“A State of Violent Contrasts”:
Lynching and the Competing Visions of White Supremacy in Georgia, 1949

BY BRENT M. S. CAMPNEY

On May 30, 1949, farmers discovered the body of Caleb Hill, Jr., a young black man, on a country lane on the outskirts of Irwinton, in Wilkinson County. “Georgia becomes the first State in the Nation to record a lynching for 1949,” the state’s leading black paper, the Atlanta Daily World, reported grimly. Local whites unflinchingly expressed support for the killing; one quipped that it “didn’t as much as upset a checker game.” To their astonishment, however, “the rest of the country . . . adopted a different attitude.” Within days Irwinton whites found themselves at the center of a storm of national condemnation similar to the one that would greet the more well-known lynching of Emmett Till in Mississippi six years later. Coming at a moment of political upheaval and deteriorating race relations, the Hill lynching highlighted and exacerbated divisions between more conservative rural white Georgians and their more moderate urban counterparts. More importantly, it provided these factions with a platform for articulating their respective visions of white supremacy in Georgia.1


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During World War II black activists coordinated unprecedented attacks on Jim Crow across Georgia, leading a movement that exceeded in scale similar activism elsewhere in the Deep South. They established a thriving network of chapters of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), attacked the pernicious system of segregation, and successfully challenged the state's white primary, which had hitherto locked blacks out of politics. Building on the latter victory and taking advantage of the moderate leadership of Governor Ellis Arnall (1943-47), who was "as liberal as it is possible for a white man to be and hold office in the South," they pressed a vigorous campaign to increase black voter registration. The historian Stephen G. N. Tuck has written that "by 1946 the whole state of Georgia seemed poised to move away from violent white supremacy."

Instead, the Democratic primary of that year unleashed racial hysteria that aggravated the breach between the more moderate urban whites then controlling the party and the more conservative rural whites attempting to reclaim it. This contest pitted Arnall's handpicked successor, moderate James V. Carmichael, against former governor and hardcore white supremacist Eugene Talmadge, who had lost the 1942 gubernatorial campaign. Using virulently racist rhetoric, Talmadge vowed to reinstate the white primary and to reinvigorate segregation. He pointedly warned that "wise Negroes will stay away from the white folks' ballot boxes." Fearing that intimidation alone might not be sufficient to keep blacks from the polls, his supporters purged them from the rolls in rural counties. After analyzing the election results, Tuck concluded that "in approximately fifty counties where blacks were not permitted to vote, the racial purge decided the result." Reflecting the passions of the campaign, white mobs burned black churches and perpetrated several lynchings. In the most notorious incident,

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a mob executed two black women and two black men—married couples—in a single grisly incident in Walton County.3

In a peculiar turn of events, Eugene Talmadge died during the interval between his election and inauguration. Then, through an act of audacious electoral fraud, his son, Herman, assumed the office. Two months into his illegitimate term, the Georgia Supreme Court replaced Herman Talmadge with M. E. Thompson, Eugene Talmadge’s running mate, and set a special election for 1948. Talmadge won this election handily, in part because “many of the 200,000 blacks who would have cast their votes for Thompson in a peaceful election climate were kept from the polls.” Although the younger Talmadge did not warn “wise Negroes” to stay home, as his father had, white supporters did unleash violence as they had two years before, including the lynching of two black men who dared to vote. “Negro voters were not told that voting was reserved for white Georgians during the recent gubernatorial campaign,” an editor noted in 1949, “but all during the bitter race-inciting drive, cross-burnings and whippings followed closely.” Once in office Talmadge began dismantling black political and social gains, and nurtured the backlash stoked by his father. “Whether by bullet or statute, the repressive effect is the same,” lamented an observer. “One encourages the other; the coincidence is inevitable. Georgia has gone backward.”4

“The election of Herman Talmadge was an evil portent,” declared the Baltimore Sun, providing “a green light for those very elements in Georgia’s population which have been responsible for its shameful record.” These “elements” included the Ku Klux Klan, which expanded dramatically in 1948-49, even as Klan activity declined elsewhere in the South. As its membership grew, the Klan became increasingly active—so much so that “after 1948, ra-

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racial violence was unrestrained.” In early 1949 whites murdered blacks in Bibb and Troup Counties in cases that were not “obvious ‘lynching’” cases but bore striking similarities. The New York Herald Tribune established the chain of causality. “Last year there were . . . only two lynchings in the entire country,” it noted. “Both, significantly enough, were in Georgia, where white supremacy is a deliberate rallying cry for political advancement. This is the state where a ragtail version of the Ku-Klux Klan has again come to life, a new and more subtle Talmadge is Governor, and a disturbing pattern of racial violence is developing.”

In addition to their implications for interracial relations, the Talmadge elections underscored political divisions among white Georgians. “Historically, rural-urban antagonisms have created the most persistent schism in modern Georgia politics,” noted the historian Numan V. Bartley. Eugene Talmadge “emerged as the defender of rural traditionalism and as the scourge of urban concepts of progress.” He was succeeded in this regard by his son Herman. Politicians who successfully courted the rural electorate did so in part by charging that effete urban liberals dominated state politics. However, the historian Charles Pyles has also observed that, “if Georgia politics has been a history of rural-urban cleavage, it is the attitude toward the position of the Negro that explains the major peculiarities of the cleavage.” Not surprisingly, therefore, rural leaders hammered away relentlessly at black gains in the cities and spun lurid tales of disintegrating racial and gender boundaries in these growing municipalities. In 1948, for example, the Talmadge campaign distributed photographs of interracial dancing at an NAACP function in Atlanta, photographs guaranteed to raise the ire of his supporters.6

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6Bartley, From Thurmond to Wallace, 14; Charles Pyles, quoted in Tuck, Beyond Atlanta, 75. On the efforts of rural politicians to attack “groveling urban liberals,” see David R. Goldfield, Black, White, and Southern: Race Relations and Southern Culture, 1940 to the Present (Baton Rouge, LA, 1990), 66; Tuck, Beyond Atlanta, 75-76.
Rural critics notwithstanding, white supremacists also dominated the political economy of the cities, where violence—often in the form of police brutality—helped to sustain their position. Nonetheless, many urban white supremacists recognized the need to reform what they viewed as the worst excesses of Jim Crow. Some were concerned about its impact on economic growth; others were cognizant of the increasing influence of rapidly growing urban black populations; still more were offended by a gnawing sense of injustice. Keenly sensitive to criticism from the North, many feared that, if white Southerners did not reform themselves, they would have reform imposed upon them. The federal government was actively promoting civil rights, debating anti-lynching legislation, and dispatching agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to investigate lynchings. Consequently, urban moderates found themselves in a particularly awkward position. They were still wedded to white supremacy but increasingly resentful of the crude and violent racism that was so prevalent in the countryside, racism that could ultimately jeopardize southern autonomy and economic progress. Reflecting this view, officials in Atlanta promoted it as “the city too busy to hate.”

The antiquated county unit system employed in Georgia further aggravated rural-urban conflict because it awarded disproportionate influence to the least populated counties, enabling rural areas and small towns to dominate politics. It also “rewarded the politician who most single-mindedly cultivated the rural vote,” thereby encouraging inflammatory race-baiting. The county unit system bred particular urban resentment in the election of 1948 when rural authority brought Talmadge to power over Carmichael. “The more moderate race relations in Atlanta and Savannah had no influence,” and “over half of the black voters in the state were in the thirty-eight most populous counties, which were

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relatively underrepresented by the county-unit apportionment.”

The backlash unleashed by the gubernatorial campaigns of the late 1940s sparked the lynching of Caleb Hill, Jr., and the simmering resentments between rural and urban whites shaped its contentious aftermath.

Three primary areas of investigation follow. The first is an examination of the lynching of Caleb Hill, Jr., its underlying causes, the local responses to it, and the criminal investigation that followed. The second is an analysis of the condemnation by the national press of the lynching and the response to this censure by whites in Irwinton generally, and by Alex S. Boone, the editor of the Wilkinson County News, in particular. The last is an exploration of the rancorous debate that emerged between rural Georgia, as exemplified by Boone, and urban Georgia, as represented by the white dailies in Atlanta and Macon. This war of words over the content and character of white supremacy in Georgia in the post-World War II era underscored and intensified the intra-racial divisions opened by the 1946 and 1948 elections.

Irwinton was the seat of rural Wilkinson County and a kaolin mining community of about five hundred residents situated in the heart of the Black Belt, an area characterized by a sizeable black population, persistent economic stagnation, and brutal racial repression. Wilkinson County exhibited all of these characteristics and, as a testament to its stifling brand of white supremacy, was the site of at least four lynching incidents between 1882 and 1930. During the 1940s it witnessed a mass exodus when the population declined by more than 11 percent because black and white residents alike left for the cities or the North in search of better-paying jobs in the defense industries and, in the case of blacks, of a more amenable racial climate. The South on the whole had lost

*Bartley, From Thurmond to Wallace, 14; Tuck, Beyond Atlanta, 75. Numan V. Bartley has succinctly described the county unit system as follows: “The system provided that the candidate in a primary election winning a plurality of the votes in a county carried that county’s unit votes. Each county was allotted two unit votes for each member that it elected to the Georgia House of Representatives. All counties chose at least one representative to the lower house of the legislature, and the more populous counties elected either two or three members. Consequently, the 121 least populous counties cast two unit votes each, 30 ‘middle’ counties possessed four unit votes each, and the eight most populous counties were in the six unit vote category. This arrangement permitted the least populous counties to dominate both the state legislature and the executive branch.” Bartley, From Thurmond to Wallace, 14-15.
over a million rural blacks since the beginning of the Great Migration during the 1910s.9

As fervent Talmadge supporters, whites in Wilkinson County played a role in the violence unleashed by the gubernatorial campaigns of the late 1940s. In 1946 “a black union organizer was murdered near Gordon.” Three years later a white man killed black resident Thomas Porter in the same town. Although Macon newspapers quoted the sheriff “as saying that [Porter]...had been killed by being shot in the back while running from G. H. Miller,” the coroner rendered the predictable “verdict of self-defense in justifiable homicide.” County residents would gain national notoriety, however, when vigilantes took a twenty-eight year old miner, known to friend and foe alike as “Picky Pie,” from his Irwinton jail cell in 1949 and shot him to death. Given the endemic violence of the period, observers initially assumed that this killing, like many others, would recede quickly from public view. “The lynching of Caleb Hill, Jr.,” lamented the Atlanta Daily World, “is but another episode in the long chain of lawlessness and violence blanketing the state since the celebrated Walton County multiple lynchings of 1946.”10

At the most basic level, the lynching grew out of a scuffle between Hill and Sheriff George C. Hatcher during an arrest at the New Harlem Club, a black juke joint in tiny McIntyre. According to Hatcher, Hill freed himself of his handcuffs, seized the sheriff’s gun, and fired a shot that narrowly missed the officer. Hatcher wrestled Hill to the floor, gaining control over him. He took Hill to the jail in Irwinton and returned to the club to retrieve his weapon. There he learned that a black witness had pocketed the pistol during the fight in an effort to prevent him from shooting Hill. The sheriff and six officers paid the man a late-night visit. After ransacking the witness’ home and beating both he and his wife,


Hatcher retrieved his handgun. He claimed that he then returned to his living quarters adjoining the jail and fell asleep.  

Within a short time, a rumor circulated that "the Sheriff had been killed at the negro club." Although the exact sequence of subsequent events remains unclear, several white men soon invaded the jail, hastened to Hill's cell, and told him, "Come on and lets get out of here." They escorted him roughly outside and stuffed him into a waiting automobile filled with an unknown number of co-conspirators. The men then drove off into the night. "Caleb [Picky Pie] Hill, Jr., 28-year-old Negro bread winner for a family of nine, was whisked 'mysteriously' out of jail here, beaten, shot and his body dumped two and a half miles from town," reported the Macon News of his disappearance and death. The following morning, two young white farmers discovered the body and walked into Irwinton to report the finding.  

When told the next morning that Hill's body had been discovered, Hatcher professed astonishment: "I ran upstairs and sure enough, Hill was gone." At the coroner's inquest Tom Carswell, a prisoner who "shook perceptibly" when questioned, reported that two white men had taken Hill but denied knowing them. "You probably couldn't identify those two men if you saw them again, could you?" asked the coroner. "Carswell, a Negro, answered smartly: 'No sir.'" The jury soon concluded that Hill had come to his death "by hands unknown." The Macon News noted the comic absurdity of the interrogation. "Carswell . . . said the two murderers were white men but he did not know them," it observed. "Even if he did, is it likely Tom Carswell, remembering the colored blood in his veins and realizing he spoke in the deep Southland, would speak out?" The answer, it concluded, was too obvious to state. "No, Tom Carswell likes to live just as Caleb Hill would have liked to have lived," and "from now until the end of his days, he'll be


shaking his head and making sure that everybody knows that ‘No, sir’ he didn’t see the killers.”13

Undoubtedly, the vigilantes lynched Hill in part because of his alleged attack on Hatcher, an unequivocal challenge to white supremacy. Police Chief J. A. Fountain took this position in an interview with the Macon News. “Any Negro that starts shooting at white folks is overdue,” he opined. Based on the evidence, however, whites had long viewed Hill as threatening and insufficiently subservient. The victim’s friends told the Chicago Defender that “he was the type of man who did not hesitate to ‘talk up’ to anyone. ‘And the white people here just didn’t like that.’” In fact, just a month before, Hill had fled town after an argument with two white men, returning only after “he thought ‘feeling had died out.’” Whites also resented Hill’s financial acumen, which enabled him to purchase an automobile that was the envy of many whites. “Hill owned a shiny 1946 Ford which mysteriously caught fire and burned up while it was parked a month ago,” noted the Atlanta Daily World. Viewed in this context, it is likely that many whites were looking for any pretext to rid themselves of this “troublemaker.”14

The white community in Wilkinson County rallied behind the lynching, which it viewed as justifiable on the merits and worthy of little comment. “There is an air of indifference, sprinkled with a dash of ‘so what?’” reported the Macon News. With the killing itself and their seemingly unanimous support of it, whites sent an unequivocal message of intimidation to the black community. They sent this message explicitly to Hill’s siblings the morning after the lynching when they came into town to bail their brother out of jail. A man approached them and warned, “the white folks said stay out of town today.” Not surprisingly, many blacks were afraid to speak to reporters. They “just shrugged their shoulders and said: ‘I don’t know anything about it,’” noted the Chicago Defender. In addition,


influential whites applied pressure to those blacks possibly inclined to speak out. They subtly coerced, for example, Ceola James, the owner of the New Harlem and a witness to the barroom scuffle between Hill and Hatcher. "Mrs. James, the mother of six children, is buying [a] 56-acre farm, and to say anything against Hatcher would be detrimental to her future business, so she tells what will help the sheriff." Because white intimidation reached such levels, state police were compelled to "guard the services and the funeral procession."15

Even if its protest was somewhat muted, the black community did demonstrate its anger through the sheer number of its members who gathered to mourn Hill. In fact, police probably patrolled the funeral services as much to control potential black protest as to pro-

tect black people from white violence. It was steaming “hot and [the] clay-packed hills near the Wilkinson-Twiggs County line cracked under the sun’s rays in the early Sunday afternoon,” reported the Macon News. “Yet nearly 1,000 Negroes perspired through last rites for the murdered Negro clay miner.” As the minister preached, it added, “the box-shaped [church] building bulged with relatives and friends and many more stood outside in the sun.”

Initially, it was unclear whether the killing would be classified as a lynching. Some argued that it was a ‘‘murder’’ rather than a ‘‘lynching’’ since only two men were involved.” Others believed that there were at least three assailants, making it “a lynching under the definition of the authoritative Tuskegee Institute.” Irrespective of these technicalities, the press settled on “lynching” to describe the event and, consequently, reporters converged on Irwinton. “It was inevitable that the case would attract national attention,” an observer noted, “especially as an anti-lynching bill is on President Truman’s civil rights program.” The Justice Department placed the case “under active study” and dispatched FBI agents to determine if the lynchers had violated Hill’s civil rights. Under national scrutiny, Talmadge sent two representatives of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI), H. N. Spurlin and Henry Walden, who were to remain on the case “until there is a break.” The GBI agents became the lead investigators, working secretly to build their case while stripping Hatcher of any role. The sheriff put his best spin on these developments. “[Hatcher] said he is co-operating with the GBI agents ‘in every way possible,’” reported the Macon Telegraph, “He indicated that he wants it to be a state show, not his.”

Whites in Irwinton watched in amazement as a stream of inquisitive strangers poured into town. The editor of the Wilkinson County News spoke for many when he declared that "he didn't see 'why so much fuss is being made over this thing.'" Almost immediately, the white community circled the proverbial wagons. "Weary of answering questions," noted the Macon News, local whites grew hostile and "reporters were 'frozen out' despite the summer weather." An editor for that newspaper reflected on the growing anger that he witnessed during his time in Irwinton. "The townspeople with whom we chatted—the country newspaper editor, the women in the restaurant on the square, service station attendants, overalled farmers and sawmill workers—unanimously were resentful that the crime should have attracted such attention and drawn newspapermen and photographers to their community as sorghum syrup draws flies."18

Community leaders who had initially taken a laissez-faire attitude to the case now felt compelled to go through the requisite motions. Officials who had declined even to remove the bullets from Hill's corpse because it "would 'cost a lot of money'" now backtracked. C. C. Thompson, the coroner and a local butcher, assured journalists of his commitment to justice. "The reporters and all made the coroner nervous," noted Time magazine. "Leaning on his meat counter, he declared: 'I am still making a desperate effort to apprehend the guilty party.'" Others, however, continued to drag their feet. The sheriff claimed that his efforts to find the lynchers had delayed him from seeking assistance from the state's chief executive. "I have been much too busy to ask Gov. Talmadge to offer a reward," Hatcher told reporters. The governor, in turn, claimed that he was powerless without an appeal from Hatcher, stating "that no reward had been posted by the state ... because he had received no request to do so."19

19Georgia Leads Nation in First Lynching in '49 at Irwinton [sic]," Atlanta Daily World, May 31, 1949; "The South," Time, June 13, 1949; "Sheriff Not Sure about Lynch Reward," Atlanta Daily World, June 5, 1949. The governor affirmed his disinterest in the lynching on June 3 when he addressed the Negro Statewide Beef Cattle Show and Sale, telling more than a thousand people that "There may be isolated instances of injustices sometimes occurring in Georgia or the South, but the same is also true in every section of the nation." "Race Problem Economic, Talmadge Tells Negroes," Atlanta Constitution, June 4, 1949.
Within a week the GBI agents arrested "two ‘well-thought-of’ white men" from McIntyre, placing them in the same cell from which Hill had been abducted. One was thirty-seven-year-old Dennis Lamar Purvis, a businessman who owned a café and a grocery store, and who, Police Chief Fountain assured investigators, "wasn’t the kind" to be mixed up in a lynching. The other was twenty-seven-year-old Malcolm Vivian Pierce, whom Fountain called "the best electrician that ever touched two wires together." Pierce, coincidentally enough, was also Hatcher’s nephew. Despite the glowing endorsements from Fountain, agents Spurlin and Walden told the press that they had "an ‘air-tight’ case against the two." Hatcher—with little choice in the matter—declared his intent to keep them in jail until the GBI was through with its case.20

A county attorney stressed that the investigation had "removed ‘any question of doubt’ about the role of Hatcher in the lynching, adding that “most Georgia sheriffs would have shot the Negro instead of taking him to jail.” Nevertheless, the press identified inconsistencies in the sheriff’s story, accusing him of complicity, if not participation. It was particularly skeptical that the lynchers could have removed Hill without collusion. "Is the sheriff to be blamed?" asked the Macon News. "It is not within our jurisdiction to find out, but it is strange that the keys to the jail should be left within easy reach of night prowlers who stepped in with the self-assurance of invited guests.” Not only did Hatcher leave his jail keys at home ("on top [of] a safe in the kitchen where he usually keeps them") during his absence to retrieve his gun, but he also left his home unlocked. In an explanation that strained credulity, he told reporters: "If I lock [the front door] the lock sticks," adding that "he didn’t want to disturb his wife when he returned."21

Others suggested that Hatcher took an active role in the killing. A white prisoner—undoubtedly hostile to the sheriff—told investigators that "he could not see the men who took Hill away, but that from what he heard he thought the sheriff was with them." A


witness far more sympathetic to the sheriff initially told a similar story. "The sheriff's wife, downstairs in the Hatcher's living quarters" at the time when the lynchers raided the jail on the second floor of the dwelling, "said she also heard the men enter and get Hill, but she too thought her husband was present." 22

With a grand jury set to consider the evidence on June 14, Spurlin told the Macon News that "he is 'sure' he has enough evidence to obtain some indictments." The day before the hearing, the News pondered its significance. "Georgia sets out tomorrow on a stern test of its justice—an effort to solve the lynching of a Negro. The state has seen 25 Negro lunchings [sic] since 1930. It hasn't returned a conviction in any of them." Not surprisingly, after a day-long presentation of the evidence the twenty-two man all-white jury returned a no-bill, resulting in the release of the prisoners. The duo walked out of jail together "with arms over each other's shoulders to receive handshakes from a small crowd that had stood by faithfully." The News conceded that Georgia had failed its "stern test." "Georgia added No. 26 today to an unbroken string," it concluded. "It is now up to the Federal government to decide whether to tackle the case." 23 In the days and weeks that followed, the federal government also failed the test, bringing no civil rights charges. Caleb Hill, Jr., would get no justice.

The national press denounced the lynching. Predictably, northern newspapers used the incident as a springboard to attack southern race relations, to condemn the defiance of law inherent in mob violence, and to advocate for federal anti-lynching legislation. "One more disgrace to the people and authorities of the State of Georgia," opined the New York Times, and "one more argument for federal laws to protect the individual against . . . 'the mindlessness of a mob.'" Given their assumptions about southern backwardness and their views on a practice that had become anachronistic elsewhere in the country, the press inflected its reports with condescending depictions of slack-jawed southern "crackers." "The way folks in Irwinton, Ga., saw it, there was noth-

22"Bullets Taken from Body of Lynched Negro," Dublin Courier-Herald, May 31, 1949. The Atlanta Journal also reported that "Mrs. Hatcher said she heard a car drive up during the night, but thought it was her husband." "Clues, Motives for Slaying of Negro Sought," Atlanta Journal, May 31, 1949, 5.

ing to get excited about,” wrote Newsweek contemptuously. “Sup-
pose a couple of men did kidnap Caleb Hill Jr. from the Wilkinson
county jail, beat him up, shoot him in the head and neck, and toss
his body in a creek? It was just what he deserved.” The weekly news
magazine paired this depiction with a sympathetic representation
of Hill. “Sure, he was a hard worker, steady, dependable, and the
sole support of his wife, his three children, his two sisters, his
mother, and his crippled father. They had to grant him that. But it
was just about the only good thing they could say about the man.”

While it used the incident to attack the South in general, the
national press drew a clear, if over-simplified, distinction between
the “back country” and the cities, dubbing Georgia “a state of vi-
olent contrasts.” The New York Herald-Tribune put it thus: “the preju-
dices of the forks of the creek account for lynchings,” while
“Atlanta refused to be upset by the professional appearance of
Jackie Robinson and more recently forbade parades by masked
[Klansmen].” The San Francisco Chronicle similarly rooted the
lynching in the rural character of Wilkinson County—and relied
on simplistic stereotypes. “Irwinton lies . . . far from major high-
ways,” it noted. “Its few inhabitants are likely to be walking projec-
tions of the vicious circle of the Southern backwoods—poverty,
pellagra, hookworm, corn whisky and hate.” Wilkinson, it con-
cluded, was a relic of a bygone era. “That a lynching has happened
there, with the archaic classic touches of the Sheriff who somehow
saw nothing, the Marshal who can learn nothing and the citizenry
too terrified to know anything, does not mean that ‘the South’ will
not change; it just means that change will come last of all to such
communities.”

The national press also used the Irwinton case as an object less-
on in ways in which racist violence undermined both Amer-
ica’s claim of moral superiority in crushing racist, fascist regimes
during World War II, and its claim to leadership among the non-
white peoples of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. “The latest race-
murder is America’s shame,” opined the Philadelphia Inquirer.

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bune, reprinted in Atlanta Daily World, June 7, 1949; “Old Judge Lynch at Irwinton,” San
Francisco Chronicle, June 1, 1949.
“This display of inhumanity affects us all. If ever this Nation is to fulfill its destiny, if it is to take its rightful place in world leadership, it must divest itself of the barbarism of racial and religious intolerance, of which lynching is the final expression.”

These attacks perturbed Alex S. Boone. Known for “his sly humor, his twinkling eyes and his small town air of frankness,” the editor of the Wilkinson County News was a member of the Georgia General Assembly and a Talmadge supporter who advertised his gubernatorial preference with a pair of scarlet suspenders emblazoned with the name of the governor. “Citizens in this section are generally very critical of the manner in which the fatal shooting of Hill was handled by the newspapers,” he thundered. Even before the lynching, Boone viewed the federal push for civil rights and northern attacks on southern race relations as a repetition of the Civil War and Reconstruction, when opportunistic carpetbaggers had set out to take over the South. In the 1860s, he wrote in April 1949, “they used the Negroes as a smoke screen to hide their money fight against the South.” As he saw it, white northerners had “cared but little for the blacks but with canting hypocrisy they used the Negro plight to destroy and pull down the South’s growing economic edifice.” In the wake of World War II, he believed that northerners were back to their old tricks. “History is now repeating itself. During the last few years, the Southern States have made great strides . . . so the North again is making an economic fight to down the South. . . . And they are again using, in hypocrisy and cant, the Negro.”

Given his suspicions, Boone naturally drew upon Reconstruction-era language to explain the rush of interlopers into Irwinton, dubbing them “moronic carpetbaggers” and “White race haters.” As a testament to his contempt for predatory carpetbaggers, Boone expressed tongue-in-cheek concern for the black Georgians who, as a result of the Great Migration, would have to live among those whom he considered well below blacks on the scale

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of humanity. It was cruel and unusual punishment, he joked, to “force the decent black people of the South to live in New York where per force they may have to eat, sleep, swim and perhaps in-
ter mar[ry] with such ignorant, rotten white puppies as Walter Winchell and the editors of Life, Time and Newsweek Magazines.” Boone was not alone in his view that Reconstruction was repeating itself. In a letter to the editor from rural southeast Georgia, a sympathizer decried the “carpet bagger trouble” afflicting Irwinton: “I wonder if the good old South will ever be free of them?”

Even though he bashed mercilessly the northern critics, Boone directed most of his invective at the editors of Georgia’s white urban dailies, particularly those in Atlanta and Macon, who had published numerous articles and editorials denouncing the lynching. Sticking to his Civil War-era conceptual framework, the editor viewed these men as the second-coming of the white Southerners—or scalawags—who had supported Reconstruction and allied with freed people and carpetbaggers against conservative whites. With unbridled fury he railed against these “scalawags [who] recently blowed up an ordinary killing here in Irwinton into a slander, scattered world wide [sic], on the white people of Wilkinson County.”

In a flurry of editorials Boone targeted the specific shortcomings that, in his view, undermined the arguments of the urban moderates in Georgia. Repeatedly, he charged that they were betraying their white heritage in their avaricious pursuit of what they called “progress,” and that they were doing so at the expense of rural traditionalism. If achieving wealth meant the violation of codes set “by the Creator,” he opined, then whites in Irwinton preferred poverty. “The scalawags have perhaps made many millions by the sale of their slanders to the reading public,” he snarled, “evidently being willing to publish any lie about the White Race, provided they can get a dirty dime for so doing.” The editor accused his enemies of attempting to cultivate a larger black readership by exaggerating the facts of the case. “Typewriting jackasses...rushed down here to help blow up such a killing, as has often happened elsewhere, into a monstrous lynching.” He also accused them of ignoring black-on-white crime, as exemplified by a black man who allegedly killed a white couple in a nearby county. “No reporters,

no photographers, no detectives. The scalawags were just not interested.” However, in those instances when a black lawbreaker did receive his just comeuppance, Boone claimed that urban papers were prone to hysterical protest, proving that the scalawags believed “that every colored criminal is just an abused hero.”

Turning to a subject certain to raise the hackles of his readers, Boone dwelled at length on what he saw as the precipitous erosion of sexual morality in Georgia’s cities. “Is [there] a single scalawag editor in Georgia who does not know that the tendency of his writings is to bring about in Atlanta and Macon, more and more white and black marriages, with a possible consequent brood of mulatto babies?” he wondered. He claimed that probation officers in Atlanta had “most of their trouble with white women who pick up Negro men at night.” He asserted that such gross misconduct could only be the result “of the peculiar ‘climate’” fostered by the newspapers in the state’s largest city. “Maybe that climate is brought about by such writings as one often finds in the Atlanta Constitution.” Finally, Boone asserted that in these urban cesspools of vice and interracial sexuality even black-on-white rape, the crime which had always provided the most oft-repeated ideological justification for lynching, failed to arouse the interest of the urban press. What had the Macon papers written about a recent assault on a white woman by a black rapist in that city? he asked. “What else? Nothing! The Macon Daily papers . . . promote the idea that Love knows no color.”

Horrified by what he saw as the deterioration of racial norms in the cities, Boone laid out his own vision for white supremacy in post-war Georgia, one that adhered to the tenets of the Ku Klux Klan, including its assertion that whites were “the dominant race of all the earth.” An unapologetic champion of that organization, Boone dubbed it “patriotic to the core.” It was composed of those men and women who were not “ashamed to let it be known that they have white skins and the true principles of the White Race.” Even though he recognized that some within Georgia did not hold


the Klan of the 1940s in high esteem, Boone viewed the situation as little different from that which existed in the 1860s and saw the Klan as the only means for resisting the New Reconstruction. "The scalawags who run certain Georgia papers are always praising the Ku Klux Klan of 80 years ago . . . but invariably they do slander the Klansmen of today," he declared. While he undoubtedly preferred a world in which all knew and respected their appointed "place," the editor was certainly not averse to the use of mob violence when necessary. Indeed, in the aftermath of the Hill lynching he made repeated calls for the tarring and feathering of the urban editors whom he saw as the greatest threat to the social order. "In strictest truth, there is but one difference in the Klan of today and that old Klan," he wrote, and that was that the earlier Klan "put tar and feathers where it would do the most good, while so far the present Klan has been so remiss in manhood that as yet it has put no tar and feathers on either of the Macon editors nor on anyone of their lying reporters."32

While it is difficult to sympathize with Boone's sense of injustice, there is no question that the Atlanta and Macon newspapers were the most dogged and vociferous critics of the violence in Irwinton. They matched, and perhaps exceeded, the condemnations of their northern counterparts. "In a case like yesterday's . . . lynching, we can pull out the old familiar words like shocking and brutal," commented the Macon News. "But, alas, we fear they will mean little to . . . the good folk of Irwinton." With snarling sarcasm, it predicted that if whites in Wilkinson County could only exercise a little patience, their brand of white supremacy would survive unscathed. "Eventually, the fuss . . . will die down and sleepy little Irwinton will go back to its usual tempo, undisturbed by newspaper reporters and photographers and men who seek to find a Negro's murderers."35

In some regards the Georgia dailies shared the concerns of the national press, opposing lynching in part because mob violence posed such a mortal threat to legally constituted authority and to the rights of due process. "The way of the mob . . . is a road

strewn with the pitfalls of might makes right and the dark dangers of rebellion,” editorialized the Macon News. “There must be a central authority, the law, over all men of all races and a man who pays taxes for the support of that police control . . . is certainly entitled to its protection.” They also worried that lynching provided the Soviet Union and other international adversaries with propaganda that might undermine American leadership in the world. “The Klan is the best friend the Communists have,” opined the Atlanta Constitution. “The degraded, brutalized murderers who recently took a Negro out of jail in Irwinton and killed him, allow the Communists to say, with some truth” that the United States was a land of entrenched racial and class inequality. “The same thing is true of the stupid killers in Toombs County; those in Walton of a few years ago—and any others of the past, present or future. They are lynching their own country and its good name.”34

While concerned about disorder, these papers were principally governed by a very distinct set of concerns. Revealing their still simmering anger over rural power in the recent elections, they lashed out against rural whites (whom they depicted as poor, ill-bred hicks) and the politicians who courted them, worrying that lynchings encouraged civil rights legislation. “If a federal anti-lynching law is brought upon us,” raged the Atlanta Journal, “it will be the doing of the moronic, murderous goons and the cowardly or stupid law-enforcement officials, plus the hate organizations and the politicians pandering to prejudices and violences [sic] of the ignorant.” By lynching, it concluded, white mobs jeopardized the possibility that Georgia could retain its grip on state’s rights. “Georgia with its . . . Wilkinson county outrages,” it lamented, “is sabotaging its own sovereignty.”35

In a related concern, the state dailies worried that lynchings would invite increased scrutiny and censure from the North—the very things that Boone so resented in the aftermath of Hill’s killing. “The South is constantly the victim of bigoted and unfair criticisms on the part of Northern agitators,” main-

35“Georgia Sabotaging its Own Sovereignty,” Atlanta Journal, June 16, 1949.
tained the *Macon Telegraph*. "Such crimes as this give these agitators more fuel for their fire and that is why we must endeavor to keep our records clean." Taking a similar stance, the *Atlanta Constitution* pointed out that the Hill lynching was not even the result of an alleged assault on a white woman. It simply grew out of an incident of resisting arrest in which no white person was injured. "The racial mores of 'tradition' were not involved," it noted. "Our northern critics have new weapons. The Southerner is without explanation." While they were keen to stave off unwanted attention, however, urban papers did rightly note that northerners, so eager to attack southern race relations, were far less willing to examine the savage injustices that defined their own society. The race riot that had rocked Detroit, the 'Arsenal of Democracy,' in 1943 was a prime example of such atrocious behavior. "This newspaper resents the self-righteous attitude of northern critics who give undue importance to every incident in the South, when we all know that these critics would have plenty to do if they swept before their own doors," declared the *Macon Telegraph*. "Detroit [held] a lynching bee on a larger scale" than Irwinton could ever have hoped to hold.56

Taking Boone's pronouncements as their starting point, the urban dailies, in turn, articulated an alternative vision for white supremacy. The *Macon News* insisted that this white supremacy was "realistically situated halfway between the venom-filled, frenetic shrieking 'nigger-haters' and the traitorous denunciations of professional apologists for the Southland." Dubbing the Wilkinson County editor a "violence-minded man," they strenuously opposed his exhortations to use mob violence to maintain the social order. Shortly after the lynching, Ralph McGill of the *Atlanta Constitution*—whom Boone would soon threaten with tar and feathering—placed the blame squarely at Boone's feet. "In Wilkinson County . . . there has been for years a considerable amount of inflammatory, irrepressible writing to create a climate for violence." The *Constitution* also attacked the Invisible Empire's brutal cam-

paign of intimidation, noting that "the Ku Klux Klan naturally will be suspected in this latest lynching, which has disgraced the State."37

Clearly, the Atlanta and Macon papers supported the tenet of natural white superiority. "I believe the white man to be superior to the Negro," proclaimed Joe Parham, an editor for the Macon News who wrote several lengthy pieces on the subject of race relations in the weeks following the Hill lynching. "He [the white man] is quicker to learn, more skillful with his hands and his mind, endowed with greater imagination." These papers also agreed with Boone and the white population of Wilkinson County that white supremacy should remain an undisputed fact of life in Georgia. "Uncle Alec Boone, I gather, feels that colored people should have their own organizations, their own restaurants and churches and schools and meeting places," noted Parham. "I agree. Uncle Alec Boone is for segregation of the Negro and the white man. I agree." Yet, he concluded, the editors of these large urban dailies diverged from their country cousins in that they could no longer tolerate some of the crude excesses of Jim Crow. "Uncle Alec Boone seems to feel that since Caleb Hill was a trouble-maker . . . there should be no great hue and cry to seek out his murderers. With that hypothesis I cannot agree."38

Without question, the urban press favored what it viewed as a more progressive type of white supremacy, one that would allow blacks some forms of equality and autonomy. "Certainly the boon

37"Joe Parham," Macon News, June 13, 1949; "Joe Parham," Macon News, June 8, 1949; "A Lynching and 'The Difference,'" Atlanta Constitution, June 1, 1949. "If Jesus, The Christ, had ever as much money as Ralph McGill has gotten directly and indirectly out of the Negro race, then he would have never been crucified," Boone sarcastically remarked in one editorial. The editor concluded with an explicit threat - one that suggested how deeply the Talmadge campaign literature had etched itself into Boone's mind. "If such a one [as McGill] after being stripped and thoroughly tarred was turned loose at Five Points [in Atlanta], naked, except the tar and feathers, if that was once done then you would no more have Negroes and Whites dancing together in that city." "Climate," Wilkinson County News, June 24, 1949. In an earlier case Boone had issued a more generalized call for mob violence: "Maybe some of those Georgia editors will yet get the rancid tar and rusty feathers they so much deserve for being traitors to both white and black." "Sob Story," Wilkinson County News, June 10, 1949.

of civil equality should be and will be given the colored race in Dixie . . . within the next decade," Parham observed, a reform that would alleviate the kinds of political discord and racist violence that had defined the previous three years of Georgia history and jeopardized the state’s economic development and stability. "The problem will not be solved for many, many years," he predicted, but "it can be eased . . . so that much of the friction is lessened. There must be a meeting of black and white minds as free from prejudice as possible." At the same time, he rejected out of hand the likelihood of "social equality," insisting that the races should remain separate, as much as possible, in daily interaction, public accommodations, schools, and housing. "I would not invite a Negro to be a . . . guest in my home," he asserted. "It is contrary to my upbringing and to [my] deep-rooted convictions." Parham was clear that, in his view, even urban liberals were unwilling to surrender an inch on this issue, and lashed out at any federal effort to force reform on the South. "In my lifetime, I honestly doubt that the Negro will gain an equal social standing with whites below the Mason and Dixon line," he concluded. "You can’t pass a law changing the way a man thinks."39

In their extensive coverage of the Caleb Hill, Jr., case the Atlanta and Macon papers—so thoroughly excoriated by the Wilkinson County News—presented remarkably similar arguments for their more moderate vision of white supremacy and opposition to the more conservative rural vision articulated by Alex S. Boone. While these dailies were highly influential and reflective of one major segment of white opinion, they did not command the only "liberal" vision. As an example, a small cohort of white Georgians repudiated white superiority in its entirety. These critics argued that the racial status quo was achieved and maintained through violence and legal chicanery rather than through any innate biological difference between the races. In a letter to the Atlanta Journal, George Wannamaker III of Emory University asserted, "if it takes a lynching to make the white race superior, it must not be superior." Concurring with this sentiment, left-wing novelist and social com-

mentator Lillian Smith wrote that until white "Southerners are willing to give up their belief that 'segregation is here to stay,' lynchings, symbolic rites of segregation, will go on, on, on." However, such racial ultra-liberals found themselves largely marginalized in an environment where the discussion of race relations still centered squarely on the character of white supremacy rather than on its continued utility.40

For many observers in 1949 the Irwinton lynching clearly indicated that the rural vision had triumphed over the urban. Just weeks after the killing, German-born and New York-based photographer Marion Palfi arrived in Irwinton. She wanted to visit "Georgia, to take a look at one or more of the communities where things like lynching seem to be going on." During her time in Wilkinson County she captured an extraordinary visual record of the people who lived in this Black Belt community and the stifling racism that prevailed there. She also interviewed several of the central players in the recent drama. One of these was Boone, who was unrepentant about his traditional rural views and fervent in his admiration for the principles espoused by the Klan, although he insisted that he was no longer a member. "I am now 76 years old, too old to be active," he told her. "Now I can only promote their ideas and spread their gospel." The photographer also met with Hill's wife, capturing a haunting image of her and eliciting from her the fears so prevalent among blacks over this local resurgence of violent white supremacy. "She told me her husband died because 'he spoke up for his rights,'" Palfi noted. She also reported that Hill's wife had actually gone into hiding somewhere in the county following the lynching, and that many of her family had fled as a result of intimidation. "The Mayor 'sent word to the family—they better leave,'" she later wrote. "They [now] live in the worst part of Harlem but say 'here we don't need to be afraid.'" On her return journey north Palfi learned that black lives were not the only ones that had been in jeopardy in Irwinton. "They were ready to lynch you," a man on the train to New York told her. "I tell you the truth.

They said you photographed every goddam nigger in town. You know how it is in Irwinton.”

Three months after Hill’s lynching came a further indication that the rural vision had prevailed. In this case, a mob in Bainbridge lynched a farmer named Hollis Riles. Like its counterpart in Irwinton, this mob was provoked by its victim’s success and had previously waged a campaign of intimidation against him. “Some time ago, Riles’ home . . . was riddled by buckshot,” reported the *Atlanta Constitution*. “Riles farmed about a 200-acre tract.” Through mob violence in places like Irwinton and Bainbridge rural whites reinforced their vision with action, suppressing organized black resistance and plunging the state into a “long, dark night.”

Yet more evidence that the rural vision had triumphed emerged over the next several years, as some whites in the “city too busy to hate” resorted increasingly to violence. In the early 1950s, “Atlanta experienced almost monthly bombings of houses occupied by middle-class blacks that encroached on all-white residential areas.” After the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling in 1954, which struck down the legality of school segregation, Governor Herman Talmadge stoked this backlash. He and his anointed successor, Lieutenant-Governor Marvin Griffin, vowed that white Georgians would oppose so-called interracial mixing “‘come hell or high water!’” Under their leadership white Georgians effectively curtailed the activism that had so successfully advanced civil rights for blacks during the Arnall administration.

Other commentators recognized that the rural vision of violent white supremacy exhibited in the Irwinton lynching and its wake was actually suffering its death throes, and that the urban vi-

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sion was asserting its hegemony. “The fact that the crime of lynching is almost at the point of disappearance makes the Georgia occurrence all the more shocking,” declared the New York Herald Tribune in reporting the Hill killing. In considering Palfi’s manuscript for publication in 1951 a perceptive New York editor expressed a similar view, concluding that the lynching—however shocking—constituted an exception rather than a rule. “Certainly, Miss Palfi has caught the face of a town, but is it any longer a representative face?” he wondered. In the long sweep of history it is evident that these commentators were correct. While the Irwinton lynchers had set out to demonstrate and reinforce white power and ascendancy, they ended up advertising its weakness and decline. Additionally, in presuming to speak for rural Georgians the lynchers succeeded instead in casting aspersions on their own community. Whether or not they shared the conservative rural vision of white supremacy so evident in Irwinton, whites in nearby and oft-maligned Black Belt towns distanced themselves publicly from their now pariah neighbors. They feared being connected to the crime by the broad-strokes of the national press. The citizens of “Wilkinson county who call themselves Christian and God-fearing. . . must accept some responsibility for this crime,” asserted the Milledgeville Union-Recorder. Had they done so, “the County of Wilkinson would not have on its good name the blot that now embarrasses all who believe in law and decency.” The Twiggs County New Era also denounced Hill’s lynching, despite his alleged attack on the sheriff: “Two Wrongs Don’t Equal One Right.”

In spite of the appalling racism that pervaded his writings, Alex S. Boone was, conceptually at least, correct in delineating

parallels between Reconstruction and what he viewed as the “Second Reconstruction.” In the immediate aftermath of the Civil War guerillas representing organizations such as the Klan had conducted clandestine, backwoods assaults on blacks. These attacks reflected their obsession with upholding white supremacy and their fear of prosecution by officials who sought to suppress white southern violence and to expand citizenship for southern blacks. As white Southerners reclaimed sectional power in the 1880s and imposed Jim Crow, mobs began executing blacks publicly and with great fanfare. “Perhaps in the 1880s the same number of white Southerners objected to racial violence as in the 1860s and 1870s,” submitsthe historian Christopher Waldrep. “Yet the difference seems as clear as night and day. Gilded Age lynchers acted with community approval . . . Rather than skulking in the dark, they killed their victims in broad daylight and posed for photographers, freely distributing postcard pictures of themselves and their victims.” In the 1910s and 20s, however, the state’s largely urban, white middle class successfully campaigned against lynching, making that tradition a rarity by the Great Depression. After World War II they received the added support of federal officials. As a result, mobs once again altered their modus operandi. Calculating correctly that they could count on local white support to sustain their efforts, they continued to murder their victims and escape the legal consequences. Recognizing, however, that they might be held accountable for their actions by outside authorities, they could rarely recruit large numbers of active supporters. Like their Reconstruction counterparts eighty years before, therefore, mobs changed in size and character, becoming much smaller in the number of participants involved and more clandestine in the violent racist acts they perpetrated. Writing of the infamous Emmett Till incident in Mississippi in 1955, the historian Stephen J. Whitfield reflected on these differences. “The distinction between . . . classic lynchings and the case of Emmett Till should . . . be noted.” He continued: “Though socially sanctioned after the fact, his murder was neither a community ritual nor a community activity. . . . It might even be argued that, in the traditional sense, Till’s death was not a lynching at all. . . . For the ‘jungle fury’ of a mob had not descended on the alleged perpetrator of an outrage that had inflamed local whites. Even though [white defendants] Bryant and
Milam probably did not act alone, they felt obliged to conceal the existence of their accomplices, knowing that their fellow counterparts were in jeopardy of prosecution."

Boone was also correct in his belief that in the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s, as in the late 1860s and early 1870s, some southern whites (whom he branded scalawags) were eager to ally themselves with the objectives of the North. They did so not because they necessarily supported those objectives, but because they urgently sought southern stability and prosperity. They worried that lynchings ensured continued unflattering media attention (as in the Hill and Till cases) and exposed the South to northern condemnation and possibly anti-lynching legislation. The Chattanooga Times voiced this concern. "Hill was murdered," it declared, "but it is the South which again was lynched in the unreasoning fury of a cowardly mob." The Union-Recorder argued that "many people will try to take vengeance upon the entire South for the deeds of a few irresponsible men." Rather than protecting white supremacy, these observers recognized that lynching now sowed the seeds of its own destruction. Asked in the 1970s to identify the moment at which the Civil Rights Movement had crystallized, a white Southerner offered the following observation: "It all started probably with a case of a young Negro boy named Emmett Till...that made every newspaper on the face of the earth. And following that...whenever something happened to a Negro in the South, it was made a national issue against the South."46

Boone was correct in at least one other way. Just as many white Northerners had sought to establish black suffrage in the former Confederacy but had fought to block similar policies in their own states in the 1860s and 1870s, they wholeheartedly endorsed the eradication of de jure segregation in the South but rejected a similar solution for de facto segregation in the North in the 1950s and 1960s. As civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., famously

45Waldrep, The Many Faces of Judge Lynch, 83; Whitfield, A Death in the Delta, 131. On the white middle class campaign against lynching in the 1910s and 20s, see Brundage, Lynching in the New South, 191-244. Despite the radical differences in their thoughts on race and politics, Boone's views on the "Second Reconstruction" during the post-World War II era match in many respects those of the inventor of that term—the prominent southern historian C. Vann Woodward, in his classic The Strange Career of Jim Crow (1955).
46Chattanooga Times quoted in "The South," Time, June 13, 1949; "We Suffer from these Things," Milledgeville Union-Recorder, June 2, 1949; Whitfield, A Death in the Delta, 146.
noted, the white mobs that menaced activists in Chicago in 1966 rivaled or exceeded anything that they had faced in the South. "I have never in my life seen such hate,' he said. 'Not in Mississippi or Alabama.'" Reflecting anger over challenges to their status quo, white northerners in the 1960s and beyond—paralleling events a century before—joined their southern counterparts in a backlash against blacks, as demonstrated by their opposition to the busing of school children to integrated schools, by their charges of victimization over "what they called reverse discrimination," and by their flight from northern cities to intractably segregated suburbs. Summarizing the northern backlash of the post-Civil War era, an observer noted that "there is a feeling all over this country that the Negro has got about as much as he ought to have." Daniel Patrick Moynihan, an aide to President Richard M. Nixon, echoed this sentiment nearly a century later when—noting the white northern retreat from civil rights reform—he speculated that "the time may have come when the issue of race could benefit from a period of 'benign neglect.'" His words created a sensation when they were leaked to the press, noted the historian Dean J. Kotlowski, but they only reflected the larger mood of the country. "Moynihan gave a name to what had become since 1965 the standard presidential posture on civil rights. White discontent over the Watts riot in August 1965 had forced President Johnson 'to mute his public commitment to black rights.'"

Ironically, an editor for the black Atlanta Daily World—he whose voice might have seemed the least relevant amidst the back-

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lash of 1949—may have predicted the future most clearly in articulating a black vision that challenged both white supremacist visions. Shrewdly focusing on the concerns of national leaders anxious about America’s reputation in the world, he suggested that a civil rights movement that secured for black people their rights was the only outcome that could ensure national cohesion during the unfolding Cold War with the Soviet Union. “Every such [lynching] serves to alienate the goodwill of foreign nations and to strengthen the Soviets [sic] arguments that the American flag is a symbol of inequality, jimcro [sic] and class distinction,” he wrote. “America cannot be a united Nation as long as one group of its citizens live in security of life, limb and home, while another group lives in constant danger of violence, lynching and mob rule.”

Determined to force the United States to fulfill at long last its promise of civil equality to all Americans, and aligned with the desire of public officials to prevent incidents of reactionary violence potentially injurious to the post-war foreign policy goals of the nation, black Georgians in the 1960s, like their counterparts throughout the country, would lead a campaign that would ultimately transform the state and nation.

49“Violence Marks our Pathway,” Atlanta Daily World, June 1, 1949.