

JOS. F. JOHNSTON [Joseph F. Johnston]
RICH'D M. NELSON [Richard M. Nelson]

Law office of Johnston & Nelson,
Selma, Ala., March 11 1876

Dear Col

I have been intending for some time to write you in regard to the Bromberg case. You know Mr. Bromberg and you appreciate his honesty and manly worth; some our friends from Ala do not look upon him with the consideration they would have given others. I think the principles involved in his contest are about all that we in Ala care for in so far as they touch Federal politics. What we want and what we have been striving for with all our power was and is "non interference" The very first time this question is presented to a Democratic House (to whom we had been looking and whose election was hailed ever over the south as the greatest of political blessings) they repudiate the principle. I suppose it was feared that unseating an unprincipled negroe would fire the northern heart. So the democracy of this Dist are to be sacrificed to expediency. If Haralson had 10000 majority and it was clearly shown that federal troops had been stationed at one precinct for the purpose of influencing the election in his favor I would vote to set it aside. The testimony in the case shows wholesale bribery and corruption - enough

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to unseat every member from Ala had it have occurred in the State instead of the 1st Dist. It wont do to say that the Dist is Republican. The majorities in William's Dist were greater than in this and if that rule is to govern we had as well hold one election and then quit. There are too many Democrats holding seats in the House from Dist's where the majorities were twice as great as here to set such a precedent. What would become of the Ga. Miss & La members, to say nothing of the [?] which came in by revolutions in Districts in the northern states. I have no more doubt that Bromberg received a majority of the legal votes cast than I have that you were lawfully elected. You gentlemen who dont live in the black belt cant understand the testimony taken in this case. It can only be realized by actual observation you dont believe the testimony. I have no more doubt of the substantial truth of it than I have of the guilt of Belkna. The trouble with our friends is this. The majority is 2500 you dont prove examine that many illegal votes so Haralson must retain his seat. Suppose no illegal vote had been proven and Haralson's maj had been under 100 or under 500 all would have voted to seat Bromberg.

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The principle is the same : but whether Bromberg is seated or not it would be an outrage upon the Democrats of the 1st Dist to allow a negroe greasy with [?] bacon and foisted into Congress by bayonets to retain his seat. I know very well that our friends are afraid that it will look like an outrage to turn out a member with an apparent majority of 2500. Cowardice is as great a crime in politics as in morals. What are we to expect when such practices as are shown in this case are permitted to stand : Can we complain at their exercise in the next election? I am afraid that our senses are becoming too blunt to stand by constitutional principles. I want you to consider this question and to see if the com' cannot be induced to reconsider. I sent Pillsbury (Don Carlos) today some of the newspapers (Argus & Times) containing the sentiments of the people here in regard to the case. I have rec'd many letters filled with indignation at the finding of the com'. I would like you to take some steps to give the com' to understand how their action is considered.

Your friend truly,
Jos. F. Johnston [Joseph F. Johnston]

Hon Jno. H. Caldwell [John H. Caldwell] M.C.
Washington D.C.

Return to JOHNSTON & NELSON
P.O. Lock Box 101, SELMA, Ala.
If not delivered within 10 days

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