

April 16, 1947

Professor Harold J. Laski
5 Addison Bridge Place
London W.14,
England

Dear Mr. Laski:

As you have learned from my friend, Mr. Otto Nathan, a few months ago, a very serious effort is being made here to found a new University which we feel has become necessary because of the quota system, openly or subtly used by almost all American Colleges and Universities. We hope that the new institution will make it easier for young men and women of Jewish faith and of other minorities to obtain a first-class education. Similarly, we hope to make it possible for those scientists and scholars, who under present conditions suffer from grave discrimination, to find a place where they can teach and work. The University will be in Jewish hands, but we are determined to develop it into an institution which is enlivened by a free, modern spirit, which emphasizes, above all, independent scholarship and research and which does not know of discrimination for or against anybody because of sex, color, creed, national origin or political opinion. All decisions about educational policies, about the organization of teaching and research will be in the hands of the faculty.

The Board of Trustees has delegated to me the authority of selecting the first president of the University. This man would have the challenging task to help us in determining the basic foundations of the University and to select and organize the initial faculty upon whom so much depends. We all feel that among all living Jews you are the one man who, accepting the great challenge, would be most likely to succeed. Not only are you familiar with the United States and her academic institutions more intimately than many American educators, your reputation as an outstanding scholar is widespread throughout the country.

I am writing, therefore, to ask you whether you would be prepared to consider such an invitation. Since we realize

pg.2-Professor Harold J.Laski,London

that you probably will be very reluctant to leave Great Britain, we wonder whether it might be easier for you to reach a favorable decision if you were to assume the leadership of the University only for the period of its formation - say for two or three years. Should it be possible for you to accept the invitation, I do not doubt that we would find it very easy to make a mutually satisfactory arrangement about all the details pertaining to the appointment.

We should be very happy if you were interested in the position which I indeed consider a unique opportunity. Let me assure you that the men and women with whom you would have to work would do everything in their power to cooperate with you and to facilitate your difficult task to the best of their abilities.

You would oblige me by treating this inquiry confidentially.

With kindest regards,

sincerely yours,

A. Einstein

Albert Einstein.