

Petition

TO GOVERNOR EARL WARREN OF CALIFORNIA

We, citizens of the United States, call your attention to the Sleepy Lagoon case and petition you to free the seventeen boy victims of that case, sixteen of them Mexicans, who are now serving sentences in prison, three for life, nine for five years to life, and five for six months to one year—for alleged assault and for the supposed murder of one man.

These boys are innocent. The court records of the trial contain no evidence to prove them guilty. The defense attorneys state that there is no basis for the conviction.

They were found guilty because they are Mexicans. Anti-Mexican prejudice and hysteria prevailed in the court room, in the press and most shockingly in an official report submitted to the Grand Jury by Ed Duran Ayres of the Sheriff's Office of Los Angeles. This report, remarkable in its oneness with Hitler's doctrine of race superiority, states that there is a "biological basis" for crime in Mexican youth and that they should be punished collectively.

The way was paved for the Sleepy Lagoon case by the creation of a "zoot-suit crime wave" by the defeatist press and other agencies interested in playing Hitler's game. The Sleepy Lagoon case in turn prepared the way for the later outbreaks of violence in Los Angeles, Beaumont, Detroit, and other parts of our country; outbreaks which in the words of President Roosevelt, "endanger our national unity and comfort our enemy".

The Sleepy Lagoon case, to our shame, has become known throughout all Spanish-speaking countries. Thousands of people here and abroad feel, and rightly so, that these boys were the victims of anti-Mexican prejudice. The imprisonment of the seventeen youths is an injustice to more than themselves. It is an injury to the reputation of our entire country as a "good neighbor". It is an injury to the internal unity of our country. It is a blot upon the state which sanctions or perpetuates such an injustice. It helps Hitler.

It is within your power to end this dangerous situation at once by releasing these seventeen boys. Appeals are now pending in the courts, but appeals will take time. The boys have already spent over one year in prison. Tomorrow or next year it may be too late to undo the mischief caused by their conviction. For internal and international unity, as a blow against the Axis, and as a guarantee that race hatred and anti-democracy are being expunged from this nation, we urge that you act at once.

FREE THE VICTIMS OF THE SLEEPY LAGOON CASE

(Please sign the enclosed card signifying your endorsement
of this petition)

PROGRAM OF ACTION

Because of the immediate national and international importance of the Sleepy Lagoon Case, it is essential that every American give it his support.

You can do this by:

1. Getting every member of your organization and every friend to sign the Petition to Governor Warren for the release of the Sleepy Lagoon defendants. Send to our office for as many copies of the Petition as you can use.
2. Ordering copies of our pamphlet, THE SLEEPY LAGOON CASE for distribution among the members of your organization and your friends. Copies sell for 5c per single copy; \$4 per 100 and \$30 per 1000.
3. Contributing as much as you can and as quickly as you can. Thousands of dollars are immediately needed to further this petition to the Governor and to support the appeals for reversal of the conviction, now pending in court.

SLEEPY LAGOON DEFENSE COMMITTEE

206 South Spring Street — MUtual 4964
Los Angeles 12, California

SLEEPY LAGOON DEFENSE COMMITTEE

206 So. Spring Street — MUtual 4964 — Los Angeles 12, Calif.

Dear Friend:

We urge you to read the petition on the inside of this page and the pamphlet enclosed.

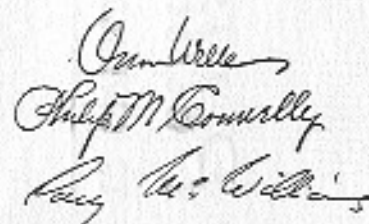
We know that after you have done so, you will join with thousands of other Americans in signing the appeal.

Your action will help guarantee that terror against Mexicans, Negroes, Jews, or other minorities will not be tolerated by the overwhelming majority of the win-the-war people of this country.

Please sign the enclosed card and return it to our office as quickly as you can.

May we also call your attention to the program of action on the back.

Sincerely yours,

The block contains three handwritten signatures in cursive ink. The first signature is 'Dan White', the second is 'Philip M. Connelley', and the third is 'Ray W. Williams'.

For the Committee

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