Dedicated to Ida B. Wells

Raven Chacon

LYNCH LAW AND THE COLOR LINE
Reply of Miss Ida B. Wells to Editorial Comments in "The Post"

EDITOR POST: I have been shown the editors of the daily papers of the country teaching my recent views to Great Britain and the addresses delivered while their agents were in the South. With the printed papers I have not been well acquainted. Great Britain did not consider that calling me "howlers", "vandals", and "liars" was not only a violation of my own safety but a violation of the safety of the country. In my opinion, I do not consider that I went to Great Britain to express an opinion from British people themselves. This occasion came unlooked and unexpected. They could not understand why such lurid scenes prevailed in the "land of the free and the home of the brave." And voluntarily pay my expenses to have the case tried and tell my friends had been misinformed and known to me personally as a lyceum teacher and a friend to all who were in the interest of those to whom the cause was just and well advertised and involved as a duty of the afterlife.

Some of the British had written to me privately in behalf of the cause, and I was well pleased with the letters. Besides, hundreds of other occasions were printed at various stages and held to all the Congressmen and prominent citizens of the city of Columbus. On the right of the building, there were not more than a dozen whites in the house, while amidst the freeholders, Rutherford, was so closely connected with the general public that he was in the thick of the fight. But the editor was not enough to cancel a few, which are not well-advertised. The American press, with few exceptions, either by such a dislike or silence, has every confirmed and is responsible for the existing state of existing, which was ever so close. The result was that Mr. and Mr. Wells were elected to the place of Mr. and Mr. Wells, who was elected to be the chief editor. In February 2, and the editor was enough to cancel the few, which are not well-advertised.

"Our correspondent, however, well that I visited New York, being over the state of New York. If our correspondents are not, what more can we do?"
Dedicated to Ida B. Wells

For two women's choirs, two glockenspiels (or other metallophone), two drums, and coins.

The performers may use the flag or the newspapers or both for performance.

Two choirs are situated on opposite ends of a field, street, town square, or any open space, facing each other. There is a deliberate distance between the two choirs, though all events should be audible and visible to both sets of performers. Each choir has at least 10 members, a drum, a glockenspiel, and a bucket of coins.

Choir A reads the score from top to bottom until they reach the middle black section.
Choir B reads the score from bottom to top until they reach the middle black section.

A drummer is assigned by/or each group and a single coordinated drum hit from both initiates each event. When to proceed to the next event is decided jointly by the drummer in each choir.

Event #1
Choir A: Remain silent until the next cue.
Choir B: A performer tosses coins onto the glockenspiel (this action continues until the middle black section.)

Event #2
Choir A: Coins are tossed at the glockenspiel by twice as many performers as Choir B utilized in Event #1. (This action continues until the middle black section.)
Choir B: Roughly 1/3 of the choir repeatedly sings the words “The New Cry,” using any pitches, within three beats followed by two beats of rest. Each singer can follow their own tempo, and need not be synchronized to any other singer. (This action continues until the middle black section.)

Event #3
Choir A: Roughly 1/2 of the choir repeatedly sings the words “Ray of Light,” using any pitches, beginning with any word of the phrase. A rest should occur after each of two words, while the third word of the phrase immediately loops back to the start with no rest. Each singer can follow their own tempo, and need not be synchronized to any other singer. (This action continues until the middle black section.)
Choir B: The drummer hits the drum four times with one beat of rest. (The drummer will continue this action until the middle black section while continuing to cue the next sections with the opposing choir drummer.)

Event #4
Choir A: Anyone not singing should sing the words “Side by Side” as a melody with the contour of the notated graphic, followed by two beats of rest.
Choir B: Anyone not singing should sing the words “Light of Truth” as a melody with the contour of the notated graphic, followed by two beats of rest.

Black Section
(Everyone): On four beats, synching with the drummer from Choir B, all sing the words “Onward, Skyward,” any pitches, followed by one beat of rest. Individually, each singer may speed up slightly, so as to fall out of synch with the others. When each desires, they may walk away from the ensemble, continuing to sing until no one else from the performance is within visible range.

Think and act on independent lines in this behalf...
LYNCH LAW IN AMERICA (1960) 
IDA B. WELLs

The State of Illinois was admitted to the Union in 1818 and 1818 years later a flag was designed by a Chicago poet and newspaperwoman Walnut Roe, showing a broad blue horizontal bar, typifying union, between two white ovals, which symbolize peace and justice. Ten blue stars above and ten below the central bar represent the Liberty of the Union and the ten southern states admitted before Illinois, which was the 21st state, and is represented by a large white star on the blue bar.

This pamphlet, in the form of a novel, is published to serve as an possible alignment, not necessarily toward a unified worldview, but in order to locate an approximate shared understanding of truth, as well as the current obstacles that we search for whatever lies in the middle.

Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Numbers of free Persons, including those bond to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other Persons.

In one part of the country, economically devastated for defending its flawed philosophy, those in power are silencing those who helped manufacture its own wealth, until voices screamed and layered upon themselves becoming secret ears.

In another part of the country, one that likes to believe it is above the other, there has long been a consciousness of merald duty, particularly with a sense to a rope of an economic origin to a rope of a ground, ground, ground, ground, ground, ground, ground, ground, ground. This is the part of the country where the violence has not been as much exposed to the public's eyes, but only because they have been able to keep us in the hold;\*

*Three-Pintos Compromise, Article 1, Section 2, Clause 3 of the United States Constitution.

The Chicago Tribune, "The Black and the White of it", Sunday, December 30, 1951

New York, Minor Commissions, 1913.

R. Chacon

\*This method of procedure seemed to have furnished itself upon the laws, crimes, and the crime process that at first was invoked to declare justice was made the eunice to speak vengeance and some crime. It went defended in the South, where centurions of Anglo-Roman civilization had made effective all the indigents of court appearances. No eunice called for Lynch law. It asserted its way in defiance of law and in favor of anarchy. There has been finished over once, marking the thirty years of its existence with the inhuman licentiousness of more than ten thousand men, women, and children by shooting, drowning, hanging, and lying there alive. Not this, but so to put in the face of the lynching many laws have spent throughout the North and middle West. It is now as an innocuous thing to read of lynching north of Mason and Dixon's line, and those most responsible for this fashion greatly point to these instances and assert that the South is no better on the South.

The work of "the lynching law" about which so much is said, and in whose behalf lynch law is made a public and national sovereignty conceived. The first statesman of "the lynching law" was written in the hands of thousands of brave men who thought that a government that was good enough to deserve a citizenship was strong enough to protect it. Under the authority of a national law that gave every citizen the right to vote, the newly-made citizens chose to exercise their suffrage. But the reign of the national law was short-lived and his enemy, hardly the sentences drier upon the statutes books before one Southern State after another raised the cry against "negro domination" and proclaimed there was an "lynching law" that justified any means to resist it.

The method then inaugurated was the outbreaks by the "red-shirt" bands of Louisiana, South Carolina, and other Southern States, which were translated by the Ku-Klux Klan. These outbreaks of the "lynching law" boldly avowed their purpose to intimidate, oppress, and nullify the right to vote. In support of its plan the Ku-Klux Klan, the "red-shirt" and similar organizations proceeded to burn, rob, and kill with open purpose in their organization was accomplished and the supremacy of the "lynching law" was effected. Then lynchings began in the North, rapidly spreading into the various States until the national law was nullified and the reign of the "lynching law" was supreme. Men were taken from their homes by "red-shirt" bands and stripped, beaten, and killed, others were assassinated when their political prominence made them obnoxious to their political opponents; while the Ku-Klux Klecture of election days, reveling in the hundreds of thousands of colored voters, furnished currency in Congressional investigations that are a disgrace to civilization.

The alleged menace of universal suffrage having been avowed by the absolute suppression of the negro vote, the spirit of mob murder should have been satisfied and the torching of negroes should have ceased. But mob, women, and children were the victims of murder by individuals and murder by mobs, just as they had been when killed at the demands of the "lynching law" in "negro domination." Negroes were killed for disputing over terms of contracts with their employers. If a few were burned some colored man was killed to stop it. If a colored man esteemed the importance of negroes, he was burned, a colored man who wanted to marry, either as a slave or free, was taken at the hands of a mob that specifically gathered. If he showed a spirit of courage manifested he was hanged for his pain, and the killing was justified by the declaration that he was a "kangaroo." Colored women have been molested because they refused to fill the ranks whose relatives could be forced for "lynching boys." Boys of fourteen years have been lynched by white representatives of American civilization. In the South, in all kinds of offense and for no offense, from murder to theft, women in the South, men and women are put to death without judge or jury; so that, although the political menace is no longer necessary, the wholesale murder of human beings went on just the same. A new name was given to the killings and a new enmity was invented for what was done.

Again the aid of the "lynching law" is invoked, and again it comes to the rescue. During the last ten years a new statute has been added to the "lynching law." This statute provides that for certain crimes or alleged crimes no negro shall be allowed a trial, that no white woman shall be compelled to take oath on any matter to which she may be put to death whose innocence was afterward established; and to-day, under this reign of the "lynching law," no colored man, no matter what his reputation, is safe from lynching if a white woman, no matter what her standing or name, ever charge him with murder or assault,\*
Miss Ida B. Wells, a mulattress who has been "stamping" the British Islands to set forth the brutality of Southern white men and the unchastity and untruthfulness of Southern white women, has just returned to these shores. On the same day on which an interview with her was reported it was also reported that a negro had made an assault upon a white woman for purposes of lust and plunder, not in Texas or Mississippi, but in the heart of the City of New-York. The wretch is probably safe from lynching here, which is to the credit of the civilization of New-York. Thus far he seems to have escaped the clutches of the law. But the circumstances of his fiendish crime may serve to convince the mulattress missionary that the promulgation in New-York just now of her theory of negro outrages is, to say the least of it, inopportune.
Ida Bell Wells-Barnett was an American investigative journalist, educator, and an early leader in the civil rights movement. She led an antilynching crusade in the United States in the 1890s.

Ida Wells was born July 16, 1862, Holly Springs, Mississippi, US into slavery. She was educated at Rust University, a freedmen's school in her native Holly Springs, Mississippi, and at age 14 began teaching in a country school. She continued to teach after moving to Memphis, Tennessee in 1884, and attended Fisk University in Nashville during several summer sessions. In 1887 the Tennessee Supreme Court, reversing a Circuit Court decision, ruled against Wells in a suit she had brought against the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad for having been forcibly removed from her seat after she had refused to give it up for one in a "colored only" car. Using the pen name Iola, Wells in 1891 also wrote several newspaper articles critical of the education available to African-American children. Her teaching contract was not renewed. She then turned to journalism, buying an interest in the Memphian Free Speech.

In 1892, after three friends of hers had been lynched by a mob, Wells began an editorial campaign against lynching that quickly led to the sacking of her newspaper's office. She continued her anti-lynching crusade, first as a staff writer for the New York Age and then as a lecturer and organizer of anti-lynching societies. She traveled to speak in a number of major U.S. cities and twice visited Great Britain for the cause. In 1895, she married Ferdinand L. Barnett, a Chicago lawyer, editor, and public official, and adopted the name Wells-Barnett. From that time she restricted her travels, but she was very active in Chicago affairs. Wells-Barnett contributed to the Chicago Defender, her husband's newspaper, as well as other local journals; published a detailed look at lynching in A Red Record (1895); and was active in organizing local African-American women in various causes, from the anti-lynching campaign to the suffrage movement.

From 1898 to 1902, Wells-Barnett served as secretary of the National Afro-American Council. In 1909, she participated in the meeting of the Niagara Movement and the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Although she was initially left off the NAACP's controlling Committee of Forty, Wells-Barnett later became a member of the organization's executive committee; however, disenchanted with the NAACP's white and elite Black leadership, she soon distanced herself from the organization.

In 1910, Wells-Barnett founded and became the first president of the Negro Fellowship League, which aided newly arrived migrants from the South. In 1913, she founded what may have been the first Black woman suffrage group, Chicago's Alpha Suffrage Club. From 1913 to 1916, she served as a probation officer of the Chicago municipal court. She was militant in her demand for justice for African Americans and insisted that justice was won by their own efforts. Ida B. Wells died March 25, 1931, Chicago, Illinois. Her autobiography, Crusade for Justice, was published posthumously in 1970.

Acknowledgments and Sources:
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