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R SEATTLE WASH JULY 12 1923

HON LEWIS H HART

GOVERNOR STATE OF WASHINGTON OLYMPIA WASH

YOUR EXCELLENCY ACCORDING TO THE PAPERS OF SEATTLE WE ARE THREATENED BY A CERTAIN SHERIFF WITH A FORCIBLE INTERFERENCE WITH OUR INalienable RIGHTS AS AMERICAN BORN MEN AND ONE HUNDRED PERCENT PATRIOTS HIS ALLEGED STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS INCLUDE A WILD INTERPRETATION OF THE NINETY EIGHTY THREE PIECES CODE OR TWENTY FIVE FIFTY THREE REMINGTONS CODE WHICH READS AS FOLLOWS QUOTE ANY ASSEMBLAGE OF THREE OR MORE PERSONS DISGUISED BY HAVING THEIR FACES PAINTED DISCOLORED OR CONCEALED SHALL BE GUILTY OF A GROSS MISDEMEANOR BUT NOTHING HERETOFORTH SHALL BE CONSTRUED AS PROHIBITING ANY PEACEFUL ASSEMBLAGE FOR A MASQUERADE OR FANCY BALL OR ENTERTAINMENT QUOTE THE KLAN IS A PEACEFUL ASSEMBLAGE A MASQUERADE AND A PATRIOTIC RELIGIOUS CEREMONIAL WE ARE BITTERLY OPPOSED TO EVEN THE SUGGESTION OF LAW BREAKING AND WILL NOT SUBMIT OUR AMERICAN BIRTHRIGHT TO THE WILL OF THIS PREJUDICE OFFICIAL WHOM IT IS ALLEGED THREATENS TO BREAK THE LAW IN HIS EFFORT TO DISPERSE OUR PEACEFUL GATHERING RATHER THAN SUBMIT TO THIS FOREIGN DICTATION AND THIS UNWARRANTED THREAT TO ABROGATE OUR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF FREE SPEECH AND FREE ASSEMBLY WE WILL DEFEND OUR RIGHTS AS THEY ARE GUARANTEED UNDER OUR AMERICAN CONSTITUTION AS ONE HUNDRED PERCENT AMERICAN BORN MEN SWORN TO DEFEND OUR FLAG AND OUR CONSTITUTION TO THE LAST DROP OF OUR BLOOD WE WILL STAND AGAINST THIS INVASION OF OUR RIGHTS AS PEACEFUL CITIZENS WE PRAY YOU SIR THAT IT WILL NOT COME TO THIS AND THEREFORE DO HUMBLY AND RESPECTFULLY PETITION YOU AS OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF WASHINGTON STATE TO SEND FOR OUR PROPER PROTECTION A COMPANY OF THE STATE GUARD AGAINST THOSE WHO WOULD FORGET THEIR OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE UNITED STATES IN ORDER TO PUT IN OPERATION A FOREIGN CONCEPTION OF THEIR POWER TO DISPERSE THOSE WITH WHOM THEY ARE TOLD TO DISAGREE AND DISTURB PERSECUTE AND PROHIBIT ON THE MOST FEEBLE PRETEXT OF DOING THEIR DUTY RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

LUTHER I POWELL

KING KLEAGLE KNIGHTS OF THE KU KLUX KLAN PACIFIC NORTHWEST DOMAIN...624P
Olympia, July 12, 1923

Major Luther I. Powell, King Klansman
Knights of the Ku Klux Klan,
Seattle, Washington.

In reply to your telegram of today allow me to call your attention to the fact that I have no power to order out the national guard except after a state of riot exists, and then only after the civil authorities have exhausted every effort at their command to keep the peace, and at their request. If the sheriff, and a superior judge of the county certify that they are unable to preserve the peace and enforce the laws I will then consider the advisability of declaring martial law in the district affected, and ordering out the troops to enforce the statutes. I will not anticipate a condition with which the civil authorities cannot cope.

Gov. Louis F. Hart