

SINNED AGAINST AS WELL AS SINNING

So many columns have been written—many of them unwisely—about the recent Eastern Shore lynching, the situation merits little further comment from the press in other parts of Maryland. No sane, law-abiding citizen can do other than greatly deplore such a barbaric act as lynching in these days of modern law, but at the same time part of the odium must be assumed by many people in other parts of the state along with those of Wicomico County who participated in the affair.

It must be borne in mind that citizens of the Eastern Shore had faced three atrocious crimes in succession. At the same time they had been held up to ridicule by the Baltimore daily press, had been subjected to the insults of a two-by-twice Baltimore Communist lawyer seeking notoriety, and had squirmed under the apparently unnecessary court delays in bringing criminals to the bar of justice. It is small wonder under such circumstances that hotheads took the law into their own hands—no doubt against the wishes and best judgment of the vast majority of citizen's in Wicomico.

Frankly, we feel that officers detailed to protect the prisoner showed the white feather in their "do-nothing" attitude and are quite as subject to censure and investigation as those who participated in the lynching. Certainly those guilty must be ferreted out and speedily brought to trial if the fair name of Maryland is to be cleared. Meanwhile it is manifestly unfair for an entire community to be subjected to such a scurrilous attack as appeared Monday in the Evening Sun from the pen of H. L. Mencken. To say the least such a bitter, destructive article is beneath the dignity of both the writer and the newspaper which published it and can have but the one effect of engendering further hate in a community where there is every need for pouring oil on the troubled waters.

For our part we have every confidence in the ability of the people of the Eastren Shore to administer their own affairs. Now is the time to let them prove it by immediately trying every one of the criminals who has gained recent notoriety right on the Eastern Shore under adequate military guard. By so doing you will prove to the Communists that they have no proper place in the Free State, you will prove to the lawless element of the Shore that their courts can and will function quickly and efficiently, and will leave to the vast majority of the citizenship their inalienable right to local self government.