

STATE OF ALABAMA

CIRCUIT COURT

MADISON COUNTY

HUNTSVILLE, ALA.

PAUL SPEAKE, JUDGE
JAS. G. STOGNER, CLERK
JAS. H. PRIDE, SOLICITOR
E. P. KINGSBERRY
COURT REPORTER

August 13th, 1934.

Hon. B. M. Miller,
Governor of Alabama,
Montgomery, Ala.

Dear Sir:-

The situation here is such that in our opinion the militia should be sent here to aid in keeping the peace and in preventing actual bloodshed which we believe is impending.

You have received a copy of a letter which we received from the C. L. C. Thomas Company, which is represented by Mr. Fraser. He tells us that he has had several conversations with you explaining the situation. The strikers are walking around, armed with shot-guns, pistols and rifles, and making serious ~~threats~~ threats if he opens his factory. They say to him that he can open it if he can get laborers, but are seeing to it that he does n't get laborers. Dean, the representative of the Union, who is here and who is at the root of the strike, has said to-day to the sheriff, who conferred with him, that the pickets would be taken away from this particular factory, but we understood that he has said to others that that was with the view of preventing the militia from being sent here, and that if the factory attempted to open he would see that it could not run. He and the strikers have also stopped a grist-mill from running.

The grand jury was organized to-day and it was charged fully as to the various laws as to riots, routs, threats to prevent people from getting employment, unlawful assemblies, etc., and abducting or kidnapping. We believe it likely that indictments will be preferred, but when it comes to arresting the ring-leaders we are very apprehensive that the militia will be needed and needed IMMEDIATELY. We do not believe the sheriff will be able to cope with the situation. The main thing we want to do is to prevent ~~these~~ unlawful parades by armed men and it is not so much to break up the strike. We understand that the sheriff has appointed six deputies (of Dean's selection) to take care of Dean. This places matters in an awkward attitude, for these deputies will be armed and will be opposing other armed deputies, if trouble does come.

We earnestly recommend, therefore, that you confer with the commanding officer here, Major Edwin Jones, and have him have a company of militia here at once, and in our opinion it would be better to have a company sent here from some other place, rather than have our own local company, as its members have local connections and sympathies which might render their service less effective.

In our opinion an injunction would not meet the needs of the situation.

Very respectfully,
Paul Speake, Circuit Judge
James H. Pride, Solicitor

August 20, 1934.

Judge Paul Speake,
Huntsville, Ala.

Dear Judge Speake:

Your letter received and appreciated.

My experience as soldier, Circuit Judge and Governor with strikes, makes me know that conditions change from day to day and the remedies must change to meet the altered conditions.

Then too new facts and factors enter from day to day and the Executive Department must always keep in mind, and aim and purpose, the preservation of human life and the protection of property and the prevention of its destruction.

When the Judicial and Executive Departments keep separate from each other, yet work in harmony within the law with common sense, good judgment and calmness, life will be preserved and property protected and the law respected.

This, I am confident, you all will do.

The Sheriff will no doubt, as suggested to him by me, consult constantly with you and the Solicitor with the above ends in view.

Hope you will have no trouble and the strike will soon end and no life will be lost and no property destroyed.

With best wishes, I am

Yours truly,

B. M. MILLER,
Governor.

BMM:T