

Wednesday, December 7, 1932.

## Recall of U. S. Consul In Einstein Case Asked

### 'America Humiliated,' Meeting at Mrs. Gerard Swope's Holds

Demand for the recall of George S. Messersmith, American Consul General at Berlin, "because of his ignorance" in the treatment of Professor Albert Einstein's application for a visa, was made yesterday by a group of women at a luncheon and meeting at the home of Mrs. Gerard Swope, 1040 Park Avenue.

Most of the guests were members of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, of which Mrs. Swope is local chairman, but their resolution of protest was adopted not as league members but as American citizens. The resolution, introduced by Miss Katherine D. Blake, follows:

"Resolved, That we protest, in the name of the intelligent people of America, against the action of the State Department in forwarding to the consulate in Berlin the absurd document of a so-called patriotic society objecting to the admission of Professor Albert Einstein as a Communist.

"Resolved, That Mr. George S. Messersmith, Consul General at Berlin, by his treatment of the distinguished scientist, has humiliated America and made it a laughing stock second only to the Scopes trial in Tennessee, and we ask that he be at once recalled because of his ignorance. Every intelligent person in the world knows that Communists and pacifists differ fundamentally. Communists believe that violence has its place as a political weapon. Pacifists believe that the use of force is always a mistake.

"Resolved, That we are opposed to the exclusion of any individual because of political or religious convictions."

Among those present at the luncheon were Mrs. Lionel Sutro, Mrs. Herbert Mitler and Mrs. Henry Necarsulmer.

## Einstein Waives Consul's 'Joke,' Sails Saturday

### Laughs Off 'Inquisition' as a Schoolboy Prank and Accepts Visa to the U. S.

### Americans Cable Cheer

### Patriot Protest Prejudiced, Liberties Union Declares

By The United Press

CAPUTH, Germany, Dec. 6.—Professor Albert Einstein, whose mind wrestles with problems far beyond the ken of most of his fellow humans, received a visa to enter the United States today after he had threatened to call off his projected visit because he had been questioned about his political beliefs.

The world's most famous physicist, indignant yesterday when an American consular officer sought his views on communism, rallied his sense of humor today and let the whole matter pass as a joke. He actually, Frau Einstein said, thought for a while that George S. Messersmith, American Consul General at Berlin, was playing a sort of prank when he began plying the professor with "schoolboy" questions.

Einstein was subjected to questioning after the Woman Patriot Corporation in the United States had demanded that the State Department bar him on the ground that he had Communist leanings. At the height of the questioning the scientist pointed out that he was going to America because he had been invited, and if he was not granted the visa within twenty-four hours he would cancel his trip. The visa was signed about an hour before the twenty-four hour "deadline" expired.

#### Einstein Villa Is Secluded

The Einstein villa here is on a beautiful wooded height overlooking the River Havel. It is an ideal secluded spot for a scientist's retreat, only twenty-six miles from Berlin.

The professor and Frau Einstein

will leave Bremen on Saturday morning aboard the motor vessel Oakland. The ship will touch at Antwerp on Monday and proceed to the Panama Canal en route to California. The voyage will take eight weeks.

"We have been flooded by cablegrams all day long from our American friends," Frau Einstein, who acts as her husband's liaison officer in contact with a world he desires to shun, said at their home. "They tell us: 'Don't mind those old ladies who caused you all this trouble.'"

"The professor said only today: 'Here I have two honorary keys to the City of New York and it looks as though they would not even give me a chance to use one of them.'"

#### Professor Patient for an Hour

"The whole incident was ridiculous. The consul general catechized my husband as if he were a little boy, asking him hundreds of questions in a most solemn manner concerning his political affiliation, sympathies and tendencies.

"The professor sat there like a schoolchild, patiently answering all the questions. It took more than an hour, and finally my husband, weary of the inquisition, asked Mr. Messersmith: 'I only wonder whether you are doing this on some supreme authority or for your own amusement?'"

"Later at home he told me we would wait until 11 o'clock this morning and after that, if the visa had not been granted, he would cable California that our trip was definitely canceled.

"I had to do all the packing—you know what that is!—and it was impossible to get things done if we had to wait until Thursday or Friday before knowing whether we would be permitted to go."

#### Liberties Union Makes Inquiries

The American Civil Liberties Union, 100 Fifth Avenue, announced last night that its director, Roger N. Baldwin, had written a letter yesterday to Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of State, concerning the Einstein case, which read in part as follows:

"We do not question the department's right or duty to forward pertinent information to consuls abroad concerning any prospective visitor. We do, however, question the obvious lack of common sense shown in forwarding a communication from such a prejudiced source (referring to the Woman Patriot Corporation) concerning a distinguished foreign visitor whose record and activities are so well known throughout the world . . .

"May we ask whether it is the practice of the department to forward com-

munications of this character from ill-informed sources to consuls abroad without checking them up? . . . I am confident that a very large body of Americans will be interested to know whether this is the routine practice of the department, and, if so, whether it will be continued."

## Note on the Perfect Bureaucrat

If the Associated Press has reported the incident correctly, the American Consul General at Berlin, Mr. George S. Messersmith, has probably managed to achieve lasting recognition. For in future histories of the manners and customs of our times at least a footnote will be devoted to Mr. Messersmith. He will be remembered as the man who summoned into his presence one of the great thinkers of all times and solemnly asked him to prove that his entry into the United States would not

endanger our institutions. Mr. Messersmith has made himself famous by the mere effort to do his duty in connection with Albert Einstein's visit to the United States. If ever the law was an ass, it was when Mr. Messersmith undertook to administer the law. For his benefit and for bureaucrats like him all future laws of Congress should contain a clause saying that "this act is to be administered by men possessing at least ordinary intelligence and a grain of common sense."

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## HERALD TRIBUNE

### The Lady and the Doctor

Now that the great Einstein crisis has been happily averted, the visa granted and Princeton made safe for mathematics, one may look back upon the dreadful episode with relative calm. So viewed, it is difficult to say which is its more instructive feature—the revelation that we possess a group of ladies so charmingly humorless as to call themselves (actually) the Woman Patriot Corporation, or the discovery that even great mathematicians can be just about as silly as ordinary mortals. Perhaps we all ought to be humiliated into speechlessness, as Dr. Butler says he was, at the mere thought of the great Professor Einstein being asked routine questions by a consul. But somehow it is difficult to work up quite so much humiliation as that. After all, who has not been asked all sorts of irritating and impertinent questions by other people's consular officials; who has not felt the impulse to say, "Well, if your darned old country is so particular I'll just stay at home and serve you right"; and who (except Professor Einstein) has not been restrained by the thought of how childish it would sound? Now that it has actually been said, we all of us see that we were right: it does sound just as childish as we thought it would.

Of course, American immigration and passport formalities are quite as annoying and often as absurd in operation as those of other nations; of course, it would have been a calamity if Dr. Einstein had allowed himself to get into such a huff about it as to cut us off from the light of his countenance. Still, we probably could have stood it. What one would not like to have missed is the discovery of the Woman Patriot Corporation. The more one ponders that title, the more one savors its nuances of significance, the more wondrous does it become. That nice balance between the ideal and the practical, that impressive suggestion of hearth, home and business stability all in three golden words—no, it is unbeatable. A nation which can produce a Woman Patriot Corporation will never go under, not even before German mathematicians.