

50 Sunset Drive
Anniston, Alabama
March 28, 1958

Mr. Robert K. Bell
Attorney at Law
610-14 Terry-Hutchens Building
Huntsville, Alabama

Dear Mr. Bell:

Thanks for your fine letter of 18 February and I have been most interested in what you had to say with reference to Medaris in it. Since then, of course, I suppose the force of circumstances and no one else being as close to the successful launching of Explorer I and III makes it almost impossible to expect anything except that Medaris will ride on the crest of the wave of Von Braun's capabilities.

I have talked to Harry Ayers since receiving your letter and both he and I are still plugging for Nickerson but it seems that not much headway has been made up to this date. Incidentally, I met Colonel Pritchard who is the Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army, Mr. Brucker, the other night at a dinner at McClellan and he and I crossed swords immediately in a good natured manner, he saying "I saw your letter to Colonel Ayers with reference to Nickerson" and I replied "yes, and I saw your reply to Colonel Ayers saying that you could do nothing for Nickerson in good conscience and I still think you are in error in the matter." He laughed and said that he would like to talk to me at some other time to which I replied "gladly" but the fact that Explorer is in the air is due to Nickerson and those associated with him in insisting on not fully complying with Secretary Wilson's throttling instructions as to Redstone's activities.

Soon after receiving your letter I noticed a statement which had a Washington dateline of February 15 and published I believe in the New York Times which said that: "Meade Alcorn, chairman of the Republican National Committee, said today that the Democrats had dropped national defense as a campaign issue 'like a hot potato' but that the G. O. P. planned to run on its missile progress anyway." The item went on to say: "...we'll also remind the people of the nation of the six lost years during the Truman Administration and during the prior Administration when missile research which should have been done and could have been done was left undone."

This attitude is in line with what you indicate as being Toftoy's fate. However, I see in the re-organization that Toftoy is assistant to Medaris but this may only be a matter of convenience until Toftoy is transferred, if that is to be his ultimate fate.


As you know, of course, General Toftoy came down here and spoke to our Rotary Club and was very cordially received. I hate to see the man who is really responsible for the sound and solid foundation of our missile program treated so badly.

If you have any more information along the lines that you indicated in your letter please let me have it as a matter of interest at least.

We are expecting you down here this summer sometime for summer training and please let us know before hand so that we can be sure to be prepared for your 'tour' here.

With good wishes to you and Mrs. Bell from Mrs. Almond and myself, I am

Sincerely yours,



Edward M. Almond
Lieut. Gen. USA (Ret)

EMA/jn