

Albert Einstein to Rose Russell [in German]

Princeton, New Jersey, [May 28] 1953.

Autograph letter signed, 1 page.

Dear Rose Russell,

I feel obliged to answer your kind letter from May 21st. My intention was not to disparage the 5th Amendment as being unjustified.

The 5th Amendment was adopted in order to make it impossible for the judicial authorities to bring the accused to confess through means of extortion.

In the present cases, it is not a matter of violent extortion of the accused but a matter of using people as tools for the prosecution of others that one wants to label as “unorthodox” and pursue through an economic campaign of destruction. It is a misuse of Parliament’s immunity, carrying out practices that should fall into the machinery of the judicial fury (police). This procedure absolutely contradicts the nature of the arrest, if not also it’s exterior form.

The individual is offered no legal middle ground for him to defend his actual rights. That is why I argued that there is no way other than revolutionary non-cooperation, like Gandhi used with great success against the legal powers of the British Authorities.

----- A.E.

Notes: Translation from original German.

Rose Russell responded to Einstein’s letter on 13 June 1953 from Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York.

Dear Professor Einstein,

It seems to me that the powerful force of your letter advising intellectuals to resist the congressional inquisitions can be measured by the subdued tone of the editorial in today’s New York Times. It cannot fail to give heart to many thousands the country over. I trust that whatever controversy it stirs up will be salutary for the cause of cultural freedom. May I say at

this point that I have not made public your very thoughtful and valuable letter to me on the same subject.

Since the day I took the liberty of sending you a copy of The Nation, I have been here at Mt. Sinai, undergoing surgery. I am eager now to be back in the fight, and I want to thank you again, in behalf of those of us who bear the brunt of the attacks daily, for your wise and courageous counsel.

Respectfully, Rose Russell