**Source 2: An extract from the Richmond Planet - June 20 1896**

**Lynching of Jesse Slayton and Will Miles**, both colored at Columbus Ga., June 1, 1896 at about 10 o'clock was one of the most cowardly and brutal murders as yet chronicled. Slayton was being tried at the time, and the court-room was surrounded and stormed by a body of armed men, the prisoner shot on the way to the tree to which he was to lie hanged and the body perforated with bullets. Miles was then taken from jail, carried to the same tree, strung up and shot into shreds.

Columbus, Ga. is a populous city, has a military company and officers of the law and yet no attempt was made to frustrate the murderous designs of the cut-throats. Gov. W. Y. Atkinson has offered ($5,000) five thousand dollars reward for the arrest and conviction of the first ten lynchers. This is ($600) five hundred dollars a piece and is said to be the largest reward ever offered in the state for a criminal offense.
In the Atlanta Constitution Gov. Atkinson is quoted as follows: "I was astonished," said the governor yesterday, as be stood at the car shed, waiting for his train, "to learn of this recent lynching. It is a great blot on the record of Georgia that a criminal who had been arrested by due process of law, and who was on trial, should have been taken from the very court of justice itself and hanged by a mob. This occurred in the midst of a thickly populated c:ty, where there was an abundance of county and city officials, and with the military within easy call.

What astonished me still more was that not a single shot was fired, or, so far as I can learn, not a single attempt was made by the officers to defend the prisoner or to see that the laws of the State were properly executed "It is this sort of thing which brings
criticism on our courts of justice. This lynching business must stop. If one
sheriff would defend his prisoner, as he would his life, and never give his
charge up to a mob until he was overpowered, it would go far to putting an
end to lynch law in Georgia. The laws of the state provide for sure and
a speedy trial for such offences as those of which the two Negroes were guilty
This lynching spirit should be put down, even if it takes bullets to do so. When once the officers of the state defend their prisoners with their own lives, then lynching in Georgia will be at an end."Will you push this case, governor?”was asked.
"It is my intention to do so to the extent of my power," replied Governor Atkinson. "Of course all I can do now is to offer a reward for the guilty parties, and I have done this.
But I expect to do all that I can to stop this lynching spirit.“

From the Atlanta Constitution. This is a statement of his position made with the full knowledge of the responsibility resting upon him . We challenge a comparison of these utterances with any made by any Chief Executive officer in these United States. We are thankful that a southerner of his stripe lives and occupies such a commanding position.
He has the courage of his convictions and dares to express them. Upon the pinnacle of fame the Recording Angel of nations will finally accord him place.
Lynch-law must go!