

January 15, 1958

Colonel H. M. Ayers, Publisher
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Dear Harry:

I am returning herewith the letter of your friend, Mr. William S. Pritchard, and have noted carefully what he has said.

Without going into the merits of his belief and understanding some other aspects of the situation, I still am of the opinion that Nickerson is a valuable man to the U. S. services and he was motivated by the purest of interests for national defense and was spurred on by the fact that the Army was losing a valuable aid to its operations in combat, none of which facts Mr. Pritchard seems to take into account in Nickerson's case.

It is very easy to see the influence that the Army, particularly Mr. Brucker, has on his civilian aide, Mr. Pritchard, and I can thoroughly understand this influence. Of course, the Russian progress which seems to be overshadowing our progress in the very thing that Nickerson was trying to spur on seems to have little effect on whether or not we can use Nickerson to good advantage. Nickerson used information that he is accused of using, which he frankly admits according to the court martial trial, which had appeared in one form or another in every magazine that chose to write about it and what Nickerson was actually accused of doing was taking a paper that was marked secret by some agency without being certain that the facts marked secret might have long since become public knowledge.

What Nickerson was really tried for by the Army was at Secretary Wilson's insistence and for something which had angered Mr. Wilson.

I don't go along with your friend's judgement of Medaris at all and I think that times to come will prove this to be the case. Medaris is a very good press relations man and thereby hangs the tale of where he is today. Really, Gofroy and von Braun are the essence of whatever Redstone turns out.

I think you gave your friend, Mr. Pritchard, a magnificent reply.

Thank you so much for taking an interest in this matter and I must say that I shall continue to carry out my efforts to have Hickerson restored to some position where his ability towards improving the defenses of this Nation will be useful.

Very sincerely yours,

Edward M. Almond

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