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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Mines
WASHINGTON

July 19, 1924.

Hon. Duncan U. Fletcher,
United States Senate,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Senator Fletcher:

Please accept my thanks for the opportunity of seeing the letter of July 10, from Mr. Robert Ranson with the extract from the Palm Beach Post.

I took the liberty of going to Mr. David White's office to see the letter which Mr. Ranson refers to. It all illustrates the point I tried to make to you in my call. There is an old receipt for a Welsh rarebit which begins by saying, "First catch your rabbit."

In this peat matter there is an immense field of interest in the material itself as it lies in the ground. The Geological Survey investigates such problems and if a study of Florida peat along this line were to be made by the Survey they would doubtless carefully consider the services which Mr. Ranson could render.

The other problem of reducing such resources to possession and getting something out of them is largely an engineering problem and that is the field that the Bureau of Mines is attempting to cultivate at the present time. In all of our contact with Mr. Ranson we have been most interested in his plans for harvesting peat, which he says he can do for \$1.00 a ton. This has never been done before and we therefore expected some clear out program. We have never been able to discover that this matter was carefully developed so as to justify his faith. Mr. Ranson rather assumes this as detail and builds his prophetic structure on this basis. As a matter of fact that has been the most serious difficulty with all our peat enthusiasts and the Bureau is anxious not to lend itself to anything beyond the hard facts of the case.

Very truly yours,

G. P. HOOD

Chief Mechanical Engineer.