Asks U. S. To Probe Murder

By HARRY McALPIN

WASHINGTON—(NNPA) — Ac-
tion of the Department of Justice
has been demanded by the Birm-
ingham NAACP in the reported
brutal killing of a Negro woman
by Federal and county officers in
Selma, Ala. She was Mrs. Hattie
Debardelaben, 46 years old.

According to an affidavit filed
in the case, three Federal officers
from Montgomery, Ala., and the
county officer from Prattville, Ala.,
found a whisky still on the planta-
tion of W. J. Underwood. They
arrested one of his men and then
went about three and a half miles
to Mrs. Debardelaben's home on
the same plantation, where they
found her washing in the back-
yard.

The officers asked her if she had
any chickens to sell. Told her did not, the officers asked if she had any
whisky for sale. When told that
she did not, they said they would
search the place. They were told
they could.

At this time, Mrs. Debardela-
ben's sister's son, about sixteen
years old, came in from school.
He was told by the officers to go
sit down. He seemed not to have
heard the officers, who jumped on
him and beat him. When she pro-
tested, two of the officers jumped
on her. She was struck about the
face and neck with fists and
knocked down each time she tried
to get up.

Mrs. Debardelaben's son tried to
defend his mother. He was hit
several times and bruised about
the face. He then called for his
other two brothers, both grown
men, who were working in the
field. When they attempted to
rescue their mother, they were
held at gun point at the edge of the
pasture by the two federal
officers. The other two officers
put Mrs. Debardelaben into their
car and arrested the sixteen-year-
old boy on a charge of interfering
with an arrest. He was later re-
leased on bond furnished by a
neighboring white farmer.

Mrs. Debardelaben died in the
car of the officers about seven
miles from her home. Proceeding
to the Prattville jail, nevertheless,
the officers jailed the son, and
then called for the sheriff, and a
colored undertaker, to come get
the dead body out of the car.