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AN ANALYSIS OF THE DENNIS HUBERT AND S. S. MINCEY CASES
TO ILLUSTRATE CHANGING TRENDS TOWARD MOB VIOLENCE AND
THE FOSTERING OF INTERRACIAL COOPERATION IN GEORGIA, 1930

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by
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ABSTRACT

An Analysis of the Dennis Hubert and S. S. Mincey Cases to Illustrate Changing Trends Toward Mob Violence and the Fostering of Interracial Cooperation in Georgia, 1930

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The primary purpose of this research is to illustrate changing trends in white Georgians' attitudes toward lynching and mob violence in Georgia during 1930.

The Dennis Hubert and S. S. Mincey cases and their results will be used as examples to reflect such trends as well as illustrate interracial cooperation among the races.

During 1930, Georgia witnessed at least six terrible acts of mob violence in the form of lynchings and murder. Also this number constituted the highest number in comparison to other states that year.

The Dennis Hubert and S. S. Mincey cases were different from any other lynching which occurred in Georgia in that white Georgians denounced these murders and made a considerable attempt to apprehend the guilty parties as well as aid the families of these Negro victims.
The primary sources for this research were derived from the Commission on Interracial Cooperation (CIC) collection and the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching (ASWPL) papers located at the Atlanta University Center Robert W. Woodruff Library. This collection included the newspaper clippings collected by the CIC, letters, minutes, sermons and unpublished material used in pursuing this research.
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INTRODUCTION

In 1930, Georgia witnessed at least six terrible acts of mob violence inflicted on the Negro. These acts of mob violence were considered lynchings and almost all of them occurred in Southwest Georgia which constituted the then newest and poorest counties in the state. In these rural sections, low educational and economic achievement was a common denominator.

The depression was in full swing and many whites as well as Negroes struggled to make a living. In most of these counties, whites were worse off than many Negroes. Like most Negroes these whites were jobless and lacked even basic education. Therefore, they competed for employment usually held by Negroes prior to the depression.

In addition to these problems, the white Georgian also held what Walter White describes as the Southern attitude that Negroes were lazy, given to crimes and possessed an inherited desire to commit crimes which expressed

1 Arthur F. Raper, The Tragedy of Lynching (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina, 1933), 139.

2 Ibid.
unmentionable brutality. Also, they felt the Negro had an uncontrollable lust or desire for the white woman.

Therefore, white Georgians insisted that the Negro remain in his place, and occasionally reminded him of his position by these acts of lawlessness.

In most of these acts of mob violence which occurred during 1930, not one member of the mob was ever indicted for murder. Moreover, in many cases, not a single lyncher or mob leader was ever identified. In practically all of these communities where these Negroes were lynched, family members as well as the Negro community were passive and silent. For example, in one particular lynching, the wife of a lynching victim dared not ask the local officials for her husband's body.

The Negro community was forced into this situation for many reasons. First, leading Negroes believed that protest might result in things being made harder for the masses of their race. Second, Negroes had been taught to fear and avoid an enraged white populace in the past and third, the number of influential Negroes (i.e., business owners, professional, etc.) was small. Finally, the vast

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4 Raper, The Tragedy, 222.
majority of Negroes depended on the white community for employment and generally left public matters to white citizens. The communities where these acts occurred openly justified and condoned these lynchings! This fact can be seen in public opinion expressed in newspapers and the media.

However, in the summer of 1930, there occurred a change in public opinion in terms of white Georgian attitude toward mob violence. Also, this change was seen in a lynching that is characterized among Georgia's six recorded lynchings in 1930.

This change reflected the attitudes of the majority of white Georgians in counties where the lynching had occurred. White citizens began to condemn acts of violence. In many cases these were ministers and church members who attempted to take a stand against mob violence inflicted on Negroes in general. However, they were only a small minority and were generally influenced not to act by severe peer pressure.

This encouraging swing in public opinion and attitude towards mob violence was seen in the lynching of S. S. Mincey of Montgomery County, Georgia. S. S. Mincey was seventy years of age and a leader in the politics in his county when he was kidnapped and flogged by a group of masked white men on the night of July 29, 1930. At the time

5 Commission on Interracial Cooperation, Lynchings and What They Mean, General Findings of the CIC on the Study of Lynching (Atlanta: CIC, 1931), 134.

6 Ibid., 154.
of his death he was chairman of the County Republican Party. He also was very active in many Negro civic and social organizations. Mincey was much better off economically than most whites and owned a large farm. Therefore, he was considered wealthy and was well respected by local whites in his community. Mincey died of a cerebral hemorrhage the next day after a severe flogging.

The murder of S. S. Mincey may lack proper classification in that the general public did not participate in his death as characterized in other Georgia lynchings of 1930. His death, premeditated and executed by a small group employing private and secret means, was much like the gang murders of organized crime. Nonetheless, it has been considered a lynching and incorporated in the number of lynchings which occurred in Georgia during 1930. Raper includes the Mincey incident in his discussion of lynching in The Tragedy of Lynching.

In the summer of 1930, Georgia witnessed another murder which occurred in Atlanta on June 15, 1930. This murder was not included in Georgia's recorded number of lynchings during that year and has received little or no attention by researchers writing on the problem of lynching. This was the murder of Dennis Taylor Hubert, an eighteen year old divinity student attending Morehouse College in Atlanta.

7 Raper, The Tragedy, 172.

8 CIC, Lynchings, 67; see also Raper The Tragedy, 173.
Moreover, this case was very similar to that of Mincey's. Dennis Hubert was shot and killed by seven white men on a Negro playground after being accused of insulting a white woman.

These murders are related in that they both created and produced strong denunciations from the white community. Also, the white Georgians made a considerable attempt to aid the Negro community, which in turn fostered interracial cooperation.

Therefore, this research will present evidence concerning these cases and use it as examples to illustrate the beginning of a new trend in race relations and interracial cooperation in Georgia. This research will also present evidence of the contributions and aid of several white civic and social organizations as well as individuals who aided the Hubert family in particular.

Finally, this changing trend in public opinion toward mob violence will be illustrated through newspapers, editorials and actions by prominent personalities and organizations.
CHAPTER 1

THE MURDERS AND TRIALS IN THE CASES OF DENNIS HUBERT AND S. S. MINCEY

Early on the afternoon of Sunday June 15, 1930, a white woman was allegedly insulted by a young Negro male in the vicinity of the Crogman School for Negroes in Atlanta. This white woman was the wife of a J. Glover Garvin, who came to the school playground to identify the Negro. On this particular day, Dennis Hubert attended church and visited his grandmother's home shortly afterwards. Around six o'clock, Hubert walked to the Crogman School for Negroes to meet friends. Hubert had not been on the playground fifteen minutes before a car drove up. Six white men got out of the car while a seventh remained at the wheel. After receiving a series of blows to the head and other physical abuse, Hubert was accused of insulting Garvin's wife. Hubert's responses led eyewitnesses to believe that he was


3 Commission on Interracial Cooperation (CIC), The Facts in the Hubert Case (Atlanta: CIC, July 19, 1930).

4 Ibid.
totally ignorant of the "crime". Nevertheless, one of the white men placed a handgun to Hubert's head and fired, killing him instantly.

With the aid of eyewitnesses, six of the seven men were arrested within twenty-four hours. However, one remained at large. The six men arrested included: J. Glover Garvin, Tom Berryman, Troy F. Martin, Aubrey Sikes, Murry W. Harmon and Roy H. Evans. All of these defendants had a history of criminal offense.

On Friday June 20, the defendants went before the police court and a Grand Jury. The presiding judge was Virlyn Moore of Fulton County Superior Court. Subsequently, all defendants were indicted and held equally guilty on a charge of murder. On June 24, the defendants made application for bail. However, Judge Moore denied bail for all of the defendants.

At this point tension mounted in Atlanta among the races. Many white Atlantans resented the court's refusal to allow bail to the defendants. Hence, only two days after the defendants attempted to

5 CIC, The Facts.

6 "Seven Face Trial In Negro Death," Atlanta Journal, 22 July 1930. CIC Papers, Box 24.

7 CIC, The Facts.

8 Ibid.
make bail, the home of Dennis Hubert's family mysteriously burned to the ground. This incident sparked what could have been considered a small "reign of terror" because other incidents occurred. On July 2, a weekly prayer meeting was suddenly interrupted by a teargas bomb which was thrown through a window from a speeding car. This weekly prayer meeting convened at Wheat Street Baptist Church was one in a series of mass meetings being held by Negro citizens on behalf of the Hubert case. Also rocks were thrown against Sisters' Chapel on Spelman College's campus. Fortunately, no damage was done.

Although these incidents did not result in any injury, an attempted attack was made on Charles Hubert, an uncle of Dennis Hubert. On July 17, a white man pretended to deliver a special letter to Mr. Hubert. It was a little after midnight. Although Mrs. Hubert answered the door, Mr. Hubert came to the door shortly afterwards. The man attempted to get inside the door while another man stepped up and drew a pistol. Realizing that this was a frame-up, Hubert decided to slam the door shut. Suddenly, the two men ran.

9 CIC, The Facts.

10 Ibid.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.
These incidents which occurred involving the murder of this Negro youth illustrated that Atlanta was not free of racial tension similar to that which occurred in other southern communities during that year. Negro Atlantans experienced rigid Jim Crow laws, discrimination and more importantly, the racial tension created by subversive organizations. Among these organizations were the Ku Klux Klan and a newly created organization called the Black Shirts.

The Ku Klux Klan was not operating in Atlanta during the summer of 1930. By 1929, the Klan disbanded due to problems within the organization. On June 10, 1930, at least four hundred jobless and angry young white men founded and formed the Black Shirts. This subversive organization drew many ex-Klansmen. This organization was formed only five days before the murder of Dennis Hubert. According to the press, the Black shirts were allegedly accused of Hubert's murder and the incidents which occurred afterwards. However, these facts were never proven.

The trial of Troy F. Martin, one of the defendants charged with murder, began on Wednesday July 23, 1930. Martin's case was first

13 "Gas Bomb Hurled Into Church," Savannah Tribune, 10 July 1930.

14 "Injunction Halts Local Activities of Black Shirts," Atlanta Constitution, 2 September 1930.

15 "Gas Bomb Hurled Into Church," ST, 10 July 1930.
because he was accused of firing the fatal shot which killed Hubert. The court hearing was held before Judge Earl Camp of Dublin, Georgia in Judge Virlyn B. Moore's division of the Fulton County Superior Court.

The prosecutor was Special Prosecutor William Schley Howard. H. A. Allen was the Defense Attorney. The Hubert family employed two Negro attorneys, Mr. Howard (first name unknown) and Mr. A. Walters (first name unknown) to aid in the prosecution.

Six panels of Atlantans were exhausted in order to obtain twelve jurors. Twenty-three men were excused from jury duty services when they voiced opposition to capital punishment and six were excused for reasons of prejudice and biased attitudes. Subsequently, the jury consisted of twelve white men.

In his opening statement, State Prosecutor Howard charged that Dennis Hubert was killed without justification and that he was totally ignorant of the charge. The state also charged that Hubert was shot by Troy F. Martin after having been whipped by J. G. Garvin. Also the state set out to prove that Hubert was not on the playground at the


17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.
time of the alleged insult which occurred at approximately 2:30 p.m. that afternoon.

The defense pleaded that the defendants went to the playground to apprehend the youth and hold him until a police official arrived. The defense also stated that Hubert attempted to assault the defendant after producing a concealed weapon. Consequently, the defendant shot and killed Hubert in self defense. It must be noted that Hubert was shot at close range in the back of the head. The defense also attempted to prove that Aubrey Sikes, another one of the defendants, fired the shot, not Martin.

According to sources, Martin and the other defendants were considered "hoodlums" by people who knew them prior to this murder. Court records indicated that Martin had been charged with the seduction of a female in 1920. He had also been charged with

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19 "Seven Face Trial," AC, 22 July 1930.

20 Ibid.


22 CIC, The Facts.

23 Fulton County Superior Court, Docket Information on Hearings of Troy F. Martin, Tom Berryman, Roy Evans, 1921, 1930, 1936 (Atlanta, Georgia: Fulton County Superior Court).
carrying a pistol without a permit. Martin and the other defendants were known for drunkenness and disorderly conduct. Moreover, they had been drinking the day they killed Hubert.

Eyewitness testimony describing Hubert's slaying began July 23. Hubert's movements during that day were traced with the aid of his father, Rev. Gaddus J. Hubert along with his mother, Mrs. Pearl Hubert. The Huberts testified that Dennis spent most of his time between their home and his grandmother's home that afternoon. Six eyewitnesses' testimony showed that a white woman and man appeared out of a patch of woods near Crogman School playground and later disappeared just before Hubert's arrival. Both appeared to be intoxicated. Shortly after Hubert reached the playground, seven white men drove up in a car. Six stepped out while one remained at the wheel. One of the white men accused Hubert of insulting a white woman earlier. One man began to beat Hubert.

Nelson McCrary, a friend of Hubert's, stated Hubert made no attempt to defend himself from his attackers. According to McCrary,

24 Fulton County Superior Court, Docket Information.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
Hubert's only remarks were "What's the meaning of this? I have done nothing." McCrary also stated that Hubert was selected from a group of youths on the playground to be shot. Unfortunately, McCrary could not identify the actual slayer for he fled as soon as the shot was fired. This created a problem for the defense who was attempting to prove that Martin did not commit the murder. Fortunately for the state, this problem was solved by the testimony of a Walter Hinton. Hinton, a friend of Hubert's as well as an eyewitness, positively identified Martin as Hubert's slayer. He also stated that Martin stepped up and said, "Let me have him." Martin then placed the pistol to Hubert's head and fired.

J. Glover Garvin, one of the defendants and husband of the woman allegedly insulted, admitted he fired the fatal shot after Hubert drew a knife and attempted to attack members of their party. However, the defense was unable to prove this. Moreover, Garvin's wife was not sure Hubert was the Negro who insulted her earlier that day. After five days of hearings, Troy F. Martin was found guilty of


voluntary manslaughter in a sealed verdict on July 28, 1930. Judge Camp recessed the court for several hours before the jury reached a decision. The jury set the sentence for Martin at only 12-15 years in a state penitentary.

Judge Camp, presiding judge and a native of Georgia, made a vigorous statement regarding the position of the courts. Camp stated,

. . . . it is only the degenerate type of citizen that will promote racial prejudice. There are degenerate whites as well as Negroes, but we are determine[d] that they shall not interfere with the orderly process of our courts.

According to the press, Camp spoke for all the responsible citizens in Atlanta.

Evidence concerning the other six defendants was not heard until January, 1931. These defendants were tried and convicted on a charge of accessory to murder by an all white jury also. They received sentences of only one to three years.

Many Atlantans, both white and Negro, were outraged at such lenient sentences for this wanton murder. Dr. Will Alexander, president of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, felt that the

34 Ibid.
35 Ibid.
sentence in the Martin case was not as "stiff" as it should have been but the trial itself was an encouragement. Alexander also felt that the trial and conviction of Troy F. Martin was a victory for decency as well as for Negroes. Moreover, the conviction of a white man by an all white jury for the murder of a Negro was very uncommon during this period.

The results in this case may have been due in part to the prominence of the Hubert family. The Hubert family was considered to be one of the most successful as well as most educated Negro families in Georgia in 1930. Furthermore, its history can be traced back as far as 1764. The grandfather of Dennis Hubert, Zacharias Hubert, a former slave, was successful in sending all of his twelve children to college. Gaddus J. Hubert, Dennis Hubert's father, was a minister and educator. At the time of Dennis's murder, one of his uncles was president of Georgia State College for Negroes; another was principal of a Negro high school in Savannah; another was president of a Negro school in Oklahoma; and yet another was president of the New York Urban League in New York City.

Due to their family background and success, the Huberts were considered middle class and had many prominent white friends.

36 Letter to Benjamin Hubert from Will Alexander, July 31, 1930. CIC Papers, Box 24.

37 CIC, The Facts.
Moreover, many of these whites were in leadership positions and members of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation. The Hubert family was well respected by both Negroes and whites.

**S. S. Mincey Murder**

During the summer of 1930, another lynching or murder took place on July 29, 1930 in Ailey, Georgia. Ailey is a small rural town located in Montgomery County, Georgia.

Shortly after midnight on this day, a group of masked white men drove to Mincey's farm and forced their way into the house. Although Mincey was a huge man and very active for his seventy years, he was quickly overpowered by these men. Subsequently, he was beaten in front of his grandchild and wife, thrown into a waiting truck and kidnapped. He was taken to a secluded area in Uvalda located in Toombs County and severely beaten over the head and back. Obviously he was left there to die. Mincey managed to crawl back to a nearby road where he was discovered by a white farmer. Mincey received immediate medical attention. Unfortunately, he died of a cerebral hemorrhage the following day. His death resulted from a blow to the head.


39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.
Although Mincey had very little education, he was one of the most successful and prosperous Negroes in Montgomery County. Very much like the Hubert family, Mincey had many prominent white friends and was respected by both whites and Negroes.

Mincey was active and influential in the Republican organizations of the county and state. He had been a delegate to the National Republican Conventions. Mincey had been the leader of Montgomery County's Republican Committee and his position on the committee was favored by many whites. Mincey was also prominent and held leadership positions in Negro fraternal circles. At the time of his death, he had been elected Secretary and Treasurer of the Widow and Orphan's Department of the Negro Masonic Lodge of Georgia. He also was about to open an office in Ailey at the time of his death.

In April of 1930, Negro control of the Republican Committee was threatened by a group of whites on the committee who were anti-Negro. This group was called "Lily white Republicans" and many members were accused of allegedly being ex-members of the Ku Klux Klan. When the county convention opened, this group came with the intention to elect all white officers.

41

42
Ibid.

43
Ibid.
At the convention, Mincey became alarmed after discovering a flaw in voting procedures which involved the "Lily white Republicans'" ballots. Expressing himself vigorously, Mincey declared that the best "white people in the county had always allowed Negroes to manage their own affairs but the whites present are not of this class." The Lily whites were insulted and resented a Negro talking to them in such a way. They also felt Mincey was calling them "white trash". According to sources, one of these Republicans stated, "That's alright, we'll see you later."

At this convention, Mincey was elected chairman of the Montgomery County Republican Committee. Mincey also angered these whites by refusing to support one of them who was running for postmastership in the county.

It was later reported that Mincey had received life threatening letters two weeks prior to his death. These letters advised him to refrain from political activity. Mincey did not act upon these messages.

The white community of Ailey felt that Mincey was "taken for a ride" because of his political success. The Negro community insisted

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45 Ibid.
46 Ibid., 174-75
47 Ibid.
that Mincey was killed for the same reason but also for his prosperity as a Negro. Furthermore, after Mincey's death, the Negro community was inclined to believe that no Negro, regardless of his relations to leading white citizens, was secure from the mob.

The Montgomery County Grand Jury which convened only a few days after the murder, investigated the case without results and no one was indicted.

The Grand Jury's report read in part:

Having investigated very earnestly every source of evidence at our command, we find no definite clues which would lead to the conviction of the party or parties responsible for the death of S. S. Mincey.

Although this grand jury reported no clues as to who murdered Mincey, it was reported in the community that evidence did exist. On the night of the murder, a company truck was reported away from a county convict camp from 9:30 p.m. until nearly day light. Also tracks at Mincey's home were reported to have corresponded to the lines of this truck. Lastly, this truck was seen by an eyewitness on the road to Mincey's farm filled with hooded men.

48 Raper, The Tragedy, 175.

49 Ibid., 188.

50 Ibid., 185.

51 Ibid., 185-186.
When this session of the Grand Jury ended in August of 1930, it urged its successors to continue to investigate Mincey's murder. Unfortunately, the next Grand Jury indicted no one as well. But this continued concern was the direct result of two factors: First, Mincey was a law abiding Negro with unusual ability; and second, many local whites as well as Negroes applied pressure because they were outraged that his murderers would go free.

To date no one has ever been indicted for Mincey's murder.

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On Monday June 16, 1930, the account of the Dennis Hubert murder appeared in local Atlanta papers. However, very few details of the murder were given. According to sources, little was presented by the press out of respect for the Hubert family in their time of grief. Also racial tension was high particularly in the Negro community. Public opinion in the form of denunciation did not appear in the press until weeks after the murder. This silence was not broken by individuals but by an organization called the Commission on Interracial Cooperation (CIC). This organization which operated out of Atlanta was the first to print its resentments and to assist the Hubert family.

The CIC came into existence in January 1919, shortly after the Armistice which ended World War I. By April of that year, the Negro soldier had returned from Europe. Moreover, White Americans had prepared for such a day when Negro soldiers would return and demand first class citizenship for servicing this country. However, the Ku

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Klux Klan had revived as early as 1915 and implemented a program geared toward White supremacy. 

During the early months of 1919 approximately seventy Negroes were lynched. Ten Negro soldiers were among this number. Also, during the summer of 1919, this country witnessed race riots throughout the nation. Lynchings and other acts of mob violence multiplied throughout the country. As a result of this situation a small group of white southern leaders met and founded the organization and methods of the CIC.

Among the founding leaders was Dr. Will W. Alexander who became president. Will W. Alexander was very active for the Negro cause in the South between 1915 and 1956. He managed to work his way through Vanderbilt University and become a Methodist minister. According to Alexander Heard, author of the Forward in Dr. Alexander's biography, Seed of Southern Change, Alexander was considered a complex person, yet his social objectives were simple. He wanted to give people a chance to make their own way. Where he saw a general impersonal condition that imprisoned individuals, and was beyond their control,


3 Ibid.

he was against it. Thus, he fought race prejudice. Will Alexander was instrumental in founding Dillard University in New Orleans. One of the first Negroes to join the CIC later was Dr. Robert R. Moton. Dr. Moton later became president of Tuskegee Institute. Subsequently other Negroes were to join through the years.

The CIC was formed to correct injustices inflicted upon the Negro and to improve Southern white attitudes concerning race. On these principles the CIC drew membership of representatives of both races over its period of existence. Moreover, it recruited members from all locations in the south which brought together some of the best representatives of the two races.

In the early years of the CIC, many Southern whites opposed the work of this organization. Most of the opposition came from the Ku Klux Klan whose members could be found in almost all significant positions in Atlanta during the 1920s.

Prior to the Hubert murder, the CIC had done remarkable work in adjusting social interactions among the races, preventing lynchings (including both Negro and white victims), preventing race riots and


7 Ibid.
aiding greatly in the areas of social welfare and education in
general.

President Herbert Hoover expressed his opinion concerning the
work of the CIC in 1927, stating:

I have been greatly impressed by the constructive work of
the Commission on Interracial Cooperation. The solution of
all conflict is that men and women of good will shall search
and find the areas where we can cooperate, and thus minimize
differences. That is the sane, simple and sensible plan of
the Commission. It is of real national importance. I trust
it will have the widest support.

In 1944 the CIC merged its program with and transferred all its
assets to a newly founded organization called the Southern Regional
Council which is still in existence today.

The CIC publically expressed its resentment of the murder and
the incidents which occurred afterward to the press on July 20, 1930.
The CIC led by Dr. Will Alexander issued a statement outlining the
murder and crimes which occurred afterwards and the CIC called upon
all citizens of Atlanta to repudiate these crimes and use their
influence to see that the perpetrators were brought to justice.

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8 Excerpt from The New York Times, 3 July 1927, printed in
Southern Regional Council's 30th Annual Meeting Program (Atlanta: SRC, November 15-16, 1974).


Dr. Alexander as well as members of the CIC played an important role in seeing that all information concerning the Hubert murder was received by prominent Atlantans through the mail as well as the press. Not only were leading citizens contacted but churches and social organizations were also informed. Also, Alexander maintained contact with members of the Hubert family who lived in other areas of the country by mail. Alexander's correspondence included the progress of the trial and actions taken by the community in aiding Dennis Hubert's family in Atlanta.

Dr. Alexander was quoted in a news story attacking local ministers and churches for their reluctance to publically denounce crimes of this nature inflicted upon Negroes. Alexander stated,

The pulpit is largely responsible for lynchings and lawlessness in the South. The crime of lynching and the terror of mob violence would be surpressed if preachers had the moral courage to stand up and denounce lawlessness from their pulpits.

He also added that

... much of the crimes committed in this country can be laid at the doors of our churches by reason of cowardice of the men in the pulpit.

This statement as well as the printed resentment by the CIC and Alexander forced others to act.

11 Letter from Will Alexander to Benjamin F. Hubert, 31 July 1930.

12 "Cold Blooded Murder," Atlanta Independent, 26 June 1930.
The *Atlanta Constitution* published an editorial written by editor Clark Howell entitled "Shaming the City." This editorial was considered one of the severest indictments of such injustices ever written to that time. According to this editorial,

These acts of lawlessness outrage the character and spirit of the citizenship of Atlanta and are the vicious deeds of a few conscienceless persons, moved by racial intolerance.

The perpetrators of this outrage must be identified and made to pay the penalty in full. The white and colored people of Atlanta have established relations of peace and cooperation that must not be broken down by the bloody hands of irresponsible and law-defying hoodlums.

During the weeks that followed, local papers carried denunciations concerning mob violence. Also, the ministers of the leading churches of Atlanta and other religious organizations expressed their opposition to this kind of problem. This was evident in the sermon of Dr. R. O. Flinn, pastor of the North Avenue Presbyterian Church in Atlanta. Dr. Flinn called upon the people of Atlanta to stop all incendiary talk and do their utmost to maintain the normal peaceful relations between whites and Negroes in the community. Referring to


14 Ibid.

15 Handwritten excerpt of sermon of Dr. R. O. Flinn, pastor, North Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, date unknown.
reports of heated racial relations in certains areas of the city, Dr. Flinn warned that,

This is no time for heat and wild talk, but for clear, calm thinking and for concerted efforts to maintain peace and order between the races. Our city must not suffer the disgrace and horror of mob demonstrations as it did in 1906. The responsibility of seeing that it does not rest upon all classes as well as upon the courts and officers of the law. In situations silence gives consent, and the man who make no effort to obviate a threat of crime is guilty along with those who commit it. If we fail in this crisis, we may expect the wrath of God upon us, as it fell upon Israel of the old.

Religious organizations expressed their abhorrence in resolutions which were printed in the newspapers. One of these organizations was the Methodist Preachers of Atlanta which consisted of white members. On July 21, 1930 the Atlanta Journal carried their resolutions which read as follows:

Having learned with profound regret of recent alleged outrages against some of the colored people of our city, we desire to condemn all unlawful conduct, such as the murder of Dennis Hubert, the throwing of a tear bomb into Wheat Street Baptist Church, the sending of anonymous letters to Negro church officials and individuals and efforts to intimidate and assault law abiding Negro citizens.

We also hereby call upon our white citizens to join us in protest in upholding the enforcement of our laws.

16 Handwritten excerpt of sermon of Dr. R. O. Flinn, pastor, North Presbyterian Church in Atlanta, date unknown.

Another organization which expressed resentment was the Atlanta Christian Council. Unlike the CIC, the Atlanta Christian Council had a long history which extended back into the nineteenth century. The Christian Council, originally a white organization, was founded in Atlanta in 1879. The organization provided a channel through which flowed the best efforts toward the solution of human problems. The council founder an H. H. Parks felt an obligation to society and the organization later became an interracial one.

The chief objective of the Council was to develop among Christian people concerted sympathy and action in all that pertains to the civilization of practical morality and religion in our community. This organization is still in existence today; however, it has changed its name to the Christian Council of Metropolitan Atlanta. Even today the organization still pursues its original objectives.

The murder of Dennis Hubert and the work of these white social organizations, churches and ministers appeared in many leading papers throughout the state and the South. This information was channelled to other Southern states by the CIC which had long since expanded or had members living in other states. As a result of this, southern states, and possibly some northern ones, were made more acutely aware of the problem of mob violence in the South, particularly in the state

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of Georgia during 1930. At the same time, interracial cooperation was strengthened in Georgia as a result of Hubert's murder.

One of the most positive instances of interracial cooperation can be seen in the participation of leading white Atlantans' organizations in a fundraising drive to rebuild the Hubert's home. This drive was organized shortly after the burning of the Hubert's home on June 26, 1930. Local Atlantans both white and Negro held mass meetings which convened at Wheat Street Baptist Church in Atlanta. One of these meetings was disturbed by a teargas bomb which was hurled into the church from a speeding car.

John H. Magnet, a white realtor in Atlanta, organized and became treasurer of the Hubert Home Rebuilding Fund. Mr. Magnet had been conspicuous for active and courageous interest on behalf of Negro justice and social welfare.

The Atlanta Journal printed a story on July 22, which included information about Magnet and the Citizen's committee. This committee did not ask for a large sum of money but wanted at least one dollar from two thousand people. If this sum could have been raised, it would have gone a long ways in the restoration of the Hubert home.


Although the sum of one dollar was asked, much larger donations were received. Atlanta Mayor I. N. Ragsdale donated fifteen dollars, a check for five dollars was received from a Julius R. Watts and Company. A letter accompanied the donation promising to pay more. The letter also stated, "the least the law abiding citizens of Atlanta can do is replace the Hubert home with a better one."

Churches began to send money and collect donations in Sunday morning services. Also personal donations came from at least fifteen of the city's leading ministers of all denominations. Among them were a Rev. E. M. Poteat, pastor of the Second Baptist Church of Atlanta enclosed with his subscription the declaration that he regards the "expression of good will on the part of responsible citizens of Atlanta at the present time as of capital importance." Rev. Poteat also stated, "Please count me among those who feel that the city cannot too strongly repudiate the attitudes of irresponsible hoodlums who know neither respect for humanity nor respect for the laws of civilized life." The Reverend Louis D. Newton, pastor of the Druid Hills Baptist Church, sent a check and urged his congregation to do

22 "Many Atlantans Give to Restore Hubert Home," Atlanta Constitution, 23 July 1930.


likewise. Newton also stated, "I hope we will have generous response from our people to this very worthy appeal."

A. Luther Stimson in a letter to Mr. Magnet enclosed fifteen dollars with the message that he was "glad to partly express the great sympathy we feel for Rev. Hubert and his family."

On July 30, personal contributions were received from members of the CIC such as Dr. Alexander and Mrs. R. B. Eleazer. They donated ten dollars and one dollar respectively. As of July 30, the Citizens Committee had received donations from at least five other states including the donation of a Mrs. J. H. Murphy from as far away as Los Angeles, California. Mrs. Murphy donated two dollars. The citizens committee also received an anonymous letter with a donation signed "a friend of justice." Contributions were also received from Atlanta based companies such as Welch's Grape Juice Company and from the Atlanta Christian Council.

Overall donation to the Hubert Rebuilding Fund were received from many organizations and individuals from all walks of life. For

26 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 Letter from John Magnet to Gaddus J. Hubert, 30 July 1930. CIC Papers, Box 24.
example, money was donated from missionaries who had served in uncivilized lands and were shocked beyond expression at this outrage which occurred involving the murder of Hubert. Donations came from city officials, educators, millionaires and from representatives of the state and local government.

On August 12, 1930, Magnet totalled the amount of the donations and proceeded in giving the money to the Rev. Mr. Hubert. The grand total to that day was six-hundred and twenty-five dollars. Although the sum was not near the goal of the committee, this sum was still a considerable amount in 1930. Also, it is certain this amount aided the Huberts in replacing their home.

The S. S. Mincey Case

The widespread condemnation of citizens in Georgia concerning the Hubert murder was seen again as a result of the S. S. Mincey murder in Montgomery County, Georgia. This murder occurred only two weeks after Hubert's on July 29, 1930.

Unlike their behavior in the Hubert murder, white citizens of this county began to openly condemn Mincey's murder as soon as it occurred. Both weekly and daily papers gave considerable attention to the case in the form of editorials. On the day following the murder

30 "Christian Council Group and Methodists Take Stand: Donations Pour In," Atlanta Journal, date unknown.

31 Letter to Dr. Alexander from John Magnet, 12 August 1930. CIC Papers, Box 24.
there appeared an editorial depicting the attitude of the majority of Montgomery County citizens. This editorial was the first to be issued after Mincey's death. It stated:

Hail to Conquering Heroes! . . . not only charged Mincey's death to the lily white Republicans but concluded that in view of the fact that Montgomery['s] earlier floggers had gone unpunished . . . we can assure no man that he is safe in his liberty or life while in our midst.

The editorial continued,

The majority of the citizens of this county do not approve of such things. . . .

We speak for the majority when we say Montgomery County condemns such brutal action.

Editorials denouncing Mincey's flogging as well as murder appeared in other nearby towns and cities. Like those of Montgomery County, they also expressed resentment. For example, The Madisonian of Madison, Georgia, carried a very striking editorial which not only condemned Mincey's murder but also attacked the state of Georgia on August 3, 1930. This editorial stated,

Georgia will remain at the bottom of the list of illiteracy and in the sisterhood of states will continue to go backward in things worthwhile as long as outrages in Montgomery County continue to happen.

The editorial urged that something be done about these outrages.

32 Raper, The Tragedy, 177.

33 Ibid., 182-183.
The newspapers were not the only protestors of mob action. On August 4, a majority of leading white citizens of Montgomery County held a mass meeting which convened at Ailey's court house. Some of the objectives of the meeting were to publically denounce mob rule and formulate some plan to aid in the apprehension of Mincey's murderers. The chairman of this meeting was Col. L. C. Underwood, a leading white farmer of Montgomery County. Underwood stated that Mincey had given his life to rid Georgia of floggings and if necessary, he himself would do the same. White ministers, physicians, lawyers and businessmen all expressed their utter disapproval of this murder. A Dr. J. W. Palmer, of Ailey, described the bruised and mangled bodies of Mincey and other victims of past floggings which occurred in the past in Montgomery County. Also, appreciation for Mincey's work in the community were expressed. As a result of these meetings a resolution was adopted by the citizens who attended this meeting. This resolution stated:

Whereas, in recent years a number of horrible crimes have been committed within the [bounds] of Montgomery County, or upon citizens of this county forcibly taken to an adjoining county by masked bodies of white men; the perpetrators of such despicable and cowardly acts, under cover of darkness and their identity unknown, have gone without apprehension or punishment, to the indignation of an enraged citizenship; and

34
Raper, The Tragedy, 183.

35
Ibid.

36
Ibid.
Whereas, in the early morning of July 29 this county again suffered an unpardonable shock to civil rights and justice, when S. S. Mincey, a colored citizen, was by a masked band of white men dealt a fatal blow in his home, forcibly taken away and tortured to death in an unmerciful and heinous manner, and this without provocation, and unwarranted by any rule of civilization. This murder of this citizen has but forged another link in the chain of violence; it is a tendency toward anarchy and a reign of terror, which, if not summarily checked by enforcement of law, supported by a righteous citizenry, will soon render this county unsafe and unfit for citizenship of character and decency; it is a blot on civilization, a blow at American Constitutional rights, and an unsavory record abhorred by the lawabiding element of Montgomery County.

Therefore, be it

Resolved, by the citizens of Montgomery County, Georgia, in mass meetings assembled at the courthouse of said county, August 4, 1930, that their unqualified condemnation of this and similar acts of mob violence, contrary to law, human instincts and social order, be expressed in demand for more direct and definite actions taken by officers of the law-charged with the apprehension of criminals and courts responsible for the administration of justice and the punishment of those so flagrantly defying the law of the land, in the support of which our efforts are hereby openly and freely pledged, that crimes of this nature may be stamped out and a higher and unquestioned standard of citizenship be raised in this section of Georgia.

As previously stated, the Grand Jury hearing which followed the Mincey murder never indicted anyone. However, pressure was placed upon the courts by a group of leading white citizens of Ailey and Mount Vernon, Georgia. This group of citizens founded a committee which called themselves "Vigilantes". The expressed purpose of this

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38 Ibid., 187.
committee was to inform the people of the revolting problem of mob violence, to place before the courts all available evidence concerning the Mincey murder and other acts of mob violence, and to raise funds to apprehend and convict those who flogged Mincey as well. Unfortunately, this committee never secured enough funds or evidence to incriminate a party or parties.

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Action taken as a result of the Dennis Hubert and S. S. Mincey cases exemplified a new trend in race relations, changing attitudes of white Georgians towards mob violence, and the growth in interracial cooperation among the races.

In the Dennis Hubert case, evidence illustrated a definite change in public opinion which played an important role in securing a trial and conviction. Also, a new trend in race relations can be seen at that time in interracial cooperation. An example of interracial cooperation is the fund raising drive initiated by prominent white Atlantans to rebuild the Hubert's home.

The press also played an important role in enhancing interracial cooperation through editorials, and cover stories, particularly the Atlanta Journal and the Atlanta Constitution and its then editor, Clark Howell.

The work of social and religious organizations particularly the CIC played a very important role in attaining the result in both cases. The CIC also investigated the S. S. Mincey case and published its findings along with its findings about the other lynchings which occurred in Georgia in 1930. Without the work of these organizations, the results in these cases may not have become a reality.
The results of the S. S. Mincey case were not as definite as in the Hubert case—no conviction nor indictments were ever made in the case. However, the S. S. Mincey case is significant because very strong resentment and denunciation of the crime were evident. Also, it is significant in that it occurred in rural Georgia where the majority of Georgia's 1930 lynchings took place. Therefore, the significance of the case lies in the fact that although public opinion may have openly justified and condoned other lynchings which occurred in these areas in the past, Mincey's lynching was the exception. White Georgians resented Mincey's murder.

This research has raised the question of whether the status of Hubert and Mincey had any effect on the changes in attitude toward mob violence. The middle class status of these Negro victims may have had some effect.

Mincey had acquired many white friends during his career in county politics. He held his position in the county Republican party for twenty-two years. Mincey's economic status in the community also had some influence in that he was regarded as a person of substance.

The Hubert family consisted of very prominent and educated Negroes whose acknowledged history extended for generations. Moreover, practically all of the Hubert family members held leadership positions, particularly in the fields of education. Dennis Hubert's father, Gaddus J. Hubert and his brothers had many white friends in

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leadership positions, as did Mincey. The Hubert family was very large and many family members lived in other areas of the country in 1930. Therefore, the murder had ramifications beyond the immediate local area. Overall, Hubert and Mincey were well liked and, most of all, respected for their character. They did not fit the traditional stereotype of the "shiftless trouble-maker" ascribed to Negroes by most whites during this period.

Other Negro lynching victims in Georgia during 1930 were not of the status of Hubert or Mincey. Only four of the mob victims were property owners and this number included Mincey. Most of these victims had very difficult lives and had unattractive backgrounds. Other victims also had little formal education. No one had advanced beyond the fifth grade. More importantly, none of the other mob victims were respected by white citizens in their respective communities.

The Hubert and Mincey cases also served as a catalyst for the formation of an anti-lynching organization and contributed to a decline in mob violence in Georgia for a period of time. Shortly after the summer of 1930, the CIC initiated a quick attack upon lynchings and mob violence. Dr. Will Alexander and the CIC implemented three programs to undermine the mythology and respect-

2 Raper, The Tragedy, 3.

3 Ibid.
ability that lynching had achieved and collected figures which would expose the savagery of lynching. The first of these programs consisted of researching information on lynching and distributing it to the public. The second involved the education of the community to the necessity of influencing sheriffs and the local press on the situation of lynching and mob violence. And the third program involved the formation of an anti-lynching organization which would become the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching (ASWPL).

In November 1930, the women of the CIC gathered in Atlanta to organize this sub-organization of the CIC. They were called by a Mrs. Jessie Daniel Ames, head of the women's division of the CIC. The women's division had been a part of the CIC since 1922. Mrs. Ames assumed leadership in 1929. The ASWPL was founded these Southern women felt that the white woman was responsible indirectly for lynchings since Southern white men had traditionally maintained

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that lynching and other acts of mob violence were used as a "protection" for white women.

Mrs. Ames planned to have a one-day conference on November 1, 1930. This conference was to consider the problem of lynchings and the role, if any, the white women of the South had in curbing it. The organization's objectives were similar to those of the CIC. Therefore, it attempted to reach its goal through the use of field work and educating communities by the distribution of literature, use of the press releases and conferences. It is a fact that the CIC as well as the ASWPL did not stop lynchings completely but they were able to strip lynching of its respectability.

This research has presented evidence concerning two acts of mob violence which resulted in changing race relations in Georgia. They enhanced interracial cooperation among the races as well as contributed to the formation of an anti-lynching organization. However, the most significant contribution can be seen in the decline of mob violence and in the increasing number of prevented lynchings in Georgia after 1930.

In 1931, there were four prevented lynchings in Georgia compared to the six recorded lynchings which occurred in 1930. During

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8 Letter from Jessie D. Ames to W. C. Wimbrough, 15 October 1930, ASWPL Papers, AUC Woodruff Library.
1930, Georgia had the highest number of lynchings of all the states. However, during the years 1931 and 1932, there were no recorded lynching in Georgia.

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