Einstein's Ultimatum Brings a Quick Visa; Our Consul Angered Him by Political Quiz

BERLIN, Dec. 5.—Professor Albert Einstein was so angered today by forty-five minutes of questioning at the United States Consulate General as to his fitness to visit America that he refused to submit to further interrogation and returned home.

His anger did not cool on the way. As soon as he returned he telephoned to the United States Consulate General to submit what Frau Einstein termed an "ultimatum," saying that if by tomorrow noon he had not received a visa to enter the United States he would cancel his trip.

[George S. Messersmith, United States Consul General in Berlin, notified the State Department at Washington late yesterday that he would issue a visa to Professor Einstein tomorrow.]

Heretofore Professor Einstein has been used to having his trips, including all formalities, arranged by others, usually by officials of shipping lines. He had requested the Hamburg-American Line, on whose Oakland he plans to sail Saturday, to arrange everything.

Much to his surprise he was called up this morning by the United States Consulate General shortly after he had come to Berlin to start packing his bags, which were to be sent to Bremen tomorrow. He was requested to come to the Consulate to answer a number of questions before receiving his visa.

The professor said he was busy and would rather have the visa sent to him, but the consular authorities insisted on his coming downtown. He finally decided to go, accompanied by his wife.

As Frau Einstein described the Consulate interview to this correspondent, the Professor was courteously re-

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received and ushered into the presence of officials, who submitted a questionnaire presented to all visitors to the United States. It soon became evident the questions irritated him, and he began to lose his cheerful manner.

"You are a member of any organization?" the inquisitors proceeded. "Professor Einstein ran his hand through his ample hair, turning to his wife for assistance.

"Oh, yes," he exclaimed with obvious relief. "I am a War Resister."

"Who are they?" he was asked.

"Well, they are my friends," he replied.

"What's this, an inquisition? Is this the reason for the unusual consular questionings of Professor Albert Einstein, which he said amounted to an "inquisition," was not explained tonight, but recently the State Department at Washington forwarded a demand by the Woman Patriot Corporation that the scientist be barred on the ground that he was a Communist.

Professor Einstein's clash with the consul came after the query:

"Why do you belong to or sympathize with?"

The professor, still not comprehending the significance of the proceedings, asked what the consul was driving at.

"You see," said that official, "when persons applying for visas hold certain political beliefs it is difficult if not impossible to grant the visa. For instance, are you a Communist or an anarchist?"

Professor Einstein's patience broke. His usual gentle face Stern and his normally melodious voice strident, he cried:

"What's this, an investigation? Is this an attempt at citizenship? I don't propose to answer such silly questions.

"I didn't ask to go to America. Your countrymen invited me, yes, begged me. If I am to enter your country as a suspect I don't want to go at all. If you don't want to give me a visa please say so, then I'll know where I stand. But don't ask me humiliating questions.

Frau Einstein declared emphatically the professor was neither a Communist nor an anarchist. She has political affiliations, she said, but only as a matter of information, and that no special significance should be attached to its action in this case.

Mr. Messersmith informed the State Department that he had examined Professor Einstein as he would examine any applicant.

The State Department made public the following statement:

"The American Consul General at Berlin, George S. Messersmith, reported to the Department of State tonight that Professor Albert Einstein today applied for a visa; that whenever such complaints are received they are forwarded to the public, and prohibits them from issuing visas to any aliens not found by them to be admissible under the law. The department is fully aware of the distinguished reputation of Professor Einstein and it has no doubt that any consular officer before whom he appears will extend to him the most courtesy and the most generous treatment which the laws of the United States permit.

"The record of such information as Professor Einstein may have given in support of his application for a visa on the occasion of his last visit to this country is not in this department, but is on the files of the consulate abroad to which he made two applications, and it is obvious that the consul-officer making the decisions should have before him all the pertinent information.

Mr. Messersmith was born in Freeland, Pa., in 1885 and attended Delaware College. He was vice-president of the State Board of Education of Delaware from 1912 to 1914, when he entered the consular service. His first post was at Fort Erie and he served subsequently at Curacao, Antwerp and Buenos Aires before being assigned to Berlin.

"You are no, doubt, aware," he added, "that the immigration laws place upon consular officers abroad the responsibility of classifying aliens seeking to enter the United States and prohibits them from issuing visas to any aliens not found by them to be admissible under the law. The department is fully aware of the distinguished reputation of Professor Einstein and it has no doubt that any consular officer before whom he appears will extend to him the most courtesy and the most generous treatment which the laws of the United States permit.

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"We will leave that to the American public," he said.