

1155 East 57th Street
Chicago 37, Illinois
April 18, 1950

Mr. Henry B. Cabot
140 Federal Street
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Cabot:

Enclosed you will find a few copies of a memorandum containing thoughts that lead to the decision of the Emergency Committee to try to bring into existence a "Council of Inquiry into the Conditions of Peace." The enclosed letter addressed to Reuben G. Gustavson, Chancellor of the University of Nebraska and one of the Trustees of the Emergency Committee, will bring you up-to-date, showing you how far we have gotten to date.

We intend to raise some funds prior to public announcement of the plan and the incorporation of the Council of Inquiry and prior to starting public fund raising. If you can think of a few men in Boston who you think might be sympathetic, you might perhaps transmit to them one of the enclosed copies of the memorandum. If you find sufficient interest in Boston to warrant it, Harrison Brown and I could come to Boston to meet with a few men--I should say no more than five or six--at a time convenient to you on May 2-6, inclusive. I propose to call you over the telephone on Thursday, the 20th of April, to find how you feel about this idea and whether you are able to set a date. In many ways the morning of Saturday the sixth might be the best for Harrison Brown and me, and I have asked Harrison Brown to keep himself free for that date until we hear from you.

Very sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

New York, April 22, 1950

Address: 1155 East 57th St.
Chicago 37, Ill.

Mr. Henry B. Cabot,
140 Federal St.,
Boston, Mass.

Dear Mr. Cabot:

I am sending you four more copies of the memorandum, indicating the state of our thinking as of March 27th. Since then our thinking has made some further progress and I hope to bring you up to date on it when I see you.

The question which you raised over the telephone is a very important one to agree upon at the very outset.

It is exceedingly unlikely that Russia and America could agree, today, on any modification of the UN Charter that would effectively abolish the veto, or that they could agree on any effective method of sanctions, unless they are able first to stop the cold war and live for a period of time in "peace" with each other.

In the circumstances, it is very important for us clearly to think through whether or not, in the absence of any method of enforcement, we can have "peace" which we can trust to endure long enough to give us a chance to work out and get agreement on the first major step towards a world government. The question may be put in this form: What is the use of having an agreement with Russia if we cannot trust Russia to keep an agreement?

It is my belief that upon finding the answer to this question will, in fact, turn on war or peace in the next ten years.

I have attempted to cope with this question in a speech given before the Rochester Institute of International Affairs and I am enclosing a reprint of that speech. In particular, the paragraph entitled "What Use is an Agreement" on page 10, and the passage which I marked on page 12, are relevant to the question at issue.

I should be very happy to discuss this with you in greater detail, since I believe that in the end, everything will turn on this one crucial point.

Apart from these considerations, it also appears very doubtful whether the Commission, within the six months at its disposal, could hope to cope successfully with such an issue as the rewriting of the UN Charter. I discussed this point with Granville Clark and came to the conclusion that the Commission should not be burdened with this task.

I wonder whether you plan to be in New York at any time during the week of May 1-6? If so, I could meet you there at any time during that week.

I shall call you in any case, next week to find out if the time is ripe for Harry Brown and me to visit Boston on the 6th of May, or if we had better postpone the trip until some later time.

Sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

1201

W. P. MARSHALL, PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS

- DL = Day Letter
- NL = Night Letter
- LC = Deferred Cable
- NLT = Cable Night Letter
- Ship Radiogram

1950 APR 25 (55) PM

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

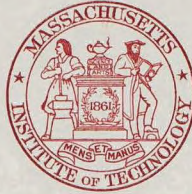
CAE147 DL PD VIA UG NFU=BOSTON MASS 25 501P=

PROF LEO SZILARD=

6200 DREXEL=

FAVORABLE REACTION FROM PRESIDENT FIRST NATIONAL BANK.
 CANHAM EDITOR CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR AWAY UNTIL LATE MAY.
 BELIEVE YOUR VISIT SHOULD BE POSTPONED UNTIL AFTER HIS RETURN.
 HENRY B CABOT=

Wages Brace



OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CORPORATION

May 1, 1950

Mr. Henry B. Cabot
140 Federal Street
Boston 10, Mass.

Dear Mr. Cabot:

I have read the memorandum by Professor Szilard which you sent with your letter of April 25, and I am returning it to you with the following comments.

The suggestion is an interesting one, but I find it very difficult to come to any conviction as to whether it would likely work out successfully or not. On the one hand there is obviously a very important point in bringing about public understanding and public consideration of these questions, and there is also the fact that an independent committee of very able citizens might be able to make the suggestion which would break the present impasse. What may be needed might be a new idea or it might be some face-saving mechanism.

If this plan is carried out it would seem to me that a logical extension of its basic idea would be to provide two Russian teams, and not one. The first of these teams might approach the problem from the point of view of Russian self-interest along the lines suggested in Szilard's memorandum. We must admit the possibility, however, that the Russian government will not act, even as a first approximation, the way we would, and that it may have objectives definitely in view which are not susceptible of argument on the assumption of a desire for world peace and a free society. It might therefore be advisable to have a second Russian team which would go to the worst extreme possible, and assume that all the Russian objectives were of the type which we most dislike and most fear.

I have some qualms about the suggestion at the bottom of page five to the effect that the press should be brought into these discussions at the very outset. I would be afraid

that this might result in an avalanche of political or prejudiced outpourings which would handicap the project at the start. I would think that a better procedure would be to carry through the study on a rather confidential basis until it has reached the stage of at least some tentative conclusions and some definitive formulation of arguments. Then might be the time to bring in the press for their reaction and for securing the reaction of the public through them.

Finally, there is another obvious difficulty. In order to bring in people who are best informed it would probably be necessary to call in people who have also been associated as members or advisers of the State Department on these issues, - to say nothing of men who have been associated with the work of the Atomic Energy Commission. On the other hand, it would be extremely difficult for any of these men to operate objectively, if at all, because it would be impossible for them to dissociate themselves with the arguments concerning these same questions in which they may have been involved in their governmental duties. Perhaps I feel rather keenly about this because I have had to write myself out of a number of interesting situations, since leaving the Research and Development Board, simply because I could not divorce myself from the discussions of these questions which I had heard in the War Council and other agencies.

As you may see, therefore, I am very much on the fence as to whether this is a good project or not, and by good I mean a project which can reasonably be expected to produce results commensurate with the cost in time and money. I do think that Szilard has made a very straightforward and skilful presentation of the plan.

Very sincerely yours

Karl Compton
Chairman

HENRY B. CABOT
140 FEDERAL STREET
BOSTON 10, MASS.

May 10th, 1950

Professor Leo Szilard
1155 East 57th Street
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Mr. Szilard:

I sent your memorandum about a settlement with Russia to the following persons: Mr. Albert Pratt, a partner of Paine Webber Jackson & Curtis, an investment firm; Mr. Lloyd Brace, President of the First National Bank of Boston; Mr. Phillips Ketchum, one of our leading lawyers; Judge Raymond Wilkins, a justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts; Mr. Thomas Mahony, another leading lawyer; Mr. James R. Killian, President of Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Mr. Erwin Canham, publisher of the Christian Science Monitor; Mr. Harold Hodgkinson, General Manager of Filene's, one of our largest stores; and Mr. Karl Compton, Chairman of the Board of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. I have written replies from all except Messrs. Brace, Wilkins, Mahony and Canham. Mr. Canham is away in Europe and I haven't heard from him. Mr. Brace told me that he felt that the situation in the world was so serious that any step which might even have a very small chance of improving our relations with Russia should be taken and that he felt that a study such as you suggest was one of them. Mr. Mahony's reactions were very similar to those of Mr. Grenville Clark but, in addition, he felt that your memorandum put too great restrictions on the general point of view of the Russian team. Judge Wilkins was the only person who was unfavorable to the idea. He felt that it would be a good education for those participating in the project but for nobody else. I am enclosing the reports of all the other gentlemen.

My own feeling remains that a general study of the relations between the West and Russia would be beneficial. However, I agree with Mr. Clark that to leave out of consideration world federation is to leave out an essential part of any possible settlement and, as your memorandum stands today, I would not be prepared to go along with it for that reason. I have some other but lesser criticisms. I also judge from the reactions of these gentlemen that the question of raising money will not be easy.

You now have all the evidence in your possession that I have acquired here in Boston. If you and Mr. Brown still wish to come on I would be glad to seek to arrange a meeting with all or some of these gentlemen who I think are representative of the most intelligent sector of our community. I dislike being quite so discouraging to an energetic and resourceful man and one whom I admire, but I assume that you rather have the truth than any fine talk.

Yours sincerely,

Henry B Cabot

HBC:S

P. S. I also enclose a copy of President Killian's speech.

P.P.S. I have kept no copies of the enclosed letters.

As for myself, I know nothing about either of the men, and so am not able to make any independent evaluation.

.....

Very sincerely yours,

Walter Orr Roberts

From: Henry B. Cabot
140 Federal Street
Boston 10, Massachusetts

May 10th, 1950

To: Professor Leo Szilard
1155 East 57th Street
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Dr. Szilard:

I sent your memorandum about a settlement with Russia to the following persons: Mr. Albert Pratt, a partner of Paine Webber Jackson and Curtis, an investment firm; Mr. Lloyd Brace, President of the First National Bank of Boston; Mr. Phillips Ketchum, one of our leading lawyers; Judge Raymond Wilkins, a Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts; Mr. Thomas Mahony, another leading lawyer; Mr. James R. Killian, President of Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Mr. Erwin Canham, publisher of the Christian Science Monitor; Mr. Harold Hodgkinson, General Manager of Filene's, one of our largest stores; and Mr. Karl Compton, Chairman of the Board of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. I have written replies from all except Messrs. Brace, Wilkins, Mahony and Canham. Mr. Canham is away in Europe and I haven't heard from him. Mr. Brace told me that he felt that the situation in the world was so serious that any step which might even have a very small chance of improving our relations with Russia should be taken and that he felt that a study such as you suggest was one of them. Mr. Mahony's reactions were very similar to those of Mr. Grenville Clark but, in addition, he felt that your memorandum put too great restrictions on the general point of view of the Russian team. Judge Wilkins was the only person who was unfavorable to the idea. He felt that it would be a good education for those participating in the project but for nobody else. I am enclosing the reports of all the other gentlemen.

My own feeling remains that a general study of the relations between the West and Russia would be beneficial. However, I agree with Mr. Clark that to leave out of consideration world federation is to leave out an essential part of any possible settlement and, as your memorandum stands today, I would not be prepared to go along with it for that reason. I have some other but lesser criticisms. I also judge from the reactions of these gentlemen that the question of raising money will not be easy.

.....

Yours Sincerely,

Henry B. Cabot

From: Karl Compton
Chairman, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

8.

May 1, 1950

To: Mr. Henry B. Cabot
140 Federal Street
Boston 10, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Cabot:

I have read the memorandum by Professor Szilard which you sent with your letter of April 25, and I am returning it to you with the following comments.

The suggestion is an interesting one, but I find it very difficult to come to any conviction as to whether it would likely work out successfully or not. On the one hand there is obviously a very important point in bringing about public understanding and public consideration of these questions, and there is also the fact that an independent committee of very able citizens might be able to make the suggestion which would break the present impasse. What may be needed might be a new idea or it might be some face-saving mechanism.

If this plan is carried out it would seem to me that a logical extension of its basic idea would be to provide two Russian teams, and not one. The first of these teams might approach the problem from the point of view of Russian self-interest along the lines suggested in Szilard's memorandum. We must admit the possibility, however, that the Russian government will not act, even as a first approximation, the way we would, and that it may have objectives definitely in view which are not susceptible or argument on the assumption of a desire for world peace and a free society. It might therefore be advisable to have a second Russian team which would go to the worst extreme possible, and assume that all the Russian objectives were of the type which we most dislike and most fear.

I have some qualms about the suggestion at the bottom of page five to the effect that the press should be brought into these discussions at the very outset. I would be afraid that this might result in an avalanche of political or prejudiced outpourings which would handicap the project at the start. I would think that a better procedure would be to carry through the study on a rather confidential basis until it has reached the stage of at least some tentative conclusions and some definitive formulation of arguments. Then might be the time to bring in the press for their reaction and for securing the reaction of the public through them.

Finally, there is another obvious difficulty. In order to bring in people who are best informed it would probably be necessary to call in people who have also been associated as members or advisers of the State Department on these issues, - to say nothing of men who have been associated with the work of the Atomic Energy Commission. On the other hand, it would be extremely difficult for any of these men to operate objectively, if at all, because it would be impossible for them to dissociate themselves with the arguments concerning these same questions in which they may have been involved in their governmental duties. Perhaps I feel rather keenly about this because I have had to write myself out of a number of interesting situations, since leaving the Research and Development Board, simply because I could not divorce myself from the discussions of these questions which I had heard in the War Council and other agencies.

Mr. Henry B. Cabot -- Continued

9.

As you may see, therefore, I am very much on the fence as to whether this is a good project or not, and by good I mean a project which can reasonably be expected to produce results commensurate with the cost in time and money. I do think that Szilard has made a very straightforward and skilful presentation of the plan.

Very sincerely yours,

Karl Compton
Chairman

The following is a copy of a letter from Albert Pratt of Paine, Webber, Jackson and Curtis, 24 Federal Street, Boston 10, Massachusetts.

Mr. Henry B. Cabot
140 Federal Street
Boston 10, Massachusetts

April 25, 1950

Dear Harry:

I have read with interest Professor Szilard's memorandum. I think he is overly optimistic of the possible results of his plan. I doubt that such a recommendation of a private commission can ever be accepted by both the American and Russian governments as a basis for negotiations. However, I do believe that his idea has merit as a method of devising possible solutions, provided that the highest calibre brains are employed to work out a new approach entirely unhampered by preconceived ideas.

In this connection I think there is some danger in unduly restricting the "terms of reference" as suggested in Professor Szilard's paragraph four.

I also have some doubt as to his conclusions in paragraph five as to the point of view which the Russian team should adopt. It seems to me that this team must try as best it can to take into the act the Marxian method of thinking of the Russians. Otherwise the procedure will be entirely unrealistic and of no value.

I also doubt the practicality of the press coverage proposed in paragraph three. I don't think that it is the kind of "news" that will be used and there is some doubt in my mind as to whether premature publicity might not destroy the value of anything which the commission is able to work out.

I am returning to you the memorandum as you requested.

Sincerely,

Albie

From: J. R. Killian, Jr.
President, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

10.

To: Mr. Henry B. Cabot
140 Federal Street
Boston 10, Massachusetts

May 8, 1950

Dear Mr. Cabot:

It was good of you to send me a copy of Professor Szilard's letter to Professor Einstein. I return the copy as you requested.

I feel very strongly that we need more public discussion of the whole atomic energy problem, and aparticularly we need to face up to the question of the advisability of a further effort to reach an agreement with Russia. For this reason I am generally in favor of systematic efforts to study the problem. You may be interested in the marked passage in a speech of mine made on the west coast some weeks ago in which I discussed this problem.

I was awfully disappointed that I could not get to the meeting at your house recently.

Yours sincerely,

J. R. Killian, Jr.
President

From: Herrick, Smith, Donald, Farley and Ketcham
1 Federal Street
Boston 10, Massachusetts

April 27, 1950

To: Henry B. Cabot, Esquire
140 Federal Street
Boston, Massachusetts

I received yours of April 24th with the enclosed memorandum of Leo Szilard which I have read with great interest. It raises two questions.

1. Would the Commission which he plans produce a valuable advance in thinking about a possible agreement between Russia and the U.S.A. within which there could be International control of Atomic Energy?

2. Would the money, namely, from \$550,000. to \$1,000,000. for the work of the Commission and the Board be obtainable?

Dealing with the second question first, I think it would be extremely difficult to raise the money unless a few large donors were prepared at the outset to give most of it.

As to whether the Commission would produce a worthwhile idea, I feel unable to have a sound opinion. The chances I should think would not be as favorable as 50-50. Inevitably such a Commission works in a somewhat academic atmosphere and the ability of those representing Russia to really understand the Russian point of view would be subject to considerable doubt. A great deal would depend upon the genius of the members of the Commission working on the two teams. How could one assume a probability that they would be up to the job? I find myself in a haze. I return herewith the memorandum.

Yours sincerely,

Phillip Ketchum

Stringfellow Barr, President
Foundation for World Government
From: Fifty-eight Park Avenue
New York 16, New York

May 5, 1950

To: Mr. Leo Szilard
1155 East 57th Street
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Mr. Szilard:

May I confirm in writing what I told you orally at the Waldorf Saturday, namely, that at a meeting of our trustees on April 28 your application of April 24 was carefully considered. In view of their own present plans and policies they felt unable to go further than a token grant of \$10,000. which I hope may be of some help.

Will you tell me how payment should be made. Is the Emergency Committee willing to accept money from the Foundation? You may recall their public statement that they were not. On the other hand, our trustees would want to make the grant to some tax exempt body.

Cordially yours,

Stringfellow Barr

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

Mr. Henry B. Cabot
140 Federal Street
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Cabot:

I was sorry to have missed you in New York. I went to the Town Hall Club on the chance that you might be able to come; and when you didn't appear, I concluded that you had a conflicting appointment which you said you might have.

Many thanks for your letter of May 10 containing a number of very interesting enclosures. These will be studied more carefully in the next few days jointly with Harrison Brown and Joe Mayer.

My own reaction is that it would probably be very useful to talk to some of these men in Boston. Would you think that the middle of June would be too late to catch them in town?

The problem of raising the money does not worry me very much. If it should turn out that we are not able to raise it, no harm was done. Once we get into the stage of public fund-raising, we will, of course, have to go through with the enterprise, but we do not propose to make any public announcement until we have perhaps \$200,000 privately raised.

Our chief concern at the moment is to get a good Board together, and we shall keep in touch with you on that score.

Yours sincerely,

Leo Szilard

HENRY B. CABOT
140 FEDERAL STREET
BOSTON 10, MASS.

May 19, 1950

Professor Leo Szilard
1155 East 57th Street
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Mr. Szilard:

Thanks for your letter of the 13th. I don't think that a meeting in mid-June would be too late with some of the men to whom I sent your memorandum. Probably I can't get them all. I am afraid a weekend in June would be pretty difficult; on some weekday evening we would probably have more success. If you wish me to try to get them together I hope you will let me have at least a couple of weeks' notice.

Yours sincerely,

Henry B Cabot

HBC:S