

1994.A.322 Yakob Langer collection

Essen, 23 November 1941

My dear son,

The transport to Poland threatens us all since we could not emigrate. I am writing this to make known to you events in our lives and the demise of your mother. This letter is given to an acquaintance who will send it to you after the war.

As long as you are in Denmark I was able to inform you about our doings. I worked in the emigration bureau and studied English. After the start of war our radios were taken and we could not go on the street after 8 p.m. Travelling could not be considered since Germans had to report their places of _____ within 3 days. Organized music performing in Synagogue.

(Description of people who emigrated and their destinies. Had bad luck with own emigration plans.) In 1939 we tried to go to Chile. Immigration was stopped suddenly. In 1940, the Hamburg-America Line stated that for \$500 it could arrange entry into Brazil. The entire matter was a swindle and cost me 180 marks. In February 1941 our registry number for North America came up. To obtain visas, ship's tickets were needed. Turned to Michael Bever, who paid \$850.00 for two places. America had few ships to Portugal. This was a great pressure from Spanish and Portuguese ships. We could not get tickets U.S. consulate was closed in June and we would not emigrate to U.S.

In June the Union of Jewish Congregations in Germany dismissed many officials, including me. A leading official the former lawyer Krombach, I could not stand. Mr. Austerlitz took over my activity. The saddest chapter of my life is Mama's illness and demise (description of her story in hospital and funeral. Description of her good character and activities).

Since the death of Mama our destinies went downhill. Today is 12 January 1942. On the day of Mama's death, the ordinance for wearing a yellow star on our clothes was issued. We may not leave our residences. Six weeks later started the transports to the east. First transport from Rhineland, 130 people from Essen. Second end of October with 250 people went 14 days later. Allowance of 50 pound luggage and food for three weeks. All money confiscated by state. First transport to Litzmannstadt (Lodz). Aunt Käthe has also been transported. If I see that life becomes intolerable, I will terminate myself.

Considering the sad events, I say to myself that Mama had a good destiny.

After the end of my activity in the community, I looked for work. I reported to a Jewish labour column in the city gardens. Our column consists of six Jews. Planted 100,000 tulips. Grandmother cooks and cleans for me. Since July 1941 our apartment has been repeatedly inspected by police officials. Was told to clear out on January 1. Found new apartment in a Jewish house on Krawehstr. 4. The Jewish occupants in house are friendly and cooperative.

After Mama's death I lost interest in emigrating, but since conditions worsened I decided to seek asylum in Cuba. A large amount of money is required. Dr. Weitmann, Mama's which made arrangements. Received telegram that Cuban consulate was ready to issue visa. Suddenly all emigration is prohibited.

24 March 1942

Received your letter of December 2. For several weeks I teach several 14-15 year old boys literature. Two and half years have passed since you, my good boy, have left us. If you need advice, turn to the good friends I have in Palestine.

15 April 1942

Received notice to join transport to the east on April 21. Our community consists of more than 400 young people. Yesterday told to move into barracks. I now close and with a heavy heart say goodbye to you.

Your papa.