

A PROPOSAL BY PROFESSOR LEO SZILARD

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As time goes by there may be an increasing need for a private organization, somewhat similar to RAND, operating in the field of arms control and general disarmament. Such an organization ought to resemble RAND in some respects and differ from it in other respects. It ought to be similar to RAND inasmuch as the organization as such must hold no views and hold no opinions. Each member of the staff or Fellow of the organization may develop his own views and may try to convince others, if he can, of the validity of his views. The organization should differ from RAND, however, in the sense that it shall have no permanent staff members, except perhaps a skeleton administrative staff. Otherwise the staff members or Fellows shall hold temporary positions and should be on loan for one or two years from other organizations, from various universities or research institutions, or wherever else competent men can be found. It is not likely that anyone who would attempt to make a career out of working in the field of arms control and disarmament would prove to be productive for an extended period of time.

While the creation of an organization as indicated above is probably a legitimate long-term objective, it is not proposed to do more for the time

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being than to take the first step towards its eventual creation. This first step is meant to fill an urgent need which may be described as follows:

Most of the men who are working for the government on a full-time basis in the general area of arms control, political settlements, and general disarmament are kept far too busy to be able to think in a relaxed fashion about the issues involved. There are a number of excellent men who are advisers or consultants in these areas and who spend, on the average, about a day a week in Washington. They may make excellent recommendations but their effectiveness is severely limited by their mode of operation. An adviser or a group of advisers may make an excellent recommendation to the Disarmament Administration in State but by the time the objections, say from Defense, come in, they are no longer here to answer these objections and there is no one who can answer them in their place. They may make excellent recommendations but they are not in a position to follow through on their recommendations.

It seems to me that we ought to try to set up an organization that would bring to Washington, for a period stretching from three months to two years, men who are actively thinking in the areas of arms control, political settlements, and general disarmament. Probably this should be done in the form of offering such men a generous fellowship with the sole obligation to reside in Washington while they hold the fellowship. While here, they should be given

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office facilities.

We ought to think in the first instance of bringing to Washington perhaps five people. Of these the first three should be men who are now actively advising one or another agency of the government. By being in Washington they would have an opportunity to follow up on the recommendations which they are making, to make available their services to other government agencies, and to develop further their thinking in their area of interest by talking to others.

No limitation should be placed upon these men by virtue of holding the fellowship to engage freely in conversation with others in general and, in particular, to engage in conversation with Russian colleagues or with members of Congress.

It is envisaged that the group of Fellows, particularly as it gets larger, will more or less automatically develop a certain division of labor. It may be assumed that all of the Fellows may spend most of their time in trying to clarify their own thinking and each other's thinking. Beyond this, however, some of the Fellows may be effective by acting as advisers to one or another agency of the Administration. Others may be effective by keeping in close contact with their Russian colleagues (if it should prove possible to develop such contacts to the point where they become useful) as well as keeping close contact with their colleagues who function as Government advisers. Other Fellows may

be effective by making themselves available to the members of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate and other members of Congress who wish to clarify in their own minds the intricate problems involved in the areas of arms control and disarmament.

It seems to me that the first steps to be undertaken would be as follows:

1. To find an organization or an individual who will undertake to set up the formal organization that is required.
2. To find out whether a promise of \$250,000 might be obtained from one of the foundations or some private individual. This sum would be given to a tax exempt organization either in existence or to be set up de novo, to award five fellowships and to cover the cost of facilities which may be made available to the holders of these fellowships (office expenses and secretarial services).
3. If a promise relating to funds can be obtained, then it would be necessary to explore the possibility of obtaining the services of first class men for a limited period, stretching from three months to one or two years, (before one would proceed with setting up any organization). This could best be done by making a concrete and binding offer to such men,

not separately to individuals but rather to a group of men who are congenial to each other and who would like to be in close touch with each other.

Concerning point (1) I wish to raise the following question: Would it be possible for IDA to set up a separate division to be called the Fellowship Division which would be willing to receive funds from foundations for the purpose described above? A small committee of perhaps five people could be set up, composed of three who would represent IDA and two who would be drawn from the outside. This committee would make recommendations to IDA concerning awards of fellowships. For one or two years perhaps this Fellowship Division could operate on a budget of \$250,000 per year and concentrate mainly on making consultants of the government more effective by bringing them to Washington, where they would be in touch with others who are interested in the same issues. After perhaps two years this division of IDA could be split off and become an independent organization concerned with arms control and disarmament and operating on a larger scale.

It seems to me that it would be desirable to have from the outset a group which is not exclusively composed of those who have advisory relationships with the government of long standing but rather a mixed group so as to reduce the drawback of inbreeding.

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Those who are at present advising the government have of course clearance, but I do not believe that holding a fellowship per se should be tied to clearance. If part of the group is cleared and part is not this makes it somewhat inconvenient to hold group discussions or to organize efficiently office facilities for the group, but I believe that these inconveniences ought to be accepted. My reason for this belief is the conviction that as time goes by there will be more and more need to have free-wheeling conversations with the Russians and others, and for those who engage in such conversations it would be a serious burden to be in possession of classified information. I know from my own experience, that in discussion in groups composed of both Americans and Russians it is of advantage if at least some of the Americans are not in possession of classified information and thus are in a position to say things which their colleagues, who are in possession of classified information, are not free to say.

If IDA were willing to set up a division for fellowships and apply to foundations for funds it would be necessary to designate someone representing IDA to be responsible for carrying out this function. It would also be necessary to designate someone to be responsible for housekeeping arrangements for the fellowship division.