

**The Rev. Dr. Smith Seems To Think
Mr. Mencken And Professor Mitchell
Are Evils Equal To A Brutal Murder
And A Bestial Lynching**

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Let me register my heartiest approval of the letter of Dr. Charles M. Elderdice, in *The Sun* of January 27, denouncing the recent unjust, unwarranted and arrogantly presumptuous misstatements of that self-appointed expert investigator of interracial conditions on the Eastern Shore, Dr. Broadus Mitchell, published in *The Sun* January 25 as a report from the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.

As one of the eight representatives of my denomination in the Federal Council, I desire to protest emphatically the action of this commission in the council, and my utter amazement that such a distinguished body of organized churchmen should incorporate into its findings the evident snap judgment of a lone man, who confesses that he spent less than a week on the Eastern Shore investigating the case, and then announces that this most regrettable affair is to be explained in that this section of our great State "is isolated geographically," and its inhabitants are the victims of "backward mental and spiritual development."

Inasmuch as *The Sun* has published about the last necessary word in depreciation of the lynching, it is unnecessary for me to write even "nine mild words to 'deplore'" it. Rather let us leave it to the high moral sense of *The Sun* and of H. L. Mencken to supply the needed denunciatory language. I would, however, suggest to Dr. Mitchell that he make another visit of at least five days to Salisbury for the purpose of comparing the mental and spiritual conditions of its inhabitants with that of the average citizen of our own Baltimore.

My acquaintance with and observations of the people of the Eastern Shore are not confined to a three-day visit, made like that of Dr. Mitchell to confirm an evidently biased and prejudiced judgment, but rather are the result of twenty-two years' residence on the Shore and nearly three years of close supervision of hundreds of churches of my denomination throughout the Eastern Shore. I unhesitatingly affirm that no section of the city of Baltimore, or of the entire State of Maryland, has a higher average of intellectual, moral and spiritual character in its inhabitants than is to be found in this section of our State.

The brutal murder of an upright citizen of Salisbury and the unfortunate lynching of the murderer are no more indicative of the character and mental and spiritual condition of the people of that town than are the high-priced innuendo of H. L. Mencken and the far-fetched demonstration of a self-inflated intelligentsia on the part of Dr. Mitchell an index to the character and intelligence of the people of Baltimore.

It is to be deeply regretted that the thousands of upright citizens of Salisbury are compelled to suffer the humiliation of two horrible crimes in their midst, but it is equally unfortunate that the citizens of Baltimore must endure the indignities brought upon them because two of its citizens, one of them a prominent journalist and the other a prominent educator, encouraged by *The Sun*, should see fit to accuse the churches and ministers of that town of criminal neglect in their failure to apply religion to life, and then place its entire citizenry into the category of mental and spiritual in-

feriority, merely because two atrocious crimes took place in their community.

LEONARD B. SMITH,

President, Maryland Annual Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church.

Baltimore, Jan. 28, 1932.

Dr. Israel On "Dr." Bruce

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: Prof. Broadus Mitchell, of Johns Hopkins University, is a Southern gentleman, a scholar and an economist. Dr. William Cabell Bruce is a Southern gentleman, a scholar and a politician, who, by his own confession, was defeated in his last political campaign largely because the Eastern Shore Democrats didn't like his attitude on intolerance.

Dr. Bruce makes amends for this by stating in a lengthy communication to *The Sun* that prejudice is inseparable from Eastern Shore stock and that he is proud to be born of that same stock though not an Eastern Shoreman. Dr. Bruce's statement is distinctly confusing, particularly since it emanates from such an uncompromisingly righteous soul as Dr. Bruce, who, in the United States Senate, refused to allow forgiveness for an American soldier who had stolen a turkey during the Spanish-American War.

As so many others, Dr. Bruce insists that the Eastern Shore lynching was reprehensible. He doesn't defend it, but with an adroitness that is too transparent he builds up a case on the basis of precedent to allow the Eastern Shoremen to defend their conduct.

There may be some question about the judgments expressed in Professor Mitchell's report on the Salisbury lynching, but there can be no question of the fact that even the good people and the law-abiding citizens of the Eastern Shore have not demanded that the lynchers be punished, that with only one exception, the newspapers of the Eastern Shore have tried to condone the situation and that the churches of the Eastern Shore have shown a moral cowardice that augurs ill for the influence of organized religion in the field of fundamental human decency.

Of course, the trouble isn't limited to the Eastern Shore. Our worthy Governor, who rushed to Chicago on a political speech the day after the lynching, has contented himself with issuing a statement, but with a conspicuous lack of aggressive leadership.

EDWARD L. ISRAEL.

Baltimore, Jan. 29, 1932.