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UNITED STATES SENATE

Special Committee Investigating  
the National Defense Program

March 10, 1944.

Dear Mr. Stimson:

About June 15, 1943 the Committee requested of the War Department information with respect to the project in the neighborhood of Pasco, Washington, and you will recall that you made a specific request upon me that the Committee not make any investigation whatever as to that project because of your fear that important secrets might become known to the enemy.

Since that time, the Committee has received, both directly and from five members of the Senate, not members of the Committee, suggestions that the undertaking at Pasco is being carried out in a wasteful manner.

Bearing in mind your desire for secrecy, the Committee several weeks ago suggested that Brigadier General Frank Lowe and Lieutenant Colonel Harry Vaughan be sent by the Committee to the Pasco project solely for the purpose of investigating questions of waste with respect to the construction of housing roads and other matters not relating to the processes of manufacture or other secrets connected with the project.

This suggestion was made because General Lowe had been assigned by the Chief of Staff of the Army as Executive Officer to the Committee for the purpose of carrying out assignments made by the Committee in which it was expected that his personal experience and qualifications and his duties in the War Department especially would qualify him. The detail was not sought by General Lowe nor by the Committee but was welcomed by the Committee because the Committee believed that General Lowe could serve a valuable function.

In this instance, I thought that General Lowe would be especially valuable because he is an officer of the Army and



his obligations as such certainly preclude any assumption that he could not safely be permitted to examine into the non-secret portions of the Pasco project, especially as those portions are being constructed by thousands of civilians who have access thereto.

I understand that Mr. Julius Amberg on your behalf has notified the Committee that you personally oppose any examination into this project, and that you have decided that General Lowe, if sent to the project, would be barred from entering it. I understand further that you suggest that any investigation desired by the Committee be conducted by personnel of the War Department to be chosen by it. If such personnel is limited to those in charge of the construction of the project, it is my opinion that no useful purpose would be served by asking them to investigate themselves. If such investigation is to be conducted by any other personnel, I do not understand why it would be expected that the secrets would be any safer with such other personnel than with General Lowe, in whom the Committee has the utmost confidence.

If General Lowe is not to be permitted to serve the functions for which he was detailed, a serious question arises as to whether his detail should not be reviewed by the War Department insofar as his duties with this Committee affect the War Department.

The decision which has been made by the War Department with respect to the Pasco project, if it has been made as indicated above, is a serious one. It may be necessary for the Committee to consider the appointment of a subcommittee to investigate the project. On your urgent request, that usual procedure will not be adopted at this time. The responsibility therefor and for any waste or improper action which might otherwise be avoided rests squarely upon the War Department.

Very truly yours,

/sgd/ HARRY S. TRUMAN  
U.S.S.

Honorable Henry L. Stimson  
The Secretary of War  
Washington, D. C.