

Berlin, Germany, December 20, 1932.

Dear Hick:

Just yesterday through a Buenos Aires friend now living in New York, I got a copy of the letter which you wrote to the Herald Tribune and which was published in one of the issues, I am not sure what day as the clipping does not say. I certainly appreciate your having gone to the trouble to write to the editor and this is only one of the many evidences of real friendship which this Einstein case has brought out. I can't go into the details because it is a long story, but the facts briefly are that I think Einstein, even before he left the United States the last time, had some inklings that some people might object to his return not so much on account of anything he may have said or written, but because he had allowed his name to be used on the committees or as a member of certain organizations which in certain circles are not in good odor. For a week before he actually applied for his visa over here he was conducting, as it were, an application through the press, and the morning he actually did apply here, I happened to have left for Breslau for an inspection trip at our Consulate there. He was received by Geist who is my second man and who is not only a splendid officer but very discreet and tactful, and we had talked the whole thing over as to what we should do in case Einstein did apply, so that he was handled with all discretion. We did not ask him any of the silly questions which the papers and certain people say were put to him. In fact we made the whole procedure of getting a visa as easy and as simple as we could, but we did ask him whether he was

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affiliated with certain organizations and he said he was not and that was enough for us. He was granted his visa within a delay of less than twenty-four hours. He was obviously very nervous when he called and was afraid that a visa would be refused him because he knew that he had allowed his name to be used in connection with organizations he himself did not really approve of. Instead of submitting him to a grueling, he really put Mr. Geist through an ordeal as he was so nervous that most of the time he was in the Consulate was spent in smoothing his ruffled feathers. I can quite assure you that if we had given any information to the press or had been able to do so, the story of what happened would have made Professor and Mrs. Einstein look so ridiculous that his prestige, great as it may be, would have much affected. The whole trouble was really due to Mrs. Einstein who kept giving interviews to the press and who was quite careless in what she said and without any doubt must have used a good deal of embroidery. The newspaper men here in Berlin are a very fine lot and I know them all well and like them. They were, of course, annoyed at my office because we could give them no information even for background purposes in this particular case, but they wouldn't have put the embroidery in the story as it appeared in the papers at home unless they had got the information from Mrs. Einstein. He was asked none of these silly questions and all the supposed conversation of Einstein never took place. The whole visit to the Consulate was very short and all I can say is that 98 per cent of what appeared in the papers was not correct. I don't hold the newspaper men here responsible because we could not tell them anything and they had to depend on what they got from Mrs. Einstein. I don't think he did any talking at all except probably a few words, for his own attitude was quite correct. I can tell you that here in Berlin and in Germany where the Einsteins are well known, he is of course not quite the figure that he is in America and Mrs. Einstein and her peculiarities are well understood. I have a good many Jewish friends here in Berlin, for

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after all Berlin, like New York, is a sort of Jewish city, and I am particularly fond of a number of them and see a good deal of them. A good many of them have commented to me recently about the Einsteins and how much they regret that I should have been, as they put it, one of her victims. There is no use in crying over spilled milk and the whole thing has really turned out to be a comedy although it might easily have been a tragedy. The way the whole thing turned into personal criticism of me was most extraordinary as I wasn't even here. The people in Berlin were pretty sore about it and I think a good many people in Europe were pretty well upset because they know that if there is one man in the Service who is not a beaurocrat and who has liberal views on visa practice and on immigration practice generally, it is I, and they resented pretty bitterly the personal attacks. Of course I think Lippmann made an awful mistake by making his first criticism so personal, for he is supposed to be a well documented man and for him to go off half cocked as he did, did not do him any good. His ungenerous apology in the Herald Tribune hasn't done him any good either, for there he simply absolves me but places responsibility on anonymous persons and the State Department, when there was in fact no Einstein incident at all, which he still leaves the impression there was. He may be critical of our immigration laws but he should make his criticism apply where it belongs. Someone writing in the Paris edition of the New York Herald Tribune immediately after the Lippmann article appeared, ventured the belief that I would get out of the whole episode better than Lippmann, and without flattering myself I think there is some truth in that. Lippmann is too big to have made such a half-hearted reparation, but after all some people are not as big as we think they are and some of those whom we think are little, are much bigger than we think,

In any event the Secretary came across handsomely in his statement to the press and I know that some pretty highly placed people were in direct contact with Lippmann and I think he knows by this time from some of his own friends

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that he got after the wrong man. It looked for a while as though his holding me up as an ass might ruin the whole results of nineteen years faithful, and I hope fairly intelligent, service. But I have had letters and telegrams from friends all over the States and from all over Europe and from South America, all saying how indignant they were about this and I think that eventually and indirectly it will have repercussions which may do some others harm but which I think will not do me or the Service any injury. I am entirely satisfied myself to let the matter rest as it is but I do hope that Lippmann will in some way or other find an opportunity to say something decent because he owes it to himself and to me. If he doesn't, he will suffer more from it than I; that much seems clear already.

I should like to tell you the whole story but your letter to the Herald Tribune shows that you understand as I was sure you would, without knowing the details and as there was no Einstein incident, there is no need in going into the details as they would only show up Mrs. Einstein and some other people and there is no end to be gained there. I want you to know how really grateful I am for your generous gesture in writing the letter to the Herald Tribune. Marion and I appreciate it enormously.

I suppose the newspapers, etc., have been asked more or less to soft-pedal anti-French comment but I doubt whether we are doing right and whether it is really the best course to bring the French into line. I am not suspicious by nature and I do not believe in international conspiracy, but there is a real concert among the European nations involved to endeavor to compel us by all possible means to cancel the debts or to make some ridiculous arrangement before all these other questions such as limitation of armaments, contingents, exchange restrictions, tariffs and political questions in Europe and the Far East are settled. They want the debts out of the way and will give nothing but lip service to these other

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things until they are out of the way so that then they can make their regional agreements, trade, political and financial, among themselves, and leave us out in the cold. They realize that as long as the debts are not settled a reasonable solution of armaments, etc., can be brought about and that we will play a part in it, and they do not want us to play a part in it. There may have to be not only a moratorium for a year but for several years on the debts, and then we may find it convenient and feasible and possible to practically cancel them; but we should not do anything with regard to the principal or make any concession other than a moratorium until we are sure that there has been a reasonable settlement of armaments, tariffs, etc. Once these things are done, then the debts will sink into insignificance so far as their importance to us is concerned. We have too many people at home who are always apologizing for ourselves and who are willing to weep over the difficulties of every other country except our own and it is time that we have more people who realize what is done to us. We are the most cordially disliked nation in the world and we might as well recognize it, and cancelling the debts or making some ridiculous adjustment now will only make us the laughing stock not only of Europe, but of the world, and completely upset the financial applecart for us for years to come. If we keep a firm tone with the French and let them see that they cannot treat us as they do the Balkan states and their other vassals over here, they will come around. The whole French policy already is toppling and there is no reason why we should help hold it up because it is what is disturbing the peace of Europe. I believe that it would have been a far better policy to let Congress and the newspapers loose on the French after their refusal to pay, because it would have shown them really where they stand. Perhaps those who advise the other are wiser, but I doubt it, for the French must be held at present with a firm hand or they will only be confirmed in certain

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wrong impressions which they have.

I am tremendously interested in what the new administration is going to do. It has wonderful chances and I hope that they will be used. I am certainly with the new administration in every way and I am only hopeful that no chances will be missed. I hope in the near future to write you with regard to something which I believe is a wonderful opportunity for the administration to start out with and that will make a popular appeal.

Mation joins me in all good wishes to you and your mother and Gladys and for a New Year filled with all manner of good things. Again with many thanks,

Cordially and sincerely yours,