

September 27, 1962

Washington, D. C.

Mr. Thomas J. Watson, Jr.  
590 Madison Avenue  
New York 22, New York

Dear Mr. Watson:

I understand that Professor Morton Grodzins wrote you yesterday about the possibility of my discussing with you a project which appears to show some promise. I have recently returned from a so-called Pugwash meeting which was held in Cambridge, England, and discussed this matter there with some of our Russian colleagues. Upon my return to Washington I had lunch with Dobrynin and I mentioned to him something about this project on that occasion.

I plan to come up to New York from Washington, D. C. this Saturday, September 29, and shall be staying at the Hotel Roosevelt. I shall, if I may, call your office Monday morning to find out whether you can spare the time to see me at your convenience either on Monday or on Tuesday. On Monday, I am booked so far from 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

Yours very sincerely,

Leo Szilard,  
Hotel DuPont Plaza

Washington 6, D. C.  
October 2, 1962

Mr. Thomas J. Watson, Jr.  
590 Madison Avenue  
New York 22, New York

Dear Mr. Watson:

It was a great pleasure to visit with you yesterday. The attached memorandum describes one of the two projects which I discussed with you. It might be that it would be easier to set it up if it were limited to two working periods of six weeks each, with a pause of six weeks in between. This would, incidentally, lower the cost also.

Nothing further needs to be done, or can be done, about this project until we have a response from the Russians. In the meantime, I propose to push as hard as I can the two-weeks project which I mentioned to you.

With best wishes,

Yours very sincerely,

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

Attachment

MEMORANDUM

FROM: Leo Szilard

October 2, 1962

TO: Thomas J. Watson, Jr.

The United States is formally committed to general and complete disarmament, but at the present time, few Americans in responsible positions are wholeheartedly in favor of it. Disarmament would not automatically guarantee peace, and at present no one is able to appraise the chances that America and Russia might be able to reach a meeting of the minds on the issue of how the peace may be secured in a disarmed world. No real progress towards disarmament is likely unless the current uncertainty on this issue is removed.

A Committee of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, of which I happen to be chairman, proposes to explore this question by setting up a non-governmental task force, composed of five to seven Americans and five to seven Russians, who would work fulltime, for a period not exceeding six months, half of the time in Russia and half of the time in America.

Some months ago I mentioned this project to William C. Foster, and at that time I gained the impression that there would be no objection on his part to the setting up of such a study.

If this study is to accomplish its aim, Khrushchev would have to understand its purpose and give it his wholehearted blessing. On the basis of a conversation I had with him in New York a year ago last October, I know that he is aware of the importance of this issue. I believe there is a fair chance that I can see him, explain the purpose of such a study to him, and induce him to take a hand in the selection of the Russian participants.

It would not be the purpose of this study to come up with a recommendation of how the peace should be secured in a disarmed world. Rather the goal of the study would be to produce a working paper which would list several possible approaches to this problem, discuss in each case the weaknesses of that particular solution, and the circumstances in which it would be likely to break down. By proceeding in the manner projected, none of the solutions discussed would carry the stigma of representing an American or a Russian proposal.

Upon its completion, the working paper would be transmitted to the interested governments and, depending on the arrangements with the Russian and American governments, the working paper might also be published.

The cost of this study is estimated at between \$100,000 and \$150,000.

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Washington, D. C.  
October 13, 1962

Mr. Thomas J. Watson, Jr.  
590 Madison Avenue  
New York 22, New York

PERSONAL

Dear Mr. Watson:

In regard to the "two weeks' project" which I mentioned to you when I saw you earlier this month, I continued to meet with a favorable response on the American side. Therefore, I have asked Ambassador Dobrynin to transmit the enclosed letter to Chairman Khrushchev.

So that I may be able to tell Ambassador Dobrynin truthfully that I have not cleared this project with the Government, I did not talk to Foster or to Rusk, even though I talked to others in the Government, including the State Department.

Until there is a response from the Russians, there is nothing much that we can do any further on this side.

Yours very sincerely,

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

Enclosure

P.S. I marked the enclosure confidential in order to indicate that it should not be unnecessarily talked about. This does not mean, however, that it may not be referred to if there is a good reason for doing so.

February 12, 1963

Mr. Thomas J. Watson, Jr.  
590 Madison Avenue  
New York 22, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Watson:

Last October I sent you a copy of a letter which I wrote to Khrushchev and I am attaching another copy to refresh your memory. Soon thereafter there occurred the Cuban crisis. Khrushchev's answer reached me on November 15 in Geneva; it was a warm personal letter in which he said that he "liked my proposal", and it was followed by an invitation to come and see him in Moscow. Before visiting Moscow, it seemed advisable that I first return to Washington and clear matters with the White House. There I am dealing with Carl Kaysen, deputy to McGeorge Bundy, and I now have the green light from the White House to recruit the American participants.

When I last saw you you were kind enough to say that I might contact you if we needed funds for financing privately arranged and sponsored communications with the Russians. I am about to set up under a committee of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a program of such communications which will comprise 3 three week sessions. One of these sessions is meant to implement the proposal described in my letter to Khrushchev. The other two would be aimed at producing a working paper on the issue of how the peace might be secured in a disarmed world. The cost of this program is estimated at \$20,000 per session or a total of \$60,000. The Reynolds Foundation is committed to make a contribution of \$7,500 and I am in the process of exploring where the rest of the funds could come from.

If you think that you might be able to help in this matter, I should be grateful if you would let me know. I could mail you the correspondence with Khrushchev and such additional information as you may need to have. Also I could see you at your office at your convenience.

I trust you will let me know if you want me to make out a formal application for a grant.

Mr. Thomas J. Watson  
Page two  
February 12, 1963

Contributions to the Academy are tax-deductible.

Perhaps you might find it convenient to leave word with your secretary whether or not you may want me to pursue this matter with you further and I might then call her over the telephone to find out.

I am staying at the Hotel Dupont Plaza, Washington 6, D. C., telephone HUDSON 3-6000, Room 745 or 740.

Very sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

Attachment

*sent*

Thomas J. Watson, Jr.  
590 Madison Avenue, New York 22, New York

March 1, 1963

Dear Dr. Szilard,

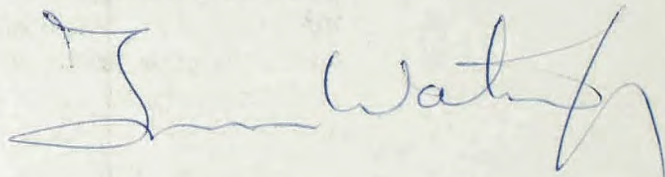
Upon my return to the office after an extended absence, I have seen your letter of February 12th. I am pleased to hear that you are making progress in your efforts.

Since our discussion several months ago, I have given considerable thought to the problems we face in controlling nuclear weapons. My conclusion is that we must challenge our best thinkers to come up with a solution which will achieve disarmament without compromising our freedom and sovereignty. As a step in that direction, I have proposed a special conference aimed at finding ways and means to move the U. S. and the U. S. S. R. toward disarmament and peace.

I am still in sympathy with your objectives but have already embarked on this other approach. The financial support that I am currently able to give has now been committed, and I am therefore not in a position to help you with your project.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Leo Szilard  
Hotel DuPont Plaza  
Washington 6, D. C.

March 5, 1963

Thomas J. Watson, Jr.  
590 Madison Avenue  
New York 22, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Watson:

Many thanks for your letter of March 1st.

As I wrote you on February 12th, I was dealing in the White House with Carl Kaysen, deputy to McGeorge Bundy, and I had the green light from the White House to recruit the American participants. This did not mean, however, that the Project had been cleared with the other agencies of the Government which are also involved, and I am at the present in the process of discussing the Project with the U. S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. My letter of February 12th was received by your office in your absence and if at that point they made inquiries about the Project in Washington they would be likely to have received an ambiguous or noncommittal reply. When the Project is cleared with the U. S. Arms Control Agency then I shall be free to make formal application for funds to foundations. In the meantime it seemed advisable to make some preliminary inquiries and the letter which I wrote you on February 12th was one of them

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,



Leo Szilard



Thomas J. Watson, Jr.  
590 Madison Avenue, New York 22, New York

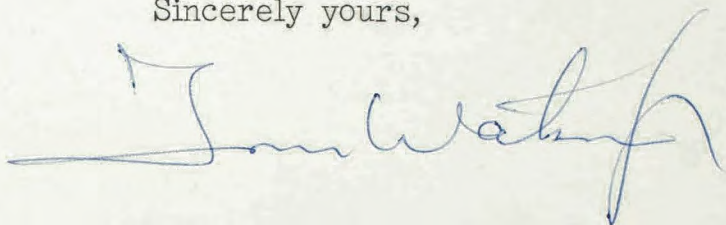
March 12, 1963

Dear Dr. Szilard,

I appreciated your letter of March 5th and the purpose of this note is to assure you that no inquiries were made by my office about the project, and my inability to participate is based solely on my personal situation.

As I mentioned in my last letter, I am in sympathy with your efforts along these lines, but it just is not possible for me to extend myself further at this point.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Watson", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Leo Szilard  
Hotel DuPont Plaza  
Washington 6, D. C.

Hotel letterhead

March 14, 1963

Thomas J. Watson, Jr.  
590 Madison Avenue  
New York 22, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Watson:

Many thanks for your kind letter of March 12th. You need not be concerned about being unable to be of financial assistance in this case since, in the meantime, we have received commitments totaling \$20,000 toward the cost of \$25,000, which is our current best estimate.

I should perhaps add, for the sake of maximum frankness, that I phrased my letter of March 5th the way I did because your office had in fact made inquiries about the project in Washington and the White House called me up about it. Apparently, this was done while you were abroad and it was not reported to you on your return.

There is a matter unrelated to the Angels project about which I might want to talk with you if I may. It would not involve any financial assistance but you might, perhaps, wish to help in other ways.

Sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

*gen files*

Thomas J. Watson, Jr.  
590 Madison Avenue, New York 22, N.Y.

March 21, 1963

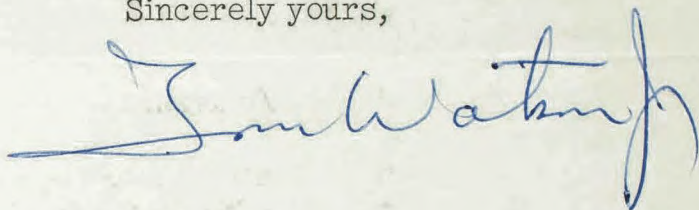
Dear Dr. Szilard,

On receiving your letter of March 14th, I looked into the matter of the contact with the White House by my office and find that what you state is correct.

I am, of course, highly embarrassed that the inquiry was made in the first place and further by the fact that I was not told about it. You have undoubtedly been both confused and embarrassed by this event, for which I would like to extend my apologies.

In regard to the other matter that you would like to discuss with me, I would be happy to get together with you at a mutually convenient time.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Leo Szilard  
Hotel DuPont Plaza  
Washington 6, D. C.

*The call came about three  
an overaggressive assistant trying  
to push things along while I  
was in Europe. It won't happen again*

Hotel letterhead

March 25, 1963

Thomas J. Watson, Jr.  
590 Madison Avenue  
New York 22, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Watson:

I wish to thank you for your generous letter of March 21st. The inquiry at the White House has done no harm, but I am glad that the matter has been cleared up.

Sometime in the course of the next two weeks I expect to be in New York and if the matter that I thought I would discuss with you is ripe by then, I will call your office to find out if you could conveniently see me.

Sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

*Leo Szilard*

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June 19, 1963

Thomas J. Watson, Jr.  
590 Madison Avenue  
New York 22, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Watson:

To-day, I called Charles Townes, who is at present Provost of MIT, in connection with the case of a man who occupies a key position in the Government and who is now, after two years of Government service, faced with the decision of resigning in order to return to Harvard or of resigning from Harvard. My reason for calling Townes was that I thought that maybe MIT could help out in this particular case. I also asked Townes what he would think about "prizes" that could be given to scientists or scholars who are rendering, or have rendered distinguished service to the Nation, through serving the Government, or otherwise. He thought that such a "prize" might, indeed, make a difference in a number of cases.

The only thing that I may add to our conversation of June 14th would be the suggestion not to limit the "prize" to scientists, but to include also scholars (economists, historians, etc.) It would probably be better if the "prize" were awarded by a committee, set up for the purpose, rather than any existing institution.

I am leaving for Europe on June 24th, but upon my return I shall take the liberty of communicating with you if there is any substantial progress to report on the project I discussed with you.

Very sincerely yours,



Leo Szilard