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Friday's Lynching

The lynching which occurred Friday in Salisbury will undoubtedly, and rightly be charged to the misrepresentation campaign that has been carried on by some of the Baltimore newspapers. It is easy for any one exercising the slightest degree of fairness to follow the psychology which lead up to this unfortunate affair.

Several weeks ago a family of four persons was murdered. A negro was arrested and confessed his guilt to several persons and gave them his reasons for committing the crime. One or two of the Baltimore City papers ran sensational headings and misleading news articles concerning the crime and as the result of this The International Labor Defense League got into the case. Then followed a series of delays in bringing to trial the man accused of the crime. Many attempts have been made to have the case removed to Baltimore for trial and those who have followed the case recognize the possibilities of justice being thwarted thereby in various ways.

The people on the Eastern Shore realize the fact that it is no longer safe to send prisoners to the Baltimore City jails for safe keeping because of the probability of agitators and radical organizations intervening to prevent prompt justice. They realize the fact that the most efficient cure for crime is prompt justice and that often times justice delayed means a miscarriage of justice.

With the results of the Yuel Lee case before them, and, in view of the many delays that have occurred in this case it is easy to see how persons who would be influenced by sensational head-lines and misleading news articles would decide that there should be no repetition of the Yuel Lee case in the crime committed yesterday afternoon in Salisbury.

More Misrepresentations

In an editorial carried by the Baltimore Sun Saturday morning its campaign of misrepresentation of the Eastern Shore of Maryland is carried to the point of being insulting to every resident of this peninsula, although we do not suppose this makes any difference to the publishers of that paper. We republish the editorial on this page.

We deny emphatically that mob violence has existed on the Shore for four weeks as alleged by The Sun. The only time there has been mob violence was when Mr. Ades was slightly mishandled at Snow Hill and on that occasion those composing the crowd had no desire to seriously injure Mr. Ades but simply wanted him to understand that the people of that section resented the methods which he was employing in the Lee case. Of course if The Sun feels impelled to defend, protect and nurture the organization

at Cambridge and had directed Commissioner Baughman to have a large number of the state police force present for the trial. The suggestion of the militia and of the state police came from the Governor and was not in response to any request or petition from the Court or the State's Attorney.

The insinuation that the Court was influenced in its decision to have this case tried in Cambridge is in keeping with the above statement about the "petition" for troops. The Courts on the Eastern Shore of Maryland are neither influenced by popular clamor nor expediency and the suggestion contained in the editorial would sound as if it had been written by the organization of which the counsel for Lee is a member, it certainly is hardly worthy of such a paper as The Sun claims to be and we have no doubt that the publishers of that paper, upon more mature consideration, were heartily ashamed of themselves for publishing it.

The Eastern Shore has no pride in this lynching. The people here feel that it is very unfortunate but they also feel that the greater part of the responsibility for its results from the interference of Baltimore City in the affairs of the Shore, and we would suggest that the last lynching in Maryland occurred not on the Eastern Shore but on the Western Shore not many miles from Baltimore.

The people on the Eastern Shore resent not only the interference of Baltimore City in the matters of crimes that are committed on the Shore but we also very greatly resent the inexcusable insinuations that are made against the Courts of this section especially when such insinuations are the result of deliberate mis-statements of facts and are made, apparently, without any efforts to ascertain the truth. Assaults upon the Courts are attempts to break down the bulwarks of justice and liberty, to deliberately undermine the confidence of the people in their Courts, and the ultimate results of such action, if successful, would be to bring about that condition in the nation for which it is believed certain organizations have been established. Possibly, that, too may be the attitude of The Sun.

Editorial Reprinted from The Evening Sun of last week

No Temporizing

Less than a month ago a mob formed down in Worcester county and made an effort to lynch a Negro accused of murder. Failing to find its intended victim, the members of the mob appeased their blood lust, to some extent at least, by beating up one of the lawyers appointed to defend the prisoner.

There was much excitement created. The Governor insisted that the Negro would be protected at any cost and announced his intention of calling out the National Guard.

That sounded fine, but that it was effectively in quelling the mob spirit we venture to doubt. For yesterday, in Kent county, another mob formed, marched on the Chestertown jail and searched through it with the announced intention of lynching a Negro accused of attempted rape. The Negro had already been spirited away but so violent were the would-be lynchers that they searched jails in four counties before giving up hope of shedding blood.

It is clear that making the gesture of "protecting the prisoner" is not enough. Mobs, as everyone knows

enough.

Putting a few more leaders in jail would soon convince the rabble that it does not run the State. If Governor Ritchie acts to set the law against the blood-thirsty in Kent county he will have the support of every decent man in that county and of every citizen jealous of the reputation of the State.

Reprinted of Saturday's Editorial of The Eastern Shore From The Morning Sun

DISGRACE

The Eastern Shore has reaped its reward. For four weeks its reckless elements have proclaimed mob law. For four weeks its officials and its responsible citizens have yielded ground. They started with their minds fixed upon law as the means of dealing with crime, however atrocious. But they have increasingly wavered. In the Yuel Lee case the court could find last Monday no conditions which would prevent a fair and orderly trial at Cambridge, although no more than two weeks ago the same court and the State's Attorney had petitioned the Governor for troops and for police "armed for an emergency." That judicial finding so strangely in accord with popular clamor, so hazardous in the view of observers, was hailed on the Eastern Shore as a vindication of the dignity of the people! And, as if in logical sequence, last night a mob in Salisbury heeded the law not at all, but instantly wreaked barbarous vengeance upon a Negro murderer.

We say the Eastern Shore has its reward. Whether the reward takes the form this morning of satisfaction or of shame we have no means of knowing. We do know that the Eastern Shore's reward is shame for the State of Maryland. It is twenty years since Maryland has been disgraced by this savagery. We had supposed the freedom from disgrace was permanent. It is not necessary to demonstrate to intelligent men and women that lynching is an assault upon the State, upon the law and upon civilization—or that in unleashing the violent, murderous impulses of many men its reflex upon the community ranks it as the gravest of crimes. Our decent people know that and it had not been supposed that in any old and seasoned community of this State, decent and intelligent people would throw wide the gates to the mad and unreasoning and bid them take command. It was a false pride and a false security. The lowest and least civilized elements did take command, and that remains true whether or not men of position participated in the Salisbury lynching or tacitly approved it.

There will be hope that this upsurge of barbarity will bring intelligent men on the Eastern Shore to their senses, and that they will take whatever steps need to be taken to assure respect for the law in the case of the two Negroes yet to be tried for serious crimes. But there is a duty beyond that. There is a duty upon the officials of Wicomico county and upon Governor Ritchie to seek out the members of the Salisbury mob and to punish them. It must be admitted that there is no great hope that the county officials will do so. The size of the mob and the manner in which the lynching was carried out point to official indifference and complacency. That, however, only makes it the more imperative that the Governor use the full power of his office and that he permit no technicalities to stand in the way of ruthless prosecution.