Carl Schurz, “Report on Condition of the South” December 1865

The number of murders and assaults perpetrated upon negroes is very great; we can form only an approximative estimate of what is going on in those parts of the south which are not closely garrisoned, and from which no regular reports are received, by what occurs under the very eyes of our military authorities. As to my personal experience, I will only mention that during my two days sojourn at Atlanta, one negro was stabbed with fatal effect on the street, and three were poisoned, one of whom died...

So far, the spirit of persecution has shown itself so strong as to make the protection of the freedman by the military arm of the government in many localities necessary—in almost all, desirable. It must not be forgotten that in a community a majority of whose members is peaceably disposed, but not willing or not able to enforce peace and order, a comparatively small number of bold and lawless men can determine the character of the whole.

Source: https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1866/12/reconstruction/304561/