

THE MONITOR

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For mankind are one in spirit, and an instinct bears along,
 Round the earth's electric circle the swift flush of right or wrong;
 Whether conscious or unconscious, yet humanity's vast frame
 Through its ocean-sundered fibres feels the gush of joy or shame;
 In the gain or loss of one race all the rest have equal claim.
 —James Russell Lowell.

OMAHA BOWS IN SHAME

OMAHA bows her head in shame. Her warm heart is torn and bleeding because of the temporary de-thronement of law and order within her borders. Her sorrow is profound and heartfelt because the rule of the jungle, the snarl of ravenous beasts, the rending and the tearing of tooth, talon and claw, even momentarily supplanted the rule of law and the reign of reason. Her splendid, cosmopolitan citizenry, unsurpassed by any in the world, can hardly believe it possible that the orgy of hatred, murder, arson, anarchy and vandalism of Sunday was an actual occurrence in this beautiful, progressive, liberal-minded western city. It all seems as though it were an hideous nightmare, a disturbing dream that must vanish when one awakens. And would to God that this were true! But, unfortunately, it is no dream, but an awful reality which has horrified and stunned the community. Realizing this, many are questioning how it were possible for such a thing to happen in Omaha—in Omaha, of all places, where the relationship between all classes of our citizenship was kindly and sympathetic and seldom ever approached abnormality or the point of dangerous strain.

The Monitor ventures to answer this question. What has happened in Omaha is directly traceable to several causes which, would we be wise and avert in the future, must be frankly faced, honestly and penitently confessed and fearlessly removed.

At the foundation of all lies the unexplainable and regrettable race prejudice which unfortunately looms large in our American life and is latent or dormant even in the most liberal and broad-minded communities. This is a fact which cannot be gainsaid. And this prejudice is by no means limited to the Negro race, but because it constitutes the largest well defined group in our polygenous nation it is most acute against this group. When, therefore, it is considered advantageous to do so, for the accomplishment of any purpose or the furthering of any cause or special interest, agencies are found, subsidized and set to work to arouse this dormant prejudice.

One of the chief agencies used in arousing prejudice is the press. It may be prejudice against an individual, a race, an institution, public officials or duly recognized and constituted authority.

The lynching and mob violence in Omaha is directly traceable to the fanning of race prejudice by sensational reports in two of the daily newspapers of this city of alleged crimes by Negroes against white women; the persistent attacking and ridiculing of the police administration of the city, some of which criticism was sincere and deserved, others purely for political purposes; the anarchistic element which simply seeks an excuse for the overthrow of all stable government, and the hidden, but not wholly concealed hand, of those who would go to any extreme to place themselves in power. These are among the chief causes that made the shame and infamy of Sunday night possible, a foul blot upon our urban escutcheon which the authorities avow shall be effaced by the punishment for murder, arson and rioting of all who can be apprehended for taking part in that orgy. This, we believe, will be done, for only so can atonement be made and Omaha vindicate her honor.

The Monitor, it need hardly be repeated, has no sympathy with crime or criminals, black or white. It abhors the crime of rape and holds that death is not too severe a punishment for the ravishment of women. We voice the sentiment of the law-abiding, self-respecting members of our race not only in Omaha, but throughout the country, in saying that because of the vicarious suffering we are compelled unjustly to endure when crimes of any character

and especially this, are traced to any member of our race, we are more vitally interested in the apprehension and punishment of such criminals than the white race can ever be. But we contend that accusation is not proof. We contend that every man accused of crime should be given a fair and impartial trial and then pay the full penalty of his crime, whatever it may be, according to the court's decree. This is the only safeguard of society, the only guarantee that honor, virtue, life and property shall be protected. The raping of law, civilization and society by mobs does not protect but menaces the sanctity of womanhood.

That mob violence and the mob spirit liberates all those primal passions of the brute which respect neither age nor sex, race nor color, official nor private, was fully demonstrated Sunday night. The safety of all, the stability of the republic, rests upon respect for and enforcement of law. The eyes of the country are resting upon Omaha to observe what action will be taken to vindicate the majesty of the reign of law. And shamed, weeping and outraged Omaha will not disappoint those who look to her to vindicate her honor.

PROUD OF PEOPLE

THE MONITOR is proud of the manner in which our race have conducted themselves during the trying ordeal of the past few days. Their behavior has been all that could have been desired. While ready to protect their homes from any mob that might attack them, they were exceedingly careful not to do anything to in any way precipitate trouble. Sunday night was an anxious time for all, because with the knowledge of what was done or attempted recently at Washington and Chicago by lawless mobs there was apprehension that similar outrages might be attempted here, and none wanted to be forced to the necessity of defending their homes, which they were fully prepared and determined to do. Fortunately that was not necessary.

Conditions are still more or less feverish and it behooves us all to keep cool and do all in our power to help restore normal conditions. It will be wise for us to avoid all large crowds and as far as possible contact with persons of rowdyish tendencies who might pick a quarrel. Let us all go quietly and regularly about our work and duties, attending strictly to our own business. Let there be no thought of reprisal or vengeance. Let us continue to be on the side of law and order. We have bought golden opinions from the best people of Omaha by our self-restraint and good conduct. Let us not lose it by any overt act.

EVERY INCH A MAN

MAYOR SMITH has proven himself every inch a man. He placed his life in jeopardy to uphold the majesty of the law. It was not the fault of that blood-thirsty mob that sought to lynch the mayor of the city because he would not deliver up the prisoner that Mayor Smith did not pay the supreme sacrifice. With a rope around his neck he would not yield. Facing death, if he refused, he was unyielding as a rock, insisting that Brown should have a trial, because he might be innocent. No man showed greater courage or did more to protect the prisoner than Mayor Ed P. Smith. We thank God that his life has been spared. Omaha is honored by having as her chief executive one who has proven himself every inch a man.

THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES

THE military authorities are here to protect life and property and to prevent all rioting and disorder. All good citizens will most gladly cooperate with them and help to make their task as easy as possible. They are here as friends, not foes.

LEADING EDITORIAL OF DAY

Law and the Jungle.

There is the rule of the jungle in this world, and there is the rule of law.

Under jungle rule no man's life is safe, no man's wife, no man's mother, sister, children, home, liberty, rights, property. Under the rule of law protection is provided for all these, and provided in proportion as law is efficiently and honestly administered and its power and authority respected and obeyed.

Omaha Sunday was disgraced and humiliated by a monstrous object lesson of what jungle rule means. The lack of efficient government in Omaha, the lack of governmental foresight and sagacity and energy, made the exhibition possible. It was provided by a few hundred hoodlums, most of them mere boys, organized as the wolf pack is organized, inflamed by the spirit of anarchy and license, of plunder and destruction. Then thousand or more good citizens, without leadership, without organization, without public authority that had made an effort to organize them for the anticipated emergency, were obliged to stand as onlookers, shamed in their hearts, and witness the hideous orgy of lawlessness. Some of them, to their blighting shame be it said, respectable men with women and children in their homes, let themselves be swept away by the mob spirit. They encouraged if they did not aid the wolf pack that was conspiring to put down the rule of law in Omaha—that rule which is the sole protection for every man's home and family.

It is over now, thank God!

Omaha henceforth will be as safe for its citizens, and as safe for the visitors within its gates, as any city in the land. Its respectable and law-abiding people, comprising 99 per cent of the population, will see to that. They have already taken the steps to see to it. The first step was taken when the rioting was at its height—taken belatedly, it is true, because they had placed reliance on the public authorities to safeguard the order and good name of Omaha. The blistering disgrace of the riot has aroused them. There will be no more faltering, no more fecklessness, no more procrastination, no longer the lack of a firm hand. The military aid that has been called in is only temporary. It serves to insure public order and public safety for the day, for the week. But the strengthening of the police force of the city, its efficient organization under wise and competent leadership, is a policy that public sentiment has inaugurated and that it will sternly enforce. As to that there will be neither equivocation nor delay. Nor will there be any hesitancy or laxness in the organization, and rigid use if need be, of civic guards to keep the streets and homes and public places of Omaha secure.

The citizenship of Omaha will be anxious that the outside world should know what it was that happened and why it happened. Let there be no mistaking the plain facts. The trouble is over now. It was a flare-up that died as quickly as it was born. Omaha is today the same safe and orderly city it has always been. It will be safer, indeed, hereafter, and more orderly, because of the lesson it has so dearly learned. And the flare-up was the work—let this fact be emphasized—of a few hundred rioters, some of them incited by an outrageous deed, others of them skulkers in the anarchistic underbrush who urged them on for their own foul purposes of destroying property and paralyzing the arm of the law. If the miserable Negro, Brown, had been removed from Omaha in time, as he should have been; if failing to remove him, the public authorities had taken vigorous measures to prevent the congregation and inflaming of the mob, the riot would never have occurred. An organized and intelligently directed effort in advance would have preserved the good name of Omaha unharmed. It would have prevented the lynching. It would have saved our splendid new court house from being offered up in flames, its defense with the mob victim in it, a costly sacrifice on the altar of law and order. There would have been no thought, even, of the amazing attempt to lynch the mayor of Omaha, bravely and honorably discharging his duty as chief magistrate in resisting the wolf pack.

It would be impossible to speak too strongly in condemnation of the rioters or in the uncompromising demand for their stern and swift punishment, whoever they be, wherever they can be found. They not only foully murdered a Negro they believed to be guilty. They brutally maltreated and attempted to murder other Negroes whom they knew to be innocent. They tried to lynch the mayor. They wantonly pillaged stores and destroyed property. They burned the courthouse. In the sheer spirit of anarchy they pulled valuable records from their steel filing cases, saturated them in gasoline, and burned them. They burned police conveyances and cut the

fire hose, inviting the destruction by fire of the entire city. Their actions were wholly vile, wholly evil, and malignantly dangerous. There is not a one of them who can be apprehended and whose guilt can be proved but should be sent for a long term to the state prison. And toward that end every effort of every good citizen, as well as every effort of the public authorities, from the humblest policeman to the presiding judge on the bench, must be directed. There can be no sentimentalizing, no fearful hesitancy, no condoning the offense of these red-handed criminals. The pitiful bluff they have put up against the majesty of the law, against the inviolability of American institutions, must be called and called fearlessly.

To the law-abiding Negroes of Omaha, who like the law-abiding whites are the vast majority of their race, it is timely to speak a word of caution as well as a word of sympathy and support. Any effort on the part of any of them to take the law into their own hands would be as culpable and as certainly disastrous as was the effort of the mob. In the running down and maltreating of unoffending men of their color, merely because they were of that color, they have been done odiously wrong. They naturally and properly resent it. They naturally and properly resent having been confined to their homes, in trembling fear of their lives, while red riot ran the streets of the city. But their duty as good citizens is precisely the same as that of the rest of us, all of whom have been outraged and shamed as citizens. It is to look to the law for their protection, for their vindication, and to give the law every possible support as it moves in its course. The law is their only shield, as it is the only shield of every white man, no matter how lowly or how great. And it is the duty of all, whites and blacks alike, to uphold especially the might of the law—to insist, if need be, on its full exercise—in protecting every Colored citizen of Omaha in his lawful and constitutional rights.

For the first time in many years—and for the last time, let us hope, for many years to come—Omaha has had an experience with lawlessness. We have seen what it is. We have seen how it works. We have felt, however briefly, the fetid breath of anarchy on our cheeks. We have experienced the cold chill of fear which it arouses. We have seen, as in a nightmare, its awful possibilities. We have learned how frail is the barrier which divides civilization from the primal jungle—and we have been given to see clearly what that barrier is.

It is the Law! It is the might of the Law, wisely and fearlessly administered! It is respect and obedience to the Law on the part of the members of society!

When these fail us all things fail. When these are lost all will be lost. Should the day ever come when the rule that was in Omaha Sunday night became the dominant rule, the grasses of the jungle would overspread our civilization, its wild denizens, human and brute, would make their foul feast on the ruins, and the God who rules over us would turn His face in sorrow from a world given over to bestiality. May the lesson of Sunday night sink deep! May we take home to our hearts, there to be cherished and never for a moment forgotten, the words of the revered Lincoln:

"Let reverence of the law be breathed by every mother to the lisping babe that rattles on her lap; let it be taught in schools, seminaries and colleges; let it be written in primers, spelling books and almanacs; let it be preached from pulpits and proclaimed in legislative halls and enforced in courts of justice; LET IT BECOME THE POLITICAL RELIGION OF THE NATION."—Morning World-Herald.

A WORD TO THE PRESS

THE MONITOR has frequently called the attention of the Omaha Daily News and the Omaha Daily Bee to the danger they were inviting by their sensational headlines and featuring of alleged crimes by Negroes. Now that this policy has borne such bitter fruit we appeal to you, Mr. Polcar, and to you, Mr. Rosewater, to desist from this policy and practice. In the light of recent occurrences is this asking too much?

PROMINENT BUSINESS MEN AID IN CONVICTING RIOTERS

More than 125 men, all prominent business men of Omaha, on motion of Penn Podrea, advertising manager of Iten Biscuit company, rose to the floor in a meeting at the Hotel Fontenelle Monday night and, raising their right hands, swore that they would report all that they had seen of the rioting Sunday night.

These men were in a meeting of the Advertising and Selling League of Omaha. They promised that they would furnish proper authorities with names and any other evidence that would lead to the conviction of leaders and members of the rioting mob Sunday night.

Flashes of Most Anything

The Wolf-Pack.

Low, cowardly, criminal, getting its false individual courage from contact with the herd, down upon us they swept Sunday. Murder and assault, arson and vandalism they wrought; and then they slunk away to their lairs and left a shamed and humiliated Omaha to bear the blame and burden of their depredations and to reconstruct and build up again the ruin and devastation they wrought.

And what the reason? They try to hide behind that threadbare excuse that they were protecting their womanhood. But they lie. Passion let loose protects nobody. From unreason and lawlessness no one can look for the security that only law can give. Law is the basis of civilization, the one thing that separates the civilized man from the savage. The fundamental tenet of the Magna Charta is that a man is innocent until proven guilty, and every suspect has a right to trial by jury. Law came to us the heritage of centuries. With the increase of its guarantees have come an increase in civilization and democracy. Fed upon by a tissue of lies and villainous suggestions from an inflammatory press that will sacrifice public safety to sensationalism and will substitute race hatred for reason, a band of ignorant, lawless hoodlums would constitute themselves above law, and subvert all civilization that their passion and hate and vandalism may have sway.

If Will Brown were guilty and committed this crime he should have been tried and convicted by due process of law and punished with its extreme penalty. I am a woman, and like all others, consider this crime against my sex hideous. And I think the state should punish to the limit the degenerate so convicted by it. But crime is crime and has no race nor creed nor color. Its blackness is inherent in it and not in the color of the accused. No mob looked to wreak its vengeance on the four white men who raped one

woman. No mob looked to wreak its vengeance upon the white degenerate who victimized the little 10-year-old cripple child on the south side. Propaganda has been coming out of the south aimed to incite race animosity and race friction. The south wants colored laborers to remain in the south and many are the ways it has taken to keep them there. The Klu-Klux-Klan organized and it would seem that it is busy. Omaha has seen the Klu-Klux in action and Omaha wants none of it.

If Will Brown were innocent? Good God! If he were innocent? Our shame becomes deeper, our humiliation becomes greater. Always the doubt. Justice outraged. Democracy bowed of head. Humanity leaden of heart. And the question ever there. If innocent, it is the funeral pyre of a martyr upon which we look. The smell of burning human flesh is at all times nauseating to the nostrils of civilized men. But innocent—Great God!

And the wolf-pack has slunk away. It murdered and robbed and burned and destroyed, and now, it has slunk away, and real Omaha must assert herself and redeem herself. She must hunt out the criminals guilty of this cowardly thing and punish them. She must show to the whole United States that lawlessness shall not reign. For, lawlessness tolerated anywhere in any shape or form is the forerunner of disintegration and disaster. The lyncher and mobster is more of an enemy to a community or commonwealth than all the Huns in Germany. Foreign malice can be fought and nullified, but trickery and lawlessness, within the household, will send America in the wake of Babylon and Rome and Russia. The mob feels no duty or responsibility. The wolf-pack is due no consideration. It is beyond the pale and must be put down and must be put down and crushed and suppressed.

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