

JUL 18 1940

200  
Refugee Scholars

Same letter sent  
to all members of  
Executive Committee


July 17, 1940

Dear Mr. Rockefeller;

I am sending you herewith an informal action the necessity for which has developed since the last meeting of the Executive Committee. It relates to the tragic situation of eminent scholars and scientists now located largely in France, England, Spain and Portugal, whose work - indeed in some cases whose personal safety - is threatened by the swift development of the war. As you will recall, at the meeting of the trustees in Williamsburg last December, the officers recommended that the special fund set up for deposed European scholars be abolished and that hereafter items of this kind be handled through the grant-in-aid device in connection with the different divisions of the Foundation. This recommendation was adopted and in the last two or three months we have successfully brought to this country a number of eminent scholars whose productive work was no longer possible in Europe. For example, we are now just concluding arrangements in relation to <sup>otto</sup> Meyerhof, the brilliant physiologist, a Nobel Prize winner, who is stranded in Toulouse. He will come to the United States on funds furnished by the Foundation, and a place is waiting for him at the University of Pennsylvania.

As the war develops in intensity and as this problem of refugee scholars becomes more acute, it seems wise not only to have specific authorization from the trustees for work in this field but also to set up some mechanism outside the Foundation by which the details can be

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supervised. The New School for Social Research here in New York with which we have cooperated in the past seems to be the best agency for this kind of activity, and Dr. Alvin Johnson, its head, has had genuine success with work of this type.

Briefly, therefore, the enclosed action provides for:

- (1) Authorization to the officers to bring to this country outstanding European scholars not to exceed one hundred. The emphasis throughout, as always, would be on quality.
- (2) A grant of \$35,000 to be expended over two years by the New School for expenses in connection with the administration of the project.

The funds to pay the travel and living allowances of the incumbents over two years would be provided from the grant-in-aid budgets of the separate divisions and would amount altogether, if the maximum of a hundred scholars were brought to the United States, to a figure somewhere between \$150,000 and \$250,000.

Sufficient grant-in-aid funds have already been voted to the various divisions to carry them well into next fall, but the approval of this resolution would imply that further funds would be forthcoming up to the amount herein specified.

I am confident that no action which could be taken by the Foundation at this time is more basic. It means the salvaging of brains; and it is bound to have profound influence in enriching the intellectual life of America.

Mr. J. D. Rockefeller, 3rd

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If you concur in this action, would you be good enough to add your O.K. to this docket item, and return it to me in the enclosed envelope? Critical comment on the proposed action would be most welcome. I apologize for asking for this vote by mail, but if we are to act in relation to many of these cases, we must act quickly.

Sincerely yours,

**RAYMOND B. FOSDICK**

Mr. John D. Rockefeller, 3rd  
Marion  
Massachusetts