

Subject Files (File 648c): Duluth Lynchings, 1920.

Letter from Maud Craig to J. A. A. Burnquist, June 19, 1920.

Cable Address "Unimpro," New York

Telephone—Sey. 5687L

ONE GOD!

ONE AIM!

ONE DESTINY!

VANCOUVER DIVISION—No. 31

Universal Negro Improvement Association

AND

African Communities League

MARCUS GARVEY
President General

HENRIETTA VINTON DAVIS
International Organizer

H. M. MICKENS
Secretary General

J. A. PORTLOCK
Asst. Actg. Secy. General

WM. H. FERRIS
Actg. Chancellor

UNIVERSAL BUILDING, 56 WEST 135TH STREET
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

"He created of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth."

Vancouver, B. C.,
June 19, 1920.

To His Excellency, The Hon. Mr. Burnquist,
Governor of the state of Minnesota,
Saint Paul, Minn.

Sir:-

Having read of the deplorable stain imprinted upon the immaculate record of the great state of Minnesota, caused by the barbarous lynching of three Negroes, we, the members of the local branch of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, herein beseech your Honor to do your utmost to save the reputation of "Good Old Minnesota" from falling to the degraded level of that of the state of Georgia, or any other heathen vicinity, by putting forth strenuous to bring the murderous perpetrators of that terrible deed face to face with the awful justice it very much deserves. It is necessary to inflict upon the guilty ones a punishment that will cause all "hoodlums" to refrain from the repetition of such crime, and to remember with respect the moral sense of the state of Minnesota and the federal constitution upon which the honor and integrity of the United States of America are founded. ZZ

It is not for the protection of the individual criminal, regarding the circumstance of singularity, that we ask; but it is the respect for a law-abiding and patriotic mass of black American citizens numbering millions which we demand. Perhaps, it would be better to state that we do not believe that criminals, few or many, should not be protected; however, we wish to emphasize the fact that millions are insulted by this breach of the law, federal, state, and divine. Is this the kind of treatment promised those black boys of Minnesota in 1917 when they nobly marched away amid your cheers to give up their life-blood to save the citizens of Minnesota and all other Americans from the persecution of a common enemy, and to make the world safe for "Democracy"?

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Did they valiantly fight in the recent world war to return home and find members of their race swinging to telephone poles? Did they tell the Hun that he was barbarous and tyrannical on the weak, and that a civilized country had sent them to teach him the laws of humanity? There is a just indignation when they witness such heathenism such as occurred in the Zenith City of Duluth. Does the word "Zenith" imply such atrocious misdemeanor?

We ask no more for our citizens than the constitution grants, but we do ask for equality and protection as we are citizens and soldiers. It is not unreasonable that we expect the courts of the country to punish, after a fair and impartial trial, the lawless element who exhibit a chronic disregard for the laws of the land and a stubborn defiance of those in- to whose keeping the same is entrusted. Having developed a high sense of moral rectitude, we, as black Americans, will never condone crime whether found in the ranks of black people or white, and we hereby state our unconditional recognition of the majesty of the country's statutes, which cannot be considered unworthy. We hold lynch-law a most deplorable institution for which the better element of white Americans are, in a measure, responsible. They have done little to restrain the moral and mental defectives whose chief delight is to torture Americans of color, thereby stigmatizing America before the eyes of the entire world.

We are in sympathy with you and the state of Minnesota, as disgrace has been brought upon you in the perpetration of this heinous deed, and we sincerely hope that you, as an executive official of an honorable and progressive state, are in real sympathy with us for the persecutions we have for decades suffered. Once more, your Excellency, we beseech you and other Governors to put a stop to this undesirable institution. It can not last forever!

In conclusion, allow us to state that we are thanking you in advance for a reply at your earliest convenience.

Yours most respectfully,

Maud Craig - Secy.

Vanouver B. C.

1274 - Granville St.