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Berlin, Germany, December 17, 1932.

*Penning*

Dear Mrs. Shipley:

I hope you did not mind the liberty I took in telegraphing you the other day with regard to this Einstein matter. The personal criticism was so unjustified as well as that of the office that I felt something should be done and I knew that you and Mr. Klots could bring the situation to the attention of the Secretary better than anyone else. I therefore telegraphed to you and to him and I shall never be able to tell you how much I appreciate what was done. I have written a report to the Department in my despatch No. 1070 which I do not know if you would be interested in reading as it is very long, but even at that there is a good deal more that could have been said but which I felt it was not necessary to cover. I am, however, sending you a copy of my letter to Mr. Klots which goes forward by this same mail, which gives you some additional data.

It looked for a while as though this personal criticism might wreck the results of 19 years of what I hope has been faithful service, but I was not going to crawl out by letting the responsibility fall on Geist on account of my having been in Breslau. I am confident that Geist really deserves a gold medal for what he did and I have brought this out in my letter to Mr. Klots. The whole secret of course of the affair is that the Einsteins were afraid that they would be refused a visa and so they tried to conduct their application through the press rather than in the usual way.

I hesitated

I hesitated a good deal before telegraphing you and Mr. Klots, but it was not only the personal attacks on me which might eventually come on Geist but also the possibility of our whole visa system being held up to ridicule which seemed at stake, and I felt that it would be wrong for me to hesitate to telegraph you.

I think that Lippmann is coming out of this a good deal smaller because his retraction was so utterly ungenerous and aside from the real issue. I feel sure, however, that his readers have passed judgment on him in this respect already and that any endeavor to do anything further would be useless.

I hope in the near future to be able to write you about some things of real interest as I think there are some constructive measures which we ought to take which cannot be delayed very much longer.

The Ambassador and the Castlemans are going to Oberhof for Christmas and are expecting us to go with them, but we have decided to stay home and entertain some of our friends and people in the official family who were as lonely here last Christmas as we were. Besides that I think I may be able to get a little rest over Christmas as there will be so many people out of town. I have been going pretty hard and feel the need of a real let-up. I should like very much to go home for a little while in the spring, but I doubt whether this will be possible. Geist tells me that your boy is with you this winter and I know that must be a great comfort and joy to you. My wife joins me in every good wish. I hope that you will have a very happy Christmas and that the New Year will bring all manner of good things.

Always faithfully yours,

Mrs. Ruth B. Shipley,  
Chief, Passport Division,  
Department of State,  
Washington, D.C.

P.S.

P.S. I got a letter the other day which I think will give you a smile, if not a laugh, so I am sending you a copy. The man who wrote it signed it but we have no idea who he is. He may be a simple-minded man in some ways but he has certain people and things sized up a whole lot better than some who consider themselves very clever.

G.S.M.