

Phyllis Wheatley Club,
Salem M. E. Church,
129th St. & 7th Avenue,
New York City.

April 21st/1933

Governor Miller,
Montgomery, Ala.

Honorable Sir:-

The Phyllis Wheatley Club of Salem M. E. Church, numbering about One Hundred members have read much lately of the famous trial of the 9 Negro youths which has been conducted in Decatur, Ala. and each member of our club has followed this trial very minutely all the way through, and noting the outstanding absence of any degree of justice in view of evidence and testimony presented by Ruby Bates and Victoria Price, our club decided that perhaps if we wrote you a line regarding this case, you might, out of the goodness of your heart condescend to drop us a line in answer to our letter.

1. We are at a loss to understand why the statute books of your state could make rape punishable by death. However terrible this crime might be, there is no other state in the Union that has such a law on its books, making a crime of this sort punishable by death. This in itself seems inhuman.
2. How can your State wilfully disobey the Constitution of the United States by not permitting Colored men to serve on the jury,
3. How can any jury with ordinary common sense, and when I say common sense, I simply mean mother wit, for I am told that the Jury that served were only mediocre men, when compared with the type of Colored men offered (but rejected) for the jury; men selected from College Graduates with 2 and 3 degrees, lawyers, Doctors, and ministers from the Negro ranks were all refused.

When this jury heard the evidence from Ruby Bates, and Victoria Price, Judge Horton charged the jury telling them that they must weigh the evidence presented by these two women from the underworld, one of which had at last come up with the real truth, and the evidence of Victoria Price lacking in truth to a very great extent, how could such a Jury be so inhuman, so dumb, so uncivilized as to come in laughing and guffawing over such a serious thing and then to bring in a verdict of death in the Chair.

4. We are living to-day in a world that is moving all the time from one degree of intellect to another one that is higher and still higher. White men have always had a better chance to get some of this high and higher intellect. It was sadly lacking in this jury that served at this trial.
5. It has also puzzled people all over the world why you as Governor of the State of Alabama could read of this terrible miscarriage of justice in every form, and you have not lifted your voice once against it.

Surely as a man occupying such a high office as Governor of the State of Alabama, you must have some vestige of humanity about you; some sense of reason, to know that these boys are innocent, and long ago should have been acquitted

The world at large knows and believes these boys are innocent, then why spend Alabama's money foolishly in trials? This expense must come out of the pockets of the dwellers in that particular county, either Scottsboro or Decatur, and I am told the inhabitants of both of these places are the poorest that we can find anywhere, both whites and Negroes.

As Governor of the State of Alabama, everyone feels that you could do much good in trying to set things right in this (now) world wide case that has even reached other continents.

Do not let it be too late to do the good that you can do. Remember Pontius Pilate, when Christ came before him on trial and after hearing the evidence, what did he say? "I do not find any wrong this man hath done." He then called for a basin of water to wash his hands of the matter.

Governor Miller, do not stand ready to wash your hands, but stand up and be a hero in the strife, especially when you know how inhuman, how unfair, how unjust all of this procedure has been. A word from you in this great trial means much in righting a great wrong.

6. Last but not least, may we hear a word from you. Our club is most anxious to know your attitude in this famous trial.

Thanking you for an immediate reply, we are,

Sincerely yours,
Phyllis Wheatley Club,
Salem M. E. Church, N.W.

Julia E. Siggan President,
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New York City.



Honorable Governor Miller,
Montgomery, Alabama.

Governor of the
State of Alabama.