

UTI/PRI/1#4

PRINTING OFFICE.

No. 818

C.S.

1920

Miscellaneous	SUBJECT.
1920	Head Printer and Second assistant refuse to work overtime.
4th October	
Previous Paper.	

	MINUTES.
Subsequent Paper.	

C.S.O.

I am informed by Mr. Hallett that Messrs Finch and Coker refused to work overtime on Saturday the 2nd & Sunday the 3rd Inst, thus disobeying the orders given them by me through you.

2. You have not yet reported this to me. I wish to have a report on the circumstances at once.

Please furnish a report here - below.

W.H.M.
11.10.20

H. E.

I regret that I did not report the subject of Your Excellency's enquiry immediately, but the papers dealing with the appointments of Messrs Finch and Coker were at Government House during the week end and I had not the opportunity of looking over their agreements which I was ^{wrongly} informed contained certain reservations regarding the hours of labour.

I understood from Your Excellency on Saturday that the object of the overtime was to get the estimates through with the least possible delay and if anything had occurred to prevent this I should have reported the matter immediately. Messrs. Smith and Allan who are both more capable of despatch than either Finch or ~~Coker~~ Coker were asked to carry on on overtime with the Estimates in the first place, and I asked Smith to get the other men in to assist if need be or to do any other work that required being brought forward. Smith and Allan assured me that they could work better on the estimates alone than with the assistance of Finch and Coker. In this I considered that Your Excellency's wishes were being met without the assistance of the two new men.

(OVER)

Finch came to me early in the afternoon and asked if the rates of overtime were increased, and if not if it were absolutely necessary in the present instance that overtime should be worked. I informed him that the rates of overtime were the same but gave both him and Coker permission to leave off for the day if they felt so disposed. I explained to them that nothing would be paid to them for the short time they had attended, and I thought it better that there should be no discontentment in the printing office while the important work of the estimates was going forward. Finch was not insubordinate; neither was Coker. As a matter of fact I did not tell either to come in in the afternoon, but issued instructions through Mr. Smith that the estimates must be got through as early as possible and this I was assured was being done. I acknowledge the blame, if it were the intention of Your Excellency to have all the staff working overtime irrespective of the work being done on the Estimates, as I allowed Finch and Coker to go home.

I intended to bring the matter of Finch and Coker's complaints to the notice of Your Excellency as soon as their papers were returned from Government House. Coker is really at the root of the trouble and Finch for a head man is too easily influenced by him. Apart from the dissatisfaction which they expressed on Saturday, neither is nearly so useful a man as either Messrs. Smith or Allan.

Coker is little more than an apprentice and Finch is only at best second rate. So far as Coker is concerned his drawing salary at the rate of £150 a year is an imposition on the Government: Finch however would make quite a good second man. He is usually willing enough and I know that he has lately worked a good deal of overtime to get his work forward and this he does expect to get paid for. He is incapable of taking charge, however, and Allan who is under him is a much better worker and so far as I am aware has never hesitated to assist the Government in times of pressure.

I regret if I should have incurred Your Excellency's displeasure/

displeasure in not enforcing the order for everyone to work, but I misunderstood, if it were the intention that work should be done apart from the work on the Estimates. I have taken care in the foregoing not to express opinions which I have not carefully considered, and have spoken to Mr. Smith as a practical man confidentially on the matter. I do not think Smith is in any way prejudiced against either Finch or Coker or unduly disposed to favour Allan. Both Smith and Allan assured me that they would feel freer on their work on the Estimates if left to themselves.

The Estimates are well in hand and should be finished some time this evening.

G. H. B.
for C.S.
#10/20

C.S.O.

Thank you. It was the work in connection with the Estimates only that I had in mind, and I did not know that Mr. Smith was to be put on to it.

2. Messrs Finch and Coker had, however, better be reminded of the terms of clauses 4 and 8 of their Agreements, and informed that their whole time and attention is at the disposal of the Government, and that refusal to obey orders renders them liable to dismissal &c.
3. Artistic fees remain at present as they appear in the 1920 Estimates, but I am inserting increased rates for consideration in the draft Estimates for 1921.

W. H. B.
5.10.20

Colonial Secretary's Office,

5th October, 1920.

I am directed by His Excellency to draw your
your attention to the terms of Clauses 4 and 3
of your agreement, and to remind you that your
whole time and attention is at the disposal of
the Government. I am also to warn you that
refusal to obey orders renders you liable to
dismissal.

Overtime fees remain at present as they appear
in the 1920 Estimates, but increased rates are
being inserted in the Draft Estimates for 1921
for consideration.

Mr. H. A. W. Finch, Head Printer,

Mr. J. C. Coker, 2nd Assistant Printer.

Kindly initial and return.

for C. S.

noted *W.A.J.*

noted *J. B. Baker*
5. 10. 20.
5. 10. 20