

ASSAILS APPROVAL OF MITCHELL VIEWS

Baltimore Southern Methodist Criticizes Church Council On Lynching Report

Sharp criticism of the Federal Council of Churches for its approval of the investigation and report on the Salisbury lynching by Dr. Broadus Mitchell, Johns Hopkins University economist, is expressed in the current issue of the *Baltimore Southern Methodist*.

An editorial in the magazine, a weekly published in Baltimore, says the council "prediodically opens its mouth and puts its foot in it," and that the body has continually turned out regrettable faux pas in past years.

"The report on prohibition released a few years back (by the council) caused a tremendous reaction over the whole church," the editorial said, "As upon investigation it was found that it had been written by one person detailed for the purpose and that the council had not passed upon it before it was broadcast."

The writer also cited the birth-control report issued by the council last year, which was met with mingled reactions by clergymen throughout the country.

Another part of the editorial said: "We are getting the impression more and more that the federal council is simply a New York group and its representative character seems to be an east-side, west-side, all-about-the-town proposition."

The New York council, the article continued, approved the report made out by Dr. Mitchell, who acted for the Federal Council's Commission on Race Relations when he probed the lynching of Matthew Williams, colored, in December. Dr. Mitchell in his report said that the churches of Salisbury "neglected the application of religion to life." When the council approved such a statement, the magazine article stated, it made that sentiment an official declaration.

"Is it fair to judge the churches of this town (Salisbury) and label their efforts as failure because of the action of persons and parties unknown," the article asks. "The whole power of the State has not been able to name those who had a hand in this lynching, but the local church can be blamed—and is, by certain ones who never turn a finger to help the churches on the Eastern Shore or anywhere else—'apply religion to life.'"

"Grant that Dr. Mitchell is an economist of note and an authority on interracial matters, does that make him competent (after spending from Friday until Sunday on the Eastern Shore, and talking to approximately a dozen persons) to become the mouth-piece for the Federated Christian Churches in America as to the failure of the Salisbury churches in applying religion? Frankly, we do not think so."

The article said that if the "news releases" of the Federal Council are simply matters of private or sub-committee opinion, then the name of the council should not be used in connection with them.