

Fordyce ~~Orkman~~

Arkansas May 22nd 1852

To your Excellency

Benjamin Harrison

President of the United States =

Dear Sir I am a colored man
and my down South. And appeal
to you for protection to the colored
people of the Southern States =
cannot you protect us against mob
violence in these Southern States =
I appeal to you believing that you
as President of these United States
can protect us from the violent hand
of a lawless whites of the South
we are mobbed most every day by
our own arms the democrats
our county authorities failed to protect
us also the Governors are silent on
the matter = you as President are silent
and we cannot protect our selves
I believe you as President can do some
thing for us = I believe under the law
and constitution of the United
States you can place these States in
some way that all of its citizens can
be protected = our lives at least =
you protect other nations

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you ought to be able to protect your
own - you are silent on the matter
these mobs are now they don't
disguise themselves at all
look at the ~~the~~ mobs ~~that~~ that has been
in this state for the last 6 months
not less the 15 not a word from
the Governor of this state or you as
President has been said -

o what a pity pity that we the
colored people are taken out of our
houses from our wives and children
and out of jails and the state
prisons and officers of the law
and put to the most horrible death
and no one to help us -

o a shame shame God help us
we are charged with making assaults
on white women all of these charges
are untrue there is not one in a
100 of these charges true it is only
an excuse to get to kill the colored
man - dont deny that a friendship
exist between some of the colored
men and the white women
but it is the wishes of both
but on the other hand our colored
women are in trouble on by the white

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men and not a word said about it. The colored people are industrious they are the ~~makers~~^{makers} of wood and drawers of water for the whites. They are humble people.

These cases are all untrue. A colored man has been lynched for killing a white man that he caught in the bed with his wife. Which cannot be denied.

If one man are killed and 2 or 3 are whipped ^{or} and other nation you are ready to call out your war vessels and demanding pay for the damage. but colored men are taken out in to the heart of city and hanged or shot to death and no one say a word ^{for} we cannot protect our selves against these lawless people. is it a fact that the congress of the united states cannot do any thing for us. is it a fact that the president cannot do protect us. is it a fact that both state and national laws are going to stand with hand off and allow one part of its citizens to lynch and mob the other part and dare speak a word in there defence.

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if it be so I say may the Lord
help us for we cannot help our
selves

Mr President I say that you can
Release us of this mob violence if
you will

I am taught by the Constitution
of the united States that if the
States fail to protect its citizens
the Constitution Congress of the
united States have the power to
enact laws to enforce these protection
is it a fact that Congress is a farce

Mr President I pray that should you
see this letter and while times are
going well with you do all that
you can for the negro of the South
if be needfull to put these Southern
States ^{under} military law do it

Respectfully yours of the down trodden
Race
W. L. Green

P.S. please Publish this letter and let the
President get a copy of same and cor-
rect all bad spelling it is impossible to
get a name signed to the citizens right
association should this be known that I
write this letter I would stretch hemp less
then 24 hours
W. L. Green