

[May 11, 1947]

Dear Nathan,

Alpert and Siver were here. Nothing at all sensational happened. They said that the board meeting that had charged me with the task of appointing the "president" did not pass a resolution due to absences and that the gentlemen present had not been told that the election of Laski was under consideration. This evidently caused disgruntlement and distrust and I can understand it. I said that in my opinion no "president" (for the university, or its establishment) should be elected without the university's board of governors' approval of the choice, and without having stated its approval in a legally uncontestable manner.

It is, of course, true that an aversion to the "reds" is behind this whole predicament; but I do not believe that serious problems would arise if we could find someone who is sufficiently respected and also capable of fulfilling this duty. Finding such a man as *soon* as possible is clearly of great importance because the fundraising depends on it.

Alpert also mentioned that he had been told by donors that the president of the board should, if possible, be a man of *American* renown. He didn't like to come out with it, of course, but there may well be something to it. Perhaps someone can be found who has standing and at least won't be a further annoyance. Morgenthau and Lehmann were mentioned. I thought that presumably neither of them would accept this role and that I doubt whether Morgenthau would excite great enthusiasm at present among our Babitts

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if he accepted. I cannot judge these matters well.

On the whole, I have the impression that these folks aren't harboring any dangerous intentions in their breasts.

Cordial regards also to Lazarus,

Yours,

A. E.

[Verso.]