

**Jessie Daniel Ames's letter to Council Members, Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching [TRANSCRIPTION]**

Association of  
Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching

CENTRAL COUNCIL  
JESSIE DANIEL AMES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
710 STANDARD BUILDING  
ATLANTA, GA

October 18, 1937

My dear Council Members:

As you know, the President has called a special session of Congress for November 15. The Wagner–Van Nuys Antilynching Bill is almost sure to come up for consideration unless, in some astute way, it is blocked in the Senate. You may recall that when Congress adjourned it was agreed by Majority Leader Barkley that the measure would be given the second position on the calendar when Congress reconvened.

There is one thing that we should do this month and all of you who receive this letter have an obligation to perform in this connection. When the Bill was being debated in the lower house there were a few speeches made in defense of lynching as being necessary for the protection of white women. Will you please write at once to your United States Senators, telling them that above everything Southern white women do not want to be used as an argument for lynching; we do not want ourselves dragged across the newspapers as recipients of a lawless and destructive type of violence, which we appear to accept as a greater protection to us than are the courts and the Constitution. This will require of you just two letters: one to each of your Senators. But, please, I urge you, write at once before Congress convenes. You may have to follow this up again during the Christmas Holidays, but now while the Senators have a certain amount of leisure to read and ponder their mail is the time to get in the first stroke.



We have had another lynching since the September letter — at Milton, Florida. A Negro was taken from the Sheriff and lynched. He was accused of committing an unnatural crime against a white boy and of holding up a filling station. This makes unquestionably eight lynchings this year — the decision on the ninth one is still in abeyance. All victims were Negroes, all in the South.

Cordially yours,

*(signed)* **Jessie Daniel Ames**

Jessie Daniel Ames

**Source:** Jessie Daniel Ames's letter to Council Members, October 18, 1937, Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching papers, 1930-1942 (MICROFILM HV6464.A87), Butler Center for Arkansas Studies.