Office of U. S. Attorney
St Louis Mo May 4th 1861

Hon. Edward Bates
Attorney General of U. S.

Sir

I ask your advice, in reference to the propriety of causing the arrest, at this time, of parties in this State, guilty of treason to the Government of the United States.

That treason is every where in our midst, walking in open day, there can be no reasonable doubt, & I think the arrest of some prominent parties would have a good effect in strengthening loyal men, but especially in restraining, most, hot-headed young men, who do not fully appreciate the enormity of rebelling against their Government.

Will an attempt, made at this time, to bring guilty parties to justice, meet the approval of the Government? If yes, I will take steps accordingly.

You are, doubtless, aware, of the circumstances attending the forcible seizure, of the Steamer at Napoleon Arkansas, laden with Government stores, on the 17th of April last. The Boat was chartered & loaded

at St Louis, & was bound for Fort Smith.

Some party not yet known, of St Louis, telegraphed to the rebels to be on the look out & to seize the Steamer, this they did, threatening the lives of the parties, who had the Steamer in charge, & appropriating property of about 60.000 $ Value. Five U.S. Soldiers on board were obliged to disguise themselves as deck hands in order to escape with their lives.

The Quarter Master, at this point, Maj. McKinstry, demanded at the Telegraph Office, the name of the author of the dispatch, which was refused. I think sufficient cause may be shown, for the arrest of the Operator.

The telegraph here is used with impunity for treasonable purposes, & I think the Government may be justified in taking immediate possession of it.

The Legislature of Missouri is now in secret session & we may soon expect action in some form or other & should be prepared to meet it.

Will you please cause to be sent me, certified copies of the President's late proclamations. & advise me in regard to the premises.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Yours Very Truly

Asa D. Jones U.S. Attorney

Office of the U. S. Attorney
St Louis Mo. May 25th 1861

Hon Edward Bates
Attorney General of the U. S.

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st inst containing letter of A. M. Thompson Esq to President Lincoln. I believe Maj Rawlings has left Mexico for the purpose of discharging his official duties as U. S. Marshal. Information was given at this office of the lead operations at Potosi & I immediately notified the President of the Iron Mountain R. R. that no more lead must be shipped over his road southward. I also notified Genl Lyon Commandant at the U. S. Arsenal at this point. The lead did not ship on account of the notification, & the detachment of troops was sent to Potosi & the lead, all that could be found, seized. I think the seizure was made by the proper parties, the Marshal, as I believe the Mayor would have had no authority to make the seizure without proof.

I have been strongly solicited by various persons, particularly by Frank in a Dick Esq, to cause warrants to issue for the arrest of the parties on the charge of treason & of this matter I ask your advice.

policy of the Government at this time to prosecute parties for treason in this State & does the Government so advise. Does the last arrangement between Genl Harney & Genl Price, on the part of the Governor of this State, make any change in the policy of the administration?

I have now in my possession a warrant for the arrest of Gov Claiborne F Jackson on the charge of Treason. I have held it back, first because, just now, it would be impossible to serve it, secondly does the Government approve of this step?

I have not as yet been able to put myself in communication with the Marshal of the Western District of Missouri. Indeed I do not know if any has been appointed. If not it is all important that one be specially appointed. In regard to persons charged with Treason, it may be the best policy to wait until the meeting of the Grand Jury. But rest in the mean time to secure the evidence. If any difficulty can be placed in rumors great numbers could be made.

There are letters in this P.O. directed to Capt Carlton Greene, from Montgomery Ala. Greene was one of the Commissioners to the Provisional Government. Will Mr Foy P.M. be justified in putting these letters into my hands? Attention will be paid to the Department of Arms from Ark.

I am Sir Very truly your obedient servant
Asa S. Jones U.S. attorney

Office of the United States Attorney
St Louis Mo June 20th 1871

Hon Edward Pierrepont
Attorney General of the U.S.

Sir

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant. According to instructions I prepared & sent a transcript of J. F. Oliver's case to be entered on the docket of the United States at the coming special term of the Court at Boonville for the District of Missouri. Mr Broadhead accepted Mr Oliver's account of proceeding private duties, and declined the preparation. I think however it will not be necessary to retain further counsel at present. I applied to the Collector of the Revenue for the authority to employ Counsel, supposing the authority was lodged with him.

I did not move for a special term for the District of Missouri until I had given the subject full reflection. My office has been

literally flooded with informations against
various parties charging them with Treason
against the United States. I felt it my duty
however, to proceed cautiously and not
cause warrants to issue except in cases where
there seemed to be "probable cause" of guilt
of overt acts of Treason. For this several misjudge
me I think, but some friends of the Union
have been quite to critical in my course as being
too tardy. They would clamor and urge me to commence
prosecutions against every person Tom
whom Rumor pointed suspiciously.
There are no doubt a very large number of
persons in this State who are guilty of
Moral Treason, but the number is much
less of those of whom overt acts of Treason
can be proved, judging from the evidence
already produced. I think I can safely say
that the mass of the Band Leaders
has been composed of much good, loyal
men. I am informed from reliable
sources that in many parts the effect has

been to discontinue secession clubs & Union
meetings, and for secession, that they are
from Union men. The arrest that have been
made in this City on the charge of treason has
had a wonderful effect upon Southern minds.
A large number, conscious of guilt, seeing
that they might be brought to our Courts
thought that the secession sympathies entirely
many have left the State. The Grand Jury was
called together the Eighth day of July next, but
before the date for the formation of their duties
there was a collision between the State and
Federal troops that effect this state of actual
war. The Federals still rule upon prosecutions
for treason remains to be seen. I anticipate
a good deal from the charge of the Court
to the Grand Jury upon treason & the acts which they
indictments will be found against the
of the ringleaders in this State

I am very truly

[illegible]

Office of the U. S. Attorney
Saint Louis Mo August 24 1861

Hon Edward Bates
Attorney General of the U. S.

Sir

The special July term of the United States Circuit Court, for the District of Missouri organized on the 5th instant. The grand jury returned twenty five bills of indictment for treason, four for other crimes. The indictments for treason were mostly against leading men in the secret rebel societies. I thought it best to lay before the grand jury only cases in which the organizers and leaders were implicated. I have aimed to put no bills except such as would be sustained upon trial before the Traverse Jury. I feel the result will be that I am correct.

I telegraphed you last week advising the passage of a law giving the U. S. Commissioners appointed here to be appointed the same powers as an U. S. Judge under the act of July 16th 1798 entitled "an act in further addition to the act entitled an act to establish the Judicial Courts of the United States" I write this for the reason that the bench at this special term of the Circuit Court, Commissioners in various parts of this State, all good and true men, and there are

continually cases arising in which parties talking treason may be put under bonds for good behavior when they could be reached in no other way. Two parties have been put under bonds under this law by Judge Treat, and I think such power being given to U. S. Commissioners and they acting under it, the effect would be very salutary. Judge Wells distinctly announced from the Bench, that in any case when a party was brought before him on writ of Habeas Corpus, the party being detained under color of the U.S. authority, he should hear the case and if the party was detained as a prisoner of war he would remand him. If it appeared that the prisoner was not "prisoner of war" but had been guilty of conspiracy, or exciting others to conspiracy, he would put him under bonds for good behavior, under the law of 98, and if he found probable cause to believe that treason had been committed, he would commit the party under that charge. The effect of the Court and Grand Jury has been of the very best, and many persons for the first time begin to recognize the fact that they may be hung at the peril of their lives to answer the charge of treason before the legal tribunals of their country. I have acted very cautiously in proceeding before the Grand Jury and I must be exhaustive of I

have declined to follow the directions of irresponsible parties in reference to the action taken upon treason charges, for the reason that it is difficult for most persons to make the distinction between moral treason and treason in fact. Yet it would be practically impossible to bring to trial all who have been guilty of overt acts of treason: and we have struck at the leaders only. There has been great difficulty in getting witnesses who know of their own knowledge. They know by hearsay much; by personal knowledge little. I have noticed the passage of several laws by Congress criminal in their nature, which I think will much facilitate the suppression of the great rebellion; if practicable I would like you to send me copies of them as early as possible.

I send you an account against the United States for services by me rendered, and for which there is no statutory provision. I think I am entitled to the extra fees for the reason that during the time I have been in office I have been entirely and wholly engaged in the business of the Government and its offices, between much of it

that did not belong to me to do, but I performed it willingly, desiring to give all the aid in my power, to the support of the Government. I have paid out more than one half of my regular fees to persons whom I have employed as detectives &c in the service of the U. S. - The service for which the enclosed account is made, is I think as has the Government may fairly and justly allow, and I desire to submit it to your judgement. I lay this matter before you, as I see by a late law, Ushers attorneys and Marshals are exclusively under your charge

I am very respectfully &c
Your obedient Servant

Geo. S. Jones,
U.S. Attorney