

THE ANTI-LYNCHING PLEDGE

INDICATING that another fight will be made in Congress for a Federal anti-lynching law the National Equal Rights League has called upon President Hoover for his aid.

Both the Republican party and the President have spoken on this issue. The Republican party pledged itself to an anti-lynching law "to exterminate this hideous crime." President Hoover has said: "Every decent citizen must condemn the lynching evil as an undermining of the very essence of both justice and democracy." Yet neither acts. The Dyer bill, imposing Federal penalties upon counties which wink at lynchings, has got nowhere under three Republican administrations.

While the Government hesitates, public opinion moves all too slowly to stamp out this American barbarism. Last year there were 21 lynchings as compared with 225 in 1892. The truth about the cowardly injustice of these lawless episodes also comes out. A group of Southern investigators recently found that less than one-fourth of all lynching victims in the past 40 years were ever accused of assaults upon white women. They found that of last year's lynching toll two were innocent, 11 were "possibly" so.

The problem is acute. There were twice as many lynchings last year as in 1929.

President Hoover has said: "Platform pledges must not be empty gestures."

One test of Republican pledges will be on this issue. And what about the Democrats?

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