

December 1, 1942

Hon. Mon C. Wallgren
U. S. Senate
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Wallgren:

For your information I am enclosing a file of correspondence in which I have presented evidence that my chief, R. S. Dean, has pursued a policy that is detrimental not only to me personally, but also to the program upon which I am engaged. You will note that I have protested first to Dr. Dean, then to Director Sayers of the Bureau, and finally appealed to Secretary Ickes.

I refrained from giving this evidence when appearing before the Truman Committee in Spokane a year ago because I could not volunteer such information in a public hearing, and I had no definite evidence that my program was being adversely affected at that time. Moreover I did not have the evidence assembled and organized, and hoped to obtain relief by an appeal to Bureau or Department boards.

My appeal to Director Sayers was futile, so I presented it to Mr. Ickes, who referred the matter to a committee consisting of Mr. Arthur Chapman, Mr. Stephen Raushenbush, and Mrs. J. Atwood Maulding. In this connection I have heard from various independent sources that the two men on that committee have sponsored the recent elevation of Mr. Dean to the powerful post of Assistant Director of the Bureau of Mines.

The reply from Mr. Ickes, dated November 18, (copy enclosed) is quite significant. Although my rating has been raised from "Fair" to "Very good" and I was notified of a routine increase in salary, (as required by the Ramspeck Act after the change in rating) Mr. Ickes did "not wish to comment at this time on a situation in which there are obviously intermingled factors of professional ability, administrative necessities, and personalities."

My charges against Dr. Dean included gross discrimination, favoritism, nepotism, misrepresentation, false statement of facts in official correspondence, and evasion of responsibility for acts which tended to nullify the purpose of a special Congressional

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appropriation, and they are fully substantiated by the evidence presented. It is hardly consistent with Secretary Ickes' character to ignore charges of that nature, and I am not convinced that Mr. Ickes has had those charges brought fully to his attention.

This letter is written in the hope that you will ascertain whether or not Secretary Ickes has given my charges his personal scrutiny, or the reason for his reticence if he has. The following resume is added to reveal clearly the cause of Dr. Dean's attitude.

Dr. R. S. Dean has sponsored one or more private organizations that prosecute patents on inventions by himself and other Bureau employees under his jurisdiction, with the objective of exploiting these patents commercially. In the latter part of the year 1938 I was approached by one of these organizations, the Chicago Development Company, with a proposal that I assign all patents relating to the magnesium investigation to that corporation. For reasons indicated in my correspondence (copies of which I am enclosing with this letter) I declined the proposal.

It did not occur to me at the time that my status in the Bureau or my relations with Dr. Dean would be in any way affected by my decision in this matter. However, Mr. Dean soon made it very evident by his attitude toward my work and rate of advancement in the Bureau that I had incurred his displeasure. The enclosed correspondence abundantly demonstrates that such is the case. I have never questioned Dean's right to take out personal patents of his own or to offer inducements to men under his jurisdiction such as the contract offered me by the Chicago Development Corporation. I do, however, strenuously object to being disciplined for failing to accept such an offer. It is especially deplorable that an industrial development of the magnesium process in the Northwest should be retarded because of Mr. Dean's personal ambitions.

Mr. Dean's resentment was made evident by diversion and maldistribution of funds appropriated by Congress for the work at Pullman and by a refusal to give me a promotion which had been definitely promised and which my responsibilities and achievements fully justified. Many other less obvious indications of his vindictive attitude have also occurred.

I wish to emphasize that the matter of my promotion is purely incidental and of no great consequence even to me. During

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the last year I have declined several opportunities which would pay a higher salary than my present position can justify and these or other opportunities are still available, if I obtain a release from the Bureau.

The chief consideration with which we are both especially concerned is the extent to which Dr. Dean's attitude may be responsible for the scant consideration given to the development during this emergency of our important improvements in the carbo-thermal process for production of magnesium. The difficulties encountered at Permanente undoubtedly have contributed to the adverse decisions of the War Production Board, but I am equally certain that Dr. Dean's influence has been subtly unfavorable.

You requested that I keep you informed on the progress of the magnesium pilot plant, and I am happy to be able to state at this time that we have completed several preliminary tests on the new method of continuous distillation. In my opinion these tests have been very encouraging and have demonstrated that the method is feasible. There are, however, a few details that require revision in order to eliminate certain difficulties that occur when operating for considerable periods of time. These changes are nearly completed, and I am confident that we will be able to announce in the very near future that the process is entirely successful.

You also may be interested to hear that my son Bruce has achieved his ambition to join the military air force. He is very much happier now and we both appreciate your efforts to assist this commendable ambition.

With best personal wishes from,

H. A. Doerner

Encs.