

May 8, 1957

Senator John J. Sparkman  
Senate Office Building  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator:

As you have no doubt noted, the Nickerson court-martial proceeding has been continued until 25 June 1957. While this would give us sufficient time to examine the highly sensitive material involved, provided it is made available to us at an early date, it will be interesting to watch the Defense Department's timing in the additional clearances that we have requested and the availability of this material to us.

It has occurred to Mr. Jenkins, Colonel Zimmer and Lt. Cole that now would be a very fine time to take any action, regardless of how casual or subtle the action, suggestions or comments might be, to the effect that the interest of the country could be infinitely better served if the Army would proceed to give Colonel Nickerson non-judicial punishment rather than run the risk of exposing the highly sensitive material that a trial by court-martial might likely involve.

We pass this suggestion along to you because of your genuine interest in this case and hope that you can get in a good lick or two for Colonel Nickerson, the Army and the country as a whole.

Thanking you and with kindest personal regards, I am

Always sincerely yours,

Robert K. Bell

RKB:mfl

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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

May 11, 1957

The Honorable Robert K. Bell  
Bell, Moring & Richardson  
610 Terry-Hutchens Building  
Huntsville, Alabama

Dear Buster:

Thanks for your letter of May 8. I have already been dropping some suggestions. I do not know just how effective they may be. I think one of our greatest handicaps lies in the fact that the Army feels it necessary to lean over backwards in order to convince the Defense Department of its good faith. That may not be fair, but that is the impression that I have gained.

In any event, you may be assured that I will continue to do what I can to help.

With best wishes and kindest personal regards,  
I am

Sincerely,

  
John Sparkman