

STANFORD UNIVERSITY  
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA

1/27/62

DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS

Dear Prof. Szilard:

I am in general agreement with your proposals, and in the event that you find they have widespread support I would be happy to contribute a significant part of my salary.

I cannot say with any certainty how much further support you could expect in our department, but I think it is a fair guess that 2 or 3 others - out of about 20 regular staff members - would be willing to support the project.

Please let me know if I can be of any help. With very best wishes,  
Sincerely yours, Robert Finn

Washington, D. C.  
March 3, 1962

Professor Robert Finn  
Department of Mathematics  
Stanford University  
Palo Alto, California

Dear Dr. Finn:

The attached letter is meant for you and those others whose names are listed in the memo "The Next Step". I should be very grateful to you for reading the attached letter and the enclosures, and for advising me as soon as possible whether you are willing to serve as an Associate.

I very much hope that you will not disqualify yourself from serving on the Board of Directors of the Council.

Sincerely,

Leo Szilard

Hotel Dupont Plaza  
Washington 6, D. C.  
Telephone: HUDson 3-6000

Enclosures

P.S. I am enclosing the revised and final version of my speech, which will be printed in the April issue of the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists.

LS

1099 Los Robles Ave.,  
Palo Alto, Calif.  
January 14, 1964

Professor Leo Szilard  
Department of Biophysics,  
University of Chicago  
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Professor Szilard:

As you probably know from my correspondence last year with Mr. Forbes, we are not entirely in agreement on the nature of the forces which presently impede progress toward disarmament. This matter has been on my mind for some time, as it seems to me that much of the potentially useful energy of the Council has been diverted into projects on matters which have already been thoroughly analyzed by government officials. To this extent, I have the fear that our Council has been sold a red herring, and that it is in danger of becoming another of the many ineffectual organizations of people who meet to talk of their desire for peace.

I have written a synthesis of my views on the disarmament question, which I have sent as a letter to the New York Times, the Christian Science Monitor, and the Washington Post. I do not know whether it will be accepted by any of these newspapers. Since it seems to me that these views are not generally expressed and that they should be of general interest to scientists, may I ask you to communicate the enclosed modified version for me to the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists? Perhaps it could be published with an appended note pointing out its prior publication (if any).

Needless to say, I don't expect you necessarily to agree with my view on this matter but I do hope you will give it consideration.

With very best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

R. F.

Robert Finn

1099 Loa Robles Ave.,  
Palo Alto, Calif.  
January 6, 1964

Editor, Letters Column,  
New York Times  
New York, N.Y.

Dear Sir:

I think most people will agree that the most urgent single problem facing the world's populations is that of achieving general disarmament of major weapons. The significance of this problem for the course of human events exceeds that of Berlin, or of Viet-Nam, or of any of the other matters which occupy our everyday attention.

Every major government professes its devotion to the principle of eventual disarmament. This is so, for example, of our own government, of the Federal Republic of Germany, and of the Soviet Union. Yet the United States Secretary of Defense recently asserted that our hardened missile strength is several times that of any competitor in this field of endeavor, and added that our advantage will soon be widened by a large factor. With corresponding irony, the Defense Minister of the German Federal Republic anxiously seeks atomic weapons for his newly re-formed Wehrmacht, *while the Soviet Union hastens at great expense to build atomic submarines.* ~~and the Soviet Union proceeds with the construction of atomic submarines.~~

Since everybody wants disarmament, why do actual events proceed in such a different direction? Many Americans believe the reason for this to be Communist perfidy, the ambition of the Soviet Union for world conquest, and the consequent unwillingness of that nation to accept adequate inspection.

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Yet during the past several years the highest representatives of the Soviet Union have repeatedly asserted their willingness to disarm immediately and to accept any form of inspection the Western Alliance might suggest. <sup>Few people seem aware of this proposal, although it has</sup> ~~I have read of that proposal in~~ <sup>been reported by various sources, including major U.S. newspapers.</sup> ~~this newspaper.~~ <sup>^</sup> So far as I know, it has never been accepted as a basis for negotiation, and no counterproposals envisioning a specific timetable for disarmament have been offered.

I have tried to ascertain by private inquiry the reasons for my government's apparent disinterest in a proposal which on superficial reading seemed so well suited to its highest aspirations. The substance of the information sent me was that policy making officials here do not now consider general disarmament as a feasible or even as a desirable objective, the chief reason being a concern over the problems of "...maintaining the peace in a disarmed world."

The readers of this <sup>journal</sup> ~~newspaper~~ may wish to ponder the apparent paradox in this strange justification for perpetuating and intensifying a threat to annihilate civilized life. For my part, I can only conclude that my government fears the decisions that would be taken by populations freed from outside military pressure, and that it seeks to prevent social change and control world destiny unilaterally by threat of violence. Since apparently this need is not shared by the Soviet Union, the inference is plain that our government has implicitly recognized a preference in the minds of the world's population for the Soviet example, and that it feels unable to change

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this preference by peaceful means. <sup>TP</sup> If this description is correct, then it would seem time for Americans to reflect carefully on the forces in our nation which have given rise to such a situation, for no good will come of the present course. One need not dwell on the dangers imposed by the nature of modern weapons. A small part of the money squandered on these devices of dementia would supply many times over the world's basic needs, and it is not in the best American tradition to forfeit such an opportunity to use its wealth for human betterment.

It is possible that I have been misinformed and there are better reasons, beyond our control, which force continuation of present United States military policies. I have tried in vain to learn them.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Finn