

## Transcribed Excerpts from Anti-Lynching Bill, 1921

### Excerpt 1 (Pg. 3)

Ex-Attorney General Gregory, May 6, 1918, in an address to the American Bar Association, said:

"We must set our faces against lawlessness within our own borders. Whatever we may say about the causes for our entering this war, we know that one of the principal reasons was the lawlessness of the German nation—what they have done in Belgium, and in northern France, and what we have reason to know they would do elsewhere. For us to tolerate lynching is to do the same thing that we are condemning in the Germans.

Lynch law is the most cowardly of crimes. Invariably the victim is unarmed, while the men who lynch are armed and large in numbers. It is a deplorable thing under any circumstances, but at this time, above all others, it creates an extremely dangerous condition. I invite your help in meeting it."

## **Excerpt 2 (Pg. 4-5)**

In the 30 years from 1889 to 1918, 3,224 persons were lynched, of whom 2,522 were Negroes, and of these 50 were women. The North had 219; the West, 156; Alaska and unknown localities, 15; and the South, 2,834, with Georgia leading with 386, and Mississippi following with 373. Yet in Georgia Negroes paid taxes on 1,664,368 acres, and owned property assessed at \$47,423,499. Of the colored victims 19 per cent were accused of rape and 9.4 per cent of attacks upon women. In the year 1919, 77 Negroes, 4 whites, and 2 Mexicans were lynched.

Ten of the Negroes were ex-soldiers; one was a woman. During 1920 there were 65 persons lynched; 6 were white and 59 were Negroes; 31 were hanged, 15 shot, 8 burned, 2 drowned, 1 flogged to death, and 8, manner unknown; 24 were charged with murder, 2 assault on woman, 15 attack on woman, 3 insulting woman, 1 attempted attack on woman, 1 attack on boy, 1 stabbing man, and 3 assaulting man.

The Congress must provide the means of ending this cowardly crime. It is in punishing those who take part in it or who permit it. Congress has the power to enact this bill into law.

The fourteenth amendment to the Constitution provides that no State “\_ shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws,” and further provides that “the Congress shall have power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.” It is well settled by decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States that the denial forbidden is not alone a denial by positive legislation but that “no agency of the State, or of the officers or agents by whom its powers are exerted, shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

It is thus made the duty of the Congress under the Constitution to enact such laws as may be needful to assure that no State shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. Within the limits of the jurisdiction thus conferred the Congress has the right to exercise its discretion as to what laws or what means can best accomplish the desired end.