

December 20, 1932

Dear Professor Jamieson:

I do not know how to thank you sufficiently for the painstaking letter which you wrote me under date of December 8. I should have written you before but for the fact that I was called out of town at once and have just returned. I shall make it my business during the current year to get in touch with the various persons whom you mention. The probabilities are that another year will elapse before we can attack economics and history. The Board is disposed to keep a very wide margin between its expenditures and its income until the financial situation is clearer.

I hope very much that your general health will continue to improve, and I look forward to seeing you on every possible occasion.

With all good wishes and very high regard,

Sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor J. F. Jamieson  
Library of Congress  
Division of Manuscripts  
Washington, D. C.

AF:ESB

*C. R. Spencer*

December 13, 1932

Dear Mr. Spencer:

Thank you for your very kind note and for the memorandum which I have received this morning. I shall read the memorandum over the week-end and will be ready to talk with you on the subject at your convenience. Perhaps we may arrange to lunch together in the near future. Call my secretary (Ashland 4-3775) and she will make the appointment, if that proves to be the most convenient hour in the day for you.

I need not say how happy I should be if I could be of service to you.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Mr. C. R. Spencer  
The Hotel Tudor  
304 East 42nd Street  
New York, N.Y.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
DIVISION OF MANUSCRIPTS

December 8, 1932.

Dr. Abraham Flexner,  
100 East 42nd Street,  
New York City.

Dear Flexner:

When once before I wrote concerning persons I had only the younger element in mind. Now that I know, from our recent talk, that you are equally content to consider men of more mature years, the field of suggestion is broadened. The older men have this advantage, that they have already proved that they can do the things, or some of the things, that you have in mind, whereas in the case of <sup>the</sup> younger, one has to form his estimate of what they are likely to be able to do as they develop. On the other hand, the older men are often more embedded in a particular institution, from which it may be difficult to detach them. I think, however, of the following as possibilities. I will mention them in a geographical order, rather than in any other.

Samuel Morison (aet. 45) is a man of very great ability, with <sup>a</sup> very large and accurate knowledge of American history -- but indeed I would not mention anyone who had not that knowledge, so it can be taken for granted in the case of all those I mention. Their favorite fields of interest are various, and of course each one's knowledge of American history is fuller in some lines than in others. Morison is so able and executive that I should not be at all surprised if they asked him to be Lowell's successor. He has

Dr. Abraham Flexner.

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a rapid clear mind, a practical incisive way of going at everything, much facility of expression, cultivated ways (a little too Bostonian for some people's taste), but much good feeling. He is a very good planner, as may be seen by his present conduct of the <sup>tercentenary</sup> ~~department~~ of history of Harvard. One could judge of him by his Oxford History of the United States, or perhaps still better, for your purposes, from his survey of the development of history at Harvard in the last fifty years, already published, I think (at any rate I have read it in print) in the fourth volume of his Harvard History.

Arthur M. Schlesinger (aet. 44) of Harvard is also an excellent planner. He is mainly responsible for the text, and in some degree, perhaps mainly, for the outlines of that little book on historical research in the United States which I sent you, lately published by the American Historical Association. He may also be judged by his New Viewpoints in American History. He is more philosophic than most of the workers in American history, or, more broadly, has more contacts with the allied disciplines, for others that we all ought to know about. He has been for a number of years the principal representative of the American Historical Association in the Social Science Research Council, and is in touch with those sorts of people and of interests. He is an energetic and forcible man, and, not being originally a Harvard product, is more aware of the existence of regions and persons west of New England than is common among Cambridge folk.

Charles R. Lingley (aet. 55) of Dartmouth ought probably also to be mentioned. I do not know him quite as well as the others I have mentioned. I do not know much about him as a planner of researches by others, but I



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do know that he has a remarkably good head for the history of the last fifty years (on which I think he has published one book) and for insight into our politics generally; also that he has so much executive capacity that he has lately been occupied as dean of freshmen, to a degree that much interrupts his historical teaching and work.

Evarts B. Greene (aet. 62) I think you know quite well. My own impression is that, on the whole, he is the wisest of us who are occupied with American history. As I said to you, his modesty and quietness of manner, and his abundant goodness (for he is really a saint), may easily at first obscure the fact that he is a man of extraordinary efficiency in executive business, energetic, rapid, clearheaded, practical, and tactful. He is a devoted trainer of young men, and an excellent planner, with very secure judgment.

Dexter Perkins (aet. 49) of the University of Rochester has been, for a half a dozen years past, a very efficient secretary of the American Historical Association, and has shown himself resourceful in planning, good in judgment, and effective in the dispatch of business. His position has given him many contacts, and he knows exceptionally well what is going on in the way of historical research, and who the persons are. He has produced one volume of a standard work on the history of the Monroe Doctrine.

Samuel F. Bemis (aet. 41) of the George Washington University is one of the ablest men I have known in the business of American history, exceedingly active in research, sure always to be a productive scholar, and a good director of the work of others. His special line is American diplo-

Dr. Abraham Flexner.

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matic history. His two books on the Jay Treaty and the Pinckney Treaty show remarkable insight in that subject, and he is slowly preparing a large book, three or four volumes, on that subject. He deserves a better position than he now has, but is held here by the indispensable riches of Washington for his subject. He is a very energetic and forcible man, less cultivated than Morison or Greene, but gets on well with people and is well liked. His organization, in eight or nine different European countries, of the Library's work of getting photostats of materials for American history in foreign archives at the rate of \$100,000 a year (of which he had charge for the first two years), was rather a ~~mark~~<sup>model</sup> of effective planning and administration.

Lastly, there is Frederic L. Paxson (aet. 55) who for about twenty years has been one of the two chief pillars of the rather remarkable department of history in the University of Wisconsin, but has just gone out to the University of California. I have heard, I do not know how truly, that, for reasons that cast no reflection on Berkeley, before he left Madison, he rather repented of the consent to migrate. If so, he may be more detachable than these others. If so, he is very much a man to be considered, able and vigorous, prone to look forward, with a quick and clear mind and much practical sagacity. I think he would do exceedingly well the kind of work you have in mind. We have found him useful in a very high degree in the Committee of Management of the Dictionary of American Biography, and his career at Madison was one of distinguished usefulness.

While I think that any<sup>of</sup> those that I have named has the right quali-

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ties for the sort of work you have in mind, other people, who might know some among them better than I and have more penetration, may be able to talk more usefully about their varying degrees of adaptation.

I cannot close without saying once more, though at the risk of boring you, that to establish your Department of Historical Research elsewhere than in Washington is to place it from the beginning at a distinct disadvantage. Twenty-seven years of contact with the Library of Congress and especially the contacts of the last four years, have shown me in the most impressive way how much superior its resources in printed books in American history are to those of any other library, and beside that, there are the immense advantages presented by the archives of the various departments and the prodigious collection of historical material in the Division of Manuscripts of the Library. I send a pamphlet which will give you a better notion of this last matter than has been available until this present year. Also, a point not to be neglected, he who works at American history in Washington has many opportunities of illuminating contacts with the government business and those who carry it on. when in other places I am often struck with the imperfection of intelligent men's understanding of how things really go in the national capital.

I am, you see, assuming that the work of your historical department will lie in the field of American history. If I thought its proper business would be the producing of monographs of general history, I suppose I should not thus confine it, for there are many ways in which American remoteness and detachment from European conflicts gives American historians a valuable

x Next para. but one.

Dr. Abraham Flexner.

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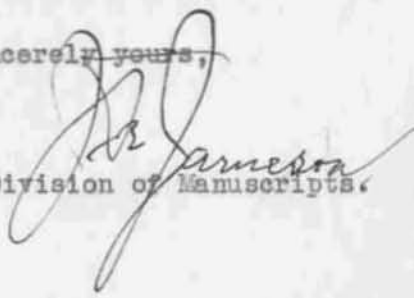
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advantage in the treatment of European history. But, I take it, we agree that the task of your historical department will be work on or related to original sources. That sort of thing, for European history, is better done by the Europeans, can be done by Americans only with the disadvantages attendant on three thousand miles of remoteness. If then your workers are to work upon the sources of American history, had they not better work where those sources are most copiously to be found?

Another consideration, of some importance, is that, for the very reason that the materials for American history are here in so enormously greater amount than anywhere else, Washington is a place of most frequent resort for historical scholars, and therefore he who should be in charge of a department of historical research in Washington would be in frequent contact with a large and varied assortment of historical scholars from about the country, whereas if he were in Princeton his contacts would be mostly with the historical faculty of Princeton University alone, some very good men, some not so good, but anyhow just one set.

With every good wish, I am,

Sincerely yours,

  
Chief, Division of Manuscripts.

JFJ:LB

November 5, 1932

Dear Professor Schumpeter:

I was very greatly pleased to hear from you and I appreciate very deeply your desire to see me again. I can assure you that this desire is fully reciprocated. Should I be going to Boston, you may be very certain that I will see you and Professor Taussig. Meanwhile, if you intend to come to New York, won't you be good enough to let me know in order that I may have the pleasure of having you lunch or dine with me?

You have had a copy of the first bulletin issued by The Institute for Advanced Study. I am enclosing a copy of the only additional announcement that has been made and, indeed, beyond this announcement, nothing has been done. I hope during the current year to add two or three mathematicians of outstanding importance to the two we have already secured. After that, I shall turn my attention to the School of Economics, regarding which I have had interviews with both you and Professor Taussig.

May I ask you to remember me warmly to Professor Taussig, and believe me

Always sincerely,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Joseph A. Schumpeter  
Department of Economics

Harvard University  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

Schumpeter

2 Scott Street  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS  
November 3, 1932

Dr. Abraham Flexner  
Institute for Advanced Study  
100 East 42nd Street  
New York City

Dear Dr. Flexner:

This is to let you know that I am again in this country and quite immersed in my work at Harvard. I have heard little but still something about the progress of the work of organization of your Institute and am very sorry indeed that its home is not to be near here, for it is difficult for me to express adequately the interest I feel in the development of what I consider one of the most interesting things ever undertaken within the field of scientific organization.

If you should pass through Boston I should be very grateful indeed to have the opportunity of seeing you again. I am living with my friend Taussig at 2 Scott Street, Cambridge, and shall probably come to New York very rarely as I want badly to finish a book which has been weighing on me for years else I should have tried already to look you up.

Very sincerely yours,

  
Joseph A. Schumpeter

Toynbee

November 3, 1932

My dear Toynbee:

Many thanks for your kind note of congratulation.

I think you are quite right that Einstein is absolutely unspoiled. While I naturally feel gratified that he has decided to cast his lot with us, I am more pleased on his account than our own, for now for the first time in his life he possesses the tranquility and security which should be assured to intellectual eminence. What fools we are to make Generals and Admirals secure - and their families too - and leave our Einsteins to plug away from year to year without knowing where they are.

We have not forgotten your engagement with us for next summer.

Mrs. Flexner joins me in all good wishes to you and your wife, and the boys.

Ever sincerely,

**ABRAHAM FLEXNER**

Arnold J. Toynbee, Esq.  
3, Melina Place  
St. John's Wood, N.W.8  
London, England

AF/d



Hale

CARNEGIE INSTITUTION OF WASHINGTON  
MOUNT WILSON OBSERVATORY  
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

September 7, 1932

Dr. Abraham Flexner  
Director, Institute for Advanced Study  
100 East 42nd Street  
New York.

Dear Dr. Flexner:

I am very glad to receive your letter from Canada, and wish to congratulate you on your arrangement with Professor Einstein. It is a matter of the highest importance to science that he be guaranteed complete peace of mind and security for the future. You have not only accomplished this but you have also assured that his personal influence will continue to be felt in this country, where it is greatly needed. The Institute for Advanced Study has already justified its foundation.

I trust that when you are able to consult the Board of Trustees of the Institute you will all agree that some such plan as I suggested seems desirable. I have not written to Professor Einstein on the subject, but when I last saw him in Pasadena he expressed a strong desire to return here. Certainly we can afford him a contact with mathematical, physical, chemical and astrophysical research which has proved useful in the past and cannot fail to be more so in the future. My belief is that this can be done in such a way as to accord fully with the plans of your Institute, and it is in this spirit that we hope for your cooperation.

Believe me, with kindest regards

Magnetawan, via Burks Falls  
Ontario, Canada  
August 30, 1932

Dear Professor Hale:

I was very happy indeed to receive your letter of August 22, which I have read and re-read most carefully. I am glad that Dr. Millikan showed you my letter, despite its confidential nature, for there could be nothing but the most candid relationship between you and him and me.

You are quite right in saying that you and I cherish precisely the same ideals, and, as my letter to Professor Millikan shows, I am the last person to wish to see the standing or influence of the California Institute impaired in the slightest degree. On the other hand, I was profoundly impressed, while I was abroad, by the serious disadvantages under which Professor Einstein and his family are laboring. His appointment to the Institute for Advanced Study was the natural outcome of this concern, and he himself greeted it with an enormous sense of relief. It would, I think, be a mistake for me now to make any pledges or undertaking respecting the future. The Institute for Advanced Study itself must be first stabilized. I insisted from the outset that the Board of Trustees should be so organized as to diminish and limit the authority of the director. For that reason a number of scientists were put upon the Board, and members of the faculty will also be appointed. You will see therefore that it is impossible for me to accept your suggestion without prior conference with the Board and without prior conference with Professor Einstein, and I hope very much that no pressure may be put upon him so as to make him

Professor Hale

August 30, 1932

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uncomfortable. He has earned peace of mind and opportunity to follow what he regards as the course best calculated to serve his own purposes.

Dr. Millikan told me that he would be in the East during the winter. That will give us an opportunity to discuss the matter further.

Meanwhile, with all good wishes, believe me

Most sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Dr. George E. Hale  
Mount Wilson Observatory  
Pasadena, California

AF:ESB

RECEIVED  
SEP 1 1932  
INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF SCIENTIFIC UNIONS.

(CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES UNIONS SCIENTIFIQUES.)

PERMANENT DOMICILE: BRUSSELS.

GENERAL SECRETARIAT: LONDON.

**Executive Committee:**

DR. GEORGE E. HALE, President.

GENERAL G. FERRIÉ } Vice-Presidents.

DR. N. E. NÖRLUND }

DR. P. PELSENEER } Members.

PROF. F. A. F. C. WENT }

SIR HENRY LYONS, General Secretary.

*Together with two representatives of each International Union.*

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF SCIENTIFIC UNIONS,

c/o THE ROYAL SOCIETY,

BURLINGTON HOUSE,

LONDON, W.1.

Mount Wilson Observatory

Pasadena, California

August 22, 1932

Dr. Abraham Flexner  
150 East 72nd Street  
New York.

Dear Dr. Flexner:

As Dr. Millikan has shown me (confidentially) his correspondence with you regarding Professor Einstein, I am sure you will not object if I write you on the same subject. I do not hesitate to do so because I think you will agree that your opinions and my own regarding the best means of developing advanced education and research are very closely in accord.

For forty years I have been deeply interested in cooperative research, and have had many opportunities to assist in local, national, and international undertakings. These include the organization of the Astrophysical Journal, with an international list of editors and contributors, in 1895; the Yerkes Observatory, with many visiting research associates, about the same time; the Mount Wilson Observatory and the International Union for Cooperation in Solar Research, in 1904; service for eleven years as Foreign Secretary of the National Academy of Sciences; the organization of the National Research Council in 1916 and the International Research Council (now called the International Council of Scientific Unions, including representatives of 41 countries and comprising such constituent bodies as the International Unions of Astronomy, Chemistry, Geophysics, etc.) in 1918.

I trust that as the result of this experience, and of the intimate relations established here between the Mount Wilson Observatory, the California Institute and the Huntington Library, all of which follow the same plan of arranging for active cooperation with leading investigators of many countries, that I may be in a position to discuss the Einstein problem in a non-partisan spirit. At any rate, I shall endeavor to approach it, not merely from the standpoint of Pasadena institutions, but in the same manner in which

Dr. Abraham Flexner

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August 22, 1932

our International Council deals with a great variety of questions calling for the most effective methods of cooperation we can devise.

As you doubtless realize, my own feeling, like yours, is that the chief need of American educational institutions is quality rather than quantity. Whatever the demand for mass education, we may be sure that it will be met by the presidents of scores of universities. Their arguments to donors or state voters or to the average trustee make a ready appeal, while ours are less easily understood. For this reason, after all the years we have spent in building up the California Institute, we cannot help being anxious about its future. With the aid of an exceptional board of trustees, we are now doing everything in our power to make certain that scientists of such calibre as Millikan, Noyes and Morgan will ultimately be succeeded by men of similar qualities, able to exercise as favorable an influence upon future trustees. This influence is exerted, as you know, by our plan of discussing the Institute's policy in an Executive Council of eight members, on which faculty and trustees are equally represented. In view of the present membership of this Council, we must neglect no opportunity to perpetuate our high standards, and the periodical visits of Einstein afford the best possible means of accomplishing this purpose. This is because his appeal is not only to our faculty and trustees, but extends to the large group of California Institute Associates and to the wider public on which we must depend for financial assistance. If our means had permitted, we should have consummated before now a permanent arrangement with Einstein. But funds were lacking, and this difficulty still exists.

Two other reasons also underlie our desire to continue our relations with Einstein, say on a basis of one visit here every other year. The first of these is that his work with the Mount Wilson staff is fully as important as his cooperation with the faculty of the Institute, and the need of this contact with our astronomers is constantly increasing. Its effect is shown, not only in the great stimulation of the Observatory's work but in its influence on Einstein's own thinking. It is not a question of waiting for the successful completion of the 200-inch telescope project, now assured by the remarkable progress in making large mirror discs accomplished during the last few weeks. As a fundamental part of this project we have been improving auxiliary apparatus (spectrographs, photo-electric devices, etc.) for use with the 200-inch telescope, and in this way we have already doubled the space-penetrating power of the 100-inch reflector. The end is not yet in sight, as several new auxiliary instruments now under construction indicate. By these means, the observations proving the expansion of the universe, a phenomenon appealing in the highest degree to Einstein, have already been obtained. We have every reason to believe that other observations, no less vital to him, will follow.

Dr. Abraham Flexner

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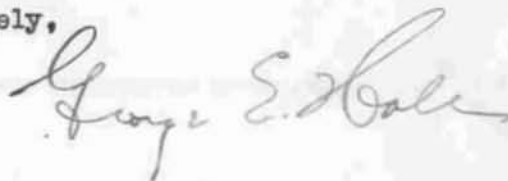
August 22, 1932

Finally, as you are well aware, the influence on the public of all first-class work is especially needed in this part of the country. We have had no solid base of scholarly tradition on which to build our foundations, and much time will be required to solidify the results thus far obtained. I am sure that the influence of the California Institute is being shown by a gradual change in the ideals of the universities and colleges in this vicinity. But any relaxation of our standards would also be reflected on every side, and the possibilities here are too great to be lost without a struggle. While you may rely upon us to relax no efforts, we are anxious to secure your personal cooperation in the present emergency.

If we can find funds not obtainable to meet current needs, and applicable only to Einstein, would you not consent to have him come here every other winter? My hope would be to have the California Institute pay him what it does now, and to secure for him an equal payment from the Carnegie Institution, aided, if necessary, by the Carnegie Corporation. I do not know whether this is possible or even whether the plan would be approved by Dr. Merriam and Dr. Adams, especially as the Carnegie Institution has recently suffered some loss of income. But if you can write me your approval of the proposed division of Einstein's time, I will see what can be done. This is one of the best types of international and institutional cooperation advocated by our International Council of Scientific Unions, and as I believe it would appeal to Professor Einstein, and strengthen rather than injure your own general policy, I am appealing to you at once.

Believe me, with kindest regards,

Yours very sincerely,



GEH:G



David M. Levy

February 16, 1932

Dear David:

Returning to town, I find your admirable letter of January 28. You have put your finger on the conditions which interfere with real scholarship in the United States. Realizing then as keenly as I do, I hope that I can take every possible precaution to prevent their disturbing this new institute, either during my time or in the future. Tenure will be secure, salaries will be adequate, and we shall be prepared to tolerate any mistakes that we seem to have made. Only the distant future can really tell whether an appointment has been wise or unwise. The necessary conditions are realized in all Europe. I don't see why they cannot be realized in this country.

Give our love to Adele, and believe me

Ever affectionately,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Dr. David M. Levy  
145 East 57th Street  
New York, N.Y.

AF:ARD



145 EAST 57<sup>TH</sup> ST.  
NEW YORK CITY

Acknowledged  
Jan. 30  
C.S.A.

January 28, 1932

Dear Dr. Flexner:

I have read your report to the Trustees of the Institute for Advanced Study twice; first, to understand its contents and second, to enjoy its reading just for the style. I am afraid I have no criticisms to offer. After reading it, I can only requote the lines, "When I contemplate the possibilities of leading a life under such circumstances, I am filled with a deep enthusiasm and a vast yearning."

I think the phrase "financially independent, unhurried, disinterested", is a beautiful list of attributes to characterize the ideal situation for ~~faculty~~ and investigators.

*scholars*

From my experience in this Institute and the Institute for Juvenile Research in Chicago, and through contact with other workers in similar situations, I have formed a strong opinion that it is very difficult for the head of an institution to take the risk involved in setting up the conditions described in your report. He usually lacks the courage and disinterestedness necessary to keep from interfering in the work of his staff. I refer especially to research. Your director sooner or later takes the attitude of an employer who has to constantly check up on his employees. The result is premature publication or routinized labor instead of the free creative atmosphere so essential for the highest type of thinking. I think your director's authority drive, and jealousy of his own staff, and insecurity of his own position determine his motives in this regard. If the investigator seems lazy or unproductive for a long time, the director begins to feel that personal advantage is being taken of the freedom allowed. If work is formulated and a manuscript

145 EAST 57<sup>TH</sup> ST.  
NEW YORK CITY

prepared, he may try to impose his personality, at least to the extent of manuscript corrections and recasting. Even aside from the question of the Institute's policy, with over-sensitivity to the attitude of donors or trustee members, he may wreak havoc with the original ideals of the enterprise. It seems to me your whole scheme is especially well adapted to the prevention of bureaucratic intrusions of this type.

The question of security of tenure is fundamental to the scheme. The fear of losing one's job is, I believe, the most powerful influence that compels submission to the interferences of your president or director. After a scholar has had a certain period of probation, say two, three or four years, provision might be made that he cannot be discharged excepting for the most blatant causes. I am thinking of your Institute for Advanced Study when it will not have a director like Abraham Flexner, and the independence of the various units will possibly be jeopardized. <sup>may</sup>

Many thanks for letting me read the report, which I hope will be published, and for your kind efforts on my behalf.

Kindest regard to you and Mrs. Flexner from Adele and myself.

Sincerely,

*David.*

Dr. Abraham Flexner,  
Director, Institute for Advanced Study,  
100 East 42nd Street,  
New York City

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
DIVISION OF MANUSCRIPTS

January 18, 1932.

Dr. Abraham Flexner,  
Institute for Advanced Study,  
100 E. 42nd St.,  
New York City.

My dear Flexner:

I have your letter of January 12. It may be that the establishment in Washington of any department or division of your Institute, which you devote to American history, is out of the question, but I don't wish to leave you under any misapprehension as to the extent of the loss or damage that would be occasioned by such remoteness. It is true that photostats can be got, and that men not resident in Washington can come there from time to time. But that is an enormously different thing from having the principal mass of material for American history right at hand, for daily exploration and use. Familiar as I ought to be by this time with the resources of the Library of Congress and Washington in general for American history, it is still a frequent experience with me to come with delight upon sources of information on this or that topic that could not be found elsewhere. In my daily work here, I am perpetually answering letters from history students at a distance who try to use through my hands, or those of others here, the resources of this Library without coming here, and I can see the enormous contrast between that mode of operation and that of the workers in the Historical Department of the Carnegie Institution, or professors and others who come here for

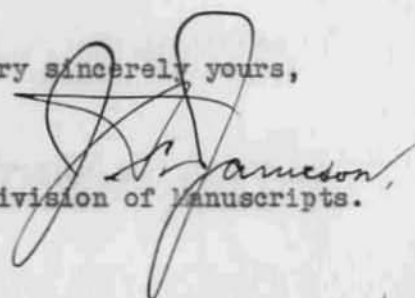
Dr. Flexner.

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months of continuous work. There is no question that research work in American history done elsewhere, unless on local topics for which local material is the main thing, is greatly hampered. Establish a historical branch here if you can.

Very sincerely yours,

  
Chief, Division of Manuscripts.

JFJ:LB

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
—  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

January 6, 1932

Dear Mr. Flexner:

I shall be at the Harvard Club in New York on Friday morning, the 8th. I have an appointment already for an hour not definitely settled, but likely to be between 9 and 10. I think I shall be free at 10 o'clock. Would you find it convenient to call me up at the Club about 9:30?

Very sincerely yours,

*F. W. Taussig*  
F. W. Taussig

Mr. Abraham Flexner  
The Institute for Advanced Study  
100 East 42nd Street  
New York City

Harkness

January 15, 1932

MEMORANDUM

I talked with Miss Gertrude Moore yesterday, and she expressed the keenest interest in a copy of the Memorandum, dated September 26, 1931, which I had sent her some time ago. She was especially pleased with what she thought the sound and gradual development which I recommended, and she contrasted it with the reckless expansion of Yale and Harvard. I told her that I had in mind ultimately to apply to Mr. Harkness to obtain funds with which to build a sort of All Souls College, in which would be housed (1) students, (2) unmarried instructors, (3) studies for married instructors. She expressed interest without making any commitments. The present she thought an unfavorable moment, as I myself had suggested, to approach Mr. Harkness. The ground is now broken so that the matter can be taken up with her and through her with Mr. Harkness at some future time.

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

AF:ESB

*Institute, Organization of*

January 9, 1932

Dear Mr. Stokes:

You are my most helpful and stimulating correspondent.  
Thank you a thousand times for your third letter.

I am going out to Pasadena this coming week to see what we have to learn from the way in which Millikan and his associates have organized and are conducting the California Institute of Technology. I imagine that I shall be gone three or four weeks. Shortly after my return I am going down to Washington to see you and Mr. Putnam, as you suggest.

With all good wishes and deeper appreciation than I can readily express,

Sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Dr. Anson Phelps Stokes  
2408 Massachusetts Avenue, N. W.  
Washington, D. C.

AF:ESB



Stokes

ANSON PHELPS STOKES  
2408 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

January 5, 1932

Dr. Abraham Flexner, Director  
The Institute for Advanced Study  
100 East 42nd Street  
New York City

My dear Mr. Flexner:

Thank you so much for your appreciative letter of January 4th with reference to the comments that I have made to you regarding the best location for the Institute for Advanced Study. On this subject of site I have convictions. On other matters in connection with the proposed Institute I have only certain opinions which might well be modified by conference or further knowledge of your tentative plans. I hesitate to put anything in writing when I do not know of the discussions which have already gone on with reference to the matters about which you now ask me, such as "scope, spirit, activities, personnel, subjects, etc., etc." As you have, however, two or three times written asking me to at least think out loud on this subject I will take you at your word. Here are a few "thunks"--as my children used to call them when they were very young.

(1) If you have not done so I would suggest the advisability of conferring with Herbert Putnam of the Library of Congress regarding some possible affiliation, even though a very loose one, with the Library as this Library is rapidly becoming a center of advanced work of a most distinguished character. Congress, as you know, has made it possible through ~~the creation of~~ the precedent of the provision for the Elizabeth Sprague Coolidge Foundation in Music and the Folger Shakespeare Library, to have quasi-independent organizations affiliated with the Library. For instance, I believe that the great Folger Shakespeare Library is under a Board that has some affiliation with Amherst College. Similarly through the establishment of the Library of Congress Trust Fund Board it has permitted the Library to engage from year to year some of the most distinguished scholars in America who are in residence in the Library as Consultants and render invaluable service to advanced students. I believe that some arrangement could be worked out by which these Consultants could be of special service to your students. I do not know in what field the Consultants are this year, but I know a couple of years ago there were men of the greatest eminence giving their full time as Consultants in Bibliography, Hispanic Literature, Classics, European History, Economics, Philosophy, Science, Oriental Art, English Literature, etc. Furthermore, I remember that when I was visited a couple of years ago by people wishing to establish an independent institution for research into the history of Science I strongly advised them to consult Mr. Putnam and see if they could not tie up with the Library of Congress in some way. Their investigations led, I believe, them to find that it was both feasible and desirable, although owing to the financial situation they have not been able to advance the project far. Some close relationship at least physically, to the Library of Congress seems to me highly desirable and fortunately adequate land can be secured at relatively low costs in this part of Washington. The

site could, for instance, be within half a mile of the Library of Congress, the Smithsonian Institution, and the National Museum if desired.

(2) I earnestly hope that your Foundation will stress the Humanities. I am as enthusiastic as any one can be about research work in Science, but I think that there has been a tendency in connection with most Foundation activities to stress scientific research and social service almost to the exclusion of research and creative work in the Humanities. I would not limit the Foundation to the Humanities but I would make this, I think, the major field of interest, interpreting the word "Humanities" broadly so as to include Literature, History, Archaeology, Education, Art, Government, International Relations, Comparative Religions, Language study, etc., etc. In this country the general level of education is fairly high, but the general level of culture is rather low. A foundation such as yours which encouraged advanced work especially in the Humanities, or scientific work that had much cultural significance could make a great contribution.

(3) I am inclined to think that I would have some provision in your Institute for bringing together the different students and members of the staff in informal social relations. Possibly, although I am not at all sure about this, there might be provision for the staff and the small student body to live together. I have in mind the broad, cultural, and intellectually stimulating relationship at such a college as All Souls in Oxford where of course all the men are advanced scholars, or even at Balliol, although here of course you have the undergraduate group thrown in. There is a mellowness about scholarship at Oxford and Cambridge which we don't have in this country. It is due partly to background and tradition, but partly to the living together of men working in different fields. Most of our Universities underestimate this on the graduate side. Possibly Princeton over stresses the social side but the emphasis was to meet a real lack, and at Princeton the contacts are of students with students, rather than of students with members of the staff. At any rate I think that you want to make sure that the specialists who work with you do not become narrow, and to prevent this some sort of community life would be advisable. I have not in mind at all what is generally called corporate research, but rather the inter-play of minds working in different fields because owing to the unity of science every discovery in every field has its relationship to or its significance for the research scholar in other fields. I was impressed in this connection with the reasons which led to the establishment of the American Academy in Rome with Archaeologists, classical scholars, painters, and architects, landscape architects, and musicians working side by side and each gaining stimulus from the other.

(4) As to the staff, my idea is that this might well be an extremely limited one at the start, perhaps 4 or 5 creative scholars in different fields. Take men in such fields as the History of Science, Philology, English Literature, International Law, Biology, Oriental Civilization, Archaeology, and throw them together as a stimulating group, and yet with each man engaged in his own independent work, and they ought to work out something mighty interesting and attract a very strong group of advanced students. They should represent very different backgrounds and one or two should be from abroad.

From the side of directing researches and studies of advanced students they could be strongly strengthened by the Congressional's Consultants.

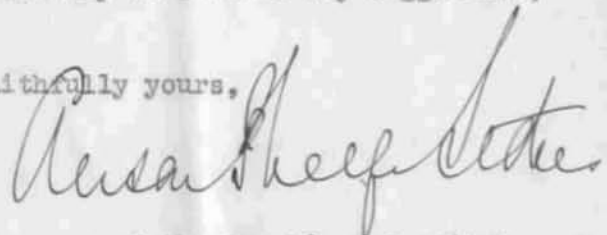
Mr. Flexner #3

Indeed, if it is known in what fields the latter are to be provided in the near future your appointees might be in different fields so as to prevent overlapping. Of course it is possible that you have already decided to limit your field for studies much more than the above would indicate. I can well see some advantages in this.

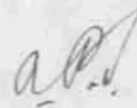
Now, my dear Dr. Flexner, I have just been thinking out loud and dictating this letter to you with no knowledge of the discussions which have preceded it in your Board. I am therefore at a disadvantage and consequently many of my suggestions may entirely miss the mark. They are sent you merely as tentative offhand opinions as a result of my general thinking on the stimulating opportunity which faces your Institute for Advanced Study.

Trusting that what I have said may be in some way suggestive,  
I am

Faithfully yours,



P.S. If you move to Washington the presence of the Brookings Institute with its emphasis on Economics and Government, might possibly suggest your stressing the more strictly humanistic fields in which of course the Library of Congress is exceptionally strong. By all means, anyway, talk the matter over with Herbert Putnam, who has a creative mind and has thought much of the possibilities of Washington as an intellectual center!



APS:m

January 4, 1932.

Dear Mr. Stokes:

I appreciate beyond words your continued interest. I hope you will not cease allowing your mind to play upon the subject of the Institute. Do not limit your comments to location. Scope, spirit, activities, personnel, subjects, etc., etc., these are all matters upon which I want to gather all possible light before taking action.

My letter of inquiry was sent at the suggestion of the Committee on Site and the replies are being copied and forwarded to the members of the Committee. Perhaps as a matter of courtesy it would be best not to show Mr. Houghton your letter, though when answers have all been received they will be bound and presented to the Trustees with any conclusions or recommendations reached by the Committee on Site. Meanwhile, there is of course, not the slightest objection to your talking with Mr. Houghton freely about the Institute from every point of view. Mr. Houghton is profoundly interested and I am extremely anxious that the members of the Board should not be figureheads. Talk to him, therefore, to your heart's content, not only about the site but about the whole scheme, and be assured that he will see your two letters as soon as the Committee has had a chance to digest them.

With all good wishes and very profound appreciation,  
Sincerely yours,

Mr. Anson Phelps Stokes  
2408 Massachusetts Avenue N. W.  
Washington, D. C.  
AF:AMK

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

December 28, 1931.

Dear Mr. Stokes:

I don't know how to thank you sufficiently for the extremely interesting discussion which you have sent to me in reply to my inquiry.

I think it is no exaggeration to say that the minds of the two founders are quite open and that they and the Committee on the Site will therefore give the most careful thought to your suggestion and to the reasons in its favor.

I may add that the same suggestion has been made by others though without the detailed argument with which you support it.

I should be very happy if you went further and touched with the utmost detail upon any other conditions which, as it seems to you, we should bear in mind and endeavor to procure for those upon whose efforts the success of the Institute depends.

With renewed gratitude and best wishes for the New Year to you and your family, I am

Ever sincerely,

AF:AMK  
Mr. Anson Phelps Stokes  
2408 Massachusetts Ave. N. W.  
Washington, D. C.

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

December 12, 1931

Dear Professor Taussig:

I have your kind note of the 11th.

The suggestion of meeting in New York on the morning  
of January 8 would suit me admirably if it turns  
out equally convenient for you. I shall remind  
you of it shortly after the New Year.

Very sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor F. W. Taussig  
Harvard University  
Department of Economics  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

AF:ESB

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS


CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

December 11, 1931

Dear Mr. Flexner:

I have your letter of December 9. My time is pretty well occupied until the holiday period, but during that period I shall remain in Cambridge, as I do not plan to attend any of the holiday meetings. I do plan to be in New York on the evening of Tuesday, January 7, having a dinner engagement of a semi-public nature for that evening. I shall probably be in New York on the morning of January 8. Possibly we could then have a chat. Perhaps you will bear in mind this possibility, and let me hear from you toward that time.

Cordially yours,



F. W. Taussig

Mr. Abraham Flexner  
The Institute for Advance Study  
100 East 42nd Street  
New York City



December 11, 1931

Dear Vincent;

It doesn't matter in the least about tardiness. Your detailed and penetrating comment is abundantly well worth waiting for. Some day I should like, if you are in town and have an hour free in the middle of the day, to discuss the project with you over a luncheon table.

Meanwhile, let me comment briefly on each of the points you make:

Size and scope Small now and perhaps for fifty years to come. Do nothing that we cannot pay for. No need to try to be complete, for that means many weak brothers. Simon's policy at the Institute a good model.

Resources In hand \$5,000,000 plus accrued income. A large additional sum ultimately. The present income would start only mathematics. Investments in government bonds, municipal bonds, etc., practically unaffected by current conditions.

Research and teaching No place for students who need much teaching. Abundant time for the research work of the professors. Free these men from all contacts, committee work, etc., which amoy them. There are such groups in Chicago, Harvard, Princeton, but they are more and more restive in the hectic atmosphere in which they find themselves.

Attracting men In my opinion, no difficulty in getting for an enterprise of this kind the best men in America in their best years. This statement is not a guess. It is warranted by conferences I have had with persons of the calibre required.

Situation Correct

Academic freedom Take every chance.

Dr. Vincent

December 11, 1931

2

Kind of students What you say is correct.

Salaries No matter if there is a permanent general slump, a professor in America ought to be far better off than he is anywhere, at least as well off as the important officers of the foundations.

Women, Negroes, etc., solely a question of intellectual merit.

Administration Arnett urged the University of Chicago some years ago to take the step I am taking. He saw both as officer and trustee the chasm between the two bodies, namely, the faculty and the trustees.

You bet it is a tough job, and of course I ought to have tackled it, if at all, fifteen years ago, but I didn't know enough and had other fish to fry.

Thank you a thousand times for this most helpful and stimulating comment which I shall reread every now and then so as to keep it fresh in mind. If the memorandum is at hand, will you return it or destroy it please?

With all good wishes,

Ever sincerely,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Dr. George E. Vincent  
Juniper Hill  
Greenwich, Connecticut

AF:RSB

December 11, 1931

December 9, 1931

Dear Professor Taussig:

During my absence from town my secretary acknowledged your letter of November 12. I have now returned and wish to express my own very keen appreciation of your comment on Schnappeter's letter. Thank you also for correcting the misprints. Schnappeter's letter was written in long hand and was copied by a young woman who was helping me temporarily.

During my absence from town I visited Chicago and had another good talk with Viner. I shall be ready to go to Cambridge to see you again whenever you feel inclined. There is some likelihood that I will be away from New York for several weeks after the middle of January, and I have a meeting of Trustees on January 11. Otherwise, I am quite free. On the other hand, it may suit you best not to see me during the holiday season when the various associations meet. Nothing will be lost by postponement of our talk until I return to New York in February.

I cannot tell you how greatly I value the opportunity to get your judgment on these extremely complex problems.

Very sincerely yours,

Professor F. W. Taussig  
Department of Economics  
Harvard University  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

AF:ESB

John Vincent

TELEPHONE:  
GREENWICH 3441-J

JUNIPER HILL  
GREENWICH, CONN

December 9, 1931

My dear A.F. -

I am ashamed of my tardiness in writing you about your memorandum which I have read several times and pondered a good deal. The fact is I have been running about making speeches for "drives" and other undertakings, and it is further true that I am lazy and procrastinating. At last here are some comments and questions.

Size and scope. I am confused a little by various statements. The small beginning e. g. mathematics and economics, seems clear enough until one finds that the latter is to include "political theory, ethics and other subjects that are involved therein." This would logically call for anthropology, social psychology, and social philosophy at least. Aren't you proposing a school of the social sciences? A good well-rounded one would run to a lot of money, especially on a full-time, high salary-scale basis. And wouldn't a satisfactory group of mathematicians call for several men who specialize in the different phases of the subject? The allusions to social life and comradeship also imply a good sized group, for congeniality can work its natural course only when there is room for a good deal of selection.

Resources present and future. It is hard to get a mental picture of the Institute without knowing how much you have to begin with and what definite promises or prospects for the future are in sight. One would like also to know how your capital is invested, what rate of income you receive, and what the chances are that it will suffer a decline as other endowment yields are doing. It is important also to have an idea of how much is to be assigned to land and to buildings which cost a good deal for upkeep. To be specific, \$250,000 a year would by no means give you the initial mathematics-economics combination you outline. I should think at least double that amount would be required. I raise this point not out of curiosity but simply to explain that it is hard to express an opinion without any notion of how much you can count on.

A research and teaching policy. This idea of both research and teaching is a little misty in my mind. Of course there is, as you say, a certain by-product of teaching in a research institution. Many investigators, I know, find the association with keen assistants stimulating. But just how your plan would differ except in numbers from the best kind of university graduate school in its teaching function I do not clearly grasp. There are excellent seminars with small numbers of students meeting informally with first-class investigator-teachers to be found in the leading universities. I had supposed that your chief emphasis would be on research with teaching recognized but incidental. I am not sure

your proposal to maintain the two functions on something like an equality will work out as you hope. It will be pretty sure, I think, to limit your choice of men for the staff. Again I cannot quite see what type of students will be attracted, unless you allow some to attach themselves to investigators as research assistants. Enough of them would in the end exclude the other type and transform your institution into a research institute. Probably the wisest plan would be to let nature take its course anyway. Here would be a subject for experiment.

Universities as maelstroms. While I agree with much of the fault you have to find with our universities, I cannot go quite all the way with you. To be sure it is nearly fifteen years since I knew them intimately and they may have been going rapidly to the dogs of late, but I think you exaggerate the turmoil, the strain and stress so far as these affect the lives and activities of the kind of professors you are interested in. For example I was at the University of Chicago during the early days. Things were always stirring where Dr. Harper was. Experiments with curricula, full-dress faculty debates, university press, university extension, correspondence instruction were in full swing. Yet men like Michaelson, Whitman, Chamberlain, Coulter, Shorey, Mall, and others went their own ways serenely. They retired to their laboratories and studies. They were almost untouched by the stir and clamor. Nobody interfered with their freedom or pressed them for practical results or publication. Moreover they enjoyed the varied associations of the university community. They lunched at the Quadrangle Club. Michaelson was keen at billiards and tennis. He used to attend a sketching class at our house one evening a week. So I fancy there are many scores of able men in Harvard, Yale, Columbia, Princeton, Chicago, not to mention less conspicuous universities, who would not recognize your descriptions as applying to them, however true they may be so far as the rank and file are concerned. Which leads to another topic:

Attracting men of productive scholarship. Opportunity for congenial work, freedom from interference, relief from routine teaching and administration, security of tenure, absence of economic anxiety, opportunity to travel, provision for old age, professional and social recognition and prestige, congenial professional and social contacts - you have enumerated the essential stimuli in a satisfying life of scholarly activity. You know, I am sure, that these desiderata are realized to a very considerable degree in our leading universities for an exceptional group of men. I fancy you would find it hard to induce the most eminent of these to leave their present positions. Increase of salary alone would hardly do it. The examples of Hopkins and Chicago might be misleading. Gilman and Harper were starting full-fledged universities of a new type. They attracted first-class men not only by paying them well but by offering opportunities for research not to be found elsewhere in the country. You are doing a quite different thing - setting up a few groups or schools in a radically changed academic situation. Personnel will be your crucial problem. One would almost venture to say: the men you can get you don't want. At any rate you'll rarely want the men who will apply. You will be on guard against men who have grievances where they are. There will be no dearth of people anxious to take your posts. This will be especially true of foreigners. Your visiting men, of course, will be no problem. But my guess is you will find the prestige of the universities and the things they are prepared to do for top notch men very real obstacles. Of course there are always



younger men of promise, but the competition for them is keen and the universities have a good deal to offer them, especially in the way of traditional reputation. And often the promise doesn't pan out. But you have thought of all these difficulties and I need not underline them further.

Situation. I assume that you will carefully consider a situation in close proximity to an established university. This would give your Institute all the very real advantages of a university environment - libraries, museums, faculty clubs, stimulating professional associations of a wide range, a pleasant general society, an atmosphere reasonably civilized - and yet permit complete freedom from university educational requirements and administrative regulations. An isolated location would involve expensive duplications especially of library resources. It would, I think, be less attractive than you might imagine to the kind of people you want. A small residential area threatens danger of petty cliques and factions or even worse still of parochial complacency. Truly congenial groupings are found only in populations large enough to permit selection and roomy enough to prevent forced contacts. The informal associations of staff members you very rightly mention as essential. But your problem if you go off by yourselves is to have enough people for this purpose. You know they have built a club in Pasadena which is to be used jointly by the staffs of Mt. Wilson, the Institute of Technology, and the Huntington Library and Art Museum. Hale, Milliken and Farrand think this is going to be a big thing for research and contentment. Any university club would be only too glad to welcome your staff to membership.

Academic freedom. You quite rightly stress the importance of keeping research and teaching free from any kind of interference and pressure. You would, of course, recognize the fact that a few of our best universities at least approximate that ideal. Harvard and Ohio State are poles apart. Complete independence is a counsel of perfection. Thus, if your economists, as they very likely would, were to find our present social order seriously defective and were to propose radical changes, you can imagine editorial clamor, the Civic Federation alarms, big business' indignation, the charges about "red" professors in the pay of Moscow, etc. Question: When solid men of affairs began complaining to your benefactors that they were endangering the welfare of the country by permitting this sort of thing, do you feel sure that they would stand back of you and, for example, show their independence and courage by putting up a few more millions? I hope so, but I am not absolutely certain. I don't know them, but I do know how insidious social pressures are.

What kind of students? I have already alluded to the bearing of the research-teaching program on the students likely to be attracted. If you have eminent scholars on your staff they will naturally attract students who are specializing in the fields of these men. Ordinarily a student seeks opportunities in two related subjects, e. g. mathematics and physics or mathematics and astronomy. Your proposed combination of mathematics and economics is unusual. Are you sure that statistics forms a sufficiently essential bond? I am quite incapable of judging, but the point is important, I think. It is clear that your candidates will have completed the four year course in some reputable institution. A few will have had less conventional preparation. Your proposal to have each school select its own students in its own way is all to the good. Again you will be competing with the

prestige of the best known universities and the recognized hall-mark they can give. You don't expect a stampede of the ablest to your Institute. Won't your chance of getting a small number of really first-class students depend chiefly on your facilities for research under distinguished leaders? My guess is that the teaching side will be much less of an inducement. As I have already intimated I think you will have to be guided by experience. You are, I am sure, right in providing fellowship and loan funds. You could not compete without them.

The economic slump and university careers. Men in engineering, law, advertising, bond selling, industry, are just now envying the security of men in the best colleges and universities. Isn't there a likelihood that better abilities which have been rather patronizing about academic careers will turn a more favorable eye in that direction? Is it certain that we are ever going back to the old status? May we not see shifts in standards and ideals? University salaries of \$10,000 - \$12,000 may turn out to be much more desirable than they have been in the past.

Miscellaneous points:

Travel for the staff is a sound idea. This has been too much neglected.

How about women? Are they to be appointed to the staff? I assume that you are planning for co-education.

Administration is a good subject for experiment. Why not try educational control by the full professors? Woods Hole managed by college and university men is one of the best administered institutions I know. Selecting a few members of the staff to sit on the Board has its drawbacks in envy and suspicion. Anyhow your idea of a minimum of management and regulations is refreshing and encouraging.

\* \* \* \* \*

But I am running on like the old man that I am. You have already regretted having asked my opinions. Don't think me too skeptical. I really think you can do good and make an impression on American education with the Institute of Advanced Studies. All I am saying is that it won't be an easy job and you know that already.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Abraham Flexner  
The Institute for Advanced Study  
100 East 42nd street  
New York City  
GEV:GER



G. E. Vincent

December 2, 1931

Dear Vincent:

I wonder whether you received the copy  
of the confidential report which I mailed you on  
October 24. There is no particular hurry about it,  
but I should like to make sure that it reached you.

Very sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Dr. George E. Vincent  
Juniper Hill  
Greenwich, Connecticut

AF:RSB

November 17, 1931

Professor F. W. Taussig  
Harvard University  
Department of Economics  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

My dear Professor Taussig:

Permit me to thank you for your  
letter of the twelfth to Mr. Flexner which  
was received just after he had left for the  
South and the West. It will be brought to  
his attention when he returns the last of the  
month.

Very truly yours,

ESTHER S. BAILEY

Assistant Secretary

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

November 12, 1931

Dear Mr. Flexner:

I have your letter of November 7, and also the copy of Schumpeter's letter. The letter is most interesting to me, even though what is in it accords with what Schumpeter has often said to me. His opinions about the various men are, upon the whole, in accord with mine, so far as I know the men. Some are mentioned by him about whom I know practically nothing. He is just now in the state of very great admiration for Frisch, who must be a person of quite unusual promise but who as yet has not achieved great things. I do not think as highly as Schumpeter does of Ohlin; and Zenthen's book, while excellent, has nothing new. Neither Brinkmann nor Lowe seem to me men of the first quality. On the other hand I am very highly impressed by Leontief, who happens to be in the United States just now. Haberler is an extremely good man, thoroughly equipped, and eminently sane, and has an unusual faculty of going to the core of things. He is a quiet, almost shy person, and may never prove to be an effective teacher. One or two names are misspelled in the copy which you have sent me.

Astelion should be Aftalion

Sonter should be Souter

Wezek should be Hayek (> Hayek!)

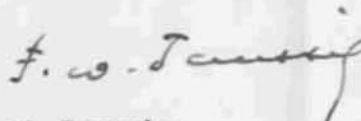
with  
C.S.G.

-2-

Here in the United States we have a fair supply of good men. Viner I should describe as a very good man. It is not easy to put your finger upon anyone who promises to be a great man.

I shall ponder on your problem, and look forward with pleasure to seeing you again.

Very sincerely yours,



F. W. Taussig

Mr. Abraham Flexner  
The Institute for Advanced Study  
100 East 42nd Street  
New York City

November 7, 1931

Dear Professor Taussig:

I am sorry to have been delayed in sending you a copy of Professor Schumpeter's confidential letter, but I have been so busy this week that I have not been able until now to get around to it. I should be very happy indeed if in returning Professor Schumpeter's letter you would comment on his various suggestions or, if you prefer, comment can be reserved until we meet as we agreed. In any event, anything that you say or advise will never be quoted as coming from you.

I cannot tell you how much I appreciated the cordial way in which you received me last Saturday and the spirit in which you are willing to assist me.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor F. W. Taussig  
Harvard University  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

AF:ESB

October 24, 1931

Dear Vincent:

I have a lot more confidence in your critical powers than you appear to have yourself, so that I am sending the memorandum herewith. Don't be swiabile. Tell me precisely what you think, especially if it is unfavorable at any point, and make any additional suggestions that occur to you.

Mrs. Flexner joins me in warmest greetings to you and Mrs. Vincent.

Ever sincerely,

Dr. George M. Vincent  
Juniper Hill  
Greenwich, Connecticut

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

AF:ESB

HARVARD UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS

*Boston*  
*Taussig*  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

October 22, 1931

Dear Mr. Flexner:

It will be a pleasure to see you, to learn about your plans, and to help you if I can. It happens, unfortunately, that I may possibly not be in Cambridge on Thursday next. I am in communication with some New York friends about a meeting which is planned for that date; possibly it will be held on Friday,--a meeting I should like to attend if I can. Perhaps you will let me know at the close of this week, or early next week, by telegraph what your exact dates are.

I am usually free at my house in the mornings until 11 o'clock, telephone University 7066. Every afternoon I am at my office-study, 42 Holyoke House at the University. There is sometimes pressure during the afternoon hours, and we should probably be able to talk more freely in the morning.

Cordially yours,

*F. W. Taussig*

F. W. Taussig

Mr. Abraham Flexner  
The Institute for Advanced Study  
100 East 42nd Street  
New York City



October 19, 1931

Dear Vincent:

At the end of my European trip I took a couple of months to mull over what I had heard from those whom I had consulted. The result I embodied in a confidential memorandum, on which I should really like to have your candid and unsparring criticism if you feel you have the time to read it. Be perfectly frank with me on the subject.

I hope that you and Mrs. Vincent are in good health and have made an auspicious beginning this autumn.

Always sincerely,

~~ABRAHAM~~ FLEXNER

Dr. George E. Vincent  
Juniper Hill  
Greenwich  
Connecticut

AF:MSB

R. B. Fossdick

CURTIS, FOSDICK & BELKNAP

ATTORNEYS & COUNSELORS AT LAW

61 BROADWAY

NEW YORK

JAMES F. CURTIS  
RAYMOND B. FOSDICK  
CHAUNCEY BELKNAP  
L. RANDOLPH MASON

CABLE ADDRESS: CURTISITE

September 24, 1931

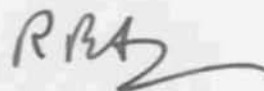
Dear Flexner:

I have read with the keenest interest your memorandum. Like everything you write, it is a beautiful piece of exposition and I have no criticism of it whatever. The only possible suggestion that I would make relates to a matter of order. If I were writing the memorandum, I think I would put the discussion of economics first, because in the scheme of things - certainly at the present moment - it seems so infinitely more important. Then in your discussion of mathematics I would develop a little more at length the argument you developed with me the other day at lunch, i. e., that mathematics with its severe and exact disciplines furnishes precisely the atmosphere in which the study of economics should be carried on. Otherwise, it seems to me you will run up against the objections of those who feel that we have over-played the natural sciences. Mathematics is the basis and foundation of these sciences, and a development of mathematics means inevitably a further development of chemistry and physics. If you could show that one of the chief functions of mathematics in your Institute is as a corrective for the study of economics, I think that it might strengthen your case. At least it would meet the objections of those who like myself are rather apprehensive of the growing gap between the development of the natural sciences and techniques of social control.

Dr. Flexner, page 2.

But your memorandum is a masterly thing, and this suggestion of mine seems trivial.

Affectionately yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of the letters 'RBA' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal stroke that extends to the right.

Dr. Abraham Flexner  
100 East 42nd Street  
New York City

June 25, 1931

Dear Professor Schumpeter:

Your letter of May 31 is so important and so gratifying that I hardly know how to begin to thank you for it. I am inexpressibly grateful for your encouraging words about my new project. You have caught precisely what I had in mind, and I shall rely upon you for counsel and cooperation at every step of the way. I hope that, when the time comes for us to begin in the field of economics, we may enlist you as an aid.

It is only a few weeks since I returned to this country, during which period my oldest brother has been very ill, and I have had to spend some time with him in the West. I have therefore been unable to clear my desk of accumulated mail and still less able to give to your memorandum the thoughtful study which it deserves. Next week I am going to Canada where I will spend the summer in the woods. I shall take your letter with me and there study it very, very carefully. In the course of the summer I hope to prepare a memorandum outlining the next step to be taken in the organization of the Institute. On that memorandum I shall wish to secure your judgment, and then will arise the question of persons on which your letter throws so much light. Please accept the assurance of my grateful appreciation for a service for which I can never sufficiently thank you.

Always sincerely,

WILLIAM FLEXNER

Herrn Prof. Dr. J. Schumpeter

June 6, 1931

Dear Dr. Jameson:

Returning from Europe, I find your letters of March 14 and April 25. Please accept my thanks for the suggestions contained in the letter of April 25 regarding personnel. I shall have an opportunity to talk with you further on this subject before any action is taken.

In reference to Dr. Martin's communication respecting William H. Crawford's diary, etc., I do not myself know at the moment where the diary is nor where Secretary Crawford's additional correspondence or memoranda may be. My wife, who is Mr. Crawford's great grand-daughter, I think, still possesses the diary. She is in Europe and will not return until after the Bayreuth Festival in July. I shall take up your letter with her, and I am certain that she will follow any advice that you may give.

With warm regards and all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Dr. J. F. Jameson  
Library of Congress  
Division of Manuscripts  
Washington, D. C.

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

AF:ESB

PROF. DR. J. SCHUMPETER

Canada  
BONN, ~~1931~~ May 31, 1931  
COBLENSSTR. 39

Schumpeter

Dear Dr. Flexner,

I have to thank for your book, which you have been so good as to send me. In its light and in the light of our pleasant conversation, I have again perused the bulletin on "Organization and Purpose" of the Institute for Advanced Study. Before answering to the best of my ability the questions you have wished me to write about, I want to congratulate you on your achievement. I hope you will allow me to say that (meeting you I have met what I had given up all hope to meet, <sup>in</sup> a man who has what I believe to be the true vision of the University and its real problem. That this same man should be able and willing to act upon his vision, is almost too good to believe, yet seems to be the fact, and I am in hopes now to behold, what I, ever since I entered the University career full of ideals destined to be disappointed, have come to think of as impossible. To put in a nutshell what it is I admire so much, and to make quite sure that we understand each other; Universities as they are, are everywhere - if everywhere somewhat differently - a compromise, in America primarily between "education" and science, in Germany between a vocational training and science. Others, beside you,



have come to recognize the impossibility of this situation, but while these others have no other remedy to offer but the "Forsubmiff" professor or the "Research institute", you have seen the unsatisfactory character of this remedy. So you have, besides breathing manfully the popular phraseology about education and vocational teaching, recognized that there is another kind of teaching, which is not only no impediment to creative work, but its necessary complement. The scientific worker must teach and as a rule wants to, so much so that he very often prefers the "vocational" drudgery to a research position without any teaching. But what he ought, and wants, to teach is pure science for the sake of pure science. And it is this you want to provide the frame for. Now this has not been done anywhere yet. If I were to point to approximations, the Graduate School of Harvard would come up in my mind, much rather than any German University. German Universities are undoubtedly a beautiful thing. But quite apart from the intolerable political interference, which will end in making professional appointments a matter of party policy, public opinion drives both administrations and faculties to stress increasingly "practical teaching", the teaching of what the students want <sup>in order</sup> to pass an exam. and to conquer and to fill some job. They do it but ill, and private cramming schools crop up beside them, but they suffer in scientific achievement just as much as if they did it well. This I wish to say but you might think my admiration for your work exaggerated. I have no other word either but "admiration" for the comprehensive insight in all the innumerable and sometimes imponderable conditions under which one may expect to see that rare bird, a good faculty, and in all those large problems of driving towards pure science that grade of brains, which it wants



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if it is to fulfill its social function, but which it as a rule, for a variety of reasons, undoubtedly fails to get. And this again I say in order to explain why I have, in spite of a fairly long experience and much melancholy thought on the matter, in spite also of having read both book and pamphlet in a frame of mind intentionally critical, hardly anything to suggest in the way of the general lines to be acted upon. Practically everything I ever thought desirable, is there. If I entered into the subject, I should be driven to such details as e.g. to putting a question mark to the thesis of the scientific character of a faculty of law, or such small suggestions as this: Creative work wants quiet and environment. You seem to provide admirably for both. But have you thought of the small fact, that one of the advantages a considerable income gives, is to shield its receiver from all these small chicanes of modern life, peccata, delectation, little steps of all kinds one must take, and that a bureau who would not cost much, could take care of that and confer upon the members of your fold a much greater benefit than the same sum would if distributed among them?

I do not presume to advise on your first question, <sup>viz.</sup> which subjects are to be included at first. The nature of your plan implies preponderance of "pure" sciences, and the rest is largely a matter of the men you get: Much better to have some subject, which is not the one you would have chosen as the most urgent to include,

if a first class man is available than to set up the most desirable department indifferently manned. My experience seems to teach me that one of the many reasons, why faculties do not as a rule look as well as they might, is precisely that they insist on filling specialized chairs when vacant whether "the" man is available or not, and ~~to~~ on offering "complete" schedules.

Nor do I presume to say whether "pure" economics ought to be included or not. I am an economic theorist, economic theory was the love of my youth, always and inevitably I was drawn back to it when I had temporarily left it for other pursuits - evidently I am not the man to <sup>be</sup> asked whether it ought to be included. Yet I will venture to submit two arguments in favor of it, which will at the same time lead on to what I have to say to your second question, <sup>as to</sup> names of possible candidates. If you abolish all Universities or Research Institutes of the world, some sciences will go on all the same: Hospitals will keep laboratories, the Amer. Aluminium company will go on financing research on Aluminium. Of course the attitude of such bodies is all wrong. You have admirably pointed out - one of the things I most heartily agreed with and which contributed most to making your general outlook so sympathetic to me - that real progress comes only from passionate love for problems for their own sake, and can never come from the practical need. Yet there is routine work even within the precincts of scientific creation, and in many fields, this routine work would go on. In Economics, it would not. Pure Economics, a few recent applications excepted, is nobody's business. On the contrary, politicians and businessmen feel very well satisfied with an economic theory of their own. They like the hackneyed prejudices, which it is as yet safe to utter without being laughed at - while not worse things in other fields would

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unwisely be looked upon as proof of the most sordid ignorance and they resent the idea of having anything to learn in a subject they feel they know so well. The other argument: Economics is not so poor in results, nor so inefficient in methods as one would think, who looks at the surface, covered as it is with products of thoroughly incompetent workmanship. The difference as against e.g. medicine is less in good work existing than in the fact that every trained medical man knows and masters as a matter of course the technique of his specialty, while that is not so in economics: An economist can be "trained" and have passed his exams, and yet know very little about his subject - the reason being that, public opinion being indifferent to theoretical work in this field, anyone can set himself up as the prophet of a new science and offer programs instead of serious work without fear that the voice of scientific criticism will ever be heard outside a rather small circle. But albeit not so bad as it would seem to anyone not able to distinguish good work from bad, the achievements of economics are modest. Economists have often asked <sup>themselves</sup> why this should be so. Now, my answer is, because the really scientific mind which delights in problems as such, very rarely turns to economics. Why should <sup>it</sup> if there are other fields offering very similar mental satisfaction, where it is not necessary to work in pure theory with a semi-apologetic gesture, or to fight against jostling misinterpretation of every argument not open to a child of twelve, or to give way to people who discuss popular questions by popular arguments? In this predicament, economics



has much to gain from an Institution like the one of which you will be Director. In its aloofness from the immediately practical, it may attract, shelter and develop many a talent, which would otherwise be lost entirely, and thereby discharge a function which may possibly be remembered gratefully by generations to come.

Proceeding ~~on~~<sup>on</sup> the assumption that economics is to be included, I should next say something on the routine work and its organization in the economic department, as distinguished from the creative work of its men, if I could hope to tell you anything you don't know better yourself. Suffice it, then, to submit, that in economics you cannot rely on graduates from colleges, who after all will form a goodly part of your students, having that mastery of technique and that all-round knowledge which they are sure to have in other fields. Some routine teaching on a high level no doubt - going over all regulation-subjects of the science and filling lacunae when they are met with, will certainly be necessary. The more so as even in America, the less than in Germany, there is a tendency of being content with a very scanty all-round apparel, which is forgotten entirely during the later work on some specialized research. You will continue in spite of all aversion to anything that savors of "doomstering" a curriculum, and assistant teachers to put everyone through it, so as to make sure, that your products, which being very much more besides, are also reliable and competent all-round economists. Theory of the Marshallian type, economic history, and a serious knowledge of the more refined methods of modern statistics, must be exacted from everyone at the outset. I

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would point out in detail, how eminent and absolutely leading economists of to-day fail to reach as far as they could, and lose part of the fruits of their efforts, never get rid of certain shamefully primitive mistakes - only because they have never fully mastered these things. Personally, I also think that the time is past, when it was superfluous for an economist to have some knowledge of mathematics and to reap benefit from the beauties of pure physics. All this, however, it will be the duty - and a very pleasant one - of the men you first select to talk over with you.

I have said enough to explain, why competent economists are so rare, and why competence plus genius or, let us say more modestly, talent, is so very much harder to find than in any other field. In fact, I venture to predict, that this Dept. will give you in this - I hope only in this - respect as much trouble as the others taken together. There is, however, one and only one man, who I am convinced not only fulfills but surpasses whatever <sup>standard</sup> one may set up. This is the Norwegian Ragnar Frisch, Professor in Oslo (Christiania), who has been already twice in the States, once as Rockefeller-fellow, and last winter as visiting professor in Yale. I think he is in Minneapolis now. To avoid misunderstanding: he is my pupil of mine. And we know these

is jealousy between two of one trade - and between an  
older man ~~and~~ a younger still more: In this respect science  
and love show some sad analogies! Believe me, I know my  
subject as few people do or ever did, and never I met a man,  
since I have grown into a worker working on his own lines,  
whose work struck me so vividly as the work of genius.  
The real touchstone is: to do what competent men think  
impossible to do - <sup>and</sup> he has done <sup>this</sup> in two instances, which  
I must not go into here, but which I am ready to explain  
if you should wish. I do not know, if I am not betraying  
Harvard-interests, if I strongly advise you to try him  
first of all. It would be a splendid start for the Dept. - and  
I feel in duty bound to tell you so altho it was my hope  
to cooperate with him one day somewhere or other.

Excepting this man, there is no other among those whom I  
think available who could be placed in the same class. A  
short survey may be useful, however. It will be evident in each case,  
whether the man in question is a candidate for a leading or a  
"junior" - if permanent - appointment. (Personally I do think,  
that the old German distinction between full, assistant professors and  
something like the ~~French~~ "Privatdozent" was a useful one, and that  
it even is not good policy to have all full professors on one  
and the same footing in every respect. If I see you I would group  
every Dept. in a variety of grades around 3 or 4 "leading" men.)

The Nordic Countries, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, - and it is the  
same with the Netherlands - are on a high average level in economics,  
on a much higher one than either France or Germany. But while



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there are many thoroughly competent men, it is difficult to point to eminent ones, who would be available, or even ones who have definitely shown high promise. Cassel is old and past his work, and Birk of Copenhagen is hardly a "leading" man. There is, however, Bertil Ohlin in Stockholm, who has done things which promise well in the theory of international trade, and Deutscher, in Copenhagen, who has written an excellent book on Monopoly. A very good man is Professor de Vries of Rotterdam who has, however, absolutely no published work to show. There is nobody of mark in Belgium, and France is very poor a present. <sup>Attalion</sup> Attalion, Prof in Paris, and Rueff, fairly high up in the civil service, <sup>(Inspector des Finances)</sup> are the only older men of note. Perhaps Rueff, freed from official duties, would develop well. As it is, he wrote a good book on money. And I forget Francois Divisia, prof. at the école des ponts et chaussées, who has written a textbook which on two or three points shows remarkable originality and force. <sup>Even a textbook may, perchance, show talent!</sup> All these French professors are so ill paid that they have to eke out their living by consulting employment so that one is apt to be unfair if one judges them by definite published achievement. There is a very gifted young man, at the Université d'Alger, Bousquet, whom I should recommend warmly if you think of such things as "extraordinary" or assistant professorships. <sup>He would not come on a temporary appointment, but he would lose his little post thereby.</sup> Germany has fallen back during the long years of the rule of the historic school and of the predominance of a overthorionic but entirely extra-scientific interest in "Sozialpolitik."



When people get tired of these things, they did not know how  
to deal with economics as a pure science and got entangled in  
fruitless "methodological" wrangles. Instead of solving problems  
they philosophized ~~on~~ how to solve them, and a great mass of  
mental energy got irretrievably lost. For one reason or another,  
due to incompetence <sup>being</sup> in some cases among these reasons, I don't  
know of anyone of the established men I would recommend and  
who would be available. There is a very lively and presentable, if  
somewhat suspicious man in Heidelberg, Prof Carl Brinkmann,  
but a fairly good man has just been appointed to Frankfurt,  
Prof. Lorenz. But there are some good men among the youngsters.  
I want to mention first young Kassily Leontief, a Russian,  
who is about 25, not even Privat Dozent, and yet is already quoted  
all over the world because of a singularly clever paper  
on statistical supply and demand covers a subject much  
more fascinating than the title would lead one to suppose.  
He is now going to be hired as a research fellow of MITell,  
National Bureau of Ec. Research. He is certainly a very  
strong talent. Next, there is Priv. Doz. Dr. Jacob Marschak in  
Heidelberg, also a Russian, and Dr. Mackenroth, who is about  
to become Privat Dozent, in Halle a. S. If I had Priv Dozent  
Dr. Neisser, of Kiel I have said all I have to say. The  
three last named would everyone of them be a good acqui-  
sition and may be expected to develop well in time. Naturally,  
a lengthy list of men could be drawn up, who would do very well  
as temporary guests to talk on some specialty or other. My  
colleague, H. von Beckerath is a very good man on cartels and so on,

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v. Bothmer, the Berlin Statistician, has an international name, Alfred Weber of Heidelberg has really done with economics but has a very interesting sociology to offer, and so there are quite a number. Among Russians, Kondratieff (banished to some island now, I believe) and the Statistician Slatsky would adorn any university. Pure economics in Italy has been for some time, and still is, in a very satisfactory condition. Among other men, I may mention in the first place <sup>Prof.</sup> Giuseppe Del Vecchio, of Bologna, a very good theorist, and in the second place the holder of the leading professorship in Rome, Luigi Amoroso. Furthermore U. Ricci and C. Prusiani Turroni, both in Egypt - having been turned out by Mussolini. There is a very good economic Statistician, <sup>Prof.</sup> Vinci of Bologna. By far the best young man I know of, is Piero Sraffa, who is much impressed the world by his first publication, that he has been appointed to Cambridge, England - this means quite a lot. A very capable man, surely to be recommended.

Well, as to England: The leading names as you know, are those of Pigou and of Keynes. Neither of these excellent men can be expected to be available: Pigou has all he wants in King's College, and Keynes wants the bustle of the world. But perhaps they would come for a year <sup>or</sup> half a year. Then there

is Robertson, a most competent thinker who has done excellent work, and R. Hartley. This, however, is all but for some promising youngsters whom I do not know enough about. Young Herrod of Dept. and R. Opie, <sup>(of Magdalen, Dept.)</sup> just appointed reader at Magdalens have both distinguished themselves, especially Opie, whom you ought to keep an eye on.

Now I always not only say, but feel that my science is at its best in America. That is why I so often go there. Yet I find it anything but easy to submit names to you. It is more <sup>the</sup> solid, and often brilliant, <sup>retailer,</sup> work in the mass than single promising, what strikes the observer. Of course, there are the famous old leaders, unrivalled in any country, Tausig, Fisher and others, but they are probably not what the <sup>needs</sup> <sup>of the</sup> <sup>present</sup> <sup>times</sup> require. <sup>altho' a leader like Thompson could be invaluable for doing dept. work</sup> On the other hand, I think I see very good youngsters, of whose possibilities it is however too early to be sure. Mitchell is hardly available, H. D. Moore suffering - of course, if he did recover, it is him before all others, that I ought to name. Among the established men, I should, under these circumstances, put Vines first, I also want to draw your attention to his colleague Henry Schultz, who goes into the leading position within one group of our problems, <sup>(and to Mr. Ezekiel, the economic statistician.)</sup> A very good man is Prof. Chamberlain of Harvard, and I am sure, that with working less and disciplining himself more Dr. Burgess of the National Bureau would develop well. Dr. Senter of Columbia seems to be substantial and clear. There is, in Dr. Snyder (Snyder himself is <sup>and really is</sup> trained <sup>economist</sup> / but fertile and original!) bureau at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, a young man, who lost his eye-sight nearly entirely by some accident and for this reason will find it difficult even to pass his exams.



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but his talent is so very striking, that, writing to a man who does not stick to beaten tracks, nor is a prisoner of received standards, I may mention him: C. G. Thomas. I met him at Harvard in 1927, then he came to see me at Bonn. Newspapers, which really only saw two long letters to me, gave me such an opinion of him, that if I saw you, I should appoint him to a junior position there and then. I am, however, sure that there are not ten economists who would follow the drift of his arguments, and would approve of such a measure.

Finally there are some good men in Vienna (none in Switzerland or Czecho-slovakia): Dr. Gottfried Haberler is the best. He would already have been appointed to a permanent professorship, if he had more political support. Then there is Dr. Rosenstein-Rodan, and Dr. Margonaster both quite good, and also Dr. v. Neugeb. But Haberler is the only one, who can be recommended on the strength of actual achievement. He will be in Harvard 3 1/2.

There is so much more to say, but I want to end an already too long letter by apologizing for inflicting on you my handwriting - I did wish to write you in English, but my Secretary knows but imperfectly - and by assuring you that if you should wish for any further information from me, I shall

very gladly give it, being happy to be able to do even so  
small a service to so splendid an endeavor.

With kind regards

for my sons

John Maynard Keynes

P.S.: Among the names mentioned, two stand out preeminently.  
And as it happened, while this letter was lying about to wait for  
additions which I am after all unable to make, I have heard from  
both. Frisch, in sending me a manuscript on New Methods of Measuring  
Marginal Utility - which I am sure will one day rank among the  
great achievements in the history of pure economics - for publication  
in a series of monographs which I am editing, writes to the effect that  
he is on his way back to Oslo, where he has been appointed full professor  
(Address: Storgate 9, Oslo, Norway). From what he says I see that  
I am not betraying the interests of Harvard, but of another great  
Scandinavian University, in recommending him.

And Scouten has been here to see me. Again I was struck  
by the brilliance of his talent. I have given him a card  
introducing him to you. He is the son of an economist, who was  
professor in Dorpat and St. Petersburg, but now lives in exile,  
& thinks in Berlin. He wants to get Privatdozent in Jena, but  
besides writing what is beyond the reach of most people here, he has  
the further difficulty - which e.g. puts him out of court in Bonn,  
for shame! - that he is a Jew. With these two men and, say, Viner,  
Ricci, Rubenlee, Damsyud, you would have a Dept. which no other  
could equal. J.M.K.

\*) Put again: who at 23 makes a name among specialists all over the world -  
does he want another word of recommendation?

April 28, 1931

Dr. J. F. Jameson  
Library of Congress  
Division of Manuscripts  
Washington, D. C.

My dear Dr. Jameson:

In behalf of Dr. Flexner, who has not yet returned from Europe, I desire to thank you for your letter of the twenty-fifth. We are now expecting him to be in his office in June, and I am sure that he will write to you as promptly as possible after his arrival.

Very truly yours,

**ESTHER S. BOLEY**

Assistant Secretary

*Carroll*  
*J. F. Johnson*

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
DIVISION OF MANUSCRIPTS

April 25, 1931.

Dr. Abraham Flexner,  
100 E. 42nd St.,  
New York City.

My dear Flexner:

I do not know how well you thought of what I proposed in a letter written just before you sailed for Europe, but I believe I was anyhow to follow it up with a letter as to persons through whom such a plan might be successfully carried out. I do not think they are numerous, but I do not think they are lacking, and will proceed to mention a few that I should think to be well qualified. I am only making suggestions of persons that might be investigated if you should conclude to go forward along such lines as I suggested, for I am well aware that nowadays I have a much less full acquaintance with the historical scholars of the younger generation than I have had with those of my own time.

One man that I think would do very well is Robert G. Albion of Princeton. He has produced an excellent book that shows him to be familiar with the ways of scholarship, careful and accurate in following them, and of uncommon intelligence, good judgment, and power of reflection and generalized statement. Moreover, far from being the type of man who can only stick to the line of work upon which he has



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been started in his youth, after completing that work (on British timber supply and its relation to the British navy) he turned to a quite alien subject, and is, I believe, working on the history of the Port of New York. In other words, he is not afraid to tackle a large subject, of vital importance to the country, though one that most of us bloodless academics would fear to tackle, and the belief is that he will succeed with it, and produce an important book. He is certainly a man of great ability, and I believe the Princeton people think him a very good manager.

Another man that might be considered is J. G. Randall of the University of Illinois, whose first published work thus far is a volume of studies in the constitutional history of the Civil War period, learned and acute and judicious. He is also a very good writer. I thought his paper on The Interrelation of Social and Constitutional History, in the (October 1929) American Historical Review, XXXV.1, a fine piece of work, showing a high quality of mind. Like Albion, he ranges outside of the older forms of history that were current in my younger days, though perhaps rather in the sociological than in the economic direction. He is a man of very attractive character, and I imagine would direct skillfully the work of others, though I have no real knowledge to that effect.

Another man to be thought of is Roy F. Nichols of the University of Pennsylvania, also occupied with the period of the fifties and sixties, in which he has recently produced an excellent book on President Franklin Pierce. He is very clever and capable, and has a singularly capable and clever wife, who showed herself an incomparable scout

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in the preparatory work she did for Nathaniel Stephenson's life of Senator Aldrich. They would anywhere make a strong team, though probably thus far a little more closely devoted to political history than the two preceding have been.

But for knowing that in point of prestige the appointment of a feminine director of such researches would seem to the people of this world less impressive, I do not know but that I should put foremost Miss Elizabeth Donnan, head of the Department of Economics in Wellesley College, partly perhaps because I know her best among these, since for seven years, 1911-1918, she was a member of my staff in the Department of Historical Research in the Carnegie Institution of Washington, and since then has in spare time continued so much work for that department that I have kept constantly in touch with her. She is a very able woman, and as head of an academic department has shown herself an efficient manager, who applied a great deal of practical sagacity to her collegiate problems. She is by preference a student of economic history, well grounded originally in historical method by Burr and Hull at Cornell, and of course very well versed in such methods of conducting a department of historical research as I was able to devise. Of her Carnegie Institution book, Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America, three volumes, the first has appeared, and has been cordially praised by competent reviewers in the first historical reviews. It is unquestionably a work of high scholarship. She has one advantage over the three men I have named in her knowledge of persons

Dr. Abraham Flexner

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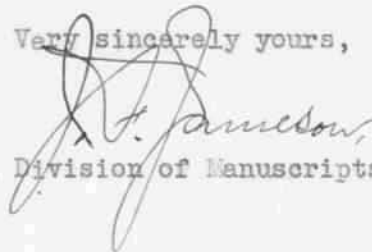
4-25-31.

in the historical profession. I think no one except Leland and me knows so many of them, because in the years I have mentioned she was accustomed to take charge of the tables of registration, etc., at the meetings of the American Historical Association, and had as her chief occupation that of subeditor of the American Historical Review, and during the last three years, during which she has been a member of the Council of the American Historical Association, has served most usefully on its Committee on Appointments to Committees. Her judgment of persons is excellent, and I think her knowledge of what is wanted or lacking in American economic history is of much value.

There are other men that I think of but without really knowing enough about them to justify me in putting them in.

I hope you had a happy time in Europe, and brought back many captives of your bow.

Very sincerely yours,



Chief, Division of Manuscripts.

JFJ:LB

Dr. Abraham Flexner

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- R. G. Albion, Forests and Sea Power (Harvard Economic Studies, 1926; reviewed in Am. Hist. Rev., XXXII.590).
- R. G. Albion, Introduction to Military History (Century Co., 1929; reviewed in Am. Hist. Rev., XXXV.647).
- J. G. Randall, Constitutional Problems under Lincoln (Appleton, 1926; reviewed in Am. Hist. Rev., XXXIII.419).
- E. Donnan, ed., Papers of James A. Bayard (Am. Hist. Assoc., Annual Report for 1913, vol. II.; reviewed Am. Hist. Rev., XXI.821).
- E. Donnan, Documents illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America, vol. I. (Carnegie Institution, 1930; reviewed in Am. Hist. Rev., XXXVI.407.) Vol II. in the press.

March 6, 1931

Professor Edward C. Armstrong  
American Council of Learned Societies  
26 Edgehill Street  
Princeton, New Jersey

My dear Professor Armstrong:

In Dr. Flexner's absence in Europe permit me to thank you for your letter of the third giving him the information he requested. I am sending him excerpts that he may wish to use while abroad, and when he returns he will study very carefully the entire memorandum.

Very truly yours,

ESTHER S. SALEY

Secretary

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

26 EDGEHILL STREET

PRINCETON, N. J.

March 3, 1931

*Amstrong*

Dr. Abraham Flexner  
100 East 42nd St., N.Y.C.

Dear Dr. Flexner:

Since our conversation at the end of January, Mr. Leland and I, utilizing information at our disposal and supplementing it by discreet inquiries, have given thought to your invitation that we suggest some available names, and a few days ago we had an opportunity to confer together. As a result I am sending you a very brief set of suggestions.

Classics.-- Rhys Carpenter, M.A., Oxford, Ph.D., Columbia, now on leave from Bryn Mawr as Director of the Athens School. Somewhat past forty. Center of interest, Greek archeology. Striking work, particularly in connection with the Acropolis. Keenly absorbed and alert in his scholarly work. He was recently offered a professorship at Chicago (renewed, I am told, on more favorable terms when a first offer did not tempt him) but preferred a return to his Bryn Mawr post with its larger freedom for his own work in his own way. When I was studying the composition of our recently constituted committee of the Council on Mediterranean Antiquities, I had occasion to inquire in detail about him from scholars of the first rank widely distributed geographically and in their center of interest, and found him uniformly ranked among our top men. This committee, by the way, is composed of Albright, Bull, Carpenter, Dinsmoor, Dougherty, Ferguson, Frank, Meritt, Olmstead, and Shear. I mention this because in connection with it I examined carefully into the reputation among scholars of others whose names I am about to mention.

Classics.-- Benjamin D. Meritt, Ph.D., Princeton, professor at Michigan. Age 32. Center of interest, Classical history. By general consent the most capable and the most advanced man of his age in the Classical field. While he is already in one of our large centers, he is largely free from organization work and his removal from there, while it would be a loss to them, should not wreck their essential plans. You probably know as much about him as I, if not more. There must be a good strain in the family, for a much younger brother has just been awarded, in the field of

Dr. A. F. --2

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

26 EDGEHILL STREET

PRINCETON, N. J.

comparative philology, one of the post-doctoral fellowships of the Council, and, for his age, his record seems also striking.

Oriental Languages.-- William F. Albright, Ph.D., Johns Hopkins, professor at the Johns Hopkins. Age 40. Center of interest, Semitics. You are already acquainted with him and his work. We have had opportunity to observe him closely in connection with his participation in activities of the Council, and have formed a highly favorable impression. From the standpoint of your preference not to break into the larger folds, he has the disadvantage of being in one of our large institutions.

English.-- Here we are dealing with a subject in which the scholarly interests are of primary importance for our country; a subject too in which it is important that the specialist scholarship should be built upon a solid foundation of sound classical training. We are hesitant about restricting suggestions by preferences in regard to age unless we are sure of the combination of qualifications just referred to, and we have not in mind a man of the younger group whom we feel safe in suggesting. We suggest for your careful consideration John S. P. Tatlock, Ph.D., Harvard, professor in the university of California. His age is 55, and he seems a man in the prime of health and vigor. Some years ago he went from California to a professorship in Harvard, but to the surprise of Harvard accepted after two years a call back to the Coast. To some of the rest of us it was less of a surprise, for we knew that he had been disillusioned to find how much of his time was consumed in Cambridge in routine duties, and that he might not be indisposed to return to a post of less glamor could he obtain greater freedom from these interruptions to scholarship, as he was able to arrange when he turned westward again. He is a man of sound scholarship and of vigorous personality. In the Advisory Board of the Council, from which he has just retired at the expiration of his term, we have been struck with the clearness of vision with which he can apply in other fields the scholarly principles which direct his work in his own.



Dr. A. F. -- 3

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES

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Romance Languages.-- Joseph E. Gillet, Ph.D., Liège, professor at Bryn Mawr. Age somewhat under forty. Center of interest, Spanish literature. Born and educated in Belgium, his studies being supplemented in Germany. After a year of teaching in a Scotch university he held minor posts in Minnesota and Illinois Universities before being called to Bryn Mawr as professor of Spanish. I was associated with him on the summer quarter staff of Chicago and again here, where for two successive years we invited him to come over from Bryn Mawr to give a graduate course. Indefatigable, accurate, and rapid worker. Besides his doctoral thesis in the field of seventeenth-century French literature, he has published various articles (the last, on the sixteenth-century Spanish drama in the homage volume to Bonilla y San Martín, Madrid, 1930, a fine, compact, meaty study), and has several important studies well advanced-- one being a critical edition of the dramatist Torres Naharro; another, now in press, which will constitute the 28th volume of my series of Elliott Monographs in the Romance Languages. He has an accurate knowledge of the Spanish, French, Italian, and German languages and literatures, and a sound classic background. A man of good personality and his English can not be distinguished from the native brand. I suggest him not because he is in Spanish but because I consider him already to have demonstrated that he will be one of our leading scholars. At the same time Spanish offers one of our real opportunities. The "tumefaction" of Spanish in the post-war period was a source of disapproval and regret to our real Spanish scholars, who saw in the rush to it as a "practical" subject a menace, and who welcome the deflation now under way. America a century ago had in George Ticknor not simply a pioneer in Spanish scholarship but a man whose world-wide reputation still remains firm, and we have today several American leaders in Spanish scholarship of high international standing. It is a tradition which was menaced by the developments of the last decade, and which should be preserved and strengthened.

Dr. A. F. --4

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PRINCETON, N. J.

As you see, we have made no effort to cover all the fields, not even all the most important ones. The choice of domains was guided by there being men whom we could visualize as being of interest in the present situation. Should other names suggest themselves to us, we shall hold them ready in case you should desire them.

Among the important domains I have not mentioned is that of German studies. Here the devastation caused by the war is only too painfully manifest. The elder scholars have gone or are going, and a new generation has not developed to take their places. My feeling is that you will need to import a man, and that you should do so. He assuredly should be young-- in the thirties or forties-- and it ought to be practicable to find him in Germany and if you find him to secure him.

I also hope that your attention is being directed toward the field of Byzantine studies. In history, literature, language, art, law, the Byzantine Empire played a rôle which has been most inadequately studied. In this country-- outside of Byzantine art, where some good work is going on-- there is one outstanding man, the historian Alexander A. Vasiliev of the University of Wisconsin, but he is probably beyond the age which you desire to consider. In that case the indicated step would be to bring from Europe the leading younger scholar of the school of the late Karl Krumbacher. Should it so happen that the center of such a man's interest lay in Byzantine history, it would be a most desirable recruit for the important domain of medieval history. In the present drive to make history the mere handmaid of the "sciences of exact measurement" the field of cultural history is, I know, one that will have your especial attention.

Sincerely yours,



Edward C. Armstrong

February 20, 1931

Dear President Spencer:

Many thanks for your kind note of February 9 with its two suggestions, both of which will receive my careful thought.

I am happy to know that the book is being read by your faculty and students. I hope very much that it may strengthen your hand in dealing with your problems.

With all good wishes,

Very sincerely yours,  
ABRAHAM FLEXNER

President M. Lyle Spencer  
University of Washington  
Seattle, Washington

AF:ESB

February 19, 1931

My dear Hill;

Many thanks for your kind favor of February 6. I am delighted that you are interested, and I feel sure that I shall get you to the point of making suggestions.

My wife and I are sailing for Europe on the Bremen, going first to Oxford to see Eleanor. We shall see you when we reach London. Thank you and your wife very much for your courtesy to Eleanor. She wrote us with much appreciation.

With all good wishes to you and your family,

Sincerely yours,

Professor A. V. Hill ABRAHAM FLEXNER  
University of London  
University College  
Gower Street, London W.C. 1  
England

AF:ESB

Reuben Hill

Miller

The Institute, in dealing with subjects such as economics which concern the lives of human beings, should do so with a consciousness that its function is not only to know how certain processes operate, but to have an hypothesis as to how they might operate better. Unless it is possessed of some such critique of society and capable of communicating that critique in a living fashion to its incoming members the dead facts of research cannot become the vital material of reconstruction. Whoever has had the privilege of work under a great teacher knows that a large measure of his pleasure lay in the coherence he was able to give to his knowledge because of the systematic values in whose image his personality was formed. In a larger and somewhat looser way, the same can be true of the spirit of institutions; it is true, however, only insofar as they have the courage to risk an hypothesis; otherwise what they do will consist of words without configuration.

February 19, 1931

My dear Toynbee;

Thank you very much for your intensely interesting letter. I agree with every word of it. When I spoke of "outside distractions", I was alluding to the almost universal habit which has grown up in this country which leads men to supplement their inadequate salaries by doing hack jobs in literature, politics, industry, science. You will find when you come to reading my book that I regard the actual world as the laboratory of anyone working in the so-called social sciences or in the humanistic field. Only I don't want anybody to have to do anything for the sake of earning a fee. I want to give the men such salaries as will make them financially independent and then allow them to use the world as the physicist uses the laboratory, as the medical man uses his clinic. I have already indeed been making inquiries as to the possibility of obtaining precisely such clinical experience in industry, finance, etc., for any young man who may be interested in economics. Our business men have been proved wrong by recent events, and our economists not less so, both because each was lacking in the training and experience which the other obtained. I have been spending some weeks going about among our universities. They are really worse than I wrote or permitted myself to say, in spite of

Mr. Toynbee

Feb. 19, 1931

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individual exceptions to be found in all of them.

My wife and I are sailing on the Bremen on February 26, so that I can talk over the whole subject of the Institute with persons who, like yourself, have vision and enthusiasm and faith. We shall go to Oxford first, for we have a daughter at Somerville. I shall let you hear when I reach London where we are proposing to have a leisurely time.

Please give my warm regards to your wife, and believe me, with great appreciation,

Always sincerely,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

A. J. Toynbee, Esq.  
3, Melina Place  
London, N. W. 8, England

AF:ESB



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
SEATTLE

Spencer

February 9, 1931

Dr. Abraham Flexner  
Institute for Advanced Study  
100 East 42nd Street  
New York City

My dear Dr. Flexner

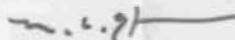
I have just read with much enthusiasm your Bulletin No. 1, explaining the organization and purpose of the Institute for Advanced Study. It is exceedingly interesting.

Two ideas occur to me: first, when you come to choosing your areas of study, give heed, not so much to those fields in which much research is being done now, but to those in which greatest need for research exists. Sociology or political economy are illustrations. Our transcending problems today are in these fields. Yet the relative amount of money being spent in them is much less than in the natural sciences.

It would be well, too, it occurs to me, for you to attempt to nationalize the Institute by appointment of trustees or overseers from other sections than on the Atlantic seaboard. It strikes me that the ideals of the Institute might be carried over the nation more effectively and greater support might be had if men of wealth and position from all sections of the country were interested directly in this new approach to higher education.

We have six copies of your book in our library for use by students and our faculty, and there is a long waiting list for it.

Cordially yours



M. Lyle Spencer  
President

MLS:B

*A.V. Hill*



UNIVERSITY OF LONDON, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE,

GOWER STREET, LONDON, W. C. 1.

TELEPHONE NO. MUSEUM 8101.

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSIOLOGY AND BIOCHEMISTRY.

IN REPLY PLEASE

QUOTE \_\_\_\_\_

February 6th 1931.

Dear Flexner,

Very many thanks for sending me Bulletin No. 1 of your Institute for Advanced Study. It is very exciting to think of the grand opportunities it will give for people to get on with real study and research. You say in your preface that you send it out for the purpose of enlisting sympathy and eliciting suggestions. You have from me the former in full, but I have no suggestions at the moment, unless it be to found plenty of tea-parties of the kind I indicated to you years ago. When, however, you come here and spend a Sunday afternoon telling me of your plans I may be able to think of something, but it will not be as valuable as ~~that~~ *the tea-parties.*

We were delighted to see your daughter <sup>*at my house*</sup> ~~here~~ one evening a few weeks ago. I hope you are coming to London soon.

Yours ever,

*A.V. Hill*

London

Tynbee

3, Melina Place,  
London, N.W. 8.

6th February, 1931.

Dear Flexner,

Thank you so much for sending me the Bulletin outlining the organisation and purpose of the Institute for Advanced Study, which has now followed upon your letter. I have read it carefully and thought over it; and, before you arrive in Europe yourself, I shall also have read your book on Universities (un-read so far, because I have been busy launching a new volume of my Survey of International Affairs). Meanwhile here are my first thoughts.

Your plan is very exciting. That is the first effect it makes on my mind. I immensely like its large-mindedness. Two points which strike me particularly are the determination not to take action prematurely, and the decision to pick out the best people for the work without regard to differences of race, creed or sex. Here you are on your guard, at the beginning, against two besetting sins of our age - the craving for quick returns and the tribal exclusiveness which is such a disastrous anachronism in a world that has become a unity. These two weaknesses have ruined many great enterprises in our time. Conversely, the two principles which you have laid down will work most potently, I feel sure, for the success of your great undertaking.

The foundations of your Institute will stand, as is natural and proper, in New Jersey, but your campus will be the World itself. This is, I imagine, a necessary condition for success; for, in the world as it is now, the great things can only be done by organisations with a world-wide range.

You raise the question whether you shall begin operations in the field of the physical and biological sciences or in the humanistic field. May I suggest that, if anything has to be postponed, it should not be the human studies. We have enough knowledge of Physical Nature to go on with. It is our understanding of human relations that is in default. In the present outlook of our civilisation, this is the danger-point. It is here that, just now, the application of thought and study - thought on a large scale and study with a long view - is urgent. The passage which I have marked in the attached clipping from an interview which was given the other day by Sir Josiah Stamp, puts the case, a propos of one line of human study, more forcibly, and of course much more authoritatively, than I can.

The importance of human studies brings me to the one point, of any account, in your exposition that I am inclined to criticise; because this particular criticism is perhaps most pertinent in the field of human studies, though I believe it holds good in some measure for all studies. You seem to make an absolute antithesis between the conditions most favourable to advanced study and the conditions of the

practical life of action. The founders, in their letter, express a hope "that the staff of the institution will consist exclusively of men and women of the highest standing in their respective fields of learning, attracted to this institution through its appeal as an opportunity for the serious pursuit of advanced study and because of the detachment it is hoped to secure from outside distractions." And you remark, (of course, quite truly) that "Men and women who a generation ago might have devoted themselves to academic life are swept into the vortex of practical life." If I interpret these passages right, I am not quite in agreement with them.

For the successful pursuit of advanced human studies, I believe that what the student needs is not purely shelter in the form of release from teaching or segregation from ordinary practical active life - but something more complicated and more difficult to provide for. He needs, I think, to be "in" the world of action but not "of" it. He needs either to stand with one foot planted in the world of action and the other in the world of study permanently, or else to be coming and going constantly between the two worlds, as, in The Republic, Plato's philosopher kings are to come and go between the Cave and the ideal world out in the sunlight. The humanist's vision has to come to him like Elijah's vision of God on Mount Horeb. God was not in the wind and not in the earthquake and not in the fire; but Elijah had to expose himself to the wind and the earthquake and the fire in turn before he could hear the still small voice. So, the student of the humanities has to be in contact with the rush and roar of ordinary human life if he is to think thoughts about life that will have a value for his fellow human beings.

I believe this is the practical crux of all human studies, because this coming and going between the two worlds is so difficult to manage. It is fairly easy to live either in the world of action or in the world of study exclusively and all one's time. But transition - à fortiori, perpetual transition - between them is not at all easy, because the two worlds have different atmospheres and different rhythms. It is like perpetually having to change your gear when one is driving a car.

One's eyes are sharpest in one's own corner of the field; so that I personally am able to see this difficulty most clearly in the case of historians. Have you ever noticed how many of the really great historians have been men of action with broken careers, who might never have entered on the life of study at all if their life of action had not accidentally been cut short? Conspicuous examples are Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, Josephus, Ibn Khaldun, Machiavelli, Clarendon, Olivier; and Clarendon, at least, was aware of the direct relation between the vicissitudes of his career and the production of his creative intellectual work. Do you know the passage in his autobiography? You might find it worth looking up, if it isn't in your mind. In looking back over his life, Clarendon thanks God for his "three acquiescences", meaning three quiescent periods when exile or disgrace removed him forcibly from the arena of politics; and he describes how, in these breathing-spaces, the experience which had come to him as a man of action found expression in his work as a man of



letters. What he says about this is rather to the point, I believe, for you.

Now obviously the trick of breaking a man of action's career in the hope of extracting some notable piece of intellectual work from him is fantastically wasteful. It is like the fabulous Chinese practice, which Lamb makes such game of in his essay, of burning down the house in order to roast the pig. If it is accepted that some perpetual alternation or transition, or some permanent posture of standing with a foot in each camp, is the desirable condition for anybody who is trying to pursue advanced human studies, then one of the aims of an Institute for Advanced Study would presumably be to make this condition possible without the necessity for a series of devastating upheavals in the individual's private life. I believe that some deliberate and systematic provision of this kind is one of the crying needs of the contemporary world.

Under the strenuous economic conditions of modern life, it is practically impossible to live and work in this way without independent means. In order to earn one's living nowadays, one is more and more remorselessly driven to work unremittingly at high pressure, to follow a single rut, to become specialised and professionalised. A historian, for instance, tends to live entirely among historians and to work in libraries and archives, instead of living partly among the men of action in the places where the affairs of the world are carried on. On the other hand, the man of action - whether in private business or in public service - tends to be so completely taken up by the ever more exacting task of getting his business done, that opportunities for temporary or partial withdrawals, in the nature of Clarendon's "acquiescences", do not come his way. Thus the student is driven into an "academic" attitude towards affairs, and the man of affairs into a "utilitarian" attitude towards study. The student becomes sterile through being out of touch with life; the man of action fails to reap the intellectual harvest of his practical experience because the rhythm and atmosphere of modern active life give him a thirst for "practical results" and "quick returns". Thus that happy blend of scholar and man of affairs which has been the salt of humanism in the past, is becoming ever rarer. And yet, when one does come across embodiments of the type, one sees clearly that this is the combination of circumstances that produces the most original and creative work in the field of human studies. As living examples, I should cite men like General Smuts, Lionel Curtis, President Masaryk, Gilbert Murray. When one considers these men's intellectual work, I think one can see one common characteristic standing out above the vast differences of temperament and individuality: with all of them, their work is in direct relation to the active life of the world, and this is the secret of its freshness and its effectiveness.

I could even illustrate my point, in a minor way, from my personal experience.

In the world as it is, it is really very difficult to secure this alternation or combination between the life of action and the life of study which is, I am convinced, the necessary condition for fruitful work in the field of human studies.

The only existing foundations, that I happen to know of, which provide this condition are Webster's Chair at Aberystwyth and a lectureship in citizenship which has been established in the University of Glasgow by Sir Daniel Stevenson and which is now held by Mr. Delisle Burns. The lecturer has to reside and teach (the fact that it is a teaching post does not affect the argument) for about three months in the year at Glasgow. For the rest of the time, he is free to gather grist by studying citizenship in the life.

I fancy that the closest precedents for your Institute of Advanced Studies are the academies which were instituted by "enlightened monarchs" in the 17th and 18th centuries. In these, there was the fruitful contact between study and affairs which, I believe, would be the ideal condition for work in your Institute - at any rate, in the field of human studies.

As your founders, in their large-minded spirit, are proposing to draw their workers and students from all countries and peoples, I believe you might find it particularly illuminating to examine how Frederick the Great and Catherine the Great made Berlin and Petersburg respectively into centres of advanced studies where scholars from all parts of Europe congregated. I suggest these two cases because Berlin and Petersburg at that time were at about the same distance (in the broadest sociological and psychological sense of the term distance) from Western Europe as the State of New Jersey is now. The problem which Frederick and Catherine had to solve was how to bring the leading scholars of Europe into regular association with the Academies of Berlin and Petersburg without compelling these scholars to cut their intellectual roots. Study Voltaire's relations with the Berlin Academy, and his visits to Sans Souci. In spite of the historic quarrel (Absit omen!), this precedent may suggest ways and means for your Institute to secure the effective collaboration of a Bergson and an Einstein and a Croce and a Tagore and a Hu Shih.

You see, your Bulletin has thoroughly stirred my mind and started a dozen trains of thought. I will now try to bring these to a point - of course, only tentatively and provisionally - by suggesting certain principles on which an Institute of Advanced Studies might perhaps base its plan of operations:-

1. The staff should do no undergraduate teaching, and indeed no teaching at all in the ordinary sense; at this level, the distinction between teacher and student would surely disappear; your work would be the mutual education of people who all had contributions to make.

2. Everybody working at the Institute ought to be engaged on some definite piece of personal work and to be putting the results into some form in which these will be communicable to other people. (I put this in because, if you exempt your scholar from teaching, you must guard the Institute against that weakness of scholars - so common in Oxford - of being too self-critical, or too sensitive to other people's criticisms, to produce results. A mind which does not communicate the results of its work, when these are ripe,



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to other people in some form is unsocial, and it will infallibly go addled).

3. There should of course be some degree of direct personal intercourse, at the material centre of the Institute in New Jersey, between all your workers, whether they are living all the time at the centre or are working part of the time, or even most of the time, at some distant point on your world-wide campus. (This is necessary, because some of the most fundamental things can only be communicated by direct personal intercourse, as Plato testified a propos of his own Academy: "There is no written account of my philosophy from my own hand, and there never will be one. Unlike other sciences, it cannot be put into words. It can only be acquired through close discussion and personal intercourse; and then it suddenly comes to life in the soul - like a light caught from a leaping flame - and keeps alive in that soul thereafter without having to be nursed.")

4. In the field of human studies, at least, there should be provision for keeping some of your workers partly in the world of affairs and partly out of it. Take care not to pluck them up by the roots or to cut off their sources of intellectual nourishment. For scholars' minds are delicate plants!

Well, this is enough for one letter; but I will not apologise for the length of this one, because you have invited comments.

My very best wishes for the success of your undertaking. May it prosper as it deserves from the spirit in which it is being set on foot. I look forward to seeing you over here before long and hearing more about it.

Yours very sincerely,

*A. J. Joynt*

Dr. Abraham Flexner,  
The Institute for Advanced Study,  
100 East 42nd Street,  
New York, U.S.

A.O. Lovejoy

January 31, 1931

Dear Professor Lovejoy:

I hate questionnaires and don't believe in them, but there are a few questions regarding which I should like to get your considered opinion. Here they are on the enclosed slip. Will you tell me anything that occurs to you in reference to them and, if you have had the patience to read Bulletin # 1 of the Institute for Advanced Study, will you also tell me anything that you may think regarding this new project? I shall very greatly value any suggestions that you have to make.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Arthur O. Lovejoy  
827 Park Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland

AF:ESB

January 26, 1931

Dear Professor Armstrong:

Returning to town, I find your note of the twenty-third to Mrs. Bailey. I shall be glad to see you and Dr. Leland at 3:30, as you suggest, on Wednesday afternoon.

With all good wishes and kind regards, I am

Very sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Edward C. Armstrong  
26 Edgemoor Street  
Princeton, New Jersey

AF:REB

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

26 EDGEHILL STREET

PRINCETON, N. J.

January 23 1931

*Armstrong*

Miss E. S. Bailey  
100 East 42nd St., N.Y.C.

Dear Miss Bailey:

Thank you for letting me know of Dr. Flexner's change of plan. Should he be back in time to make it convenient for him to see me at 3 30 or later next Wednesday afternoon, I should be glad to come to his office, should I get work at any time Tuesday, and I think it most likely that Dr. Leland could also join us.

Very truly yours,

*Edward C. Armstrong*

Edward C. Armstrong

## THE INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

1. With what subjects should the Institute first cope - this from the standpoint of their fundamental importance, their timeliness, their relative need in this country as compared with what is being done in other subjects?
2. In reference to the subjects selected do you know persons who could undertake to head them or persons to whom one should apply whether in this country or in Europe for suggestions as to the right heads?
3. In what way should the admission of students be carried on?
4. Under what conditions and in what cases should degrees be conferred?
5. What precautions, if any, should the faculty take in reference to the conduct and assiduity, etc. of those admitted as students?
6. What innovations may be undertaken as respects buildings, living accommodations, etc., for the purpose of facilitating contacts between students and teachers, or for other reasons?
7. What is the minimum amount of space that should be procured with a view to present needs and future developments?
8. What is the simplest form of administration that you can imagine as adequate?
9. What kind of salaries should be paid heads and men in lower grades?
10. What fees should be charged?
11. What should be done in reference to fellowships?

J. F. Johnson

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
DIVISION OF MANUSCRIPTS

February 24, 1931

My dear Flexner:

If you wish me to put into writing (doubtless in a more deliberate form) the substance of what I said the other day when we were discussing the possibilities of the Institute for Advanced Study, I ought, on the principle that the shoemaker should stick to his last, to confine myself pretty closely to possibilities in historical work, not already sufficiently covered by existing agencies, for the general functions and aspects of universities and the like have ceased to be familiar to me, and are exceedingly familiar to you - to no one more so. I pass over therefore the doubts I expressed, probably after too little consideration, as to the general helpfulness to the researcher of having teaching to do concurrently, only saying that in a department of historical research I had always a strong feeling that researches went on more prosperously in organizations framed for that purpose and having no other duties.

There are, however, two general suggestions I should like to advance. In one of them my proper diffidence is fortified by an impression from something you said, and in the other by the same impression derived from a passage in Bulletin No. 1, that these thoughts are not wholly remote from your own view. One is, that if it is desired that the new institute shall find its place by doing things that are not being done by other agencies already existing, it will be easier to find a career composed of such things by seeking in the field of humanistic studies than in that of the physical sciences. In every country, I gather, but certainly in America, the humanities are treated stiefmütterlich in comparison with the sciences. We see governments and endowers and even universities relatively "quitting and forsaking Minerva and the Muses as barren virgins, and relying upon Vulcan." The United States government appropriates twenty thousand dollars per annum for history and twenty millions for research in the sciences. Yale, according to the newspapers, begins the work of its much-heralded Institute of Human Relations by a study of the history of textile machinery! I do not believe that either Mr. Carnegie or Mr. Gilman meant that our greatest endowment for research should be almost exclusively used for researches in the physical sciences, but such has been its fate. Something might be done to redress the balance.



Dr. Flexner - 2

My other suggestion of general scope would be that the experiment might be made of giving to those whom the Bulletin mentions as the faculty a greater share in the management of the institute than is customary in American institutions of learning or of higher education. Our universal tradition is that, while professors are well enough in the class-room, the superior control over them and over the institution must be vested in amateurs, assumed to have more common sense, or in an autocratic president, seldom a real scholar. It may be so, and certainly when an institution looks to the public for its funds it is right that the public should be abundantly represented in its governing board. Also, professors can hardly be left to fix professorial salaries. But in the case of an institute whose departmental heads are few, and are superior men of high competence, I am doubtful whether the practical sagacity of men of the usual trustee type is so much greater, in respect to the affairs of this one institution, than that of the men in direct daily contact with the job, as to overbalance the negligence with which I have so often seen trustees treating the duties which ought to attach to their responsible positions. In Europe the tradition runs otherwise, doesn't it? The Carlsberg Foundation, the nearest analogue in Europe to the Carnegie Institution, seems to be entirely managed, and very successfully, by a committee of five or six first-rate Danish scholars. And here in America the organization with whose workings I have been most familiar, the American Historical Association, managed almost entirely by selected professors, has been administered with remarkable prudence and success, while the one foundation managed by a board of university presidents has gone to smash. However, you know far more about these things than I do, and I had better stick to my last.

Specifically as to history, then. In what way can an endowed institution for the advancement of knowledge best promote the advancement of historical knowledge? This was precisely the question that lay before me when in 1905 I took charge of the Department of Historical Research in the Carnegie Institution of Washington. The answer I gave to it was set forth briefly in my first annual report, and, since at the end of my twenty-three years there it still seemed to me to be, in general terms, the rational answer, I repeated it textually, as the basis on which I had proceeded during those twenty-three years, in the last annual report I made to the

Dr. Flexner - 3

president of that institution. Of that report I gave you a copy, but I have just discovered some copies of a lecture before the trustees of the Carnegie Institution, given in 1912, in which I set forth the same doctrine more amply, and of this I venture to send you a couple of copies, in fuller explanation of what I thought. Times change, and plans should be modified, but I believe that the fundamental principles on which that Department of Historical Research proceeded were sound; and I judge that the members of the historical profession in the United States thought so, and I observe that the various European establishments for historical research proceed on just such principles.

Historical work has always been expensive. In many periods and countries it has had to be the pursuit of rich men; in our own time and land, the historian must either be well-to-do or have an academic salary and pursue his writing as an avocation. In any case, before he can write a line there must ordinarily be much expenditure of labor and money in the accumulation of the necessary materials - correspondence, journeys, wearisome search of uncharted archives, or archives uncharted for such purposes as his, manual or photographic copying. Sometime it is as if the architect had to find and shape and transport and lay his building stones with his own hands. Sometimes the historian has to incur in these ways so much labor and expense that he arrives at his proper task jaded, or gives it up, or dies before it is finished. There are parts of this trouble that he can not escape doing for himself, but certainly there are large parts of the spade-work that, in the interest of the advancement of learning, can be more efficiently done, not for one historian alone but for all, or many, by organisms created for that especial purpose. Surely we have here a rational application of the principle of the division of labor. Individual talent can best do certain things; money can best do others. The application of money, through the labor of journeymen workers and otherwise, is in respect to history the most appropriate function of an endowment, by whose aid needed tools of research, inventories and guides to materials, and collections of documentary materials, useful to many historians, can be supplied.

It happens that just here is at present the chief gap in the apparatus of historical scholarship in the United States. There is abundant provision for the general teaching of history and for specific training in seminars. So long as the Ph.D. is required for academic appointments, and a thesis is required for the Ph.D., there will be no lack of historical monographs.

Dr. Flexner - 4

Heaven will raise up historians of higher quality. State historical commissions and historical societies stimulate state history adequately, at least in quantity. Benefactors of universities, or the trustees of rich foundations, give universities funds by means of which individual professors successfully pursue individual researches. But one may say of such as Lord Bacon in the Advancement of Learning said of those of his own time, "Not derogating from the noble intentions of any that have been deservers toward the state of learning, I do observe nevertheless that their works and acts . . . tend rather to augment the mass of learning in the multitude of learned men than to rectify or raise the sciences themselves." The army of American historical workers is an army without a general staff.

At the present moment, the opportunity and need to establish an organization for the general helping-forward of American historical work is created by the course taken in 1928 by the Carnegie Institution of Washington. On my retirement in that year from the charge of its Department of Historical Research (at that time its only humanistic department) that institution appointed no successor to me or Mr. Leland or the late Miss Davenport, the three senior workers, and, while permitting the others to continue their pieces of work already begun, made it plain in various ways that no further historical work would be undertaken, and that the clearing-house function of the Department in relation to the historical profession could not longer be maintained. The American Historical Association would doubtless be glad to step into the breach and institute such an office, but has not the means. The way therefore lies open for the creation of a department of historical research which shall serve the general interests of the profession in the field of investigation.

The Carnegie Institution's department confined itself to American history, because, if we assume that the proper function of an endowed historical department lies in dealings with the raw materials of history, those of European history obviously can be and will be more effectively and adequately dealt with by European historical scholars than by Americans three or four thousand miles away. This conclusion seems still to hold good.

It is however by no means to be expected or desired that a department of historical research newly founded in 1931 or 1932 should proceed along the same lines or by the same methods as that predecessor. For one thing, it is altogether likely

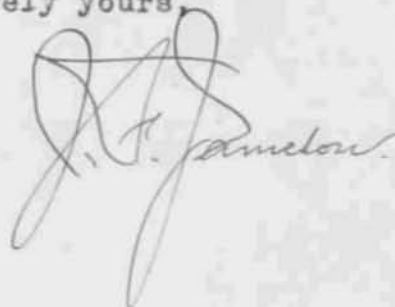
Dr. Flexner - 5

that a sagacious director of a new department of the sort, looking forward to see what lines of activity on its part will be most useful to the immediate future of his science, will recognize the decided trend toward economic and social history, and will in any programme lay added emphasis on preparatives toward their advancement. Their documentation has its own peculiarities. Some of their American materials, particularly perhaps the statistical, are already available in some abundance; but no one who has talked with any of the twelve writers of the twelve-volume History of American Life (ed. Schlesinger and Fox) can have failed to perceive how slow and difficult all work in American social history is made to the writer by the necessity of doing for himself the preliminary spade-work that ought to be ready to his hand when he begins to write. In other words, whatever shift of emphasis or direction the work of the new generation may call for, there will still be the same need, for efficient progress, of some organization to supply tools of research and collections of material.

The main requirements are modest quarters, a simple organization - a chief and a few well-educated helpers - and access to an exceptionally large library. The chief should be a man, between 35 and 50 say, who has taught general United States history or has otherwise interested himself in all parts of it (rather than in "my period" or hobbies of his own), who has some gift for organization and some habit of reflection on the larger aspects of his science, who has either a large acquaintance in the historical profession or the ability to acquire it, and who will be content to serve that profession rather than to achieve objects of personal ambition. I am sure such can be found.

In case you have succeeded in reading all this, you will find my thanks here in the last sentence.

Very sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. P. Samuelson". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Dr. Abraham Flexner



Dr. J. Franklin Jameson, Library of Commerce, Washington, D. C.

Washington, February 16, 1931

Jameson's main point was this: we needn't bother about writers of monographs and books on general history. They will be written by Ph.D. candidates and professors. The Department of ~~the~~ History in the Institute ought to concern itself with the spade work which men like <sup>monographs</sup> ~~Vandegraff~~ and Motley had to do for themselves in America and for foreign archives. That was the task which he undertook at the Carnegie Institution which Merriam has discontinued. His budget was only \$40,000 a year, but he did two things, brought to light, and put in order American sources and got photostats, etc., of material buried in foreign archives, thus enabling those who write monographs and history to base their work on authentic, first-hand data. His squint was mainly political with a view to the present developments. The sources that will be used in the next twenty-five years will be social and economic. To the gathering of such material, their arrangement and their publication a research institute of a high-grade graduate institution should devote its attention.

He was afraid of the use of the word "students", unless I meant men competent to engage in this kind of activity. He promised me a memorandum.

He thought Charlie Beard by no means burnt out and has a high opinion of Evarts Greene. Of the younger men he knows less, but promised to think and let me have his candid opinion.

AF:ESB

January 15, 1931

Dear Professor Armstrong:

Returning to town, I find your delightful letter of December 24. I realize, as you do, that in this materialistic America so strangely composed of good and bad there is going to be a long and difficult struggle to maintain high, scholarly ideals, but it heartens me more than I can say to find that you and I and many others are enlisted in the cause.

I shall be very glad to see you at any time when you come to New York if you will just let me know in advance.

With warm regards and all good wishes,

Very sincerely yours,

ABRAHAM FLEXNER

Professor Edward C. Armstrong

Princeton, New Jersey

AF:ESB



The London "Observer,"

19.1.31.

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## INTERVIEWS WITH GREAT SCIENTISTS.

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### V.—SIR JOSIAH STAMP.

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#### THE IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMICS.

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"OUR CIVILISATION IN  
DANGER."

---

#### "COMMON SENSE" AND FREE WILL.

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#### USES OF SUNDAY.

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#### THE FUTURE OF EUGENICS.

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We publish below the fifth of a series of interviews by Mr. J. W. N. Sullivan with leading men of science in this country and abroad.

The interviewer's aim has been directed less to the scientific achievement of these thinkers than to the philosophic attitude to which their work has brought them.

Sir Josiah Stamp (born 1880) is President of the Royal Statistical Society and Chairman of the London, Midland, and Scottish Railway. He is an ex-Civil Servant, who has taken a part in the handling of most of the intricate economic problems which have arisen since the War.

Interviews with Sir A. S. Eddington (December 21), Mr. H. G. Wells (December 28), Sir J. H. Jeans (January 4), and Prof. Schrödinger (January 11) have already appeared.

(By J. W. N. Sullivan.)

Sir Josiah Stamp hesitated a little when I asked him what had been the dominant motive that had guided him in his choice of a career. "It would be difficult to answer that without appearing somewhat priggish, wouldn't it?" he said. He meditated for a few moments. "I can say, however," he went on, "that my life has not been consciously planned. I did not set out with the intention of doing what I have done. As a matter of fact, my earliest passion was for astronomy. Then I became immensely interested in Gothic architecture. I still like to think I know more about Gothic architecture than I know about anything else. Economics came to my attention because it was presented to me as a subject in an examination that I entered for. I discovered that I had a natural craving for this subject, and I went on with it. But it has been a step-by-step career. The day before I left the Civil Service I had no notion whatever that I was going to do so. There has been nothing planned about my career."

#### THE COMPLEXITY OF SOCIETY

"What do you regard as the chief importance of the study of economics?"

"I think that our modern civilisation depends on it. At this particular moment our civilisation is, I believe, in danger. The only thing that can save it is right thinking about economics. Economics is *the* thing now. The crying need at the present time is for a great extension of this study. We want more first-rate minds to work out the science of the subject, and we also want a great number of popularisers who will impress the importance of these principles on the public. Unless this great effort of understanding is made I think our economic society, which has recently become so much more complex, will be more than we have ideas to control. An effort should

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be made even if it means abstracting energy from other pursuits. Science, for instance, could without disaster remain where it is for another twenty years. We could get on with what we know. There is no real need for fresh scientific discoveries just now. But greater knowledge of economics is an international necessity."

#### A GREAT GAP BRIDGED.

"Do you think that mankind has progressed?"

"I think that mankind has progressed economically and spiritually. There is no longer the great gap that used to exist between the rich and the poor—I mean in essential matters. Of the things that the rich man has access to some only are really worth while. And the poor man has access to those things, the worthwhile things, also. Society is, in this respect, more homogeneous than it ever was before. But there are disintegrating tendencies in society. To understand these we must come back to economics. The greatest influence tending to disintegrate society is the lack of a fixed standard of value. The fluctuations of money values are a real peril to society."

#### IMMORTALITY.

"Do you think that anything of a man, besides his influence and the memories of his friends, survives his bodily death?"

"You mean, do I believe in personal immortality? Yes; I certainly do."

"Do you think that there is scientific evidence for your belief?"

"No; I do not think that science has anything to say about it, one way or the other. But it seems to me that both philosophy and intuition are in favour of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. A theory that conflicts with intuition or common sense has not much real power. When I was a student I thought that science involved determinism, and I could see no answer to the scientific arguments. In fact, I forced myself to believe in determinism, or, at any rate, I tried to."

"But my common sense rebelled against the theory. Although it seemed unanswerable I could not help feeling that it was all nonsense. It so outraged my common sense that I really could not believe it. Thus common sense saved me,—as it so often does save people. Nowadays, of course, the doctrine of determinism has not the force it used to have, and through the fundamental ideas of physics itself it seems quite untenable. People's minds have been liberated by the new ideas that are abroad. The notion of the fourth dimension, for example, and the wide-spread interest in spiritualism, have revolutionised the mind and made an entirely new outlook possible."

#### HOW SHOULD WE SPEND SUNDAY?

"Do you regard the present system of rewards and discouragements as fair and desirable?"

"It has many grave drawbacks, but economic rewards are, on the whole, given to those who fulfil economic wants. The men who make money do, on the whole, produce something that is wanted. I am not now saying whether the public *should* want these things. Indeed, I think we have got our sense of values lopsided. There are various kinds of poverty. One instance of this is the way the Sabbath has been spoilt. The function of the Sabbath is to give man the opportunity of looking at quite different values from those that condition his ordinary life. But we make our recreations the mere obverse of our occupations. Thus, if a man sits in an office all the week he wants to do the opposite—he wants to dash about in a motor-car—on the Sunday. But these two ways of employing his time really belong to the same class of values. One is merely the opposite of the other. Men require to realise that there are other values, quite outside this limited circle. I am referring to such things as poetry, philosophy, history, religion, beauty. And I suppose that great music can be ranked with these, although the music that people ordinarily listen to certainly cannot. We have little enough opportunity to cultivate these oases."

#### WHAT IS "ACCIDENT?"

"Do you think that life on this planet has come about accidentally or do you think it is part of some great scheme?"

Sir Josiah was silent for some minutes. "What do you mean by an accident?" he said finally. "If I keep on throwing stones at a wall and one of the stones goes through a little hole and hits somebody on the other side, is that an accident? The chances of it doing so could have been calculated beforehand. Does science know of any accidents? Let us suppose that, ages ago, innumerable forces were let loose and, out of their combinations, our planet inevitably emerges. Is that an accident?"

"Let us take accident to mean absence of purpose. Do you think that purpose lies behind the appearance of life on this planet?"

"Yes, I think that something we could call purpose lies behind it all (regarding purpose as an order different from the order which would result from statistical probabilities at random) and I have to assume, therefore, that mind of some kind lies behind phenomena. Even the existence of all the millions of stars that cannot, apparently, support life, is no argument against purpose. It may have been a tremendous achievement, for all we know, to knock off our planet, and may have necessitated the whole material universe. Besides, those millions of stars may serve purposes of which we have no idea. We have only one idea of 'life.'"

"Do you find the existence of suffering an objection to the idea of life being purposeful?"

"Well, suffering is sometimes bene-

ficient. -But not always. No, it sometimes appears quite gratuitous and evil, I agree. The existence of suffering is certainly a difficulty, but it does not, in my opinion, negate the notion of a fundamental purpose. We obviously cannot understand the scheme of things. It may be impossible to bring results about without suffering."

"Do you think it possible to reach any real assurance that a scheme of things exists?"

"Assurance, yes. But not proof—not mathematical and scientific proof. But I do not believe that mathematical proof is the only kind of proof. One can reach profound convictions through religious and artistic experiences. Such experiences conspire, it seems to me, to make one feel that there is a scheme. But this is not a conviction that one can demonstrate to others."

"Do you assume that the material universe exists quite independently of our consciousness?"

"Yes, certainly. I do not believe in the idealist philosophy. I believe that the universe revealed by science is an objective reality, and 'exists' quite independently of the human mind. As I have said, I think that some form of consciousness existed before the human mind appeared. But it need not have existed. The universe would still be there."

#### PUTTING POSTERITY IN ITS PLACE.

"Do you think that the meaning of life, the justification of all human effort, is to be found in the future? Do we exist, in fact, to make the world better for coming generations?"

"Partly. But the individual life has rights of its own. I do not agree with the notion that our whole purpose is to serve the next generation. This is to find the meaning of life in a goal which perpetually recedes. But, also, I do not think we ought to be content with a purely personal development. Each individual's life is partly a means to an end and partly an end in itself."

"Do you think that selective breeding, as advocated by the eugenicists, would help to bring about a better future race?"

"I think that positive eugenics is in its infancy. We have to find out, first of all, what human qualities are desirable before we apply ways and means of getting them. The matter is very complicated. What is intelligence, for example? There are various forms of it. And certain moral qualities are thought desirable by some people and undesirable by others. Is humanitarianism desirable, for example? Might it not be better for the long run biologically if we made ourselves hard and unsympathetic? All these questions must be cleared up before selective breeding is undertaken. There is no body of men, at present, fit to be trusted with the power of moulding the race."

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EDWARD S. HARKNESS  
654 MADISON AVENUE  
NEW YORK

December 31, 1930

Dr. Abraham Flexner,  
The Institute for Advanced Study,  
100 East 42nd Street,  
New York City.

Dear Doctor Flexner:

Your letter of December 11th was received in due time. It has been more or less difficult to get it before Mr. Harkness since he has been away from the city most of the month. I did, however, have a moment to talk with him about it, and he appreciated your thoughtfulness in wishing to tell him about your "new venture."

Mr. Harkness hopes that you will let him look over your plans when they are finally completed, as he is able to inform himself so much better in this way than he is through an interview.

I have been a long time in replying to your letter but I have had a bad attack of grippe, having spent five days in bed, and I am just now beginning to get around.

With all good wishes for a Happy New Year,  
Sincerely yours,

Gertrude Moore

GM:M.

December 26, 1930

Professor Edward C. Armstrong

Princeton, New Jersey

My dear Professor Armstrong:

In Mr. Flexner's absence from the city permit me to thank you for your letter of the twenty-fourth. He will return to New York about the second week of January, and I am sure he will communicate with you promptly.

Very truly yours,

ESTHER S. BAILEY



*Armstrong*  
Princeton, N.J.

December 24, 1930

Dr. Abraham Flexner  
New York City

Dear Dr. Flexner:

I have been intending to write you ever since your book came out, but have waited to do so until I could read it through with the care it merits. I feel that its appearance marks an important date for American scholarship. Not that I feel that a single book, or any single act, can suffice to decide the outcome in what must be a long and difficult struggle for victory if victory is to be obtained. In fact, if our philosophy is a pragmatic philosophy it would seem to tell us that this is a fight against the inevitable in which we are contending, not merely against a present situation but a situation which is the logical outcome of a long historical development.

It is for this reason that I admire the work all the more. It is not difficult to take the leadership in a fight where conditions are favorable. It is difficult, but most important, to find a leader for a minority and a minority against whom all exterior circumstances combine.

You have clearly and convincingly defined the issue. Efforts of many sorts will be made to obscure this, but I believe that it will be impossible to upset your thesis as to what the real issue is.

Your procedure of concrete illustration is causing no end of persons in educational posts to wince under the knife. I am taking no joy in their discomfort, but it was the only method of approach capable of producing results. In the institutions which were not selected as subjects for the dissecting there may be a temporary elation, but I see no opportunity, nor prospect, of permanent hilarity on their part. One might even consider that their being passed over in silence is somewhat humiliating, as it merely marks them out as not sufficiently important to have the large artillery for the moment trained ~~xxxxxx~~ against them.

I read with particular interest all that you wrote concerning the Johns Hopkins, for there I was in a position out of my own knowledge to form a judgment concerning the facts and the inferences drawn from those facts. I wholly agree with all you write concerning Baltimore. From 1897 to 1917 I was upon the philosophical faculty there; from 1910 to 1917 I was chairman of one of the departments. When I left there it was with no personal quarrel against any individual or against the institution. During my chairmanship I had the active cooperation and backing of President Remsen -- most liberal also, in the light of the financial situation of the University. From his successor I had neither cooperation nor backing, but in



- 2 -

every single point of which I made an issue I ultimately had my way. I left because I was convinced that there was no stopping the drift in general university affairs which was increasing from a drift to a flood. I left with no anticipation that in a new place I should escape manifestation of the same tendency. The difference was that the Johns Hopkins as it had been and as it might be was so tied in with my heart strings that I could not be content to stay there, simply trying to keep my own head above water and letting the devil take the rest. It was on this basis that C. C. Marden, J. E. Shaw and I deliberately decided that the time had come for us to seek to do our work in other places.

It is the same motives which since that time have led me to give a substantial part of my thought and time to the Council of Learned Societies -- all the time in fact which I felt that I could properly take from my own personal work and from my duties to the institution with which I am connected. My effort in that organization, and the one thing wherein I count, if I count at all, is that my contribution shall be to hold the organization fast to the ideal which you set forth in your book. Now that the situation has changed so that gratitude need no longer be interpreted as thankfulness for favors still to come, I wish to tell you of the surprise and delight that came to me over the outcome of the one rather brief interview which I had with you regarding the application which the Council submitted to the General Education Board. It seemed to me then, and still seems to me, that you showed a marvellous understanding of the aims which the Council had in view, and a responsiveness which indicated that regardless of the limitations which might be placed upon the successful execution of the aims we had in view by the inadequate intelligence and energy of a man such as myself, that you sensed the whole-hearted and honest intent of our group to further the aims which are clearly in your mind of such great import.

At some time, when it may suit your convenience, and when your pressing duties may permit it, I should very much like to have a talk with you, with a view to seeing in what way the A.C.L.S. can contribute toward the furtherance of our common aim. The very appearance of your book strengthens us in holding fast to those things in favor of which I have thrown all my weight. I hope it is not impossible that in some ways we can so direct our energies as to contribute in some measure to rendering your work more fruitful.

With very hearty greetings and best wishes for the year that lies ahead,

Sincerely yours,



Edward C. Armstrong

July 6, 1930

Dear Professor Armstrong:

Returning from Europe to spend just a few days in New York before going to Canada for a rest, I find your helpful and encouraging note of June 16. I hope very much, as the proposed Institute develops, there may arise many opportunities for cooperation with you and the American Council of Learned Societies. When I come back in the autumn, I shall be very glad if we can have an opportunity to talk together.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely yours,

~~ARMSTRONG~~ FLEXNER

Professor Edward C. Armstrong  
American Council of Learned Societies  
26 Edgemoor Street  
Princeton, New Jersey

AF:ESB

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES

OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN

26 EDGEHILL STREET

PRINCETON, N. J.

June 16, 1930

Dr. Abraham Flexner  
150 East 72nd Street  
New York City

Dear Dr. Flexner:

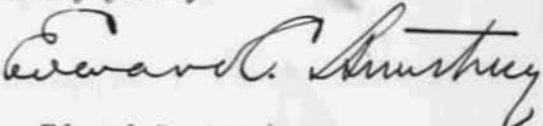
I wish to have word waiting upon your return of my great pleasure at the news of the fine gift of Mr. Bamberger which is being placed in such good hands for administration. While I do not yet know just what type of institution is in mind, I already have confidence that the foundation will advance the interests which lie so near to your heart, and feel equally sure that the humanities are not likely to fail to occupy an important place in the picture.

If there is any way in which the ACLS can be of aid to you in shaping your plans, call upon us with full assurance that we shall gladly seek for you such information as you may think us in a position to obtain, and to aid you in any other way that may lie in our power.

I am hoping also that I may have opportunity to advise with you regarding the activities and aims of the Council. In generous measure you contributed to the enlargement of our work, and we look confidently to you to aid us in steering wise courses.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,



Edward C. Armstrong

C O P Y

Cambridge, Mass.  
4 June, 1915

Dear Dr. Kirkland:

Harvard University has had very little experience about the service of members of the Faculties in its Governing Boards. The only clear case of that sort was that of Professor Ephraim W. Guérney, who, being Professor of History, was chosen a member of the President and Fellows of Harvard College by that Board itself, the election being consented to by the second Governing Board, the Overseers. Professor Guérney accepted the function at my request; and I was much in favor of his election; because he had a comprehensive interest in, and knowledge of several departments of the University; and we two were intimate friends who entertained similar ideas about the changes that ought to be made in the process of converting Harvard College into Harvard University. Professor Guérney was as good a man as could possibly have been found with whom to try the novel experiment; but, within two years, he insisted on resigning as Fellow, because he became satisfied that it was an undesirable thing to have any Professor in the Governing Board. I reluctantly came to the conclusion that he was right.

Since (1866) our second Governing Board, the Board of Overseers, has filled through elections by the Alumni, & no Professor in activity has been chosen to that Board. Several retired Professors and three retired Presidents, Messrs. James Walker, Thomas Hill, and Charles W. Eliot, have been elected members of that Board.

Since you have but one Governing Board, the experience of Harvard does not entirely apply in your case; but, so far as it goes, it would lead me to doubt the expediency of placing a member of any of your Faculties on your Governing Board. Still I feel very diffident about expressing any opinion as to the

C O P Y

Page 2      Letter of June 4, 1915      from Charles W. Eliot to Chancellor Kirkland

wisest policy for Vanderbilt University in this respect; because I do not know how good a choice you have of candidates for election to the Board. If you have plenty of good candidates, I should say that the presumption was against nominating as candidates members of any Faculty.

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) CHARLES W. ELIOT

Chancellor Kirkland

WILLIAMS COLLEGE  
Williamstown, Massachusetts

C O P Y

Office of the President

May 26, 1915

Chancellor J. H. Kirland  
Vanderbilt University  
Nashville, Tenn.

My dear Chancellor Kirkland:-

I had hoped to see you in Baltimore last week and then to answer in person your inquiry of the 18th inst.

I do not approve of the appointment of a member of the Faculty to a place in the Governing Board. Thus far we have not had the question to deal with here, although it is conceivable that, under our rules, the Alumni Association might put in nomination a member of the Faculty. My opinion is based upon experience as a member of the Standing Committee of my old school, St. Paul's, Concord. There several masters have been members of the committee, and at times this has proved to be truly an embarrassment, although in most instances no question arises which cannot be freely discussed.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) H. A. GARFIELD.

HAG-HMN



C O P Y

YALE UNIVERSITY

NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT.

President's Office  
Woodbridge Hall, 105 Wall Street.

May 25, 1915.

My dear Mr. Kirkland:-

It has been our usage not to have any member of the faculty on the Board of Trustees except the President. So uniform has been this custom that when Mr. Taft, who was a member of our Board of Trustees, accepted a professorship he resigned at once. Professor Baldwin, when elected Governor, having thereby become a member of the Board ex officio, wrote that as he was unwilling to resign his professorship he begged to be excused from attending the meetings of the Board of Trustees.

We have such complete arrangements for communication between the members of our Board and the various Deans and heads of departments that it would almost certainly be unwise to single out any individual professors for membership in the Corporation.

Regretting that I have not more that is of positive value to add, I remain

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) ARTHUR T. HADLEY

Chancellor J. H. Kirkland,  
Vanderbilt University,  
Nashville, Tennessee.

C O P Y

THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION  
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING  
576 Fifth Avenue  
New York

Office of the  
President

May 20, 1915.

Dear Chancellor Kirkland; -

The problem of placing a member of the faculty upon the governing board is one much debated in late years and one recently introduced at Cornell. There are reasons against it and there are strong reasons in favor of it provided the member so nominated is elected by the faculty.

It seems to me a good experiment to try and ought to result in a quickening of the relations between the faculty and the trustees.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Henry S. Pritchett

Chancellor J. H. Kirkland,  
Vanderbilt University,  
Nashville, Tenn.

C O P Y

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

President's Room

May 20, 1915

Chancellor J. H. Kirkland

Vanderbilt University

Nashville, Tenn.

My dear Chancellor:

I am very glad to reply to your inquiry of May 18, and to say that in my judgment it would be a mistake of the first magnitude to place upon the governing board of an American university any person, other than the president, who is in receipt of a salary from the university either as a member of the teaching staff or otherwise.

My attention was first attracted to this question about twenty years ago when the State officers of New York requested my aid in devising a plan to bring to an end the abuse of proprietary professional schools in New York State. These were schools in which the boards of trustees were composed largely or wholly of members of the teaching staff. Their educational standards were discredibly low and their chief aim was to provide the largest possible income for the teachers with the smallest possible amount of work. At that time I drafted and caused to be introduced into the Legislature an amendment to the statute governing these matters, which made it illegal for any person, other than the president of a university, school or college, to be a member of the board of trustees of such an institution if he were at the same time a member of the teaching staff or otherwise in receipt of an income from the institution. The Legislature of New York enacted this proposal into law, and under its operation the proprietary schools were brought to an end. I regret to say that in some of the later revisions of the Education Law this particular provision has been dropped

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Letter of May 20, 1935 from N. M. Butler to J. H. Kirkland

out. This was done surreptitiously however, inasmuch as there never has been any public discussion of the matter since the legislative action taken about 1896 or 1897, to which I have referred.

Nevertheless, I know of no case now in the State of New York where a member of the teaching staff sits upon the board of trustees. I should expect such a step to be the beginning of the end of the independence and integrity of the institution.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER