

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THIS BE RETURNED IMMEDIATELY

We, Southern women, protest against the use by Southern men of the excuse of the "protection of Southern womanhood" to condone lynchings of Negroes by mobs of violent men. We protest equally when this same excuse is used to condone unfair trials and extreme sentences on those accused of attacks on white women.

A flagrant instance of court procedure perverted in the name of chivalry is the Scottsboro case, in which eight young Negro boys were condemned to the electric chair on an accusation of rape. The boys were tried within a week of their arrest, in a strange town where they had neither money nor friends, without proper legal defense and with no pleas made for them. The juries were impaneled from a disorderly mob outside. The trial was held in an atmosphere of martial law.

The record of trial and the reports of procedure both within and without the court room indicate that there was no possibility of a fair trial in this case, and that the penalties inflicted are inhuman.

As Southern women, and as adult citizens of twentieth-century America, we refuse to hide any longer behind the protecting wall of prejudice and violence. We protest against the "ideal" of "Southern chivalry" that supposes that the honor of Southern womanhood can best be preserved by such savage and unjust actions as the trial, conviction, and contemplated electrocution of the seven young Scottsboro Negro boys.