

RAYMOND H. WITTCOFF

2301 Madison St.
St. Louis 6, Mo.
February 8, 1955

Dr. Leo Szilard
Kings Crown Hotel
420 West 116th Street
New York City, N. Y.

Dear Leo:

It was good to hear from you, but distressing to learn of the trouble you have been having.

You complain that you are suffering from "double vision", and then you enclose the copy of your letter to the editor of the New York Times which proves that you can see twice as far as anyone else. The letter is excellent. You have said precisely what needs to be said at this critical moment. I was glad to note that the Times published it Sunday. Will you let me know if it brings any significant response?

The Formosa crisis is forcing another wild flurry of activity by diplomats who persist in attacking symptoms rather than causes. The danger is that the futility in talking about the surface issues may cause the world to conclude that there is a futility in talking and the basic issues may never be discussed. The disease of world anarchy is like a systemic blood disease that causes painful skin eruptions at remote parts of the body. Impatience with the contrivances of the medicine men who try vainly to palliate the most recent irritating sore makes us vulnerable to the quackery of those who would abandon us to the violence of surgery. The logic that calls for the extirpation of the part leads inexorably to the mutilation of the whole.

Incidentally, did you read the text of MacArthur's Los Angeles speech? Have you met him?

I am sorry that I did not know that you were on the west coast. Perhaps it would have been possible to meet there. I had a speaking engagement in San Francisco at the end of December and then visited with our friends in Pasadena.

Enjoyed reading Laura Fermi's book. The book that is needed is one that only you will be able to write. But I am not sure that this is the time for you to do it because I have the feeling that there are yet to come some exciting chapters for you to enact, and then write about.

The University of Chicago
Chicago 37, Illinois

King's Crown Hotel
420 West 116th Street
New York, New York

March 18, 1955

Mr. Raymond H. Wittcoff
2301 Madison Street
St. Louis 6, Missouri

Dear Ray:

I am somewhat overwhelmed by the response which I got to the Letter to the Editor that appeared in the New York Times on February 6, and it has put me somewhat on the spot. Having appealed to others to do something, now others appeal to me to do something. I believe that I now have to try to set up a project that may have some chance of success, or else show that I cannot do it.

The attached clipping is taken from the Denver Post which reprinted the Letter from the New York Times. Clipped to it is a Memorandum in which I have outlined what I might try to do, if the necessary funds can be obtained. Enclosed are also answers from Marshall MacDuffie, Colin Clark, and Father John Cavanaugh whom I have asked whether they might be willing to serve on the Commission which is described in the Memorandum. I have not yet heard from Colonel Faymonville and Stringfellow Barr, but I had a favorable response from General Hugh B. Hester with whom I talked over the telephone.

It would be my hope that General Hester would act as Secretary of the Commission, if we succeed in setting up the project.

I do not anticipate any difficulty in finding a University or another tax-exempt institution to accept the administration of the funds, if funds can be obtained. However, I am quite skeptical about obtaining funds from the large, old established Foundations for such an unconventional project, and I do not believe that a more conventional approach could bring about the desired result.

The University of Chicago
Chicago 27, Illinois

In the circumstances, I would appreciate if you would look around among your friends and see if any of them might be sufficiently interested to want to discuss this matter in greater detail.

I expect to be back at my New York address after March 21st, or March 25th at the latest.

Mr. Raymond H. Wittcoff
2001 Broadway
St. Louis 6, Missouri

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Leo Szilard

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Enclosures

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LEO SZILARD AND A N SPANEL, INTERNATIONAL LATEX CORP:

=EMPIRE STATE BLDG NYK=

MOTHER PASSED AWAY LAST NIGHT I WANT TO THANK BOTH OF
YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART FOR ALL YOUR KINDNESS
DURING OUR ORDEAL:

=RAY WITTCOFF=

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~~to~~ world

Mr. Wittcoff
on this.