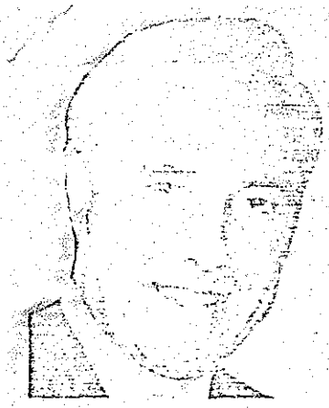


NEWS from
U.S. Senator
Bob Dole
(R.—Kans.)

New Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 224-6521

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CONTACT: BOB WAITE
202-224-8953

DOLE DEMANDS EXPLANATION OF HEW FIRING FROM CALIFANO

WASHINGTON -- Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan.) today demanded that HEW Secretary Joseph Califano justify the firing of Norman Latker as Supervisory Attorney Advisor for the Department's patent office.

Last June Latker told a Senate committee hearing that HEW had held up patent rights on pharmaceuticals developed by scientists with federal funds. Unless limited patent rights are transferred to pharmaceutical firms, the firms will not invest the millions needed for clinical testing and clearance through the Federal Drug Administration for eventual public use, according to Sen. Dole.

Last August Sen. Dole accused HEW of "pulling the plug" on biomedical research in an attempt to hold down medical costs.

Latker also provided information for Sen. Dole, which was used to write legislation making it more difficult for HEW to hold on to patent rights.

The day after Sen. Dole voiced his concern, HEW Secretary Joseph A. Califano ordered his aides to release some of the patents, which had been delayed as long as two years. However, only half of the 29 patent projects identified by the Senator were released.

Latker was subsequently notified of his termination.

Today Sen. Dole sent Sec. Califano the following letter:

Dear Mr. Califano:

In a letter dated November 16, 1978, Mr. Richard I. Beattie, Deputy General Counsel for the DHEW, notified Mr. Norman Latker that his services as Supervisory Attorney Advisor would be terminated as of December 13, 1978. The letter did not list reasons for the discharge.

According to Mr. John Blamplin, a press spokesman for HEW, Mr. Latker "was dismissed for a number of improper activities".

Last June, Mr. Latker testified before a Senate Committee. He also provided information requested by my office, which was later used to write legislation.

The coincidence of Mr. Latker's cooperation with members of Congress and his dismissal raises certain questions. Therefore, it seems in order that a full justification of the charges brought against Mr. Latker be disclosed as quickly as possible. The purpose of this letter is to request such justification. I will be looking forward to hearing from you on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

BOB DOLE
United States Senate

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