

November 14, 1957

Mr. T. C. King
T. C. King Pipe & Foundry Company
Post Office Box 788
Anniston, Alabama

Dear Tom:

I have the copy of your letter of November 13, 1957 addressed to Mr. McElroy, our new Secretary of Defense, and wish to sincerely thank you for it.

I commend you for your thinking and your courageous assertion of your thoughts, and assure you that this is pretty much the thinking of most of the responsible people throughout the length and breadth of this great country.

I have had the honor of meeting Mr. McElroy and think he is a very fine gentleman who recognizes the potential of the Army in the missile and satellite program, and is a vast improvement over the pig-headed ape that he succeeded.

I am attaching hereto an autostatic copy of a cartoon sent to me by a friend that appeared in last Sunday's issue of the Memphis "Commercial Appeal," thinking that you will appreciate it and knowing that you will concur wholeheartedly with the artist.

I hear of you indirectly through Cliff Taylor from time to time and just wish that it were so that we saw more of each other personally.

Thanking you again for the copy of your letter, and with warmest personal regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

Robert K. Bell

RKB:mfl
Enclosure

November 13, 1957

Hon. Neil H. McElroy
Secretary of Defense
Washington, D.C.

Dear Secretary:

Attached are recent clippings from Alabama Press.

First, let me state that I am unknown to Colonel John C. Nickerson. From all that I have read in the press he made a great personal sacrifice for the defense of this country and his reward was exile.

From all that I can gather from the press reports this is a second Billy Mitchell case.

If General Medaris and the General of the Third Corps Area had the same thinking as Nickerson, things would have turned out differently.

When the defense of this country is at stake political maneuvering for self is not as admirable as the courage shown by Nickerson.

From all I know, which was information obtained from the press, it would appear that Nickerson should be decorated, restored to active duty and returned to Redstone Arsenal in command. It would not be a mistake to promote him to a Major General and remove Medaris.

My words are strong, but come from a loyal American who does not want to be sold down the river by politics in such a serious matter involving jealousy between Army, Navy and Air Force at the expense of the National Defense.

Yours truly,

T. C. King
T. C. King

TCK/w
Encl.

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T.C. KING PIPE & FOUNDRY COMPANY

MANUFACTURERS OF CAST IRON SOIL PIPE AND FITTINGS • GRAY IRON CASTINGS

December 4, 1957

Mr. Robert K. Bell
c/o Bell, Moring & Richardson
Attorneys at Law
610-14 Terry-Hutchens Building
Huntsville, Alabama

Dear Mr. Bell:

I am enclosing copy of letter received from The Adjutant General, together with copy of my reply.

I also enclose copy of letter to Mr. McElroy, Secretary of Defense, endeavoring to get my interest and thoughts to the proper person. The legal procedure is all I got out of it.

I hope for better results, but doubt obtaining same.

Sincerely,

T. C. King

TCK/lts





DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

AGG-ORD 201 Nickerson, John C.
O 21 170 (13 Nov 57)

26 NOV 1957

Mr. T. C. King
P. O. Box 788
Anniston, Alabama

Dear Mr. King:

This is in response to your letter of 13 November 1957 to the Secretary of Defense, concerning Colonel John C. Nickerson, which has been referred to this office for reply.

As you are probably aware, Colonel Nickerson pleaded guilty to the commission of certain security violations. He was thereafter found guilty of the appropriate offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice and was sentenced by the court martial to be suspended from rank for one year, to forfeit \$100 of his pay per month for 15 months, and to be reprimanded. His record of trial has been examined according to law and has been determined to be legally sufficient to support the findings and sentence. His case is not now subject to further legal review.

Please be advised that, when selecting officers for promotion, the officers' entire records are considered and comparison is made with the officers' contemporaries to insure that fully qualified officers will be promoted. Isolated instances are not permitted to assume undue proportions in this consideration. At the appropriate time, Colonel Nickerson along with other officers of his grade and approximate date of rank will be equally considered for promotion.

Your interest in this matter is appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Inclosure

HERBERT M. JONES
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

December 4, 1957

Major General Herbert Jones
The Adjutant General
Washington, D. C.

My Dear General Jones:

Your letter of Nov. 26th returning various news clippings received.

My point in writing The Secretary of Defense was to bring to his attention public opinion. The legal procedure and conviction of Colonel Nickerson was secondary.

The main point was overlooked by you, and public opinion ignored. I come to this conclusion by the ignoring by you of press clippings which were returned to me with my letter, and I feel that my approach to the Secretary of Defense accomplished nothing by referring the matter to you.

I am interested in the security of our Country and not in favors to any branch of the Armed Forces.

Having discussed the matter with Members of Congress I think you will find they recognize public opinion.

I felt resentment in the return of news clippings to me.

Yours very truly,

T. C. King

P.S. - I cannot understand why my letter was referred to you. I can appreciate from your position your reply.

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December 4, 1957

Hon. Neil H. McElroy
Secretary of Defense
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

My letter of November 13th, copy of which is attached, was answered by The Adjutant General, very clearly outlining the legal procedure regarding Col. Nickerson, and returning news clippings with his letter.

I enclose copy of my reply to The Adjutant General.

My interest, I am sure, is your interest - to accomplish something in the Missile field and make the United States secure. We lost this position on account of jealousy between the different Branches, and if a man was capable of directing Scientists and Engineers in this direction why not use him?

I would appreciate my communications being referred to Dr. James R. Killian.

The people of the United States are alarmed, and public opinion cannot be overlooked.

Yours very truly,

T. C. King

TCK/its

Encl.

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