

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF MINES

May 12, 1943.

Truman Committee,
Senate Office Building,
Washington, D. C.

Attention: Senator H. M. Kilgore,
Light Metals Sub-Committee.

Dear Senator Kilgore:

As requested by you at the Spokane meeting of your Committee, I am enclosing the correspondence file relating to my appeal, first to the Director of the Bureau, Dr. R. R. Sayers, and then to Secretary Harold L. Ickes.

You will note from my correspondence with Senator Wallgren that I doubt that my charges have been brought to Secretary Ickes' personal attention, and that was my only reason for requesting assistance from Senator Wallgren.

I have reason to believe that R. S. Dean, Chapman, and others have common interests that led to the appointment of Dean as Assistant Director (and virtual chief of the Bureau) largely through Chapman's influence. Since my appeal contained charges that Dean dared not bring to an issue, and since the committees passing on that appeal must be more or less dominated by Dean and Chapman, it is not surprising that no adequate action was taken on those appeals, and I still doubt that Ickes has been informed of my charges.

Referring this appeal again to those who had previously taken action not only reacts to my disadvantage, but also may have aroused resentment against Senator Wallgren. It is even possible that it would influence recommendations made by the Bureau to Secretary Ickes regarding the location of the new Bureau laboratory.

The enclosed file has been carefully selected to present a strong case that has so far been entirely ignored. It is certainly not covered by Chapman's statement regarding "intermingled factors of professional ability, administrative necessities and personalities." It goes much deeper than that.

A thorough and detailed study of the file is required to fully reveal its significance and implications. I strongly urge

that you do nothing about this matter until you are fully convinced that the situation should be investigated. Then, if you are willing to combat powerful political influence, take the matter up personally with Ickes, and see if my charges and suspicions are not justified.

Patents on a large number of inventions made by Bureau of Mines' employees have been assigned to the Chicago Development Co. at Mr. Dean's "suggestion." These patents even control other patents on spectacular inventions that were assigned to the Government as a smoke screen. Therefore, Mr. Dean has consistently avoided making an issue of patents.

Several years after I had been invited to deal with the Chicago Development Co., outside pressure forced the Bureau to make an effort to have me assign a patent on the magnesium process to the Government. I was urged to assign some patent, any patent, even if it had no value, so that the "outside pressure" could be appeased and thus avoid an issue on the patent question. I was given to understand that I could then follow Dean's stratagem and take out private patents that would actually control the invention. And the emissary who thus officially represented the Director was none other than ~~Charles~~ John J. McLaughlin, a patent lawyer and formerly an officer in the Chicago Development Co.

If my charges are brought to issue, my refusal to assign a patent to the Government may be stressed. I wish to point out that this refusal occurred several years after I had been approached by the Chicago Development Co., and had suffered outrageous discrimination as a result of assigning to the Washington State College Research Foundation a patent that was coveted by R. S. Dean for his Chicago outfit.

My refusal was based less upon personal interests than on resentment and a desire to bring the patent question to an issue, a course that I can afford much better than my adversary.

I thoroughly approve of your Bill S-702, especially as it applies to inventions made by employees engaged in research. You will find such views expressed in my reply to the invitation of the Chicago Development Co. of December 16, 1938, Group I of file.

Very truly yours,

H. A. Doerner

H. A. Doerner,
Engineer in Charge.