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(General)

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Dear Mike:

Your letters Numbers 50, 51, 52, and 53 have been received, and we have learned by your cables as well of the removal of the office to La Baule. It is reassuring to know that the staff is safe, and that no immediate anxieties as far as our own group is concerned, need be anticipated. The catastrophe came with startling suddenness, and while in a sense we were all prepared for it, nevertheless we were numbed and stunned when it actually arrived. Here in this office we are still overwhelmed by the kaleidoscopic shift, as well as by the prospect of the long tragedy that lies ahead of the world. We seem to spend our days reading the newspapers, and our nights sitting in front of the radio. Two major wars in a single lifetime are too much, and I am not at all sure that the human nervous system was built to withstand the impact of calamity such as this generation has had to undergo.

As I cabled you the other day, your arrangements have our complete confidence, and I do not have to tell you again that we are behind you one hundred per cent in the difficult job that you and your associates are carrying out. Just what plans we should make for the future it is, of course, too early to say. Day before yesterday we had a long officers' conference, with about twenty present, and discussed the situation as far as we could see it. It was as a result of that conference that I sent you that cable bearing on the question of fellowships about which Tom is writing you today. Just now we are making up a list of current grants in Europe, as well as current grants-in-aid. Some of these commitments will, I assume, be cancelled as circumstances change, and some will be postponed. Others will have to be altered to meet changing needs. These details will have to be worked out over the next few weeks or months.

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At your convenience, I wish you would let us know just how the responsibility is now divided between La Baule and the Paris office. Just what functions is Makinsky in Paris carrying out? I am glad that you left a skeleton staff there because all sorts of questions are bound to be referred to the old office, and somebody, if possible, ought to be there to deal with them. But are there any other functions than those relating to emergency questions which Makinsky is undertaking?

I think of La Baule merely as a temporary retreat, and not as a permanent location during the war. After all, La Baule is pretty well isolated, and as soon as the immediate questions of fellowships and running grants are settled, I would imagine that we would of necessity have to face the drastic step of disbanding the French personnel and bringing the American personnel back to New York for reassignment. This would involve, of course, the assumption on the part of the New York office of responsibility for payments in Europe. In other words, the financial function would be concentrated in New York. As we see the situation from here, the free circulation of personnel in Europe is going to be practically impossible, and any contacts that we have over there will probably have to be on a decentralized basis. We might have somebody in England and somebody else in France, and perhaps one or two others in other countries. These representatives would not only keep in touch with such of our present program as has not been liquidated, but would be on the outlook for new opportunities where the Foundation could be of assistance. I can readily foresee that the IHD and MS will have plenty of work to do of a new type. As the war goes on, Sawyer thinks that the problem of typhus is bound to come again, and I presume we can look for another pandemic of influenza. In matters of this kind the Foundation, I think, could be of genuine assistance. I see very little that NS can do in Europe in the future, and absolutely

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nothing for SS or the Humanities. If this is true, it means the return of Kittredge and Miller, and the reassignment in Europe of Warren. I would imagine that O'Brien would be very serviceable to us in a country like England. About Bakeman, I have no opinion, although I am confident that he will be invaluable somewhere. I think that you should plan to return to the United States some time this fall - in other words, as soon as the questions involving the liquidation of the Paris office have been settled and new plans set up for the future. Whether you should now go to China, I do not think that anyone can say. This is something that we will have to leave for the future to determine.

As I told the officers' conference the other day, I am anxious, as a Trustee, that the Foundation should not, in this war, undertake the kind of relief program that it sponsored in the last. Our job, as I see it, is twofold: first, in a dark world to keep burning the candle of the intellectual life; and second, to make available the best of scientific research in the alleviation of human misery. This, it seems to me, is, in the long run, a more practicable service for us to render than to try to feed a Belgium or a Poland.

In all this business I am merely thinking out loud. It is still too early for definite decisions. I have no illusions that this is going to be a short war, or that the tragedy will soon be over. I think we are in this for a long time, and that we've got to make long plans to meet it. Do not hesitate to write with complete frankness what your own ideas are. In hammering out a new approach to Europe, we shall have to get the best advice that we can.

Faithfully yours,

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