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~~R. L. Henderson~~ 2 08
MRS. R. L. HENDERSON
SOUTH SIDE DRIVE
ONEONTA, NEW YORK

October 15, 1962
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Hon. John Kennedy
President of the United States
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr President, -

Could you give aid to
a memorial for Einstein who
was such a great asset
to our country. Clipping enclosed.

Thank you for your consideration
Very Sincerely Yours

Mrs R. L. Henderson

Statue Bound for Germany

Americans Find No Room For Memorial to Einstein

Of The Herald Tribune Staff

By Fred C. Shapiro

Somewhere in the land to which he gave so much, there should be room for a memorial to Albert Einstein.

But because, in the 3,628-, 130 square miles of America, none has been made available, the last sculpture posed for by the father of atomic science is about to be turned out of the land he loved, and sent to Germany—the land he fled.

An offer by a West German group to put up the memorial created by Robert Berks is still open. And Mr. Berks, disappointed repeatedly in a nine-year quest for a sponsor, is about to accept.

What is needed in America is enough room suitably to display the 21-foot disc memorial, and \$180,000 to match the German offer.

Many Near Misses

"I've had a fantastic history of near misses," Mr. Berks said yesterday at his studio at 162 E. 92d St. "At Princeton President (Robert F.) Goheen said he wanted to have it in Princeton, but Dr. (Robert) Oppenheimer, of the Institute of Advanced Studies (where Einstein lived and worked) said Einstein was too big for just a piece of sculpture."

In Israel, the land of the exile, the sculpture almost caused a government crisis, Mr. Berks said. A subscrip-

tion was raised to erect the memorial, but because of the Orthodox Jewish prohibition against graven images, the fund was not completed.

Einstein Medical College did buy a head from Mr. Berks' model, but not the full memorial. "They said they needed the money for buildings first," Mr. Berks explained.

Israel Give Him Chance

Mr. Berks got a chance to model Einstein after winning the international competition sponsored by Israel and the Chaim Weizman Institute for the best sculpture of the first president of Israel.

He has subsequently sculptured many of the famous of the world, including the late Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis; Ernest Hemingway, Leonard Bernstein, Mary McLeod Bethune, educator and founder of the National Council of Negro Women, and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise.

Mr. Berks modeled Einstein in the scientist's cluttered Princeton, N. J., study in April, 1953. "I said to him, 'Why do you allow me waste your time posing,' the sculptor recalled.

"His answer was, 'I long ago realized that people need heroes. I would much rather have it be somebody harmless like me than have it be somebody like Hitler or Mussolini.'"

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H. L. Henderson
Post 11/6/62

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Mrs. R. L. Henderson
South Side Drive
Ossona, New York

Dear Mrs. Henderson:

President Kennedy has asked us to reply to your letter of October 15 in which you suggest that the Federal Government might give aid for the purpose of establishing a memorial to the late Albert Einstein. You enclosed a clipping of a newspaper article, apparently from the New York Herald Tribune, which discussed the subject of a memorial for Mr. Einstein and which touches on the interest of Princeton University and a group in West Germany for its establishment.

Memorials to individuals traditionally have been authorized by the Congress. The memorials here in Washington to Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and other eminent public figures in our history, for instance, have all been the subject of Congressional act and authorization, and no doubt a memorial to Einstein would be an appropriate subject for the consideration of the Congress.

The National Park Service has been and is still engaged in a National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings. This Survey considers outstanding sites and eminent personages who have played unusually important roles in our history and submits data to the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments which evaluates them as to their national significance. In such evaluation, however, the Advisory Board has long followed a rule that it will not consider for evaluation any individual whose main contribution to history and claim to fame is of less than 50 years.

This rule has been adopted by the Advisory Board and approved by the Secretary of the Interior as a means of attaining objectivity by not judging an individual's role in history in his own lifetime and at or near the time events have taken place. Application of this

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rule gives the perspective needed for sound evaluations. Applying this rule, as you will note, makes Mr. Einstein ineligible at this time for evaluation by the Advisory Board in the National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings.

This rule, however, does not have any application whatever to whether the Congress would wish to consider the question of a suitable memorial to Mr. Einstein.

Sincerely yours,

(SGD) JACKSON E. PRICE

Assistant Director

Copy to: Regional Director, Northeast, w/c of inc.
Branch of History, w/c of inc.

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