

Alfred Tarski

Letter to rev. Józef Bocheński

Three years ago we published — with the consent of the addresser and Dr. Jan Tarski, the son of our great logician — the original Polish text of Alfred Tarski's letter to rev. Józef Bocheński (cf. Filozofia Nauki 1/96, p. 123—124). In the meantime, Alfred Tarski's letters to Kurt Gödel were edited in English translation by Dr. Jan Tarski.¹ In this situation, we decided to publish also the English version of «our» letter, prepared kindly by Dr. Jan Tarski.

Editors

The College of the City of New York
Convent Avenue and 139th Street
Home address:
321 W. 82 St.,
New York City
April 26, 1940

Reverend Professor Bocheński!

My cordial thanks for having sent the card to Dr. Quine. I was really touched by the interest which you showed in the fate of my immediate family.

For several months I have been making all kinds of efforts to bring my family here; I encounter unfortunately enormous obstacles. My plan was to bring my family first to Copenhagen, and only from there to the United States. This plan was already

¹ Cf. Letters to Kurt Gödel (ed. by Jan Tarski), [in:] J. Woleński and E. Köhler (eds.), *Alfred Tarski and the Vienna Circle*, Kluwer Academic Publishers, p. 261—273.

close to being realised; I received much help in connection with this from Prof. Jorgensen in Copenhagen. Unfortunately, owing to the latest happenings this plan broke down, and I must look for a new course.

The facts are as follows. Several months ago I became a permanent resident of the United States; as a professor of institution of higher learning, I obtained a so-called *non-quota immigration visa* (section 4d). Under the American regulations, my wife and children are automatically entitled to an analogous visa. To this end, the consulate of the United States which is involved has to receive an official notification from the Department of State in Washington that I have a *non-quota visa*; it is besides advisable to send to the Consulate additional documents which ascertain my ability to support my family, namely copies of contracts with institutions of higher learning and the like. Well, already three months ago these documents and official notifications from the Department of State in Washington were sent to the consulates in Copenhagen and Warsaw. They reached Copenhagen, but — as a letter from my wife, dated 22.III.40 (the only letter which I received from her), implies — they have not reached Warsaw. Since in the meantime Denmark was occupied and the American consulate in Warsaw [...].²

I should point out, that both my wife and myself are in contact with the maritime travel agency *United States Lines*, which has its headquarters in New York and a branch in Warsaw, and which is maintaining transport between New York and Genoa. Of course, when the time comes, I will pay to this agency the entire sum to cover travel costs of my family.

I presented to you the factual and the legal state of affairs; however, only you can judge whether you can help in this matter and in what way. One of the greatest difficulties lies in establishing contact with Warsaw. My wife and I send to each other countless letters — directly, by way of Copenhagen, through acquaintances; they all get lost along the way. As far as I know, my wife received only one letter from me, in addition a telegram from Prof. Jorgensen, and before that, an oral message from a certain Danish diplomat, a friend of Prof. J.; I received only one letter as well as an indirect communication from this diplomat. Therefore, if you could find sure and rapid means to convey to my wife the information contained in this letter, I would be extremely grateful just for this, and all the more for any additional help. In view of evacuation of consulates in Warsaw and the evolution of events in Europe, the whole matter appears to me to be extremely difficult, and the time is pressing! I do not know whether the moment when you will have this letter in your hands, it will not be already too late. My wife's address is: Maria Tarska, Warszawa-Żoliborz, Krasińskiego 16 apt. 63.

² Here some words are missing. They may have been cut off on the available photocopy due to oversight. It is also possible that when Alfred Tarski started the next page, he simply proceeded with a new thought and a new paragraph, without finishing the sentence [JT]. The phrase omitted contains probably words: „is closed” [JJJ].

If Prof. Turyn is now in Rome, please be so kind, convey to him my regards and give him my address.

I shall say only a little about myself, namely, that my situation is not at all stabilised, but somehow I manage. During this academic year I am *visiting professor* at the City College of New York, next year I shall be probably at the Harvard University.

Once more I thank you cordially for your readiness to help, and I extend expressions of deep respect.

A. Tarski

PS. At this moment I received a new letter from my wife directly from Warsaw, dated 15.III; it does not contain anything new concerning the matter about which I am writing.