

January 16, 1935.

Time: 11:10 a.m.

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. TOLSON

Mr. Alt telephoned from Jacksonville, Florida, and stated he had just returned from the Associated Press headquarters, in accordance with your instructions. He learned a bulletin was received to the effect that a group of about fifteen Agents and an undetermined number of men from Chicago were engaged in a gun battle at Oklawaha, about fifteen miles from Ocala; that the firing had been continuing since 7 o'clock this morning; that the gangsters are barricaded in a deserted house; that there are no casualties on either side, although machine gun fire was coming from both sides.

I stated that I want to be certain Mr. Connelley has sufficient ammunition in gas and guns. Mr. Alt advised that a group of Agents left Jacksonville this morning at 1:00 o'clock, at which time they had plenty of equipment. Mr. Alt was deeply concerned because he had not been able to contact any one in Ocala in order to get information. He places no confidence in the sheriff at Ocala. I told him I had in mind having either him or Mr. Lacour proceed to Ocala by chartered plane to make contact if it could be done safely, without becoming involved in the firing. I remarked that of course the members of the Karpis-Barker gang are the worst criminals in the entire country, and particularly not knowing the extent of their equipment and ammunition, I am deeply concerned lest our Agents exhaust their supply of equipment. Mr. Alt said he insisted last night that the Agents take shields with them, and although they were reluctant to do so because they felt they were not adequate to resist bullets, they did take them along; that the Agents were equipped with high-powered rifles and .351 guns. Mr. Alt stated that he had left in the office a couple of Monitors, a rifle and one machine gun. He did not believe they would need more guns, but it is now rather a question of ammunition.

Mr. Alt inquired as to the advisability of trying to contact somebody in Ocala. He stated he has heard favorable comments concerning the new Chief of Police at Ocala. Mr. Alt estimated that it would require approximately an hour and a half to reach Ocala by plane. I expressed concern over the fact that the press representatives will now interfere with the situation in the vicinity of Ocala; that I have confidence in our Agents' being able to handle the situation if there is no interference of this type. Mr. Alt did not feel that we need anticipate such interference due to the fact that they are located at an isolated spot and there had been no leak until this morning. I stated that no doubt the news reel and movietone representatives will rush in as soon as they learn there is a battle.

I instructed Mr. Alt to charter a plane immediately and proceed to Ocala in order to make contact, or if he felt Agent Lacour could handle this situation it would be all right to send him to Ocala. Mr. Alt expressed confidence in Mr. Lacour's ability to take care of this matter. I suggested that

Handwritten note: B. J. ...

- Mr. Nathan
- Mr. Tolson
- Mr. Clegg
- Mr. Baur
- Chief Clerk
- Mr. Coffey
- Mr. Edwards
- Mr. Egan
- Mr. Harbo
- Mr. Keith
- Mr. Lester
- Mr. Quinn
- Mr. Schilder
- Mr. Tamm
- Mr. Tracy
- Miss Gandy

Handwritten initials: W.C.

7-576-3820

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he take with him additional high-powered rifles and ammunition. Mr. Alt said he would arrange immediately for Mr. Lacour to proceed to Ocala by the fastest plane available. I instructed that Mr. Lacour proceed by automobile from Ocala to the scene of the battle, taking with him the guns and ammunition, and then arrange to get in touch with us to inform as to the status of the situation.

Mr. Alt stated that in the meantime, he would also attempt to make contact at Ocala by telephone.

Very truly yours,

John Edgar Hoover,
Director.

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