Dear George,

Since our phone conversation last week and the receipt of your nice friendly letter giving me all the details of the Einstein incident, which interested everyone here, you will have seen the "New York Herald" of last Sunday, Dec. 18th, publishing the text of the cable of the American Club of Antwerp to the State Department, it was next to the financial columns, and though you have stopped being front-page material, for the time being anyhow & I am sure you are glad of it, still I am sure that everyone will notice it even more when it is near these rotten New York stockmarket prices. The "Neptune" who publish an English Page every Saturday morning, also gave their version, and though you have perhaps seen all this already, as also the N.Y. Times of New York of Dec. 6th, I am enclosing you herewith all these various clippings for your scrapbook.

When Mrs. Alberti returned from Berlin a short while ago she mentioned that you would be pleased to hear from me re your friend Franz. Inasmuch as the political atmosphere is very hectic just now in this locality, I am afraid I will have to wait a little while longer before I can give you anything definite. It looks, however, as if, just as I told Marion when she was last here, we will have a new Burgomaster in March. Rumor has it that he is trying to hang on, although the gossip had it that he might be Ambassador to London (most improbable) but what is a fact is that he would easily have been in this last Ministry, a coalition of the Catholics & the Liberals, in the Government in Brussels. At the present time they are working on a very slim majority, and personally I don't think their present status is on very firm ground. To go back to Franz, the local City Government will probably be the Socialists and the Liberals, with a possibility of Camille Huysmans as Burgomaster, although he lives in Brussels, is said to know very little about practical business, and does not seem to care for the office. During the dickering, the Liberals are said to
have flirted with the Catholics locally, but the Socialists had tied up the Liberal minority, and the prospects are that either Huysmans, or perhaps La-roche, very little known, will be the next Burgomaster. As you will see, it is a rather complicated political situation, and the State Government is a coalition of Catholics with Liberals, whereas locally, and in all the surrounding Flemish towns, the administrations are made up of Socialists and Liberals, strange political bedfellows.

The financial affairs both of the country and of the City are far from being rosy, but of that I will write to you another time.

Last night I heard that Marion and yourself were going to visit the Pearceisin Paris, and that Jack Wright would be with you. It will be a very jolly party. I am sure, and to kid Marion you might tell her that perhaps I might have gone to Berlin to see her for Christmas, if she had not had a date with her other best beau in Paris. I am afraid that in spite of the reputation(?) that is attributed to yours truly, Jack is a steadier and better Beau-Brummel or Casanova, or whatever Jack is!

Hoping to hear from you now and then, though I imagine you are more than busy, and strange to say it is the same here, as there seems to be a good angel watching over our destiny at the Guaranty in Antwerp, with affectionate regards to Marion, and just kindest regards to you,

J.B. AVEGNO

JBA/EH