

1155 East 57th Street
Chicago 37, Illinois
December 13, 1950

Dr. Paul R. Burkholder
Osborn Botanical Laboratory
Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut

Dear Dr. Burkholder:

Some time ago when you visited our laboratory you were so kind as to express an interest in what we were doing. Enclosed you will find the manuscript of a paper which will appear in the December issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science. It describes a new method for studying bacterial populations and gives information on the mutations of bacteria. At present we are engaged in trying to discover if there is any relationship between chemical structure of mutation causing agents and their ability to cause mutations in bacteria.

I expect to be in the East soon after the first of January, and upon looking through the enclosed manuscripts you should think that the subject material might be of interest to your students, I could probably arrange to give a seminar to your group.

With best wishes--

Sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

May 22, 1961

President John F. Kennedy
The White House
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

Your strong personal appeal, a few days ago, to those of us present at the spring meetings of the National Academy of Sciences, evoked a warm feeling of loyalty to our President and stirred our thoughts in the direction of seeking ways of being helpful to our government. The disturbing trend of world events makes us all realize how necessary it is for the people of the United States of America and their friends to find solutions to fundamental problems that seriously threaten the welfare of nations, and, indeed, the survival of man as a species. At this moment, Leo Szilard, grand and humanitarian fellow scientist, is endeavoring to prepare an informal consensus of the opinions of members of the Academy as regards certain world issues, the gravity of which is unparalleled in the history of our nation.

Over recent years it has been my opportunity, as a scientific advisor to Army Chemical Center, to learn much about top secret classical methods of using military force for our defense against attack by potential enemies. At this time I am taking the liberty of writing to you concerning some principles that extend beyond traditional ways of defending the United States, and which may ultimately become more powerful and more respected than the conventional modern methods of warfare.

My thoughts, for whatever they may be worth, are the following:

1. The conquest for power over free men by exponents of an alien ideology is shown in Africa, Laos, and Cuba, spreading like an insidious disease worldwide, and seeking to undermine international law and order, and destroy the decent respect of civilized men for each other.

2. This great struggle for mastery over the minds and bodies of men cannot be restrained only through opposition by superior force, because this approach fails to convert world opinion, and leads to economic suicide and the chance for complete annihilation of human kind.

3. It is absolutely necessary now that the U. S. A. strive to maintain before the entire world a true image of great courage and strength, ready, when required in dire emergency, to fight in its own defense, against aggression, and in support of international law and order.

4. The U. S. A. must also steadfastly maintain, in its national conscience and before the eyes of all peoples, moral integrity and determination to abide by the legal standards as set forth in the charter of the United Nations, to which our country has agreed and expects all other member nations to support in good faith.

5. Beyond the need for maintenance of adequate military strength and development of great technological power in the immediate future, a still greater necessity is envisioned for the increase of worldwide general education and legitimate propaganda for an ideology that, under God, has advanced the cause of freedom, placed mankind on a high level of dignity, and made our country great among the nations of the earth.

6. I respectfully urge that a new agency of the federal government be created to organize on a vast, unprecedented scale, dynamic worldwide programs in all languages for education and persuasion of the masses of mankind to join with the United States of America in working toward the attainment of everlasting peace, the evolution of adequate systems of government, the development of high standards of living, and ultimately providing opportunities for cultivation of the mind and spirit of all peoples.

7. It is believed that in the 60's may be the last chance to crusade for the minds of men on a global scale. World events now seem to march onward independently of our best thoughts and intentions. While we rely upon the dubious prestige of great military might, the enemy wins the battle with psychological weapons and subtle infiltrations. Perhaps the U. S. A. needs a new arm in the Department of Defense for the express purpose of fighting cold war with the techniques of applied psychology. Why do we act as if we are ashamed to propagandize for the principles of democracy,

and freedom of thought, action, and religious belief? I respectfully urge you to embark upon a vast program of organized international education through which the barriers of misunderstanding and distrust will be broken down, while intelligent youth and experienced leaders will be encouraged constantly to work together toward a better world order, based not upon conflict, but upon cooperation. Future salvation of mankind will more surely be attained by creative actions of the human mind and spirit rather than through brute force that may destroy us all -- sooner than we think.

8. Our nation must continue to improve its attitudes and actions toward increasing the educational, social, and economic opportunities for all races, creeds, and colors of its citizens in the homeland, if we want to enjoy the respect and friendship of uncommitted and underprivileged peoples in foreign lands. Americans can still learn much from the contemplative philosophies and simple ways that have evolved among different peoples in strange countries. We must try to understand the psychology of poverty, if we will bring together the affluent and the poor in a relationship of mutual assistance.

9. Ever since the great day of retaliation at Hiroshima, the U. S. A. has been striving for global supremacy through induced fear of its stockpile of atom bombs and mad investment of money with untrustworthy leaders of retarded nations. Is it already too late to recognize the need for developing appropriate police squads to put out brush fire wars? What has become of our foreign intelligence and efficient diplomacy in dealing with tense situations before they blow up? Can we yet develop real leadership in communicating science, technology, and concepts of the brotherhood of man to Africans, Cubans, and Laotians? Are we prepared to earn honestly the respect we cannot force and friendships money cannot buy in the community of nations? Contemporary techniques of waging cold war seem too often to produce advantages for the Soviet Union; therefore, we must discover and use new methods of winning the battle for the collective mind of peoples.

10. I hope that in the June 3 - 4 "summit meeting", you will seize the opportunity to exercise both courage and patience in preliminary exploration of ways and means for maintaining peace in a disarmed world. If any satisfactory answer can be found for securing peace and freedom of self-determination

President John F. Kennedy

-4-

May 22, 1961

through the intellectual arts, with proper assistance from a well trained United Nations police force, then it would be folly for nations not to disarm, and elimination of the bomb threat should follow in the due course of events. This would, in turn, release funds for practically unlimited education and the advancement of human culture everywhere.

Sincerely yours,



Paul R. Burkholder
Quaker Ridge Road
Croton-on-Hudson
New York

PRB:jra

THE BROOKLYN INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
KITCHAWAN RESEARCH LABORATORY
OF THE
BROOKLYN BOTANIC GARDEN

R. F. D. NO. 1, OSSINING, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE: WILSON 1-8886

May 22, 1961

KITCHAWAN ROAD, ROUTE 134

Dr. Leo Szilard,
Hotel DuPont Plaza,
1500 New Hampshire Ave., N. W.,
Washington 6, D. C.

Dear Dr. Szilard,

I believe that my views are in essential agreement with your recent statements in regard to moral integrity and our national support of the United Nations. See point 4 in my letter to the President. I hope that I have expressed clearly my views that global issues must be solved on the grounds of moral integrity with the methods of intellectual diplomacy.

It has been many years since I had the pleasure of visiting your laboratory at the University of Chicago.

Best personal wishes to you.

Sincerely,



Paul R. Burkholder,
Director of Research

PRB:mdn
enc.