Columbia *State* and the Charleston *News and Courier* were also outspoken, being followed in milder fashion by papers like the Spartanburg *Herald*. Some small town editors vehemently denounced the "meddling" of the N. A. A. C. P. and the *World*.

Governor McLeod at once promised action against the lynchers. On one occasion he admitted publicly having evidence against the members of the mob. But he failed to call a special term of court to consider this evidence, and, as his term expires January 18, 1927, the work falls to the administration of the new Governor, John G. Richards.

The Aiken case was an exceptional and conspicuous refutation of any justification or apology for lynching, there being no question of rape, the victims having been twice tried in the South Carolina courts without delay, one of them having been acquitted and the other two being obviously innocent. The N. A. A. C. P. used the opportunity presented to the full and through it was able to focus attention on the lynching evil as in no other case ever handled.

Great credit belongs to the New York *World* for its uncompromising, efficient and courageous campaign. The N. A. A. C. P. continued throughout to furnish the *World* with new material which came from South Carolina almost daily to the National Office.

Punishment of the lynchers by South Carolina would constitute almost a revolutionary step, in that white men would suffer the law's penalty for killing Negroes. Failure to act, will furnish the strongest possible argument for the passage of the Dyer Anti-Lynching Bill.

LaBelle, Florida, Lynching Investigation.—On May 11, Henry Patterson, accused of attacking a white woman, was shot to death by a band of white men. The body was paraded through LaBelle and then hanged to a tree on the outskirts of the town. Although Patterson had been arrested on the woman's charge, officers said they learned later that she had told friends she became frightened at the man's mere presence in her home and ran screaming from the house.

An investigation of the lynching, conducted by County Prosecuting Attorney Herbert A. Rider, was begun on May 12. As a result seventeen white men were placed in jail charged with first degree murder.

In June Mr. Rider communicated with the N. A. A. C. P. as did John F. Webber, President of the Hendry County, Florida, Chamber of Commerce, asking aid in bringing the guilty persons to trial. Mr. Rider's interest in the case after the Coroner's inquest arose from a

desire to see justice done. His official duties ended with the arrest of the guilty parties.

In July the National Office sent check for $300 to assist in the prosecution of the case. This money was used to obtain evidence and photographs of the scenes where the mob lynched Patterson, and in other ways to secure facts to be used against the lynchers.

Through the efforts of Bishop John Hurst, member of the N. A. A. C. P. Board of Directors, the A. M. E. Church in Florida contributed $61, and this amount was also sent, through the National Office, to Mr. Rider.

Mr. Rider worked most unselfishly in this matter and also interested the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, which sent one of its agents to LaBelle to confer with Mr. Rider. The Interracial Commission and the N. A. A. C. P. cooperated closely throughout this case.

However, on December 6 the Lee County Grand Jury, after examining more than forty witnesses, declared itself unable to determine who lynched Henry Patterson. At the same time the Grand Jury recommended that Sheriff Dan McLaughlin be dismissed from office on account of his failure to prevent the lynching or to arrest the guilty parties.

Agitation in this case, as in the Aiken lynching, brought forth extensive editorial comment in Florida daily papers demanding apprehension and conviction of the lynchers.

Lynching—1926

Jan. 12—*Ocala, Fla.:*

A band of masked men took *Nick Williams* from two officers, bundled him into an automobile and lynched him at a lonely spot 18 miles from Ocala. Williams had been jailed on suspicion in connection with an attack on a white woman near the spot where he was lynched. When seized he was being taken to a hospital to be identified by the woman.

Mar. ——....., *Texas:*

A white man was shot to death by an armed mob of whites.

Mar. 22—*Hernando, Miss.:*

An unidentified Negro was lynched by an unmasked band of white men for an alleged attack on a young white woman. "Sheriff G. P. Thomas reported that he was unable to establish the identity of the slayers. He was called by Wm. Lauderdale (white) on whose farm the man was slain. The farmer said that he had gone to telephone the sheriff and when he returned he found the suspect's body riddled with bullets."