

1990



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Rome -

Firenze

Galleria Uffizzi - LA PRIMAVERA (Sandro Botticelli)
Galerie des Uffizzi - LE PRINTEMPS (Sandro Botticelli)
The Uffizzi Gallery - THE SPRING (Sandro Botticelli)

MERRY CHRISTMAS -

and all good wishes for
the New Year! Was so
sorry to miss you in
New York - but George
gave us news of you!
Do come to Rome sometime
soon - affectionately
D.S. Proutice

Dr. Leo Sigilard

1155 East 57th St.

Chicago, Ill.

U.S.A.



POSTE ITALIANE

Mrs Ryan Prentice

3, Calle del Sol,
San Juan, Puerto Rico.

file 6

19th January, 1962.

Dr. Leo Szilard,
Bio-Chemistry Department,
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO,
CHICAGO. ILL.

Dear Dr. Szilard,-

It is such a long time since our last sight of each other that I scarcely dare hope that you will remember me. I have often thought of you over the years, and recalled our agreeable conversations together with George Nebolsine when I used to live at East 94th Street in New York. I hope if you ever come here, or if I am in New York, we will manage to take up again where we left off.

I am writing to you now to ask a great favour of you for a young Hungarian friend of mine. He is a charming and talented boy of eighteen years who is finishing his preparatory school work with my son Michael in St. Georges' School in New-port. He has been working on a Scholarship from the School and is doing very well, and is ready to go to University next Fall. He is very deeply interested in Science, and hoping to study Bio-chemistry. You may know his father, Prof. Geza Teleki, who is now teaching in Washington.

I am a friend of young Geza's mother, Hanna, and so interested in Geza's future. Would it be possible for you, at your convenience, to see young Geza in Chicago, or wherever would be most suitable for you? I have offered to give Geza the trip to Chicago to go to see you some time perhaps during the Easter Holidays, if you have the time.

Being a foreigner, although naturalized now, I think he needs a bit of encouragement and inspiration to carry on with his dream of dedicating himself to Science, as well as a little help in advising where he should go for the proper training.

I cannot tell you how much I would be grateful to you if you could possibly manage to see him, and perhaps advise him.

With all good wishes to you for the New Year, and I hope that somehow our paths will cross again.

Yours very sincerely,

J.T. Prentice

file M

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
CHICAGO 37 • ILLINOIS
THE ENRICO FERMI INSTITUTE
FOR NUCLEAR STUDIES

Washington, D.C.
19 February 1962

Mrs. D. J. Prentice
3 Calle del Sol
San Juan, Puerto Rico

Dear D.J. :

How very nice to hear from you again.

First of all, would you be kind enough to read the enclosed copy of a speech which I have recently given at various universities and to drop me a line to say whether you are interested and perhaps also to indicate the degree of your interest.

As you will see, this speech represents an experiment made for the purpose of determining whether a movement of the kind described would get off the ground if it were started on a sufficiently large scale.

The response so far is very encouraging. On every campus mimeographed copies of the speech were distributed, after I had spoken, to those who requested a copy. On every campus they ran out of copies. The first speech was given at Harvard on 17 November and a graduate student volunteered to mimeograph copies and to make them available at cost. On 1 January he reported having distributed 2300 copies, by 15 January he had distributed 3500 copies, by 1 February another 2000 and by 15 February another 3500.

The response which I get through the mails is overwhelming and I have to run hard just to catch up with my followers.

In the circumstances I would not be able to see your young friend for about two months. I suggest that he contact me after 15 April in Washington, D. C. at

the Hotel Dupont Plaza, Washington 6, D.C., telephone Hudson 3-6000. We may be then able to work out that he see me either in Washington or in New York.

Sincerely,

Leo Szilard
Hotel Dupont Plaza
Washington 6, D.C.

file 5

DJ. Prentice

3 Calle del Sol
San Juan, Puerto Rico.
14 March, 1962

Dear Leo,

So many thanks for your letter which I found on my return here. It is very kind of you to see Geza Teleki. He is an interesting, sensitive, and intelligent boy with a real talent for and interest in science. I am sure you will find him worth helping. He will be in Washington from the 16th of March for a week visiting his father, Professor Teleki who teaches at the University there. If, by any chance you should have a moment to see him then, it would be wonderful because after April 4th he will be back in school. Of course, to see you after April 15th could be arranged because I am sure that the school would let him off for a day to come to you.

I was so interested to read your speech. Thank you for sending it. It made me happy among other things to know that you still feel the same. So often life erodes, and people lose that fine spirit of participation and responsibility.

You asked me to tell you what I think of the PLAN. I am flattered. First of all, I admire you for your dedication and sacrifice and enthusiasm. So rarely does anyone implement their thoughts with action of any sort.

I have always felt that one should not try, however, to determine in advance whether a plan will work. I think one must just go ahead on inspiration and faith - taking all the risks involved and plunging in - trusting that if one is sincere and energetic and that it is a True idea then the Bon Dieu will take care that it "catches on" and "works".

I have been thinking long and hard before answering you, because it is in my nature, one might say, to be opposed to anything that smacks of organization. I believe that power and energy are dispersed in the machinery of organization...that it becomes unwieldy and expensive and wasteful, and, worse, that it offers a continuing temptation to the less noble qualities in man.

Beyond this, there is also an abiding conviction that we are living at a meeting place in time when two opposing ideologies of life itself are in real conflict. Each of these ideologies has a great deal to be said for it. Which is "right", time alone will tell, but in the meanwhile one has to choose. In order to do this, I have simplified for myself this "conflict". On the one side there is the idea of "organization", giving man partial security and releasing him from his total responsibility, removing his "total" risk and relieving him of his terrifying and awful freedom of choice. The other side is the simpler archaic form (more absolute than relative) which works from individual courage and inspiration...catching like a brush fire from individual to individual and making a powerful natural force for good which needs no machinery, no organization or implementation. All great "movements" in history have sprung from the faith or inspiration or courage of a single or a group of single individuals.

The argument today (which incidentally I think only tends to confuse) is that we find ourselves in a complicated intense world, too large, too intricate too mechanized for the simple individualistic approach to handle...That because

of this complicated system we have evolved, nothing short of an equally ponderous organization can galvanize the "monster" into action or can stop the monstrous snowball from rolling faster and faster downhill until it crashes. I wonder.

I am of the opinion, perhaps naïve, that this unwieldy "system", this mechanical monster of modern civilization is an excrescence of some sort... That the world is still as profoundly simple and as profoundly complicated as each single human unit in it... That still consisting of humans with all their human emotions and strivings, it can still be reached and rectified by a profoundly simple call to these very human emotions without benefit of organization.

If I am right in assuming that you are asking humanity to make a BIG sacrifice.... to give up this tension, this pride... to love where there is now hatred and fear.... to put down arms and embrace the "enemy" as spiteful and envious fellow to be loved.... and thereby set an example so powerful that its idea would spread all over the planet and war would be abolished ipso facto. I agree. To trust in Life... in the Bon Dieu... to have courage for this is all that needs be told or asked. For to abolish War is the by-product of living without fear, and of love, and not an end in itself.

One could say... "Very well, and then what... we all believe that". Perhaps not All, but there is a generous majority of humble souls who do. It is to this MAJORITY that your call must appeal... not to the enlightened minority. These so-called humble souls only need the clarification and the confirmation that the few strong ones can give by themselves assuming the risks and responsibilities. By their conviction and courage they awaken and fortify the idea dormant in the vast human majority.

In short, by doing what you are doing... talking, writing, speaking.. by television, radio and any means of communication. After this it is the Bon Dieu who implements. The politicians, the lobbies, the money, the government would HAVE to follow the will of the people once it is a strong outspoken conviction

The difficulty in America at present is the lack of this conviction — not knowing what it believes any more. There is the troubled Christian conscience uneasily pointing in one direction while enlightened self-interest, pride and fear lead in the other. By substituting new names for old vices... greed is now "profit motive", selfishness is now "enlightened self*interest", weakness is called neurosis etc. etc. Should we wonder that the people are confused! Give them back the simple polarities of good and evil... Tell them what a challenge freedom really is rather than that it is the "birthright of every man." Explain what is fear and how despicable it is... what is risk... what is sacrifice... what is courage.. Call to these eternal verities. Give them real choices and real names and my life upon it you'll get the response or they're not worth saving. It is teachers, leaders dedicated men taking total risks, and not dollars and politicians, who will swing it

Forgive my lengthy answer. Only the poets can be brief in truth. I wanted to tell you truly what I thought, and even now I am not sure if I have.

I am so glad to hear that you are well again. I only now heard that you hadn't been, so my heart goes out in even more admiration for what you are doing. Please let me hear from you again. All the best to you

Yours sincerely,
D.S.