

28.I.1940

[1/1] My Beloved Pirkus!,

[1/2] I'm very sorry for only now replying to your letter from 22 Jan., but I had [1/3] a whole lot to do. Besides, I waited for Lwow's [1/4] political situation to clear up. I bring you the following news:

[1/5] AD FAMILY IN LWOW: The Polish Embassy in Washington [1/6] informed me that the Germans have concentrated several divisions in Lwow and Eastern Malopolska¹. [1/7] They say they did it in order to protect the train lines. We'll see. This news came [1/8] in a telegraph from Budapest and I passed it onto you immediately. It's clear as day [1/9] that something is up over there. What it might be, nobody knows. It's hard for me to advise you about what you should regarding [1/10] your beloved Father, Mother and Sister, regarding this news, because, theoretically, one [1/11] cannot leave the Russia territories. You can escape through Russian-controlled Vilnius in order [1/12] to arrive in Kowno², and there acquire some sort of visa. If they did [1/13] escape to Kowno, then your sister could emigrate directly here. [1/14] Your parents could come here via some South American country. [1/15] My dear Z.W.: In these times when the German army is in Lwow, that should [1/16] be plenty reason for them to escape. My family is [1/17] in a sorry situation in Lwow, because you cannot escape with kids in minus 50 degree weather. [1/18] The situation in Lwow is very bad. There is a shortage of food and firewood. Because of this, [1/19] I am very down, you know how much I love kids and both of my [1/20] aunts, and Drem Meisel too, the ex-king of all chauffeurs. [1/21] Just like you I don't know how to advise them.

[1/22] AD STEINHAUS, Daub sent me that letter, because he lost your address. He's a very honest and reliable [1/23] man. He's holding Hugo's money and wants to help him come here. Hugo [1/24] telegraphed him with the message "Will visit Morcio –Steinhaus". In the meantime Lebec is [1/25] taking care of the French and maybe they'll bring Steinhaus to Paris. I also had a letter [1/26] from Westinghouse in which they included your [1/27] correspondence with them, a copy of their correspondence with the Polish-American Chamber, and finally a three page explanation why [1/28] they are not buying the Introvisor.³ I sent them a photocopy of a letter from their office [1/29] in Warsaw, which says that they bought the Introvisor in London. In response they wrote me saying that [1/30] they judge that someone is messing around over there. I wonder how they will [1/31] explain it to me. I'll let you know later. If I were a pig I would throw out

¹ Malopolska is one of Poland's 16 administrative provinces, with Krakow as the capital city, and currently comprises 8.3% of the country's population. This camp was possibly a precursor to Auschwitz. Construction of Auschwitz began in May 1940.

² Just like Vilnius, Kowno is a city in what is present day Lithuania. Lithuania was part of Poland before the Second World War.

³ Hugo Steinhaus tried to patent this invention, an x-ray machine for use during surgical procedures, with the help of Birnbaum and Bloch.

all of [1/32] Hugo's work, but I won't do it, because I like him personally. Also, [1/33] regarding Daub, I saw him yesterday. It was a letter for Steinhaus, he wrote no others.

[1/34] AD IMPORTER, I am grateful for your interest in the matter. We are [1/35] ready with regard to that 3Americas warehouse. Now we are kicking [1/36] the trading into high gear. Naturally, so long as I didn't have a [1/37] detailed report from Managua⁴, it's no use batting an eye, because a man could lose his contacts and not develop new ones [1/38]. Be good and wait a little bit until I report everything more thoroughly. [1/39] Knowing you, you will shortly give some qualified person permission to [1/40] open up a branch of our company. After getting more detailed information, I'll be able to give you the [1/41] proper commission, which is not yet established.

[2/1] AD MY STUDIES, it looks like I've passed all of my exams. I now supposedly [2/2] speak English well, and even, write. Everyday, from [2/3] 8 to 1 I am in the office. Later from 2 to 6 I am at the university, later [2/4] 6-8 at Marian's office and then I get home and study. On top of that I have [2/5] hundreds of worries every day, 200 irritations, 1 quarrel and 1 million concerns like a very old Jew.⁵ [2/6] Thanks to all of this, I even look the part.

[2/7] AD MY FAMILY HERE, Marian had good timing in establishing the WAX REFINING COMP. [2/8] Using chemical processes they make Ozokerite. It's a good business, because they are teamed up with [2/9] Director Frydecki from Galicia who was the number one expert in ozokerite in Poland. They bought a factory [2/10] not far from St. Oil of NJ. Ozokerite is made from oil byproducts. We will [2/11] export it to French and English steel mills. [2/12] Niki is making a variety of deals with Galician Jews and is coming out well thanks [2/13] to it. Robi is trying many interests. Simply put, he's dealing. Better than nothing. [2/14] I am trying my hand too and if God wills, I will scratch out something. [2/15] Freddie is a beloved boy. He got the 1st prize Horace Mann award for progress in his studies. [2/16] Auntie keeps on going wild everyday.

[2/17] AD DORUSIA I had a whole bunch of letters from Kowno. Matterne from Chase National is [2/18] now a good friend of mine and with interest helped me greatly. He [2/19] was very honest in telegraphing the US Consul in Kowno for Dorus. Even that Williams [2/20] from Columbia is now my friend and we went to Butler Hall together for lunch. As you can see [2/21] time changes everything. A year ago he was making a fuss, but now he telegraphs daily [2/22] various guarantees to Kowno. I'd be really happy if my sister were here, because I [2/23]

⁴ Professor Birnbaum secured Guatemalan passport for his family. It is not unlikely they were secured thanks to Bloch's extensive connections in South America.

⁵ Bloch was probably in his mid-twenties when writing the letter.

terribly miss my family. After all, I spent so many years together with those guys [2/24] and now we're spread out all over the world.

[2/25] AD THE GIRLS I've written to you about that Nicaraguan girl Gloria Ramirez. Her daddy was [2/26] here. He is the vice-president of Rotary International and the Minister of the Interior in Nicaragua [2/27], got his doctorate from the Sorbonne and is very rich. I spun that Gloria's head so much that she became [2/28] convinced she loves me. Following up on that I wanted to lay her out on the couch, but it [2/29] didn't work out. Daddy Ramirez asked me whether I wanted to marry her and naturally I [2/30] told him that I did. From that time on, from their ship to Cuba, they've already telegraphed me 5 times. [2/31] Imagine the wild reaction in Paris when they'd find out "Morris married an Indian girl". [2/32] Gramps would cut my ears off from joy.

[2/33] AD VACATION How is it with you and the ladies? I, along with Marian, Noniek, and Freddy, plus [2/34-5] two others will visit you in the summer and with two cars we can go somewhere for a month.

[2/36] Please keep writing constantly. Hugs and kisses.

[2/37] Yours,

Maurice Bloch