

THE FORD FOUNDATION
914 EAST GREEN STREET
PASADENA 1, CALIFORNIA

August 29, 1951

Mr. Edward Shils
21 Elm Park Road
Chelsea
London W. C. 3
England

Dear Ed:

I have been trying to write you for some days, but the pressure of the papers on my desk has been overwhelming. What I wouldn't give for a chance to sit down with you for a long talk about the job!

Hans and I have spent the last few weeks formulating various sets of plans for the development of Program V here at the Foundation. In this connection there are three major calls upon your advice.

The first has to do with our draft (copy enclosed) of an overall operating plan for Program V. This is still to be considered very much in draft form (and, of course, very confidential), but it represents the substance of our thinking about the most desirable directions for development, and if Don Marquis does not change it too much, and if we can get it past the officers and the Board, it will become something of a blueprint for our actual operations. What we would like from you, of course, is critical comment on it. If you want to annotate the margins of the memorandum, that would be fine. Please note for us all mistakes, qualifications, modifications, and omissions.

Secondly, I am enclosing another first draft of the policy to be followed by the Foundation with reference to communication research. Once more, we would like whatever comments you would care to make about this. You will see how a lot of our old talk found its way into the memorandum!

Thirdly, I am eager to have you look at the communication research memorandum because Hans and I want to commission you to prepare two other memoranda for us. The general point is this: We have decided that in the detailed development of a sound program which can go to the officers we need to have memoranda of the general order of this one on communication research on certain other subjects in which we are interested. Accordingly, we are just beginning to commission the best brains in American social science to write confidential, informal memoranda for us - Paul and Bob, Herbert Simon, Ithiel Pool, Leites, Stouffer, (Herb), Allen Wallis, and perhaps one or two others. You, my dear Ed, have the distinction of being the only one from whom we want two memoranda. First, we are going to have to deal with an area which has here become to be called "Values and Motivations". The statement of this interest in the Report of the Study Committee reads as follows:

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"The scientific study of values which affect the conduct of individuals, including man's beliefs, needs, emotional attitudes, and other motivating forces; the origins, interactions, and consequences of such values; and the methods by which this knowledge may be used by the individual for insight and rational conduct."

I can tell you, between us, that the Foundation is probably embarking on the course of setting up a commission which will prepare a statement of "The Basic American Values" for use in international propaganda and in other ways. I feel that whatever Program V can do toward developing some sound studies in the field of values will be all to the good, both scientifically and, for this purpose, practically. I would not want you to feel limited in any way by the statement in the Study Committee Report; what we would like to have from you is a statement of the most appropriate conceptualization in this field, the most promising sub-problems, the most appropriate methods for investigating them (if that seems relevant), and a note as to the best people or groups to do the studies. The memorandum will be seen only by the staff members of Program V (Hans, Don Marquis, Rowan Gaither and me), and need not be formal or polished. As you can see from the communication research memorandum, all we have tried to do is to get down a few basic ideas, with just enough explanatory material to make them intelligible.

The second of the two memoranda we would like to have from you is one on group organization. We are asking Herb Simon to do one for us on the more formal side, and we hope that you will give attention to studies of the primary group. However, once more, you are not limited and, as a matter of fact, it might be quite useful to say something about how studies of the primary group might tie in with a more formal study of group organization.

Since we are interested in getting an overall statement of the plans of Program V ready for consideration by the officers of the Foundation, we are eager to have these memoranda at the earliest moment. I know how busy you must be, and I don't want you to feel that there is a firm deadline on this, but it would be extremely useful to us if we could have them by September 20 to 25. I hope I have made it clear that this is the kind of thing which we feel you can simply sit down and write, since it is all in your head anyway. And incidentally, while you are doing it, any other thoughts you might have relative to other fields would certainly be welcome. I want your advice as broadly and in as much detail as you care to give it.

For your services in this regard, we can pay you an honorarium of \$250. Your stuff will be worth much more to us, but you know how poor we are!

Again let me say how much I miss talking with you about the general problems of social science development and how eagerly I await your return. The job here has any number of interesting ramifications, and I expect to meet you at the dock in December with a briefcase full of problems!

Don't hesitate to query any of this which seems unclear to you. I am sorry to invade the privacy of your idyllic London existence with my miserable affairs, but as the story goes, how else is a little boy to learn!

Yours,

B.

Bernard Berelson

Enclosures

Enc. sends her best