

ALLEN J. ROULHAC

SHEFFIELD, ALABAMA

Jan. 31, 1944

Hon. R. H. Walker

Athens, Ala.

Dear Mr. Walker;

Yesterday morning a few of us were talking politics and I mentioned having a letter from you and your idea about getting a candidate from north Alabama for Public Service Commissioner. They all thought that it would be a good idea and Cooke remarked he did not see why you did not run for delegate at large to the national convention. You say you are strong for Roosevelt. Roosevelt is sure to be renominated. Why not commit your self and make others do likewise. What sense is there in going uninstructed when Roosevelt is the only possibility. If a man is against Roosevelt for the nomination he should say so and not hide behind uninstructed. Why not declare yourself for Roosevelt and Rayburn or some other able southerner. Another thing show what bosh this talk of repealing the majority rule now in effect. It is not going to be changed and should not be. Majority rule prevails with all other parties and with all units of government and is the only democratic way. These people who talk about repealing and of going uninstructed are mostly against Roosevelt and for minority rule-generally by the big financial interested. One would think to hear some of the reactionaries talk that the 2/3 rule had given the south a veto power in making nominations and a protection and defense against an undesirable man. So far as I can recall it has never served the south to any good purpose. It defeated Clark, who had much southern strength. It enabled Smith and the wall street interest to defeat McAdoo, a southern man, who might have been elected had he been nominated and we got in his place a man who had no chance to win; whose campaign manager could not get his own wife to support the  
(over)

democratic ticket. So far as I know it has never served the south. In principal it is wrong and indefensible. The best way for the south to attain its proper place in the sun is to stand for sound principals of government and economy, without asking for special treatment, but insisting and fighting against any kind of discrimination. We should be insistent upon being treated as citizens of the United States and not of any section. There is too much sectional talk; too much race issue talk.

In my opinion a column such as that of John Temple Graves the Fifth does the south more harm than even Mrs Roosevelt. There is hardly a day that his column does not have something to say which arouses sectional prejudice. I was mayor when Henry Ford made his visit to Sheffield. He was accompanied by a number of Boston and other eastern newspaper men.

Some of them came to see and the first and about the only thing they wanted to know about was the negro question. I told them we had no negro question; that it was all in the papers and magazines; that in Sheffield the negroes lived on the south side of the railroad in a section set aside for them and if they behaved themselves all went well with them, and if they did not behave they were made to. I have been very <sup>r</sup>gargous, for which you must pardon me. I certainly hope you will decide to

follow Sam Cooke's suggestion and become a Roosevelt delegate to the national convention. Smoke-out some of these uninstructed fellows.

I see Sparks is a candidate. He should be defeated. He never represented the progressive element in the party and has never made any effort to keep his campaign promises. I do not think he merits the confidence of the people. With regards,

Sincerely yours,

Allen J. Rance