

VF 108-13

IN REPLY REFER TO

WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SIGNAL OFFICER
WASHINGTON

DIVISION

August 31, 1922.

Mr. J. F. Byrne,
70 Wilson Street,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

My dear Mr. Byrne:

In accordance with your request I am returning to you under separate cover the model of your cipher device.

Shortly after your visit I spent a sufficient length of time with the model to convince myself that the statements made in our conversation with regard to the decipher ability of the system, were fully warranted. On the attached sheet I have a very short message which was enciphered by an alphabet of twenty-six characters instead of thirty-six which was in line with what you had mentioned regarding the reduction in number of characters. I have underlined the numerous repetitions occurring in this small amount of material, and this will give you an idea of what may be expected in a longer message or in a whole series of messages such as would be sent in military communications. It is for that reason that I do not believe your system sufficiently safe from a cryptographic point of view for military work, although it may suit all the requirements for ordinary commercial correspondence where a very high degree of secrecy is not an absolute essential.

We appreciate your interest in the subject, and trust that this report will not discourage you.

Very truly yours,

W. F. Friedman

Frank A. Lane

WAR DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF SIGNAL OFFICER
WASHINGTON

Mr. W. F. Friedman,
Chief Signal Officer,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Friedman:

In acknowledging your letter of the 31st ult., I cannot refrain from expressing my astonishment at your failure to communicate with me ^{long ago} relative to my cipher device, particularly in view of the fact that you say that you had conceived yourself of the validity of your opinion shortly after my visit.

Another ~~part~~ matter to which I ~~hope~~ make formal objection is the fact that you sent me back my device ^{in a} ~~in a~~ cardboard - and it came to me ~~unmolested~~.

May I ask you kindly to tell me whether you are the Chief Signal Officer, and if not what is your status? The reason for my ~~by~~ asking this question is to learn whether I may regard your opinion on my cipher system as being authoritative.

For the last paragraph of your letter, I thank you kindly. It is, indeed, calculated to discourage one to realize that one's true