

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

DATE September 13, 1945

TO Mr. Leo Szilard

DEPARTMENT Faculty Exchange

FROM Robert Redfield

DEPARTMENT Division of the Social Sciences

IN RE:

Please call at my office at some time Wednesday morning for your card of admission to the Conference beginning at two o'clock that day. I hope you will take lunch with some of us at twelve-thirty Wednesday in Judson Court.

RR:y



Richard

December 9, 1946

AIR MAIL

FIRST CORRECTED VERSION

Mr. Robert Redfield
Hotel Reforma
Mexico City, Mexico

Dear Mr. Redfield:

meeting this
Since the ~~conference~~ in December will have no agenda drawn up in advance, it might be perhaps useful to write down a number of questions which appear to be pertinent and which the group might wish to discuss. // Different persons will, of course, consider as pertinent different questions if they interpret differently the situation which confronts us at present. //

I shall ~~try~~ *try* therefore, to state as clearly as I can my own interpretation of the situation *and to state* the particular questions *which follow from it.* // Perhaps some of the others who are going to participate in the conference would be willing similarly to state ~~their~~ *their* interpretation and the questions which they think the group ought to discuss. //

leading up to
Most of us physicists who were associated with the ~~atomic bomb~~ *work* ~~the~~ atomic bomb tend to take a rather serious view of the present world situation. // We are inclined to believe that Nagasaki-type bombs can be produced in ~~very~~ large quantities, and we believe that the United States would be in a ~~very~~ dangerous position in case of war, if large stockpiles of such bombs were available and could be used

against ^{her} ~~the~~, say five or ten years from now. / Moreover, when we think of a war that may come ten to fifteen years from now we do not think of it in terms of Nagasaki-type bombs. / From our vantage point, it is now gradually becoming visible what kind of a war we may have to expect if we have a late rather than an early war ~~in~~ ^{and} in our minds such a war takes on more and more the shape of a catastrophe for which there is no precedent in ^{the} ~~history~~ ^{of mankind}. Some of my friends have become ^{almost} ~~quite~~ reconciled to the thought that our cities may be destroyed in five to ten years by Nagasaki-type bombs. / But they are not reconciled to the thought of a war, which may be fought with weapons based on the further developments in the field of atomic energy, ^{of atomic weapons} (some fifteen years from now). It is these remote possibilities as much as the ^{potential possibilities} ~~potentialities~~ of the present type bombs which move ~~some of us~~ ~~to try~~ ~~hard~~ to understand what is going on at present in the world and to try to find out just how much chance we may have for arriving at a permanent solution ~~of~~ the problem of peace without first going through another war. /

To me, it seems that if we want to explain what is going on ^{in the world} at present on the basis of some simple formula, we may say the following: / The United States and Russia are at present the two most important military powers. / As long as war between them is a potential possibility, both of their Governments will strive, ~~in peace time~~, to be in a position to win that war, if it should come. /

Clearly, the problem so stated is not capable of a solution ^{which is} satisfactory to both parties. ^{But} ~~The~~ desire to be militarily as strong

as possible in case of war ~~is~~ ^{ought to be} not the only consideration ~~to~~ to guide the United States in her relations with Russia and other nations. / In determining our national policy, the desire to avoid war ought to play as important a part as the desire to win the war if ~~it~~ ^{war} should prove to be unavoidable. /

We may try to analyze ^{the} present relations of the United States and Russia in these terms, and we may inquire what kind of a balance their actual policy strikes between the wish of having ^{their} ~~our~~ relative strength with respect to each other as great as possible ~~in the case of~~ and the wish to avoid war as far as possible. ~~in the case of~~ /

The more Russia and the United States allow their policy to be guided by the wish to be militarily as strong as possible, the more rigidly ~~their~~ their course of action will be determined and the less freedom of action will they retain for working towards a stable peace. / ~~one has the impression that~~ ^{apparently} during the past year the foreign policies of both Russia and the United States were largely guided by considerations of maximum relative military strength. / The United States and Russia ~~were~~ ^{are now} caught in a sort of vicious circle and the first question is, whether it is possible for them to break out of this circle. /

The United Nations Atomic Energy Commission is considering the control of atomic bombs. / But is it likely that within the narrow terms of reference of that Commission an agreement can be formulated that will prove acceptable to both Russia and the United States? /

- (1) Just how does the presence or absence of atomic bombs affect the relative

power of these two countries?

To me it seems that if atomic bombs were stockpiled on a large scale, both in this country and in Russia, they would bring about a considerable shift ^{from the present relation of} ~~in the~~ power of these two countries, ^{and that this shift of} ~~in~~ favor of Russia. / Assuming that Russia is aware of this, is she likely to agree to an effective elimination of atomic bombs without obtaining ^{adequate compensation?} ~~an agreement on the reduction of other~~ ^{she might ~~use~~ a general reduction} armaments which would make it as impossible for the United States to wage ~~the~~ war within the boundaries of Europe ^{and} ~~or~~ Asia as the absence of atomic bombs would make it impossible for Russia to wage war within the boundaries of the American continent. ~~It is likely that a general agreement on disarmament will actually be reached on this basis?~~

(2) If the Russians thought that in the absence of an agreement on control of atomic energy, the United States would be likely to start a preventive war, they might perhaps accept terms which they would otherwise not consider ^{wise} in their interest to accept. / But does Russia believe that the United States will go to war on the single issue of the control of atomic energy?

(3) In the absence of ^{such} ~~an agreement on the control of atomic energy~~ the greatest danger for us might lie in following the course of least resistance and seeking security in military preparedness. / If we were unable to think of anything better, we would have to accept such a program as a stop-gap. / But what would a policy of preparedness involve in the long-run, if we expect Russia to have large stockpiles of atomic

bombs of the type which was used at Nagasaki?

(4)

And what would be our position in ten or fifteen years when the danger to our population may shift from bombs which destroy cities by the blast which they cause to bombs which may affect the population directly by means of the radioactivity which they disperse?

Whenever one talks to groups who may be regarded as samples of informed opinion, one finds almost unanimous agreement on the view that permanent peace cannot be established without a world government. But agreement on this point does not appear to have much practical significance because these same groups will be split on the question along what path that ultimate goal can be approached and not only approached but also reached in time to avert another world war.

Since our desire for security is the main reason for wishing to set up a world government, it may be logical to propose that we set up at once a limited world government that would deal only with the problem of security and the settlement of conflicts between nations ~~and~~ ^{but} would have practically unlimited authority within ~~this~~ narrow scope. Logical though this may seem, I wonder whether such a frontal attack on the problem of security is a promising approach and whether it is at all possible to achieve security by pursuing security.

But however that may be, I would like to propose that in discussing possible courses for our national policy, we should recognize two fundamental limitations under which ~~we~~ ^{we} most likely will have to operate and make progress for a number of years. I believe we should

recognize that Russia and the United States will not both be willing to delegate at an early date far-reaching law making powers to any international authority. / And we should recognize that it will not be possible to set up at an early date either an international army or an international police organization which could effectively restrain from illegal action such giants as Russia or the United States, ~~either by waging war on them or by arresting their responsible statesmen.~~

If we accept these limitations for purposes of discussion and if we assume that with luck it may be possible to arrive at some far-reaching agreement on disarmament and control of atomic energy, we would ^{then} have to consider such agreements as voluntary arrangements rather than enforceable obligations. / Such arrangements will be maintained only as long as each of the major powers (two to five), have a stronger incentive for keeping the arrangements alive than for abrogating them. /

To me it seems that
a state of disarmament of this type can be stable only within the framework of a world community. / Only within the framework of a world community in which security is but one of a number of desires which have attained some measure of satisfaction, could disarmament be maintained long enough to give the world a chance of arriving at a permanent solution of the problem of peace. / *without war*

Perhaps if the United States were to take the lead and if she were willing to mobilize her material resources for this purpose, a world community might become a reality fast enough to enable us to pass, without an "accident", through the transition period. /

Q (5) The creation of a world community would involve the setting up of a number of world agencies and perhaps also some world agency which would coordinate their activities. What should the function of these agencies be and what should be their scope and scale of operation if we wish them to become the skeleton of something that might in time be developed into a genuine world government? It seems to me that we ought to try hard to find an answer to this question.

There are a number of international agencies in existence today and it might be possible to add new ones to their number and increase the scale of their operations in the hope that we may thus move towards the establishment of a world community. But to me, it seems very likely that if progress were attempted on such a piecemeal basis and without having put the problem squarely before the American people, the attempt would be resisted. It would be resisted and with a few exceptions, defeated. The exceptions would be those measures which the Government may propose as instruments of American foreign policy in the narrow sense of the word. To me, it seems that the hope of smuggling 130 million people of this country through the gates of Paradise while all of them happen to look the other way is a futile hope. ~~and that~~ Only a full understanding of what is being attempted would have some chance of success, small though that chance may be.

The first question ought to be, of course, is this a desirable goal at all? Within the framework of a comprehensive program of this sort in which Russia would participate, Russia might receive, on the

basis of objective needs and available resources, goods in values of perhaps five billion dollars per year. / She might receive help in the reconstruction of Byelo-Russian and the Ukraine which has been devastated by war. / And she might receive help in her endeavor to raise the standard of living of her people by building up a consumers goods

Q (6) industry. / Should we be willing to take the risk of helping the Russian peasants in Byelo-Russia and the Ukraine, even though we cannot be certain that these same peasants will be Russian soldiers fighting against us in the next war? / Before we make this decision we ought to examine whether our chances for winning a war against Russia, say ten

X
aid in the interim period (in the amount of several billion dollars per year.) / And we should also try to forecast, if possible, how Russia would respond to a sincere effort on our part to build up a world

Q (7) community and to mobilise our material resources for that purpose. / Is it possible to make such a forecast? / Can we understand the actions of the Russians during the past year on the basis that they think war with the United States is a potential possibility and therefore want to be in the most favorable military position in case of such a war? / Or are the actions of the Russians motivated in a way similar to those of the Nazis in the years from 1934 to 1939?

Q (8) On the basis of what evidence are we going to decide this question? / Is there any way to organize or stimulate studies of Russia which will furnish really adequate evidence?

Clearly, if we believe that the Nazi analogy applies to Russia, then war would appear to be almost inevitable and the question of a preventive war should ^{not} be dismissed without ^{being} serious consideration. /

If, on the other hand, we think that Russia might favorably respond to a sincere effort on our part ^{and if we are in favour of} to build up a world community which takes into consideration the special needs and difficulties of other nations, including those of Russia, then the question arises, how a national policy could be developed in the United States along these lines. /

Q

(9) ^{Some new} Should we think in terms of bi-partisan political action groups /

which might engage in a crusade in the hope of influencing the 1948 elections? Or is the question of establishing a world community so intimately tied up with the question of creating full employment ~~within~~ ⁱⁿ

Q

(10) method for achieving ^{full employment} can bring the question of a world community appreciably nearer to its solution? Should we then think in terms of

a rejuvenated Democratic Party fighting for a new New Deal which would have the courage of its convictions and ~~fight~~ ^{fight} for the establishment of a world community which would fit in with such an economic program? ^{which would also fight}

Q

(11) Or should we perhaps not think in terms of direct political action at all, but rather think in terms of the education of the general public?

Q

(12) And should we think of educating the masses directly or should we rather think of an approach such as described by H. G. Wells, in "The Open

They

Conspiracy"? It is possible to create a conspiracy of ~~by~~ enlightened

individuals who are
clearly able to think up solutions to the problem and
capable of doing something about them?

Clearly, it would be possible to go on raising ^{questions} further, but perhaps it might be just as well to wait until the answers begin to be forthcoming.

Very sincerely yours,

Leo Szilard

new to be Princeton special
Look up Russ. etres
T. Miller! Disposal of the

Amstetter list

Temp 6/18

perhaps it might be just as well to wait until the answers begin to

Very sincerely yours,

Leo Salzman

(Amstetter)

Carles
Rubinowitz
Quinn
Morse
Ammerich

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

DATE December 5, 1951

To Professor Leo Szilard

DEPARTMENT Biophysics

FROM Robert Redfield

DEPARTMENT Anthropology

IN RE:

Have you met and have you formed some impression of Mischa Cotlar, visiting mathematician from Argentina? He has talked to me about possible North American connections for a group of exiled Argentinian scientists.

RM

RR:zl

December 7, 1951

Professor Robert Redfield

Anthropology

Leo Szilard

Institute of Radiobiology and
Biophysics

Your note concerning Mischa Cotlar.

I have not met him and do not know anything about him.

Best regards,

LS/sds

January 4, 1952

Professor Robert Redfield
Department of Anthropology
University of Chicago
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Mr. Redfield:

I have read the enclosed memorandum and gained the impression of a very sincere and well intentioned effort, but I can't persuade myself that it would be of any practical value. I am inclined to doubt that a project which has to move with such extreme caution and slowness can amount to anything that is politically effective. I should, however, be pleased to meet Mr. Cotlar if you care to arrange for such a meeting.

With kind regards,

Sincerely,

Leo Szilard

LS/sds
Enclosure