

HOW THE JEFFERSONIAN FANNED RACE HATRED

Watson's Parallel Between Frank and Becker Cases—Attacks on Ex-Gov. Slaton.

Special to The New York Times.

ATLANTA, Aug. 17.—On the first page of The Jeffersonian, a weekly paper edited by Thomas E. Watson, which was issued tonight, appears the following:

"A Vigilance Committee redeems Georgia and carries out the sentence of the law on the Jew who raped and murdered the little Gentile girl, Mary Phagan.

"Slaton was Frank's lawyer, and the commutation was void.

"In putting the murderer to death the Vigilance Committee has done what the Sheriff would have done if Slaton had not been of the same mold as Benedict Arnold.

"Let Jew libertines take notice.

"Georgia is not for sale to rich criminals."

Ever since the sentence of Frank was commuted by Governor Slaton, Watson has been conducting a bitter anti-Frank and anti-Slaton campaign. His paper, The Jeffersonian, has a large circulation and many openly assert that Watson's violent words have had much to do with keeping alive the resentment which culminated in the lynching.

It is but fair to say, however, that a large majority of the people of Georgia were angry when Governor Slaton commuted Frank's sentence, and that Watson's incitement to violence fell on fertile soil. The people were not so resentful against Frank as against what they termed the "outside influences," which operated in Frank's behalf. They believed that a propaganda had been organized to save Frank from the gallows, and when the death sentence was commuted they took the view that "outside influences" operating on Governor Slaton had succeeded in overthrowing the courts of Georgia.

Watson knew that this feeling existed, and he has catered to it to the utmost in his paper. Every week he has had violent articles against Slaton, Frank and the Jews. Watson has always had a considerable following in Georgia, and this following increased greatly during his anti-Frank and anti-Slaton campaign.

In the issues of the Jeffersonian published on Aug. 5 and 12 Tom Watson devoted about half of his column to inflammatory articles and editorials concerning the Frank case. He scornfully accused ex-Governor Slaton of misusing his office in commuting Leo M. Frank's sentence to life imprisonment. One article is headed "The Commutation of Frank's Sentence Is Null and Void."

"If John M. Slaton had been of counsel for Leo Frank, but had ceased to be so when he became Governor," the article read, "it would have been illegal had he retried the case and reversed the courts. But since he actually was of counsel for Frank, his commutation was not only a base betrayal of his trust, but his decision is a nullity."

That is but one of many assertions in the issue of Aug. 12. The attack upon ex-Governor Slaton is couched in the most inflammatory language. Here are some of the charges Watson made:

"1—Do you know that the Atlanta dailies—after Mary Phagan was murdered and Rosser employed to defend her—announced the formation a partnership between Governor-elect Slaton and Leo Frank's leading attorney?"

"2—As Slaton was scheduled for inauguration in June and would be unable to practice law for two years, why did Frank's lawyer need him as a partner?"

"3—As Slaton was scheduled to be Governor for two years and would be unable to practice during that period, what use did he have for a partnership with Frank's leading lawyer?"

"4—Do you know that Governor-elect Slaton was assigned his own private office, by his firm, after he became Rosser's partner, and that John M. Slaton's name appeared on the front of the door of this private office?"

"5—Do you know that the files of the Jeffersonian will show that I called Slaton's attention to the fact that his private office was being used by C. W. Burke, the detective of the Slaton-Rosser firm; and that in this private office of John M. Slaton vigorous and criminal efforts were being made by Burke to bribe some of the witnesses against Frank and to scare others into changing their evidence?"

In the issue of Aug. 5, appeared one of the articles which it is charged by Mr. Loyless, Editor of the Augusta Chronicle, were employed to excite race hatred. In part it read:

"The Becker case and the Frank case should be considered together; they were contemporaneous in point of time, and they illustrate the difference between New York and Georgia; also the difference between an honest Governor and a rotten one."

"As all the world knows, Police Lieutenant Becker had been a power in New York and he was accused of procuring the assassination of a Jew gambler, Rosenthal, to prevent the exposure of systematized connivance at crime on the part of Becker."

"Rosenthal was shot on the street, and his slayers made off in an automobile; but they were afterward traced, identified, arrested, tried, and executed."

"They were Jews, but of no aristocratic connection, no B'nai B'rith influence, and no Haas Finance Committee resources. Rich Jews did not concern themselves in the case, and the virtuous activities of the Burns Detective Agency were not enlisted. Besides, the man they had murdered was a Jew.

"Becker came to trial in due course, and the fatal link in the chain of evidence against him was supplied by a negro witness, James Marshall.

"Did THE NEW YORK TIMES express horror at the idea of putting Becker to death on the testimony of a negro? No.

"Did The New York World? No.

"Did the Hearst papers go into agonies over Becker, the victim of negro testimony? No.

"Did millionaire Jewish bankers insist that the Governor of Minnesota tell the Governor of New York what to do? No."

Here is another sample of Watson's inflammatory articles:

"Iron the white dress, little girl. Iron it out smooth and see yourself wearing it in the Sunday school tomorrow. Spread it out on the bed and leave it there till you come home. Fate and the Jew have other plans for you, my child!

"Some day, some day we'll understand. Perhaps. We certainly do not understand it now.

"But if the man who inflicted this eternal infamy upon us is allowed to come back to Georgia and resume his way of practicing law with a hardened scoundrel who practices law as Rosser does, we will deserve every bit of the abuse which the rich Jews and misled gentiles have heaped upon us.

"If Jack Slaton ever puts his foot in this State again, he ought to be given the same reception that the Colonial patriots would have given to Benedict Arnold."

In another part of the paper Watson draws the picture vividly of the murdered girl and of Frank basking "in the favors of Warden Smith at the State Farm."