

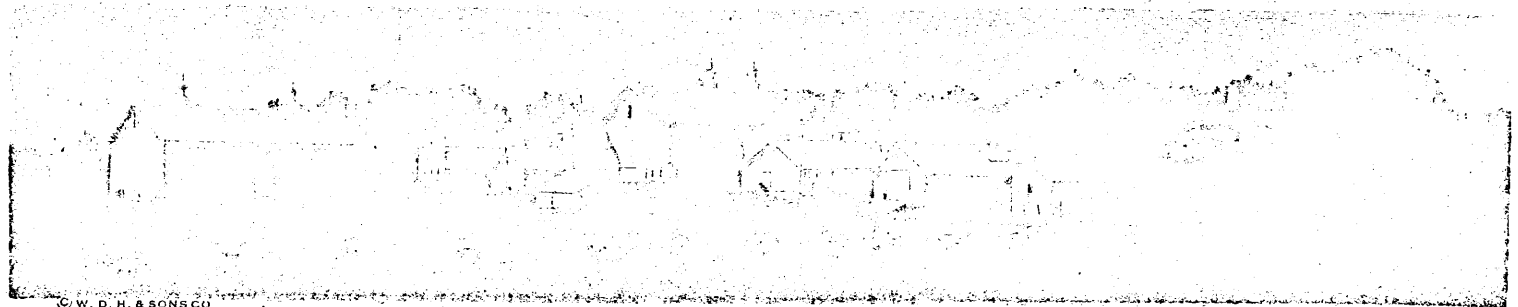
31 (I)

Enclosed in Morrison to Russell
1925, Oct. 28

Steinbeck Patent
1925, Oct 22

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Dr. H. L. Russell,
Dean of the Wisconsin College of Agriculture,
Madison, Wisconsin.

Dear Doctor Russell:

Since you informed me of the plan to form an association or a company to hold certain patents on discoveries of investigational work at the Wisconsin Experiment Station, I have been giving this matter some thought. The more I reflect, the more concerned I become about the feasibility of a public institution patenting any discovery or attempting to control the use of the discovery by organizing a company. The more I think about it, the more difficulty I have in thinking that this is the right way to handle new discoveries made possible by public money. The thought comes to me, why should the public devote money to discovering new truths only to permit them to be patented and their use determined by some corporation? It seems to me that information discovered by the use of public money belongs to the public and it is difficult for me to understand how such discoveries can be patented and some private corporation determine how they shall be used.

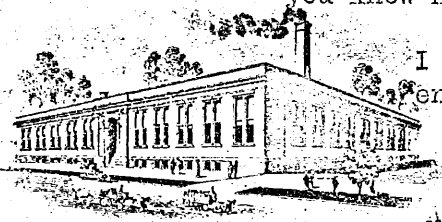
*if private corp
represents the interests
of public*

It doesn't seem logical to me that any private corporation would have the right to take public property, and that's what it is when public money is paying for it, and get patents issued that will give them control over these discoveries. A practice of this kind, it seems to me, will lead to a most embarrassing situation and one that will be difficult to sustain. As I said to you the day we had our interview, we must follow where truth leads, but are we doing this when we patent new truths and place them in the hands of a corporation to control?

You may be so busy engaged in other things that you will not care to give this matter any of your attention. I felt, however, that I would let you know how I was reasoning at the present time upon this matter.

I trust that you are finding your work interesting and that you are enjoying your full share of health. With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,



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AJG:VEZ