The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 63 Fifth Avenue, New York City, presents herewith a verbatim copy of the report of the investigation of the lynching at Mariana, Florida on October 27th of Claude Neal charged with rape and murder. The investigator is a southern white university professor whose entire life has been spent in the South and whose family for generations has occupied high rank in the South. His name is not given as to do so might possibly jeopardize his life and would almost certainly lessen his future usefulness in similar cases. The N.A.A.C.P., however, vouches for his integrity, accuracy, soundness of judgment and experience in ascertaining the truth.

This report is published with the hope that its sheer savagery and abnormal cruelty may stir thoughtful Americans to action. If this report does not do so, we fear that the situation is hopeless. Claude Neal is the 3,068th person lynched in the United States since 1882; the 45th mob victim since President Franklin D. Roosevelt entered the White House. We believe that the circumstances of his lynching demonize finally all contentions that lynching can be ended by any other means than by federal legislation. Those who love America and humanity are urged to insist by telegram or letter to President Roosevelt and to the Senators and congressmen from the reader's state that the Costigan-Wagner Anti-Lynching bill must be passed without delay.
Caption to go underneath photograph of Claude Neal.

Note mutilation of Neal's chest and thighs. Note also how fingers have been cut from hands as souvenirs.

After this picture was taken toes were cut from the feet also as souvenirs. An enterprising local photographer made post cards of this picture which were sold in large quantities at fifty cents each.
MEMORANDUM TO MR. TURNER FROM MR. W-----

Please draw a cheque at once, to be sent by air-mail special delivery, to Howard Kester for $120.39 covering balance due him on expenses and compensation for his investigation of the Claude Neal lynching in Marianna, Florida.

WJ: CTF
11/18/34

action which probably wouldn't amount to anything in the courts but which might be used to discredit the rest of the report.

It will be excellent also if we could have the names of any actual participants in the mob as I want to put these in the names of Cummings and the Department of Justice in further efforts to force action under the amended Lindbergh Kidnapping Law.

Cordially,

Secretary.

P.S. Alas, I am unable to get a cheque signed in time to get into this letter. I will have it signed this afternoon or first thing Saturday morning and put it in the mails at once. You should have it no later than Monday morning.

Mr. Howard Agster
1730 Edgehill Avenue
Nashville,
Tennessee.
Marianna, Florida
Nov 7, 1934

COPY

Dear Walter,

I have just learned, by a reliable source, that your friend Claude Neal, was lynched in Marianna, Florida last night. He was last seen alive in the early morning hours of today, after being tortured by a large group of men. Since coming here I have had no chance to get any word to you. I was told that Neal was tarred and feathered and shut up in a barn, and that they left him there to die. Neal's body was discovered this morning.

There is little room for doubt that Neal actually killed Lola Cassidy but no evidence at all that he was killed by anyone else. Of course there would be no rape since they have been having sexual relations for some time. Claude Cassidy tells me that Lola was killed by a rope tied around her neck and that she died from asphyxiation. The body was then brought to Marianna and exhibited on the square. Pictures were taken of the body. Neal was tried and was found guilty of murder and sentenced to death.

I have been trying to get a word to you but it has been very difficult. I have heard that your friend was killed by a lynch mob and that his body was mutilated and displayed on the square. I hope you will be able to find out more about this tragic event. Please let me know if you have any news.

Yours truly,

[Signature]
Neal was not murdered in Alabama but Florida. He was brought from Brewton by a small band of men who had taken him from the jail at Brewton. He was taken into the woods 4 miles from Greenwood about 9 A.M. Friday morning. He was tortured for about twelve hours and was finally stabbed and shot to death. Nothing to do with the lynching. I heard it from the best sources.

The mob first after taking Neal to the woods near Greenwood cut off his penis. "He was made to eat it," "They then cut off his testicles and made him eat them and say he liked it," "They then sliced his sides and stomach with knives and began cutting off fingers and toes." A red hot iron was used "to burn him from top to bottom." They tied a rope around his neck and drew him up in a tree where they would hold him until he almost choked to death then they would let him down and begin the process of torture all over again. Neal's body was literally cut to pieces by small wounds. After about twelve hours of torture, "they decided to just kill him." He was tied by a rope to the back of a car and dragged through the two lanes of cars on either side of the highway. (It is estimated that from 4,000 to 7,000 people from all over North Florida and S.E. Alabama were on hand for the lynching) and when the car which was pulling Neal's body got in front of Connolly's house a man on the rear bumper cut the rope. "Mrs. Connolly came out and drove a butcher knife thru his heart." "Then the crowd came by and some kicked him and some drove their cars over him."

The body was then brought to Marianna and exhibited on the Court House square. Pictures were taken of the body. Hundreds were sold for fifty cents each. Fingers and toes from Neal's body have been exhibited as souvenirs in Marianna, where one man offered to divide the finger he had with a friend as "a special favor."

It was a well known fact for days before Neal was lynched that the mob was going to get him. The word was passed around all over this area Friday morning and was actually broadcasted over the radio at Dothan, Alabama sometime Friday that there was going to be a "lynching party" and "all white folks" were invited.
Cars containing people who wanted to see the lynching came from Tallahassee, Dothan, Pensacola, Quincy, Brevton, Macon, Bonifay, Marianna, Deale, etc. & etc.

There is no truth in the statement that Marianna people had little or nothing to do with the lynching. I have it from the most authoritative sources that certain "prominent business men and leaders from the best families" were in the mob. It is known that a business man of Marianna arranged with a party in Pensacola to have word sent here the moment Neal was released from there. The word was received here and a group of men set out for the city immediately. Very few people with whom I have talked resented the lynching at all. Most of them think that it was not only justified but that those doing the lynching should be congratulated. I remarked to one business man, "That was a pretty bad lynching you had here," He replied, "No, the lynching wasn't bad. It was all right. What happened to business when the mob came and drove the niggers out was the only bad thing about it." One observer remarked that he could count on his fingers the people in Marianna who would condemn lynching. Several have remarked that lynching is the only way "to keep the niggers in their place." I am familiar with conditions, etc., in the basic factor in this whole beastly affair is economics. Jackson county's population is about 50% Negro. In Marianna it ranges from 45 to 50%. There has been constant agitation on the part of the dispossessed white element for the jobs of Negroes. Employers who give work to Negroes when white men could do the work are boycotted and threatened. A sustained effort has been made to get all Negroes off of the relief rolls and turn the relief entirely to the whites. A semi Fascist organization called the "Purification League" headed by W. Pooser has been doing most of the agitation. Pooser combines race hatred with a few of Huey Long's ideas about dividing up wealth. Negroes are terribly exploited. $2.25 per week is considered very good pay for domestic servants. $2.50 is extraordinary. Cooks and general house workers receive $3.00 at times (very rare), as in the case of boarding houses,
Porters, general workers in stores, etc., get from $4 to $6.00 a week. 

In the Chipola Hotel get $1.50 a week. Maids get $4.00 a week with rooms to care for - 7 days a week. One man remarked, "There ain't enough to go round and niggers ain't got no right to have a job when white men are out of work." Another man said, "This lynch ing was used to scare Negroes away from their jobs and to make the white men give their jobs to men out of work."

To aggravate things, relief was cut off about 2 or 3 ago. Claude Neal, he describes the queen in all of its terror, down to

While Marianna is comparatively quiet, now the rioting may start any moment. There is a very tense atmosphere wherever you go. Negroes are frightened lest another outbreak occur. "Uncle Tom" is in evidence over white men are gathered. However, most of the Negroes are armed and ready for an emergency. There are relatively few Negroes on the streets, but in threes and fours and hardly any at night. White boys (8-11) look fearfully insult Negro men and boys and women.

There is so much more to tell. I want you to get this much today, I'll send you a full, complete report by Monday, typewritten. Do not have this copied and return this to me so I can get questions, etc. Don't have my typewriter along. Send it to 1700 Edgehill just as soon as you can. I'll probably finish up here Thursday or Friday - if I can stay that long.

A Negro just told me that I had better "get out of town" but here are two or three things yet to be done.

Lola told me not to speak to her again. Yours if we did that once told me not to speak to the whites in the community on both sides.

Shoits must have known about mob. Everyone else did. Ochamblise should have known that he would need extra help. Police couldn't be round Saturday morning - they went home - No one would be deputized by Mayor.

Seal told the officers that he alone was guilty for use (the officer) lied with me, which is not near Saloma. This is straight. I got it from prime