

Truman Com

MEMORANDUM

November 8, 1943

To: Senator Kilgore
From: Mr. Meader
Subject: Industrial tractors.

Attached is a copy of an inter-office memorandum from Mr. Amberg to Brig. Gen. Browning which was apparently included thru inadvertence in some material furnished to the Committee.

I thought you might be interested in some of the comments made.

27 October 1943

MEMORANDUM FOR Commanding General, Army Service Forces
Attention: Brig. Gen. Albert J. Browning
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SUBJECT: Senate Investigation - Purchase of Industrial
Tractors.

Reference is made to my memorandum of 23 October 1943
on the above subject.

Hearing was held in executive session before the
Committee at 1500 Monday, 25 October 1943. Because of the short
time given for preparation, the hearing was not as well organized
as further time would have permitted. In addition, an orderly
hearing was prevented by the attitude of the Committee which pre-
vented a clear explanation of the situation, in that the Committee
insisted on going behind the officers in the line of command with
the view of taking up piece-meal questions with the particular
officer who had been responsible for preparing a particular state-
ment.

I am as much concerned as anyone with the unsatisfactory
results coming from such a quick hearing without opportunity for
preparation. Sometimes I can get hearings postponed. In this case,
it seemed impossible because of the insistence of Senator Holman.
If we had refused to testify until a later date, I have no doubt
subpoenas would have been issued immediately for the particular
officers who had been charged with showing favoritism, and the hear-
ing would have been held anyway. Furthermore, the next time in a
similar situation, we probably would have been given no notice at
all and would have had our officers subpoenaed a half-hour or hour
before the hearing without any time whatever to prepare.

Officers so subpoenaed could sometimes state to the
Committee that they needed further time to review the files and
refresh their recollections and that they would come back later
and testify. But on short notice and without opportunity to con-
sult with higher authority, many witnesses would not thus avoid
testifying. For that matter, those directly involved in a recent
transaction could not so state if they did know facts.

I give you this explanation because different branches of the Department have made complaints in the past about quick hearings without time to prepare. Our relations with the Truman Committee are such that they at least give us some notice. With the House Military Affairs Committee, at times, they have had hearings without any notice whatever and have subpoenaed subordinate officers and civilian employees on half-hour and hour notice to them, and the witnesses were already in the Committee room before this office could be notified.

There is annexed copy of letter of 26 October 1943 from Mr. Fulton asking certain further questions which now gives us opportunity to present the entire matter in an orderly way, not only by answering the questions, but by giving a complete resume of the transaction.

I request that you cause a full statement of the matter to be presented which, among other things, will answer the annexed questions. We shall then send it to the Committee and offer further testimony if that is desired.

It is requested that this be handled expeditiously before the Committee demands a further hearing.

We expect to obtain the transcript shortly and when it is obtained, we will forward it to you as there may be additional questions contained therein upon which answer should be made.

I have written to Mr. Fulton and enclose copy of my letter.

(SIGNED) JULIUS H. AMBERG

JULIUS H. AMBERG
Special Assistant to the
Secretary of War.

Encl.