

29 September 1954

Mr. Donald E. Stewart
Assistant to Managing Editor
Encyclopaedia Britannica
425 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago 11, Illinois

Dear Mr. Stewart:

I am in the embarrassing position of finding it desirable to request an extension of the deadline for the revision of my article CODES AND CIPHERS, which, in your letter of 25 August 1954, you had already extended from 15 September to 15 October.

It is true that in your letter you asked if the latter date was agreeable to me, and that in my reply of 30 August I tacitly accepted the new date, since I made no comment thereon other than to thank you for your thoughtfulness in extending the deadline.

I do not know if further time can be given me at all; maybe not. But a couple of weeks would help a great deal and perhaps some extenuating circumstances for my request may be of interest.

First, as you no doubt are well aware, the writing or revision of the article cannot be considered official business and therefore I must confine that activity so far as possible to "homework." Second, very recently I lost a full week on account of the illness and death of my mother, whose interment was in New York. Third, in undertaking to include in my write-up a revision of the article CRYPTOGRAPHY, which, as I indicated in my letter of 23 August, deals largely with the history of the subject, I should also have indicated that there is no publicly-available detailed or authentic history of cryptology anywhere that I know of--it has not been written, for various reasons. Bits and pieces of the history are to be found here and there, in books or articles in English but of dubious accuracy; and since the Britannica aims to be as accurate as possible, consistent with space limitations, I need a little more time in order to consult the available but scattered source material in foreign languages. Finally, I need hardly mention the fact that my article deals with a subject of very great "sensitivity" and that the temper of the times, at least since the year when it was first written (1927), has changed a good deal, especially with

respect to the business of "security" in connection with matters affecting the National Defense. In my letter of 23 August I referred to the necessity of submitting my revision to the appropriate authorities for their approval before it could be sent on to you, and stated that I did not anticipate any difficulty on that score. However, I think you will agree that the authorities should be given a fair amount of time for a detailed and careful scrutiny of the article, or, as I suspect will turn out to be the case, two or more versions differing in degree of sophistication and timeliness, or in the amount of technical detail they contain, so as to leave some leeway for their decision in the premises. I had hoped to have the material in their hands by 15 September, leaving them practically a full month for their study and consideration thereof; it is now almost the 1st of October and I have not yet completed my task, although I have really put in long hours at home every evening, full days on Saturdays and Sundays, and in addition, have taken several days' leave for the job on hand.

Would it be asking too much to request that you either wire or telephone me your decision in regard to my desire for further time?

Sincerely,

WILLIAM F. FRIEDMAN

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