farmer was sought by a howling swarm of 800 citizens. Their purpose was simple. They didn't want to try the man. They wanted to hang him by the neck to a tree.

They didn't find him. Authorities hid him, and then permitted the mob to search the Chestertown jail. They told the mob that the man was in Wilmington.

The mob then went on to Talbot, Queen Anne and Cecil counties, and ransacked the county jails. State's Attorney Stephen R. Collins has "no intention" of prosecuting the mob leaders for storming the jails.

"Some of those men are among the most prominent residents of their counties," says he.

We condemn that mob outbreak—and know exactly what the reaction will be. Marylanders will write and recite the horrible details of the crime the man is accused of committing.

Those recitals are irrelevant. No crime is horrible enough to condone the greater savagery of waiving law, the earmark of our civilization.

States have honor, too, which may be ravaged.

Marylanders are in a state of flaming anger over several outrageous crimes. But Marylanders cannot suppress lawbreaking by breaking law themselves.