

J. C. NICHOLS CHAIRMAN OF BOARD
J. C. NICHOLS INVESTMENT COMPANY
Country Club District
KANSAS CITY MISSOURI
310 WARD PARKWAY
COUNTRY CLUB PLAZA

August 5, 1941

Honorable Harry Truman Senate Office Building Washington, D. C.

Dear Harry:

Please note copy of letter which I have today written to Senator Arthur Capper.

Yours sincerely,

JCN:CC

Enclosure

J. C. NICHOLS INVESTMENT COMPANY
310 WARD PARKWAY
COUNTRY CLUB PLAZA
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

August 6, 1941

Honorable Arthur Capper, c/o Senate Office Building, Washington, D. C.

Dear Arthur:

your two letters much appreciated.

If it is not imposing too much on your time, I believe it would be well if you would go and have a talk with Harold Smith and John Carmody who are having a lot to do with the study of such non-defense departments as could be moved from Washington. I talked to both of them before I left and they are sympathetic.

Regardless of what the heads of the agricultural and other departments tell you, I believe if we apply the right amount of pressure can get a part of these agencies moved into our part of the country.

I am wondering if you know that in the last twenty-five years the percentage of federal employees in Washington has increased from eight percent to sixteen percent. This is

certainly an unsound concentration.

Also, do you know that during the world war the number of Government employees jumped from some 60,000 to some 120,000: And that after the war this number shrunk back to some 60,000?

During the last two years the number of Government employees in a Washington has run up to some 170,000. This is unsound, mushroom growth for our capital city, and if it continues Washington will have to expend millions and millions of dollars in additional sewerage facilities; water supply; schools, etc. Public utilities will be called upon to expend enormous sums. The transportation system will be overloaded, and eventually ill of this will result in a disorderly, ugly growth of our capital upsetting all the fine, orderly plans upon which we have been working for so many years. F. A. Delano feels very strongly on this subject, and believes in a decentralization of non-defense activities. It might be well for you to have a talk with him.

Certainly, with the present shortage of building materials needed for defense, it is poor planning to be building so many government offices in Washington while at the same time seventeen and a half percent average vacancy in office building. already erected in the one hundred largest American cities exists. It simply does not make sense to leave this office space vacant throughout the nation and continue expend enormous sums, using critical materials for unnecessary building in Washington.

Then, too, certain of these departments - - such as the agricultural group, could far better serve the agricultural interests of the country if they were located in the agricultural area.

I believe this is true of the National Park service; Indian Affairs;

many groups the Interior Department; the Internal Revenue Department; FH; Railroad Retirement; Social Security, and all down the line.

Arthur, I know of no one who has been more willing, or worked harder for everything for the benefit of the middle west and the soundness of our national structure, than you have.

Yours sincerely,

JCN ET