

SMITH & JOHNSTON
LAWYERS
622-626 FIRST NATIONAL BANK BUILDING
MOBILE, ALA.

HARRY H. SMITH
SAMUEL M. JOHNSTON

P. C. FOUNTAIN
DAN T. McCALL, JR.

October 31st, 1933.

Governor B. M. Miller,
Montgomery, Alabama.

Dear Governor:-

We represent the Mobile Cotton Mills, that is now being greatly troubled by a strike by a part of its employees. It is not really a strike, because, without making any complaint of any kind, these employees quit their jobs, and afterwards claimed that there had been a violation of the N. R. A. Textile Code, although no complaints have ever been filed with the Company, and the Textile Institute has sent a man here to make a complete investigation, and he has reported that there have been no violations of the Textile Code.

There was an attempt to get all of the employees of the Mill to join a Union being organized by a radical representative of the American Federation of Labor in Mobile. He succeeded in securing only 103 employees out of approximately 300.

About a year ago there was an agreement signed by a number of mills not to employ women on the night shifts. This threw a number of employees out of work, who had been with the Company for a long time. Immediately upon the Union members leaving their jobs these old employees returned to work, and the Mill has been running at full capacity with

local employees many of whom had been employed for ten or more years.

Realizing that they had not made any complaints, or complied in any way with the N. R. A. Code, those who quit their jobs have recently gotten desperate, and are assaulting and beating the workers as they go to and from their work. Yesterday there were about twenty-five severely beaten. There have been a number of shots fired into the Mill at night. I have just been informed that there is a plan on foot to have severe disorders within the next hour, when there will be a shift from the day to the night crew. It is said that a number of Union members from another Mill will be brought to this Mill to assist in the violence. It is also reported that Union members who belong to other trades are being called upon by radical Union leaders to commit violence upon the employees of the Mill. They have even organized negro labor, and caused negroes to insult white women employed by the Mill. On the Sunday following the walk-out, the labor agitator led approximately 150 negroes into the white Cotton Mill Village, and made fiery and abusive speeches to these negroes, all of which would naturally incite racial disturbances.

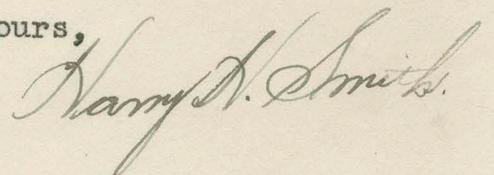
I am in hopes that the Sheriff's department at

Mobile will be able to cope with the situation, but if the trouble gets serious this afternoon, as threatened, it may be necessary to call upon you for help.

Yesterday when the Sheriff went out to the plant he saw Mr. Baker, the president of the Central Trades Council at Mobile, opposite the Mill with a number of the strikers. He went over and talked with Baker, and came back and said that Baker had told him that they wanted to force us to call out the militia, and that they were not going to stop until they did. I am trying to have the violators arrested as quickly as possible, but the Sheriff's force may prove entirely inadequate to cope with so many radicals. It may be necessary for me to call upon you for immediate help, and for this reason I am writing to acquaint you with the situation.

The Cotton Mill is located in the village of Crichton, which adjoins Mobile. It is the most notoriously bad center in this part of the State, and probably has furnished more desperate criminals than any other section of southern Alabama. I hope that if it becomes necessary to call upon you, you will be able to give us instant assistance before there is any loss of life. In my opinion, the feeling between those who are working, and those who have quit, is so tense, it is bordering on warfare between them.

Very truly yours,



Nov. 4, 1933.

Mr. Harry H. Smith,
1st National Bank Bldg.,
Mobile, Alabama.

Dear Mr. Smith:

Your letter of the 3rd reporting on the strike at the Mobile Cotton Mills has been duly received.

I appreciate your giving me the information with reference to conditions. I hope that the sheriff will be able to maintain order and enforce the law.

I presume that if at any time the matter should get beyond the Sheriff's control he will communicate with me.

The only thing that I would have any authority to do would be to call out the Military and, of course, it is desirable to avoid this if possible.

Yours sincerely,

B. M. MILLER,
Governor.

BMM:T

Mobile, Ala., November 1, 1933.



Subject: Report on investigation of strike at Mobile, Ala.

To: The Adjutant General, Alabama,
Montgomery, Ala.

1. Pursuant to telephone communication received from the Adjutant General of Alabama this date at 10:00 AM., the undersigned, John T. Moore, Lieutenant Colonel, Alabama National Guard proceeded to investigate the advisability of using State Troops in aiding the civil authority of Mobile County in subduing the disturbance caused by strikers formerly employed by the Cotton Mills located in Crichton, Ala., a suburb of Mobile, Ala.

2. A chronological report of the investigation is submitted as follows:

At 10:30 Am I called on the Sheriff of Mobile County, Mr. William H. Holcombe and advised him that I had just received a long distant call from the Adjutant General directing me to investigate the advisability of using State Troops in aiding the civil authorities in the Crichton Mill District disturbance. Mr. Holcombe told me that he was trying to get in touch with the Governor to advise him that the situation referred to was well in hand and that he was of the opinion that troops would not be needed. He also stated that he was going to do all in his power to care for the situation with his own forces. He stated that the main trouble was with the labor leaders who seemed to try to strain the conditions to such a point that it would be necessary to employ State Troops and thereby gain the necessary publicity to their cause and get public opinion on their side. The Sheriff mentioned a Mr. Baker who seems to be the President of the Labor Unions in Mobile County, and stated that Mr. Baker remarked to him "Why dont you call out the National Guard?". The Sheriff called the Governor in my presence and gave him a complete and detailed report on the conditions and repeated the above to the Governor. In leaving I assured the Sheriff that the National Guard in Mobile could be called into action within one hour notice in the day time and two hour notice at night and that it was highly trained and efficient and could and would do its work effectively. I cautioned him that the use of troops should be used only as a last resort and when civil authority was powerless to enforce the law.

At 11:15 AM I called on the President of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. O.M. Phelps, who is also Chairman of Mobile County N.R.A. movement. Mr. Phelps informed me that the trouble at the mill has been brewing for about a month, and that the strikers had been given an opportunity to adjust their affair through certain procedure that they have for their own reasons have declined to use. He stated that he thought that the general feeling of the strikers had been cooled down considerably and that it was his opinion that troops would not be of

use in settling the question. He sated that he would keep in close touch with the situation and doo all he could to get an adjustment at an early date.

At 11.30 AM I called on the Postmaster, Mr. R. S. Cartledge, who seems to act as a meaditor between employee and employer in this N.R.A. movement. Mr Cartledge stated that he would have a confidential talk with Mr. Baker, the Union Official and thought that he could get things adjusted without further trouble. I am waiting on the results of this conference. The Postmaster assured me that the situation had not reached the point where it was out of control of civil authority however, most anything could happen and advised that we keep on the alert.

At 2:30 PM I ran out to the Mill Village in my car on the pretence of investigating a charity case which I was working on. There was no signs of a disturbance. I saw only a few loiters around the store corners. I called on four or five homes inquiring about this family, and in each instance I inquired about the strike. I found out the same story from each, which was; The main trouble was with the superintendent who according to their story, was a man that drank heavily and thought that all the women in the mill village was his personal property, and that when the N.R.A. Agreement was signed that they incorporated ideas that they did not understand was in the agreement. They protested, but did not receive any satisfaction. They stated that the officials of the mill would not recognize the union that represented them. These people are ignorant and simple. They stated that they did not want to have any trouble with the law, but they thought that they had a right to a square deal as the President stated that they were going to get one. They stated that they would not destroy property or hurt anyone on the property of the mill, but they were going to keep someone else from taking their bread and meat from their families. From what they stated I understood them to mean that they were going to use passive resistance as long as possible and harrass the strike breakers on their way to and from work and prevent the mill from making it profitable to keep the strikebreakers. I gathered by this that they would try to interupt the power source throught the transmission lines, jeer and interfere with the strike breakers when they are off the property of the mill.

At 4:00 PM I conferred with Captains Mickle ans McKinstry regarding their plans for riot duty. Each stated that they would see that everything would be in readiness in case of a call. I also outlined a plan for this call that would take care of the situation. This pain called for the guarding of the gates to the mill, of the substations of the Power Company that feeds the plant and sufficient patrols to keep the lines of communications open. This plan would use 50 men and four officers including three reliefs. This would be very expensive as you can see. On the way to town I called on the superintendent of the Alabama Power Company, Mr. F.A. Keeler and got a layout of his transmission lines so that their lines could be protected.

The only empense involved in this investigation was gaosline and oil covering about twenty five miles of travel which is negligable and no claim is made for same. This report has been made in great haste and typed on my portable, which accounts for the many errors in typeing.

3. This estimate of the situation resulted in a decision to report adversely on the use of troops in aiding the civil authorities in the disturbance caused by strikers at the Mill Village at Crichton Alabama, at this time, but to hold ourselves in readiness in case of conditions get beyond control of the civil authorities.

3X

John T. Moore
Lt. Col. Ala. N. G.

CLASS OF SERVICE

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WESTERN UNION

NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT

J. C. WILLEVER, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

SIGNS

- DL = Day Letter
- NM = Night Message
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1933 OCT 31 PM 4 09

HON B M MILLER=

STATE CAPITOL MONTGOMERY ALA=

MINUTES IN TRANSIT	
FULL-RATE	DAY LETTER

I HAVE RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM A L BAKER
 PRESIDENT CENTRAL TRADES COUNCIL MOBILE QUOTE MOB RULE
 PREVAILS IN TEXTILE STRIKE AT MOBILE COTTON MILLS OF
 CRICHTON MOBILE COUNTY STOP CONDITION ACUTE RACIAL HATRED
 WILL LIKELY CAUSE BLOODSHED STOP GRAVENESS OF SITUATION
 PROMPTS THIS APPEAL FOR ASSISTANCE UNQUOTE I KNOW OF COURSE
 THAT YOU WILL INVESTIGATE AND TAKE ANY PRECAUTION NECESSARY
 TO PREVENT VIOLENCE IN YOUR STATE I SHALL APPRECIATE ADVICE
 AS TO THE SITUATION=

FRANCES PERKINS.

CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED

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TELEGRAM		FULL RATE CABLE	
DAY LETTER		DEFERRED CABLE	
NIGHT MESSAGE		NIGHT CABLE LETTER	
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Postal Telegraph

THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

Commercial
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Cables

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RECEIVER'S NUMBER

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STANDARD TIME

Form 2

Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

Montgomery, Ala.
Nov. 1, 1933

Miss Frances Perkins
Secretary of Labor
Washington, D. C.

Your telegram textile strike Mobile Cotton Mill at Crichton Stop
Talked with Sheriff today and he informs me that he feels sure he
can handle situation without trouble and that military is unnecessary
Stop I told him if he needed assistance to let me know Stop We will
keep a watchful eye on the situation and the Sheriff promises to keep
me posted and we hope it can be managed without trouble or violence.

B. M. Miller,
Governor of Alabama.

Charge to account
Governor's office.