



TELEPHONE
UNIVERSITY 4-2700

KING'S CROWN HOTEL

OPPOSITE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

UNDER KNOTT MANAGEMENT

420 WEST 116TH STREET, NEW YORK N.Y.

November 22, 1940

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Lawson:

I understand from Professor Pegram that you have turned us down. I am writing because I should like you to reconsider your decision from a particular point of view which you may or may not have borne in mind.

From what I see and hear the absorption of physicists by defense projects is taking place at such a rate that your chances of being left to work along lines of pure science appear to be negligible. I should be prepared to bet you that you will not be able to go on for another six months with the work which you had planned to do. For this reason it seems to me that the only choice which is before you is either to work with us or to work on some of the numerous defense research projects elsewhere. Perhaps if you would make a few inquiries about which other physicists had to change their plan of work within the last two weeks you will see the situation in the same light as I do. Beyond wanting you to accept this point of view I have no intention of influencing your choice. You may prefer New York or you may prefer Washington, Baltimore or Boston, and you may perhaps want to join some defense program in Philadelphia at some later date. I personally would of course be very glad if you gave New York the preference and if you should do so please let me know at the earliest possible moment. I should then be glad to give you more detailed information.

I may add that while you have to make up your mind about your own personal preference you need not have any scruples from the point of view of being ungrateful towards the University of Pennsylvania since in this case if there should be a conflict of loyalties there would be little doubt which one has to be considered as the higher loyalty



TELEPHONE
UNIVERSITY 4-2700

KING'S CROWN HOTEL


OPPOSITE
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

UNDER KNOTT MANAGEMENT

420 WEST 116TH STREET, NEW YORK N.Y.

Nor have I yet heard of a case of any university hesitating to release a man at the request of the Government for work within the frame which has been recently set up by the Government.

With best wishes,



UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
PHILADELPHIA
THE COLLEGE

Randal Morgan Laboratory of Physics

December 1

Dear Szilard

I received your letter about a week ago and have spent some time considering the various aspects of the points which you raise.

I appreciate your warning concerning a false sense of loyalty and have considered the problem from a purely objective point of view.

Since I am doing work on national defense at the present time of a nature which interests me and for which considering my previous training I am best qualified, there can be ~~therefore~~ no question of neglecting my country in her hour of need.

The job at Columbia is only offered as temporary affair with the idea that I should return to my job here at the termination of the work there. This would be an entirely feasible proposition for all concerned if I had some roots here--say five years old. No doubt I could get permission to leave -- perhaps it could be arranged that at the end of a certain time I could secure back my job but it would be done with a great lack of enthusiasm, and interest in me, as an employee worthy of notice, would be remarkably lacking.

Lastly, the only qualifications I have for work on fission are a certain curiosity and a lot of ambition. Certainly these can be found in many others plus a better

UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA

THE COLLEGE

Randal Morgan Laboratory of Physics

knowledge of what it is all about. If it is the sort of job where ignorance is an asset it surely cannot be one which should interest me.

I have spoken frankly to you because you have spoken frankly to me. I know my response will be as confidential as your inquiry. I do not wish you to feel however that I am ungrateful for your interest, ~~however~~. Nothing could be further from the truth. Actually under different circumstances I would be very much interested in the whole proposition. As it is however I can only feel that I am running the risk of selling my future down the river for one year of highly interesting and perhaps more remunerative work. While such a job would open new doors perhaps, it would almost certainly lock other doors behind me.

With kindest personal regards, and trusting that I shall see you here later this month, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

A Lawson

Dean Cowie

Hubbard Corner
Inst.

Bethesda Plaza

Seve

Cath 2-0078

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

CHICAGO 37 • ILLINOIS

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICS

June 28, 1954

Dr. Leo Szilard
Brandeis University
Waltham, Massachusetts

Dear Szilard:

Because of illness in his family, the major domo in our undergraduate laboratories, Mr. Ralph Regalbuto, is attempting to relocate his employment in an area where the climate is somewhat less severe than in Chicago.

Since Mr. Regalbuto has had 19 years experience in this type of work at Columbia and 7 years here, I feel that we should help him obtain a suitable position. It occurred to us that perhaps while Brandeis University is still in the process of organizing their laboratories such a man might be useful to them. Mr. Regalbuto built our laboratories from scratch after the War and I am sure that you will find that the majority of the Department feels that he has done an excellent job in this respect.

If Brandeis is in the market for such a man, I would be happy to supply particulars concerning Mr. Regalbuto's capabilities and limitations.

May I thank you in advance for any trouble to which this inquiry may put you.

Sincerely yours,

A. W. Lawson

A. W. Lawson

AWL/vh