

WAR COLLEGE DIVISION

5730-2

WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
WASHINGTON FPD
F Q C G

1 incl.
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
WAR COLLEGE DIVISION

R 5730-2

February 20, 1918.

WAR DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF:

Subject: H. R. 131, 65th Congress, 1st Session.

1. Under date of October 3, 1917, there was referred to the War Plans Division a copy of H. R. 131, 65th Congress, 1st Session, which had been referred, by indorsement from the Military Affairs Committee, House of Representatives, to the Secretary of War, with request for any information relative to this measure in the possession of the War Department.

2. This resolution, which was introduced on August 30, 1917, by Mr. McLemore, related to the matter of the riot at Houston, Texas, by negro soldiers of the 24th Infantry, on August 23, 1917, and in order to secure the information in regard to this matter that was available in the different bureaus of the War Department, the Inspector General, The Adjutant General and the Judge Advocate General were requested to furnish all the information available in their respective offices. The reply of the Judge Advocate General, which has recently been received, transmits the trial record of the court martial which tried these cases. This record constitutes an extensive document embracing eight volumes of closely typewritten material, as the trial was one of the most extended in our military history.

3. The resolution above referred to provided that the negro soldiers who were indicted for murder be brought back to Houston, Texas, for trial and that the Secretary of War be "instructed to authorize any military tribunal he may select to investigate the crime of the notorious and murderous negro soldiers to be coordinate with the Citizen's Committee appointed by the City of Houston, and to work with said Citizen's Committee in seeking and receiving information and testimony".

4. In view of the fact that the two trials, of 67 and 15 soldiers respectively, resulting from this riot, have already been completed, it is believed that it is improbable that the Committee on Military Affairs now desires the submission by the War Department, for use in connection with the consideration of H. R. 131, above referred to, of an extended report on the Houston riot, and that the time and labor involved in the preparation of a report of this character would be entirely incommensurate with the use to be made of such a report. It is accordingly believed to be desirable that no further steps toward the preparation of a comprehensive report in this connection be taken until there can be secured the views of the Chairmen of the Military Affairs Committee as to whether or not such a report is now desired by the Committee.

5. Draft of a letter in this connection from the Secretary of War to the Chairman of the House Committee on Military Affairs is forwarded herewith.

D W KETCHAM

Col., Gen. Staff,
Actg. Director, W.P.D., A. A. C. of A.

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WPD 5730-2

WAR DEPARTMENT

Incl 1
 OFFICE OF CHIEF OF STAFF
 WAR CORPS DIV

WASHINGTON

WPD

F Q C C

F Q C C

5730-3

February , 1918.

WAR DEPARTMENT

To the Chairman,
 Committee on Military Affairs,
 House of Representatives.

Sir:

On September 4, 1917, there was referred, by indorsement from your Committee, to the Secretary of War, the copy herewith of H. R. 131, 65th Congress, 1st Session, with request for any information relative to this measure in the possession of the War Department.

This resolution, which was introduced by Mr. McLeMORE, related to the matter of the riot, at Houston, Texas, by negro soldiers of the 24th Infantry, on August 23, 1917, and in order to secure the information in regard to this matter which was available in the different bureaus of the War Department, the Inspector General, The Adjutant General and the Judge Advocate General were called upon to furnish all the information available in their respective offices.

The Judge Advocate General has recently transmitted the trial record of the court-martial which tried these cases. This record constitutes an extensive document embracing eight volumes of closely typewritten material, the trial having been one of the most extended in our military history.

The Resolution above referred to provided that the negro soldiers who were indicted for murder be brought back to Houston, Texas, for trial and that certain instructions should be issued to any military tribunal to be convened, relative to its cooperation with a committee of citizens of Houston, Texas, appointed by the city authorities.

In view of the fact that the two trials, of 67 and 15 soldiers respectively, resulting from this affair, have already been completed, it is believed that it is improbable that your Committee is desirous at the present time, of examining, in connection with H. R. 131, the voluminous records in regard to this riot, which are now on hand in the War Department files. If, however, it is the desire of your Committee that these records, which are available at any time for examination by the Committee, be forwarded to you at this time for examination, will you kindly advise me accordingly.

Respectfully,

m.j

Secretary of War.

5730-4

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Office of the Chief of Staff,
Washington. WPD

F O R C E
May 13, 1918.

OFFICE CHIEF OF STAFF
WAR PLANS DIVISION

cc
MAY 13 1918
5730-4
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WAR DEPARTMENT

From: Director, W.P.D.
To: The Adjutant General of the Army.
Subject: Data relative to Houston Riot.

1. Referring to the letter of the Acting Chief of the War Plans Division, dated October 12, 1917, (WPD 5730-2), requesting that all data relative to the Houston riot, available in your office, be furnished the War Plans Division for use in connection with the preparation by that Division of a report for the Secretary of War, called for by the Committee on Military Affairs of the House of Representatives, I am returning to you herewith the records furnished by you in this connection in order that these records may be returned to your files.

mlb

LYTLE BROWN,
Brigadier General, N.A.
Assistant Chief of Staff.

See 2/B, C, D.

5730-4

WAR DEPARTMENT
Office of the Chief of Staff,
Washington. WPD
F Q C G
May 13, 1918.

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OFFICE OF CHIEF OF STAFF
WAR PLANS DIVISION

5730-4
MAY 13 1918
WAR DEPARTMENT

From: Director, W. P. D.
To: Judge Advocate General of the Army.
Subject: Data relative to Houston Riot.

1. Referring to the letter of the Acting Chief of the War Plans Division, dated October 12, 1917, (WPD 5730-2), requesting that all data relative to the Houston riot, available in your office, be furnished the War Plans Division for use in connection with the preparation by that Division of a report for the Secretary of War, called for by the Committee on Military Affairs of the House of Representatives, I am returning to you herewith the records furnished by you in this connection in order that these records may be returned to your files.

LYTLE BROWN,
Brigadier General, N. A.
Assistant Chief of Staff.

mlb

5730-4

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Office of the Chief of Staff,
Washington. WPD

F Q C G

May 13, 1918.

OFFICE CHIEF OF STAFF
WAR PLANS DIVISION

MAY 13
5730-4
1918

WAR DEPARTMENT

From: Director, W. P. D.
To: Inspector General of the Army.
Subject: Data relative to Houston Riot.

1. Referring to the letter of the Acting Chief of the War Plans Division, dated October 12, 1917, (WPD 5730-2), requesting that all data relative to the Houston riot, available in your office, be furnished the War Plans Division for use in connection with the preparation by that Division of a report for the Secretary of War, called for by the Committee on Military Affairs of the House of Representatives, I am returning to you herewith the records furnished by you in this connection in order that these records may be returned to your files.

mlb

LYTLE BROWN
Brigadier General, N.A.
Assistant Chief of Staff.