

Venice

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
LABORATORY FOR NUCLEAR SCIENCE  
CAMBRIDGE 39, MASSACHUSETTS  
Room 26-405

24 February 1965

Prof. Joseph Rotblat  
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London, N.W.2  
England

Dear Joe:

A number of us have had, in the last couple of days, opportunities to talk to Millionschtchikov about various aspects of the Venice Conference. In particular, he has been informed about the proposals for an additional working group on BW -- I have shown him your letter to me of 9 February (which he had not previously seen, having been away from Moscow for some time) and Matt told him about Geneva and prepared ~~him~~ a brief summary of what went on there, which he now has but had not yet read when I discussed the Venice agenda with him. (A copy of that letter is being sent to you under separate cover.) Since he is now on his way back to Moscow, I can only report to you his response to our verbal communications. Perhaps he will respond differently after he has read the various documents and your communications - - but I rather doubt it. Here is what I believe to be his views on the agenda for Venice:

(1) He would not like to see a special working group at Venice on BW, since no Russian representative has participated in the preliminary discussions, and such a working group is a departure from the previously agreed-upon agenda. He has, however, no objection to some preliminary discussions at Trieste on this question, with a view towards setting up an "official" study group (which, I believe, means with a designated Russian representative) which would prepare a report for the following conference. I interpret this to mean that things have been moving too fast on this front for him, and he is worried that they may get out of hand, though he is not opposed in principle to Pugwash discussions on this question. My personal view is that we should go ahead with a meeting in Trieste, informing him of this and requesting that he designate a Russian participant; and that this group should still aim at preparing a report for presentation at Venice; but that we should not try to organize a Sixth Working Group in Venice on BW. (We should go along with some small amount of Russian heel-dragging, because it is important that they should at least be sympathetic, but we should not permit their unwillingness to be active in intra-Conference activities to bring present motion to a halt.)

(2) They have not yet made any concrete plans for Venice, including the designation of the list of participants. M. mentioned the following as probable members of the Russian group (besides himself): Arsimovitch, Vinogradov, Talensky, Rubenstein (where are the new people?)

(3) I stressed to him our interest in discussing some problems of scientific cooperation and problems of the developing nations, but this did not elicit any response from him. It appears that, until now at least, no serious thought has been given by them to these problems. I'm at a loss on how to alter this situation.

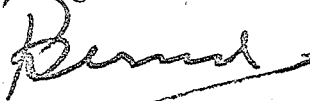
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(4) I told him of our interest in discussing, in my Working Group V, in a serious fashion, the present UN "payments" crisis and the problem of peace-keeping in general. (I am writing Artsimovitch on this subject; I'll send you a copy of that letter). He thought this was a reasonable topic for discussion at Venice, and even appreciated my point on the necessity for keeping the results of discussions on such a delicate subject strictly "off the record". But he also emphasized his view of the importance of Pugwash taking a more active public role. So I don't really know where we stand on the matter of publicity and public statements.

On the whole, I don't think the Russians are enthusiastic about engaging in the kinds of pre-Conference preparatory activities we are trying to encourage. (It's difficult enough to get some motion in this direction even when the group is enthusiastic.) What concerns me more is that, despite our pleas and hints, they keep sending the same old tired group; if we can't do better than Rubenstein on economics or population problems we are in a bad way. I see no other course than to continue to press them and to emphasize how great the danger is that we will soon fritter away any influence and prestige we may have accumulated, if we cannot come up with new ideas and serious, effective approaches to old problems.

I'll soon send you an up-to-date, latest list of American participants and, hopefully, some papers.

Best regards,



Bernard T. Feld

*Please send an invitation to:*

*Dr. Oscar Lewis  
180 Riverside Drive  
New York, N.Y.*