

From: John Milton, Governor of Florida & President of the Board of the Internal Improvement Fund
To: David Yulee, President of the Florida Railroad Company

May 20, 1863

Dear Sir,

...My attention was first invited to the necessity for the removal of the iron from Gainesville to Cedar Keys by the proceedings of a public meeting at the former place in which you were represented to me as having participated and to have expressed an anxiety for the removal of the iron and a willingness for it to be used if necessary by the Confederate Government.

...I have reason to know that the Confederate Government very much needs iron, and that the necessity is daily becoming more pressing in the conduct of the existing and formidable war...

I have the honor to be,
Very Respectfully,
John Milton
Governor of Florida &
President of the Board of the Internal Improvement Fund

From: David Yulee, President of the Florida Railroad Company
To: John Milton, Governor of Florida & President of the Board of the Internal Improvement Fund

June 4, 1863

Sir,

...I am not aware of any authority vested in the Trustees of the Internal Improvement Fund, any more than in this company, to diminish or change the security of **cestuis qui trusts** or to deal with the Trust fund, or the rights of the State or of the creditors of the fund, any otherwise than other ordinary trustees might, under the direction and control of the Courts of the State. I am also unaware of any power existing in this company, or in the Executive branch of Government, to authorize or permit the destruction of a public way.

...No such proceedings as your letter describes occurred at Gainesville. You have evidently been misinformed...

I have the honor to be
Very respectfully
D.L. Yulee
Presdt., Florida
R.R. Co.

From: John Milton, Governor of Florida & President of the Board of the Internal Improvement Fund
To: David Yulee, President of the Florida Railroad Company

June 8, 1863

Sir,

... Why should not iron from rail-roads be impressed if needed— Rail Road companies have no claims paramount to the general safety; their claims should not be more respected, than the rights of freemen to personal liberty, or of farmers, merchants and other citizens to enjoy the peaceful possession of their property...

The Confederate Government is willing to pay a just price for the iron...

[If] the enemy shall successfully invade the State – because the Confederate Government was denied the means of transportation for its defence – a fearful responsibility will attach to those who have denied the means...

I have the honor to be
Respectfully
John Milton
Governor of Florida

From: David Yulee, President of the Florida Railroad Company
To: John Milton, Governor of Florida & President of the Board of the Internal Improvement Fund

June 19, 1863

Sir.

...It is sufficiently evident that you are desirous to effect the destruction of a considerable part of the track of this road, and the transfer of its iron to the use of the connections in Middle Florida and Georgia. I hope my letter have made it equally evident that I am opposed to this movement, and will endeavor to prevent its success.

It is very clear that we entirely differ in opinion. You think it will be beneficial to the cause and to the State to do what you propose. I, on the contrary, think that the general cause, and the proper defence of East Florida and advantage of the State, will be best served by preserving and holding the military base which the Florida Railroad furnishes to the Peninsula...

I have the honor to be
Very Respectfully
Your obt st
D. L. Yulee

From: John Milton, Governor of Florida
To: David Yulee, President of the Florida Railroad Company

July 10, 1863

Sir

...One of the principal objects I have had in view has been to prevent the road from being captured and used or destroyed by the enemy; and partially to accomplish this object have advised the iron from parts of the track to be removed by Confederate Authority for the defence of the State and upon conditions which would insure the future use of the road.

... I know no man in Florida under more obligation than yourself, to rise superior to personal considerations and local interests, for the defence and rescue of the State from the threatened and impending dangers.

The political honor you have enjoyed – the rail road iron now needed for the defence of the State and to which you cling with professional and instinctive pertinacity – were not derived exclusively from East Florida. You are indebted to the State of Florida for the prime positions which were conferred upon you and to the credit of the State for the iron now required for its defence....

I have the honor to be
Respectfully
John Milton
Gov of Florida

From: David Yulee, President of the Florida Railroad Company
To: John Milton, Governor of Florida

July 17, 1863

Florida Railroad Office
Gainesville July 17. 1863

Sir

Your favor without date has been received. In the present agony of our country I have no taste nor inclination for a correspondence of the tone and nature to which you invite me.

In a season of more exhilaration in the public feeling, should circumstances then seem to require it, I may respond to such portions of your letter as demand reply.

I have the honor to be
With great respect
Your obt st
D L Yulee
Pres etc