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Category:GEORGIA GOVERNOR JOHN SLATON

Judge Roan, with that awful sense of responsibility, which probably came over him as he thought of that Judge before whom he would shortly appear, calls to me from another world to request that I do that which he should have done. I can endure misconstruction, abuse, and condemnation, but I cannot stand the constant companionship of an accusing conscience, which would remind me in every thought that I, as Governor of Georgia, failed to do what I thought to be right. There is a territory 'beyond A REASONABLE DOUBT and absolute certainty,' for which the law provides in allowing life imprisonment instead of execution. This case has been marked by doubt. The trial judge doubted. Two judges of the Supreme Court of Georgia doubted. Two judges of the Supreme Court of the United States doubted. One of the three prison commissioners doubted.

In my judgment, by granting a commutation in this case, I am sustaining the jury, the judge, and the appellate tribunals, and at the same time am discharging that duty which is placed on me by the Constitution of the State.

Acting, therefore, in accordance with what I believe to be my duty under the circumstances of this case, it is:

ORDERED: That the sentence in the case of Leo M. Frank is commuted from the death penalty to imprisonment for life.

This 21st day of June, 1915.