

797
Pl. answer
mordy



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
AUSTIN, TEXAS

COKE STEVENSON
GOVERNOR

RECEIVED
JUL 30 1942
CRIMINAL DIVISION

July 27, 1942

OFFICE OF THE
RECEIVED
JUL 30 1942
Berge
ATTORNEY GENERAL

RECEIVED
JUL 31 1942
CRIMINAL DIVISION

Honorable Francis Biddle
The Attorney General
Washington, D. C.

Dear General Biddle:

Prior to the receipt of your letter I had condemned the action at Texarkana which resulted in the death of Willie Vinson. I pointed out in a public statement that all of us deplore mob violence of any kind or character, and that the right of trial by jury is the Palladium of civil liberty.

Since receiving your letter, I have kept in touch with the authorities at Texarkana and I am assured that they will do all that is possible to apprehend the parties who were responsible for the death of Willie Vinson. It is regrettable that such incidents occur. It is more regrettable that certain members of the Negro race from time to time furnish the setting for mob violence by the outrageous crimes which they commit. I think if a white man had committed the crime which I am told that Willie Vinson was guilty of, that the citizens would have lynched him. Certainly that does not justify mob violence, but it does illustrate that the Negro race is not the target in a lynching of this character.

You may be assured that the State authorities will be diligent in the prosecution of those who instigated this lynching if they can be apprehended.

With kindest regards, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Coke Stevenson
Coke Stevenson

FILED
BY MK
On AUG 7 1942

158260-71
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
JUL 31 1942
DIVISION OF RECORDS
CRIM. DIV. - ROTNEM

CS:mm

N.M.M.