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January 15th, 1936.

Hon. R. H. Walker,
Athens, Alabama.

Dear Mr. Walker:-

P E R S O N A L.

First, I wish to state to you how greatly I appreciated your Christmas greetings. It was nice to know that you were thinking about me at this time of the year, and it is needless to say that I sincerely hope that the New Year will have in store for you much happiness and prosperity.

I received this evening a copy of your very excellent editorial in The Limestone Democrat headed "An Unwise Proposition".

I thoroughly agree with you that a very serious mistake was made when some of the members of the State Democratic Executive Committee undertook to take away from the people the right to elect their own delegates to the National Convention. I am strictly a "primary man" and do not belong to the old "convention system" which our friend, Ed Pettus, and some others insist is the only correct scheme of government.

I am going to be in Montgomery on Saturday and do what I can to have the State Committee rescind the action which was taken by it on November 13th. Like you, I think it would add prestige to the Alabama delegation to the National Convention to have our Governor and two United States Senators as members of this delegation, but they ought to get on the delegation by election by the people and not by appointment of a minority, or even by the entire, membership of the State Democratic Executive Committee.

Just confidentially, I doubt if there are enough members of the State Executive Committee who are absolutely independent to take the necessary action to rescind the action taken on November 13th. I don't believe the Committee is going to try to go any further in naming delegates to the National Convention, but what the Committee should do is to rescind the action already taken and let the people elect all of the delegates to the National Convention. The way this thing was put over was most disgusting. Members who were thought to be "under control" were notified of what was going to be pulled off, while most of us living a far way from Montgomery had no inkling of what was going on. I rather feel like kicking myself when I did not have sense enough to "smell a mouse" when I got notice that a meeting of the State Executive Committee was being called at Montgomery

for the purpose of nominating some representatives in the legislature from one or two counties. Ordinarily in such matters, a mail ballot is taken and the State Committee nearly always adopts the recommendation of the local County Democratic Executive Committee, or, at times, the State Committee requests that the members of the State Committee from the Congressional District in which the County in question is located make suggestions for such vacancies. There is no sense in asking me to ride all night to Montgomery and spend a day there and then spend the next night riding on a pullman back to Mobile to vote on who should go to the legislature from Geneva or Marshall Counties. My acquaintance in these counties is not sufficient to make my recommendations of any value. Consequently, I am sure you will agree with me when I state to you that I am good and sore over the fact that I was so "dumb" as not to realize that "something was up" when I got the very unusual notice of the November 13th meeting.

The whole thing is just unpardonable and there is no reason why in the Fall of 1935 any delegate should be named to a party convention to be held the following Summer, the date for which had not even been set.

Well, there is no use enlarging on the subject, but I don't approve of any of this sort of business, and the thing that I more heartily disapprove of is the way that your friend Graves and some of his crowd are putting pressure to bear on members of the Committee to keep them in line and have them to refuse to rescind the action taken on November 13th. In the strictest confidence, some of the stunts that they have pulled off along this line by the giving of jobs, the letting of contracts, and pressure of various kinds, is really nothing short of nauseating to any man who believes in a real democracy. Sometime, I will tell you in confidence of some of the stunts which have been pulled.

I don't think that there are enough of us who will vote to rescind this action to carry our point. My best judgment is that the Committee is going to refuse to permit the people of the State to elect their delegates at large to the National Convention. However, I have no personal feeling in the matter and if the majority of the Committee wishes to take this action, that is their privilege. I consider it very unwise and very ill-advised, and, of course, when I am trying to do what I think ought to be done, it is entirely immaterial to me whether I am successful or not, and the satisfaction I get out of voting for and fighting for what I think is right is much more pleasant to me than to go along and take the line of least resistance.

I know you will treat this letter as confidential, and while I appreciate the more or less delicate position you are in as Speaker of the House, yet I know that down in your heart you will agree with every word I am saying.

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By the way, you might be interested in reading the enclosed clipping of an editorial which I noted in the Mobile Register of this morning and also the enclosed clipping of an editorial which appeared in the Mobile Press of this afternoon. The people down our way are very much aroused over this usurpation of power, and all three members of the State Committee from Mobile, - Sam Johnston, Carroll Prince and myself, - are going to be on hand on January 18th to try to undo some of the damage which we feel is being done our Party by some of the thoughtless members of the Committee who are backed up and urged to go forward by the Governor and some of his staunchest friends.

With kindest regards and all good wishes, I am,

Sincerely yours,


(Gessner T. McCorvey)

GTM-R

Enclosures.