

TRISTRAM COFFIN

December 19, 1962

Dear Dr. Szilard:

The most important work the Council can do in the near future in Washington, it seems to me, is to win the interest of a number of responsible officials. This is so that when problems involving arms control come before them, they will think of the Council and the many fine minds it commands.

Who are these officials ? First, let me suggest that you cross off immediately those whom you know in advance will be unresponsive and those of no or small influence. Let me suggest, too, that your message to each of those you choose to see be tailored to his interests. (Very few persons in Washington are interested in good works; they are thinking all of the time, "How will this help me ? " and you must give them a hook to hang self interest upon.)

For a list, or partial list:

The Attorney General, Robert Kennedy. He is accessible to a man of your stature, intelligence and imagination. Bobby is very politically minded, he keeps looking ahead to his brother's re-election fight in two years. Too, he has a rather extraordinary social conscience; he will bring underprivileged children to his house unpublicized, spend hours talking to juvenile delinquents and worry about them. He is concerned about the shape of the world.

Thus, in talking to him, I would suggest two lines. A - a brief , factual statement on where the arms race is leading, and the concern of the young people to whom you have talked in the various campuses. (He will be impressed that you have given up your scientific career to aid humanity and the young.) Second, point out to him the political implications of continued heavy arms spending. In this last election, local elections centered almost entirely upon heavy tax burdens, and the taxers lost. There is already great unrest over Federal taxes and it could strike in two years. The only logical budget cuts are in defense. Then say, we, a council of ~~experts~~ outside the Government, not involved with our jobs or welfare, can offer you advice and counsel. Please call upon us.

The Vice President, Lyndon Johnson. Johnson can be reached on the political level. Also, he feels neglected in his present job and a little out of the intellectual swing. A little flattery, a few words of admiration for his techniques, and the offer to give him expert advice at any time, a kind of scientific, intellectual backstop he can call upon.

TRISTRAM COFFIN

Ex President Eisenhower fundamentally is frightened by the arms race and its implications. He is terribly untutored, and would, I think, feel grateful to such a group as you command talking with him regularly, keeping him in touch, making suggestions on what he might say. Again flattery - tell him that he occupies a unique position with the affection of the nation and the world, that what he says can have great bearing on the future.

Senator Fulbright, who, I think, is looking for fresh ideas. What you need to do here is develop some kind of informal relationship, either directly with him or a member of his staff.

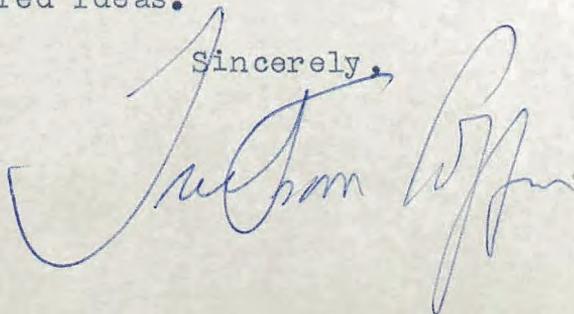
Senator Mansfield is a thoughtful, philosophic, hard working individual in foreign policy. He is not afraid of new ideas. He likes ideas clear and precise.

Senator John Stennis is the chairman of the Preparedness Subcommittee and is due to become chairman of the full Armed Services Committee (when Senator Hayden passes on and Senator Russell becomes chairman of Appropriations.) Senator Stennis has a judicial quality; he likes to hear all sides providing they are rational. He has been holding hearings on disarmament and will hold additional ones. I think the way to reach him is simply by a letter, introducing yourself on your private stationery (not the Council) as the co-discoverer with Einstein of the principles which led to the atomic bomb, that a great many of the finest scientists of the land not connected with the government in any way have ideas which might be helpful to him in his study, and ask for an opportunity to briefly tell him the kinds of information available to him through you and your associates.

Senator Margaret Chase Smith is a topranking Republican on Armed Services and Armed Services Appropriations. She recognizes, of course, women's interests in peace. She would like, I think, some specific ideas she might present. I could arrange for you to see her.

Senator Phil Hart of Michigan has exhibited a direct interest in disarmament, and while he is not terribly influential he has time and energy to devote to the subject, if he is fed ideas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tristram Coffin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "T".

TRISTRAM COFFIN

December 21, 1962

Dear Dr. Szilard:

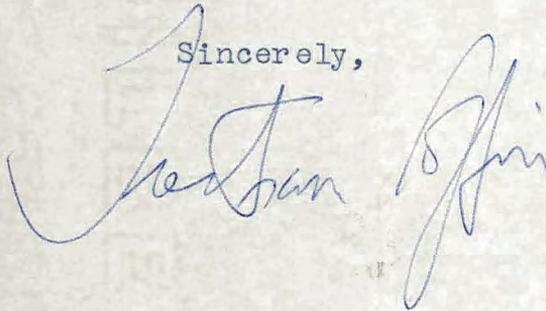
The Attorney General has gone to Colorado for the Christmas holidays and skiing, but he is looking forward to seeing you. You can call his secretary, Angela Novelle, and arrange an appointment. Her telephone is RE 7-8200, extension 2002.

Senator Mansfield is interested in seeing you, and you can call his secretary, Peggy DeMichele, at CA 4-3121, extension 2644.

Senator Margaret Smith would like to see you, and this can be arranged any time later at your convenience.

You asked me to suggest an informal committee of news people who might advise you. Let me suggest you talk to Al Friendly at The Washington Post and get his ideas. He is in more general contact with them than I am.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tristram Coffin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tristram" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Coffin".

Brown
767-2331

FILE - LOBBY

TRISTRAM COFFIN

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WASHINGTON, D. C.

December 29, 1962

Dear Allen:

I am glad that Dr. Szilard has had such positive responses in the Executive Department. Let me suggest the absolute necessity of following this up with missionary work on Capitol Hill, for no Administration, and particularly this one, is going to move very far on disarmament in the face of strong Congressional hostility. Three groups should be developed on The Hill:

* Those who will actively push disarmament by discussion and hearings.

* Important members of Congress who will be sympathetic, and help smooth the path behind the scenes without necessarily taking the lead.

* Powerful Congressional satchems who are hostile, but can be neutralized.

My contacts with Congressmen since the Cuban crisis have shown a shift of thinking away from extreme positions, and an interest, at least, in disarmament and lessening tensions. This must reflect local thinking, too. One member of the Senate, an important member who had been critical of the Administration and demanding that it threaten nuclear reprisal over Berlin, expressed great interest in finding a way out.

I think it would be wise, too, to make contacts with Republicans and Southern Democrats who ordinarily would oppose, for example, a nuclear test ban treaty. In the Senate, I would suggest Senator Dirksen, Margaret Smith, Clifford Case, and George Aiken, Republicans, and Stennis, Fulbright, Ervin, as well as Majority Leader Mike Mansfield, and his whip, Humphrey. Another Senator is Tom Kuchel, the minority whip.

In order to prepare the ground, I would suggest lunches with the influential Senatorial assistants, who often make the decisions and load the muskets.

When speaking to Senators, I would recommend: pointing out the consequences of the arms race both on human survival and tax rates, the political benefits of establishing a peace policy for the individual members in terms of the growing interest by women, young people and business executives, ask for practical suggestions, offer to prepare a statement for the individual, and leave with him some one small request.

Tris

to file

Geneva, 3 July 1963

Mr Tristram Coffin
5601 Warwick Place
Cherry Chase 15, Md.,
USA

Dear Mr Coffin,

Bob Livingston and I, who at this point share an office here in Geneva, have jointly read through the manuscript which you sent me and have made the corrections indicated in pencil.

Two passages had to be re-written and they are marked on the enclosed sheets as "insert on page 4" and "insert on page 5". I hope you will be able to decipher my handwriting.

With best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

ENCLS:

INSERT ON PAGE 4

This theory of ageing assumes that through a random process of "ageing hits" a large part of a chromosome of a somatic cell, or perhaps the whole chromosome, becomes irreversibly inactivated. These "ageing hits" are not radiation induced; they are spontaneous and their true nature is as yet not known.

In the somatic cells of mammals each chromosome is present twice. If within a somatic cell both of the chromosomes, within such a pair of homologous chromosomes, suffer an "ageing hit" then that cell ceases to be functional and might disappear. The same would be true if within a somatic cell, one chromosome, out of a pair of homologous chromosomes, carries a recessive mutation which is lethal to the cell and the other chromosome suffers an "ageing hit".

If a sufficiently large fraction of the somatic cells of an individual gets inactivated through such "ageing hits", then that individual dies. In a human population the inherited recessive mutations which are lethal to the cell determine the longevity of the individual. Dr Szilard has computed from the life-tables that in the population of the United States there are about $2\frac{1}{2}$ such mutations per individual.

INSERT ON PAGE 5

When he was working during the summer of 1934 at St Bartholomew's Hospital in London, located in the vicinity of St Paul's Cathedral, Dr Szilard was asked to pay more attention to the ^{customs} ~~rules~~ and regulations of the hospital. According to these ^{regulations} ~~rules~~ the radium needles had to be returned to a safe at 6 p.m. and could not be used until 9 a.m. next morning. Since ~~Dr~~ Szilard was engaged in experiments which frequently required long hours of observation, he found it difficult to abide by these rules. "You must understand my point of view if I suggest to you that you are to pay more attention to the customs of this hospital," said Professor F. L. Hopwood, head of the Physics Department, to Dr Szilard. "It is the point of view of a man who is very much aware of the fact that these walls you see from the window have been standing here for over 500 years." "I understand that very well" said Szilard, "but please keep in mind that these walls may not be standing here ten years from now." The vicinity of St Paul's Cathedral was one of the most heavily bombed regions of London and the wall to which Professor Hopwood had referred was demolished during the London blitz.