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letter to: Mrs. Albert Lasker  
3600 Prospect Avenue  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mrs. Lasker:

Since I saw you I have given some thought to the problem <sup>which</sup> you raised, i.e., whether we can think of any federal legislation that might increase the number of gifted students majoring in science in college.

The Joint Committee on Atomic Energy has been taking testimony on this subject, but I am told that most witnesses merely describe the situation and that no one <sup>was able to make</sup> has made any reasonable proposal on the legislation.

My own feeling is that it <sup>will not be easy</sup> would be quite difficult to increase the number of <sup>those who become able</sup> able scientists through any federal legislation and that <sup>probably much</sup> much more could be accomplished by increasing the effectiveness of those who become scientists. But this <sup>of course</sup> is a different problem and I don't ~~propose to discuss it here.~~

The following facts seem to be relevant to the <sup>young</sup> problem which you raised. <sup>perhaps</sup> About 10% of those who graduate from college major in science, and roughly about 30,000 students graduate <sup>in science</sup> each year. This includes agricultural science but it does not include engineering. (You might <sup>perhaps</sup> assume that about 20,000 graduate each year in engineering.)

On the basis of the enclosed pamphlet, we may assume that <sup>the</sup> ~~about~~ <sup>number of</sup> 100,000 high school graduates who would want to go to college <sup>but</sup> cannot do so because they don't have the cash. <sup>does not exceed 100,000.</sup> If we now assume that about 10% of

these would major in science, and that they would all graduate, we could <sup>by</sup> increase the number of graduates in science <sup>a "Bill of Rights" for scientists</sup> about 10,000 a year, ~~or about~~

one-third of the number. This <sup>if correct</sup> I believe would be quite <sup>a</sup> substantial increase, <sup>it is an over</sup> but it is probably rather an optimistic estimate, for less than one-half of those who enter college do actually graduate. <sup>P</sup> My impression is that we would have to give much more ~~more~~ thought to this matter before <sup>we</sup> ~~can come~~ coming up with a clear proposal on federal aid that, say, Governor Stevenson might put forward in <sup>any</sup> some of his speeches. Perhaps we can talk <sup>this</sup> about these things again when you are back in New York.

~~You are doing such important work in the public health field that it would be probably a mistake for you to become entangled with the problem of increasing the number of scientists, unless it becomes much clearer what this problem actually involves.~~ Incidentally, I was wrong when I told you that Charles Edison is much concerned about this problem. He is merely Honorary Chairman of the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation, and the man who is really active there in this field is Charles Kettering. ~~I have recently sent a memorandum to them.~~

*With kindest regards*

Sincerely,

*If you really want to go more deeply into all this I can get you more factual information from that Foundation. ~~But~~ But - you are already much important work in the public health field that I am not sure ~~right now~~ that you would want to spread yourself*

*spread yourself the by taking up the problem of concentration of scientists -*

March 15, 1955

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker  
405 Lexington Avenue  
New York, New York

Dear Mrs. Lasker:

I wonder whether you recall the occasion when we met. It was at your house at the time when the atomic scientists fought the May-Johnson Bill, and Raymond Swing gathered a group of people to discuss the issue.

A Letter to the Editor, which I wrote, was printed on February 6 in the New York Times. It was reprinted in the Denver Post from where the attached clipping is taken. <sup>X</sup> This "Letter" was originally written merely as a cry of anguish, but I am rather overwhelmed by the response and somewhat put on the spot. Having appealed to others to do something, it seems now that I will have to do something or else satisfy myself that I cannot do it. The enclosed Memorandum indicates what it is that I might try to do. It is my hope that General Hester, or someone like him, would serve as Secretary of the Commission described in this Memorandum, and that other good men will make themselves available. There is some doubt in my mind that the Rockefeller Foundation, or any other large foundation, would want to provide funds for such an unconventional approach, and I doubt that a more conventional approach would do. I shouldn't anticipate any difficulty in finding a suitable university, or some other tax exempt organization, to take over the administration of funds, if funds can be obtained.

After writing the Memorandum which accompanies this letter, I received answers from Father Cavanaugh, Colin Clark, and Marshall MacDuffie, the copies of which are enclosed. Previously, I had a favorable answer from General Hester

over the telephone. All this strengthens my impression that it will be easier to find the men than the proper sponsorship providing adequate funds. It seems likely that we shall have to look for funds to the smaller Foundations and perhaps more than one of them will have to be involved. \*

I should very much appreciate your looking over this material. I plan to telephone you on my arrival in New York some time after the 21st of March and find out whether you are sufficiently interested to want to discuss this matter. I expect to be in New York for a while at least, and shall stay at the King's Crown Hotel, 420 West 116th Street, telephone University 42700.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

Enclosures

ALBERT AND MARY LASKER FOUNDATION, INC.  
CHRYSLER BUILDING, NEW YORK 17, N. Y.  
TELEPHONE LEXINGTON 2-9391

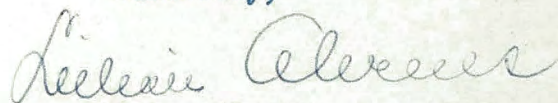
March 17, 1955

Dear Mr. Szilard:

In reply to your letter of the 15th, unfortunately Mrs. Lasker will not be in New York next week, as she is vacationing in Hawaii and is not expected to return until some time in May.

You may be assured however that your letter will be brought to Mrs. Lasker's attention upon her return, and you will undoubtedly hear from her at that time if she can be at all helpful to you on this project.

Sincerely,



Lillian Ahrens  
Secretary to Mrs. Lasker

Mr. Leo Szilard  
The University of Chicago  
Chicago 37, Ill.

1155 East 57th Street  
Chicago 37, Illinois  
November 29, 1955

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker  
405 Lexington Avenue  
New York City, New York

Dear Mrs. Lasker:

This is a sequel to the conversation which I had with you and Mrs. Rosenberg at your office earlier this year.

After I left you, I went back to Washington and stayed there until late August when Congress adjourned. The final form of the project is contained in the enclosed memorandum which you need not trouble to read! For a while, it was planned to call a two weeks conference with about 25 participants in order to determine whether some such project ought to be set up and what its term of reference should be; but I find that the present climate is not favorable for going forward with this plan. Perhaps at a later time and perhaps in a modified form something along this line can be set up.

In the meantime, I have tried to focus attention on some of the issues that will have to be discussed in an article that appeared in the October issue of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, which you will find enclosed.

The proposals contained in it are not in the realm of practical politics today; yet, I believe that it is useful to make them at this time. This view seems to be born out by responses which I have from Washington. The letters that I received from men whose opinion I value indicate that they accept some of the points of view that I put forward but think that I have neglected to take into account some other points of view and end up by suggesting that we have a bull session on these problems.

In these circumstances, I propose to continue this work on a reduced scale, having as a minimum objective another, more mature article. The University of Chicago

November 29, 1955  
Mrs. Albert D. Lasker

has given me a whole year free up to June 30, 1955 to enable me to devote myself to these problems as much as is necessary.

During this year, they pay my salary but not traveling and secretarial expenses. The Social Sciences Division, however, has set up an expense account to which I can charge these expenses, to the extent to which funds can be obtained from outside sources. The expenses for this calendar year amount to about \$4000, of which \$2500 have already been contributed, leaving a deficit of \$1500. The expenses up to June 30 of next year are estimated at \$2000. I wonder whether your Foundation or some other funds at your disposal might care to give a grant-in-aid to cover this years' deficit and as much of next years' expenses as you see fit.

Checks should be made out to the University of Chicago (They are tax deductible), and sent to attention of Mr. Chauncey Harris, Dean of the Social Sciences Division, Social Science Building, University of Chicago, Chicago 37, Illinois. The covering letter may simply state that this is a grant-in-aid to be credited to my expense account in the Social Science Division.

It does not matter very much whether the check is payable this year or some time early next year. I would greatly appreciate, however, your letting me know as soon as possible whether a check covering the \$1500 deficit will be forthcoming, since I have to make my arrangements accordingly.

I might be out of town when your letter arrives and I have asked Mr. William M. Swartz, 4940 Sheridan Road, Chicago 40, Illinois to look after this matter in my absence. Could you possibly send him a carbon copy of any letter that you may write me in this matter?

I called your office in August from Washington to tell you how things were going but learned from your secretary that you were not expected back from Europe until some time later.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

LS:cf

ALBERT AND MARY LASKER FOUNDATION, INC.  
CHRYSLER BUILDING, NEW YORK 17, N. Y.  
TELEPHONE LEXINGTON 2-9391

December 16th, 1955

Dear Dr. Szilard:

I have sent the enclosed letter and a check in the amount of \$1,500 to Mr. Chauncey Harris of the Social Sciences Division of the University of Chicago, to relieve the deficit of your expenses.

I would like very much to have an opportunity to see you some time when you are in New York to know what your present ideas are in relation to the political problems connected with atomic energy. Do let me know when you come to New York.

Warmest wishes to you, and appreciation for all your work in behalf of mankind.

Yours,

*Mary Lasker*

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Dr. Leo Szilard  
1155 East 57th Street  
Chicago 37, Illinois



1155 East 57th Street  
Chicago 37, Illinois

January 10, 1956

Mrs. Mary Lasker  
Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation, Inc.  
Chrysler Building  
New York 17, New York

Dear Mrs. Lasker:

Upon my return to Chicago after the New Year, I found your very kind letter of December 16.

It is always very awkward to approach anyone in connection with a deficit, particularly if the goal that was supposed to be served by the expenditure has not been reached. When I wrote you, I did so not without embarrassment. Your gracious letter relieved not only the deficit but also the embarrassment.

My personal ideas on what I could do in any major way in connection with the political problems connected with atomic energy are far from clear, but nevertheless the next time I am in New York I shall call your office and see if you feel like discussing the subject.

With kind regards and good wishes for the New Year,

Sincerely,

Leo Szilard

LS:cf

MRS. ALBERT D. LASKER  
CHRYSLER BUILDING  
NEW YORK 17, NEW YORK  
TELEPHONE LEXINGTON 2-9391

May 11th, 1956

Dear Dr. Szilard:

I am sure this book will interest  
you, as it's really crusading and has a wallop.  
Do let me know what you think of it.

With all best wishes,

Yours,

Harry Lasker

Dr. Leo Szilard  
Windsor Hotel  
100 West 58th Street  
New York, New York

I am sorry to hear you are not  
feeling well.

all my warmest wishes and  
gratitude for all you have  
done for our country

MRS. ALBERT DAVIS LASKER

Mary Lasher

TWENTY-NINE BEEKMAN PLACE

ack: May 15 / 60.

Windsor Hotel  
100 West 58th Street  
New York 19, N. Y.

May 17, 1956.

Dear Mrs. Lasker:

It was very kind of you to send me Gorman's book. So far I only thumbed through it but liked the spirit of it. Reading it brought back a memory: In 1938 I talked to C. P. Rhoads who at that time was at the Rockefeller Institute and I told him of an experiment I thought I would like to do. In the case of manic-depressive psychosis, I thought that the patient in the manic phase might have a substance circulating in his blood which could get a patient in the depressed phase out of his depression. I was <sup>eager</sup> to serve as a guinea pig and to see if I could be made manic through a sustained blood transfusion with a patient in the manic phase. (Looking back at this, I now suspect that I was looking for an excuse to defer indefinitely my return to England which was scheduled for the Fall of 1938). Rhoads agreed with me that such a physiological approach to the problem of manic-depressive psychosis was promising but thought that I would not be able to talk any psychiatrist into cooperating in such an experiment. A somewhat similar experiment has recently been made with schizophrenic blood on two convicts. It received a lot of publicity and therefore it should not take long now until someone will try sustained blood transfusions with manic-depressive patients.

I sent you some information on the number of students who graduate in science, etc., to Washington, D. C., and I hope that this reached you in time. If you want to pursue this subject still further, let me know please.

Since I saw you I was at a meeting in Cambridge and Bronk, Rabi, and I took the same train back to New York. My conversation with Bronk covered a great variety of topics and left me very much with the impression

that he may be a potential ally when it comes to seeking imaginative solutions to the kind of problems you are interested in. Therefore, I am now instructed to think that it might not be such a bad idea for you to serve on the committee which you have mentioned.

With kind regards,

Sincerely,

Leo Szilard

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker  
Chrysler Building  
New York 17, N. Y.

October 17, 1956

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker  
Chrysler Building  
New York City 17, New York

Dear Mrs. Lasker:

When I saw you in the spring you expressed to me your concern about President Eisenhower's health. All Americans share this concern but those who, like you, are unable to assess what kind of President Richard Nixon would make naturally add to their humanitarian concern a political concern.

I told you at the time, I believe, that I was not an adherent of Governor Stevenson's, but that I shared your concern in one respect: The people must not decide the coming elections on the false premise that President Eisenhower is likely to be able to serve out his full term. If the people know the facts and are willing to take the risk of having Richard Nixon as President of the United States then, this being a democracy, we have no right to grumble if President Eisenhower is re-elected.

I understand that there was a factual article written on Krohn's disease and another related subject by Dr. David Rudstein of the Harvard Medical School in Harper's. This magazine is, however, not widely read. Today most people do not even know that the full medical term for Krohn's disease is "chronic, recurrent, regional ileitis." Even less do they know that when this disease reaches a stage where surgery becomes necessary recurrence within a year is likely.

As I see it, there are two things which now need urgently to be done, and both can be done at the same time:

(1) There is a need to explain the true character of this disease to the people before they cast their vote at the elections, and

(2) There is a need to expand research in this field without delay, in the hope that an effective treatment may be found before it is too late to help President Eisenhower.

It is my opinion

(a) That President Eisenhower's health is not a suitable topic for campaign speeches, and

(b) That if now, before the elections, a non-political, tax-exempt campaign were made to raise funds for research on regional ileitis, it would have a very favorable response. And if ample funds were made available for grants-in-aid for research in this field, many good men would be willing to do clinical work, as well as basic biological research, in this field on an emergency basis. We might then have a fighting chance of finding a treatment that would enable President Eisenhower to preserve his present state of health for many years to come and to serve out his term if he is re-elected.

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In the attached memorandum which is addressed to you, I have outlined a fund-raising drive which would start immediately and operate with newspaper ads as well as radio and television announcements on a tax-exempt basis.

October 17, 1956

Clearly the fund-raising campaign would be far more successful before the elections than after. For if President Eisenhower is defeated in the elections, the incentive for contributing to the fund would be provided only by humanitarian considerations, whereas before the elections there are strong political incentives for contributing to it. This holds not only for potential Republican contributors but even more so for potential Democratic contributors. The latter also know that President Eisenhower might be re-elected and they are less sure that Richard Nixon would make a good President than are the Republicans.

I wonder if it would be possible for you to call me over the telephone, telling me what you think of this proposal, and also whether you believe that you might be able to undertake this task on an emergency basis. I know, of course, that you are very busy in the political campaign and that it might be difficult for you to take time off from the campaign for this enterprise, but no doubt there are many people who could help you.

If you cannot reach me at my home at Hyde Park 3-8601, you might leave the call in, but in this case it would be advisable for the operator to leave also your name and your phone number. During office hours, you might also reach me through Mrs. Norene Mann at extension 3789, Midway 3-0800 (The University of Chicago).

Sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

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cc: Mr. Archibald Alexander



The Quadrangle Club  
The University of Chicago  
Chicago 37, Illinois  
October 17, 1956

Memo to: Mrs. Albert D. Lasker

From: Leo Szilard

It is proposed that either the Albert D. Lasker Foundation or a new committee (to be formed by you and a few of your friends) start a fund-raising campaign on an emergency basis. The funds collected would be used for medical and basic biological research restricted (at least during President Eisenhower's lifetime) to a search for an effective treatment for "chronic, recurrent, regional ileitis". The funds would be distributed by a scientific committee appointed by the Fund-raising Committee, and would be spent in the form of grants-in-aid.

This fund-raising campaign would operate by full-page ads and, above all, by announcements over radio and television.

1) The ads and announcements should explain the nature and dangerous character of this disease, and should be based on good medical authority. They must avoid all exaggeration.

2) The ads and announcements should not try to conceal that those appealing for funds are concerned about President Eisenhower's chances to fight off this disease unless an effective treatment is found rather soon.

3) The ads and announcements must not exaggerate the hope that such a treatment can be found in the short time available to be of help to the President. They can, however, emphasize the fighting chance that given sufficient funds and an active cooperation on the part of the medical profession such a treatment might be found.

4) It may be emphasized that money donated for purposes of this fund-raising campaign, as well as contributions received in response to the campaign, would be tax-exempt.

5) The appeal must be non-political in character, and it may assume that contributions would come from Republicans and Democrats alike. If anything, the Democrats who fear Nixon ought to have even more incentive to contribute than the Republicans who think that Nixon might make a good president.

6) Clearly the fund-raising drive would be far more successful before the elections than after. For if President Eisenhower is defeated in the elections, the incentive for contributing to the fund would be provided only by humanitarian considerations, whereas before the elections there are strong political incentives for contributing to it. This holds not only for potential Republican contributors but even more so for potential Democratic contributors. The latter also know that President Eisenhower might be re-elected and they are less sure that Richard Nixon would make a good President than are the Republicans.

For this reason I would urge that a committee be organized at once unless the Albert D. Lasker Foundation itself can handle the fund-raising drive, and that the newspaper ads, as well as radio and television announcements, get under way as soon as possible.

T h e            E n d

August 16, 1957

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker  
Albert and Mary D. Lasker Foundation  
Chrysler Building  
New York 17, New York

Dear Mrs. Lasker:

I should greatly appreciate your reading  
the attached note when your time permits and giving me  
your general reaction at your convenience.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,

Leo Szilard

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Encl.

Hotel Dupont Plaza  
Washington, D.C.  
14 December 1961

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker  
29 Beekman Place  
New York City, New York

Dear Mrs. Lasker:

I should be very grateful to you for reading the enclosed "speech" which I recently gave at Harvard and other universities. Please note that I am not starting a movement but rather conducting an experiment which should show whether a movement of the kind I describe in my speech could get off the ground if it were started under the right auspices and on a sufficiently large scale. I would greatly appreciate your telling me whether you might take an interest in this enterprise either in its present experimental stage or at a later stage. Attached you will find some indication of the responses to date. Attached you will find also a copy of a letter from someone who is both enthusiastic and informed. I am swamped with letters many of them equally or more enthusiastic but less informed.

I understand that Chicago has by now orders for 2500 copies of my speech. On 9 January I talk at the University of California at Berkeley and on 10 January at Stanford. Just how we shall proceed from there on I do not know. We are going to have a meeting on strategy this weekend in Boston. My strongest moral support comes at the present from both the faculty and students at both Harvard and MIT.

If this letter reaches you before Christmas, and if you care to make any comments please call me over the telephone in Washington, D.C. at HUDson 3-6000, room 745.

With kindest regards.

Very sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard  
Hotel Dupont Plaza  
Washington, D.C.

*file*

24 December 1961

Dear Mrs. Lasker:

I hope to hear from you, if and when you have had time to think about the speech I sent you. The press continues to be favorable - so far not a single hos ile comment. Attached is a sample taken from Commonweal, a Catholic publication.

With best wishes.

Very sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker  
29 Beekman Place  
New York, New York

*The Study*

CONFIDENTIAL

January 22, 1963

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker  
405 Lexington Ave.  
New York City, New York

Dear Mrs. Lasker:

The enclosed correspondence which I had with Khrushchev speaks for itself and you might find it interesting. I intend to go forward with this project provided I get the green light for it in Washington. I expect to have an answer on this within two weeks.

If we go forward with this project it would be best to have it imbedded in a program of informal conversations which would be conducted under the subcommittee of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences of which I happen to be Chairman. Such a program would be composed of a number of sessions arranged ad hoc. Each session would be scheduled to last two weeks with the possibility of extending it for another week, and each session would stand on its own feet. Different sessions could have different topics and participants but several sessions could be devoted to the same topic if necessary.

By imbedding the Angels project into such a general program I would hope that it would avoid attracting

public curiosity which in this particular case it would be imperative to avoid.

The Angels project might not take more than one session, and the cost should not exceed \$20,000. Since it would be part of a program carried out by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences or some other tax exempt institution, any grant given for this project would be tax deductible.

Since it would be advisable to go ahead with this project as soon as we have the green light in Washington, I am anxious to make sure ahead of time that we are not going to get delayed for lack of prompt financial support.

I phoned your office in New York and found that you happened to be in Washington. I propose to phone you later on during the day or tomorrow morning to find out whether you would care to discuss this matter.

With kind regards,

Sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard