

The Judges Have Spoken

Whatever fear there may have been that the Eastern Shore mob hysteria was going to drag the Maryland Free State judiciary and the State itself into the category of barbarism will be allayed by the far reaching opinion handed down this week in the Euel Lee (heretofore called Yuel Lee) case.

While the appellate body did not see its way clear to act directly and take the case from the Eastern Shore, it told that section in unmistakable language that if the trial is held there the verdict will be reversed and a new trial granted. In other words, the bloodthirsty element on the Eastern Shore will not be allowed to run away with the law machinery of Maryland.

So far as the law machinery is concerned, this is reassuring and if Governor Ritchie and the state executive and law enforcing departments will act as courageously to let the Eastern Shore mobbists know that they cannot get away with the bold, barbarous and wanton lynching which took place down there recently, the Maryland Free State may yet redeem itself in the eyes of the nation and the world. But if there is any sidestepping of the issues and if the net result is not the actual punishment of at least some of the mob, there will be a bloody stain upon this state, and its officials will still be regarded as lacking in courage or efficiency.

At the present time there is some doubt about the earnestness with which the investigation into the lynching is being made, even by some of the warmest friends of Governor Ritchie. This doubt may be unwarranted, and the AFRO-AMERICAN hopes that it is unwarranted and that some of the guilty lynchers will be brought to justice. It hopes this, not in the interest solely of Matthew Williams whose life was snuffed out without even having the chance of a dog, but in the interest which every citizen should have in law and order in the state in which he lives.

And there is one thing which the readers of this paper should not forget, and that is the courage and efficiency with which Bernard Ades, a white attorney, has forced whatever decency has come out of this affair. But for him, in all probability Lee would have been either lynched or railroaded by the mob hysteria of the Eastern Shore. He has done more to protect the fair name of the Maryland Free State in this affair than any other one man.

While we are thinking on this matter it will not be out of place to begin to ponder what steps can be taken to improve the civic relations between the races and lessen the intense color prejudice behind all of this. This is a job for the leaders of both races. Perhaps Governor Ritchie's Interracial Commission can get busy, set up an office with a trained executive and help to create a better condition throughout the state.