

No Life Without You

REFUGEE LOVE LETTERS FROM THE 1930s

EDITED BY
FRANKLIN
FELSENSTEIN





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Nineteen: Letters From a Wretched Coffee House Sitter

2 October through 11 December 1936

POLITICAL TIMELINE, SEPTEMBER 1936–JUNE 1937

- 23 September 1936: Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp opened.
- 15 October 1936: Decree that “Non Aryans” are prohibited from teaching in German public schools.
- 25 October 1936: Rome-Berlin Axis formed by Mussolini and Hitler.
- 27 November 1936: Film criticism banned in Germany.
- 10 December 1936: Abdication of Edward VIII, King of Great Britain.
- 14 March 1937: Pope Pius XI issues encyclical repudiating Nazi racism but not denouncing anti-Semitism.
- 28 May 1937: Neville Chamberlain becomes Prime Minister of Great Britain.
- 11 June 1937: Jews prohibited from giving testimony in German courts.

In Leipzig, the three-month stretch before they rendezvoused in London was a lonesome period for Mope, made bearable by Vera’s dispatches. Her almost daily letters, none of which survive, had become (in his own self-consoling words) “an indispensable prerequisite on my breakfast table... [making me] almost forget the time and the necessity of going to the office.” At the office, while still engaged in the daily affairs of the Gebrüder Felsenstein, he was endeavoring

to extricate himself from his position as a salaried partner in a manner that would give his mother the wherewithal to emigrate to Palestine. His Felsenstein cousins, full partners in the firm, grudgingly figured out his importance to the business, and were not willing to make his departure easy.

From Mope's responses, it can be construed that Vera's lost letters from this period will have included details of her work for Marks & Spencer, where she was in charge of recruiting and training personnel at the company's new store in Kilburn (a northwest London suburb). In Germany, Mope still hoped against hope that he could persuade Vera to join him in Palestine. He alludes frequently to his protracted negotiations with Haavara, the transfer company set up with the agreement of the Nazis to facilitate the emigration of German Jews to Palestine. By the time of his next visit to London at the end of the year, those arrangements seemed at long last to be falling into place.

MOPE TO VERA

Leipzig, 2 October 1936

There is an emptiness here. When I walk through the streets, a hollow space marches along on my right side. I have to look again and again, but I convince myself constantly that my arm is missing the warmth of yours because yours isn't there to link with. I feel it most strongly in the morning when I wake up and realize that the joy of seeing you and wishing you a good morning are not accomplishable.

MOPE TO VERA

Leipzig, 8 October 1936

Finally, there is calm again inside and out. It is nighttime. No noise from traffic reaches here. I call back to mind the good advice that you gave me in that beautiful park in Karlsbad not to get upset over unfair people. Yesterday, at the Gebrüder Felsenstein, Semy, our senior partner asked me to write down my wishes regarding the assignment of my mother's legitimate share in the business and also what was due to me.²⁵ We reached a reasonable agreement after he expressed his amazement over the fact that I treat the whole thing not only factually, but also

25 A photograph of Semy Felsenstein (1883-1978), head partner of Gebrüder Felsenstein, can be found in the online resources for this book, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0334#resources>

emotionally. He finally understood that it is not so easy for me to forego all rights to the company as the last one of our line, a company that was raised from the ground by my blessed father—as he said himself—and in which I have worked for more than ten years of my life. He also admitted to me that I alone was responsible for the extension of the German business in the last few years—we had 90 per cent foreign business until 1933, and now we have 75-80 percent in-country business—and that it was accomplished to the advantage of the company.²⁶ Tomorrow, I will work out a declaration concerning a waiver of my rights under the caveat that my plans are effective in the future, because one cannot count on reimbursement for anything from these kinds of people. I don't expect much to come from that, since I know I can develop better with a certain amount of independence.

On top of all of this, the denial of every form of relief for my mother's assets that I had applied for arrived today. First, it looked like I might be successful in this and now I have to appeal, and the whole affair will take more time once again. This afternoon, I had the time to work through the files and devise the appeal. Not everything can always work out on the first try and nobody expects that anyway.

Now I have bored you enough with all this stuff. I am accompanying this note with some paper kisses, but I wish that you could feel them as if I were with you and had your beloved hands on my temples and my mouth on yours. Your Mope

MOPE TO VERA

Leipzig, 11 October 1936

This morning, there was a letter with a belly on my breakfast table. It was blue and fat, like no other letter from you before. You broke your

26 The significance of this becomes apparent in the context of the global boycott of German goods following the rise to power of the Nazis in 1933. Edwin Black describes the effect of the boycott on the fur trade: "On May 12 [1933]... the prestigious Leipzig annual fur auction was held. Ninety percent of the world's fur industry was in Jewish hands, and French, Dutch, British, and American furriers boycotted the event totally. Reich sources admitted that the entire auction was a failure as \$3 million worth of furs were withdrawn for lack of buyers" (*The Transfer Agreement: The Untold Story of the Secret Pact between the Third Reich and Jewish Palestine*, Macmillan Publishing Company, New York and London, 1984, p. 131). Taking responsibility to extend business with German fur companies, Mope contributed greatly to the ongoing profitability of the Gebrüder Felsenstein, but as a salaried—rather than full—partner was unable to reap individual benefit from that.

own record by much with this letter and gave me an immense delight, especially with the lovingly thought-out contents. Your letters have become an indispensable prerequisite on my breakfast table. That means, that, if the mailman appears a little too early once in a while, I creep down the hall, still in an incomplete state, and covertly retrieve the blue envelope filled with your loving greetings, take it to my bedroom, sit down on the edge of my bed, happy in my knowledge of you, and read and then almost forget the time and the necessity of going to the office.

What have you done to the Mope who was once too lazy to write? Can you take responsibility in front of God and the world for the fact that he defaces so much beautiful paper with his scrawl? But I have to confess that I don't even really hate to write to you, because the pendulum between hating to write and loving to chat with you swings in favor of the latter by a significant degree. The chatting with you about things that up to now were usually handled by myself proves that writing (which is something like talking) about many things contributes to the ease of existence and with that, to elevating my mood. I have caught myself singing (or I should really say, growling!) more than once lately and have determined that such positive expressions of life have not shown themselves in many years, especially since the melodies are usually happy ones. While I am writing, I am seated at "Café Felsche's" where I am a wretched coffee house sitter. I hope that with necessary patience this bad habit can be corrected in our future shared home and a very good coffee.

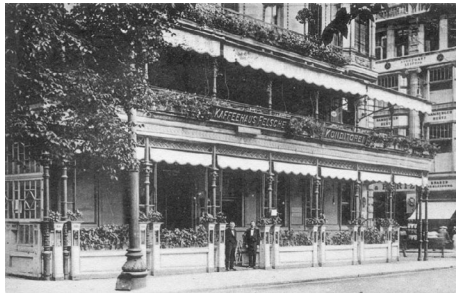


Fig. 68 Kaffeehaus Felsche, Leipzig, c. 1930 (<https://www.paulinerkirche.org/tmp/augusta/fel1922.jpg>).

MOPE TO VERA

Leipzig, 16 October 1936

This evening, I have not felt any kind of yearning to go back to my accommodation. The letter to you from Café Felsche is now starting to become a tradition. It is supposed to go across into the red mailbox of the main post office, so that it can bring my girl her Saturday greetings on time.

Who knows if you who are so scornful of our traditions want to share what touches me today! Despite all the work that seems to fall on you, I am happy that you've become aware of the old day of rest—official holiday of the week—of the Jews. The Jewish homemaker lights two candles at the beginning of the Sabbath. They stand in silver candlesticks and even the poorest feel the difference between today and the weekdays at the sight of the decorated table, because the table appointed with the silver candlesticks is especially important to them. On this particular evening—once in seven days—they are gentlemen, kings, and this awareness lets them remain human during the entire week when they have to be servants with their heavy loads on their backs. The continuation of ethics that are deeply rooted inside of us can be traced back to this and many other customs that let the heads of our ancestors rest for one day of the week even in the days of the bitterest need and let them sit proudly on those shoulders. On this day, the spirit was taken care of and the one blessed with knowledge stood above the one rich in goods, who, on the Sabbath, bowed before the one who knew the books of Judaism and let him be superior.

Now I have slipped into my teaching mode again, after I have not sat at my mother's table in several weeks or had the candles in front of me. In the present time, they are a certainty no longer but seem much clearer to my eyes even when they are not there.

Here, they are starting to put the chairs to bed, although it is only 12.30 a.m. They are allowed to rest from the humans who devoted nothing but their backsides to them all day long. A beautiful custom that should be allowed to humans as well. I embrace you and shall carry that feeling into my sleep.

MOPE TO VERA

Leipzig, 29 October 1936

After our engagement has become more widely known, I have been receiving many letters of congratulations which include you, of course. Although I let Littauers' know about our union, they have the least right to know and no right whatsoever to complain about being told late. Back then, I told Ruth about the old story first of all and received the receipt for it. I am deeply grateful to her for it today, because the happiest circumstance led the two of us together and I shudder when I think back and try to draw parallels between you and her. But that was really not her intention anyway, and only my lucky star brought about such a happy solution.

This week, our Hebrew course was cancelled, since there was a lecture on "Jewish perception of history" by Joachim Prinz and we could not find another free evening we could share. The lecture was dialectic, as always with Prinz, extremely well presented, but he is a pseudo-scientist who wants to make an enormous impression on the majority, but he cannot impress people who have a little knowledge and therefore are better able to critique. I assume that the name Prinz is familiar to you. As a boy, at the age of twenty-three, he became the rabbi of a large congregation in Berlin and has been the cause of many a fierce discussion of late because of his Zionist influence on young people whom he enthralled, in the manner of Bernard de Clairvaux, and estranged from their parents in many cases.²⁷

I will leave here tomorrow around noon and will be in Karlsbad in the evening. If it is not too expensive, I will call you from there since it will be Friday evening and you are so sweet to appoint it "our" evening.

27 Rabbi Joachim Prinz (1902-1988) was known for his fierce criticism of Nazism. He was expelled from Germany in 1937, and, seeking asylum in the USA, became the rabbi at Temple B'nai Abraham in Newark, NJ. He was a strong supporter of the Civil Rights Movement, and, as President of the American Jewish Congress, took a leading role with Martin Luther King, Jr., in the march on Washington in 1963. Bernard de Clairvaux (1090-1153) was a founder of the Cistercian Order of Monks.

MOPE TO VERA

Karlsbad, Czechoslovakia, 1 November 1936

The drive across the mountains was magnificent and even now still offered colorful autumn views that stood in idiosyncratic contrast to the blanket of snow already covering parts of the mountain. On the trip there, we even had a few rays of sunshine that brightly decorated our way at times and created new colors by appearing and disappearing in turn.

Now, I want to tell you about the reason for my trip here. All of a sudden, after the devaluation of the crown, my request for a letter of credit submitted on August 5 was approved for 3,000 Czech crowns at the old exchange rate. The Reichsbank did not want to lose any value in its Crown holdings and that is why everyone who had applied earlier had to withdraw the money and if they don't use the letter of credit, they have to bear the loss in the exchange rate. A critique concerning this is unnecessary. I would have had time until December 6 to withdraw the money, so it was the last possible weekend.

I was lucky that the sister-in-law of my car driver is here from England for a spa-treatment and I arranged to have some of the money paid to her. I will give her approximately 1,500 of my Crowns which she will pay back to you in London. Since we have not balanced the books yet, I don't know if there will be anything left to possibly put in this letter.²⁸

MOPE TO VERA

Leipzig, 6 November 1936

A week ago today when I called you from Karlsbad, we heard our voices sing and they lost nothing of their naturalness, although they cut across earth, under the channel with its storm-tortured waves and once again moved through wires that moved in the wind, crossed borders and were led through the pulsing, loud life of metropolitan cities. We felt close to one another, not closer than usual because such strong feelings cannot

28 Because of currency restrictions on Jews imposed by the German authorities, crossing the border into Czechoslovakia was one of the few ways by which Mope could transfer funds to London. Until Hitler annexed the Sudetenland in October 1938, many German Jews would apply to visit Karlsbad as a temporary release from conditions under the Reich.

even be heightened by sounds that one wishes to hear all the time. But it was something special, like a gift of nature that one has heard, like the rustle of leaves that continues on through the forest. It is passed along from tree to tree and the melody rings for miles and miles. It is like a huge ringing that fills the entire forest, and we were like two trees that have suddenly plugged into this concert and our leaves were touched by others and always others making music between us until there was the contact that let us feel each other's breath. But then, the contact was dissolved again as suddenly and there was a hollow space in which we wanted to grab each other and reached into emptiness. It was as if a tendon had been cut so that the hand that reached for you sank down feebly before it could feel the softness of your skin and the breathing of your pores and warm itself in the warmth of your body. The separation was like a gush of cold, icy water on a person feeling highly aroused and one would never have felt the separation if the secret of nature, the rustle of trees that can be sustained without interruption, had been taken without also taking the continuity in the actions of nature.

Could you have felt it in the same way and not feel overcome by the gush of ice-cold water? I almost believe that such an interruption can be less surmountable in women for a longer time than in men. But maybe it is just a silly hypersensitivity in me to have felt that way but also needing to put it into words which can only describe feelings in a lackluster way.

MOPE TO VERA

Leipzig, 10 November 1936

While I am writing from here (at Zellner's),²⁹ I am eating the rest of my dinner. Unfortunately, it was near 11.00 p.m. when I finally found the time, since, during the day today, I had to inspect merchandise that will be sold at auction tomorrow. Semy sent me to look at the wares although I definitely will not reap the sweet or sour fruits of success. He considered my judgment on the merchandise to be completely accurate, and tomorrow, I will buy for the Gebrüder Felsenstein. It is lucky that the other partner-cousins are not here, because they would surely suffer

29 Jewish-owned Zellner's Restaurant was on Nikolaistrasse along from the Gebrüder Felsenstein building. Its forced closure took place in 1938. The Zellner family would be deported to Auschwitz in 1942 where they perished.

seizures in their anger over the trust shown me. Actually, I am dead tired from all the work, but I don't want to go to bed without writing to you.

My intention to drive to Berlin on Friday will likely take place. I do not know yet where I will be staying and I will let you know if you can call me Saturday evening. I am just feeling bad for the English money that you will have to spend for that, since that is a rare article that can only be acquired with much effort. Please forgive this materialistic view of the world that is necessary nevertheless.

MOPE TO VERA

Pension Gloria, Berlin, 14 November 1936

I am sitting here waiting. I wonder if you will call or even received yesterday's letter today. Since it was really late yesterday, I stayed in bed in the morning and went for a walk in the afternoon. Life on the Kurfürstendamm is tremendously crowded and cannot be any more flooded without respite in Piccadilly or Regent Street.

....

To hear your beloved voice was, just like the last time, an experience to me and it was so clear and distinct, as if you were in a telephone booth on the Kurfürstendamm. Although I was waiting for it, I did not find the right words once again, for the most important thing is not the technical stuff with its positive and negative aspects, but the fact that I love you and that I long to kiss your beautiful mouth and that I want to stride with you arm in arm, and my heart is so overfilled with it that I can only stammer, because the words that are meant to tell you that, come out in such a rush if they have to be spoken. We write to each other and we know a lot about one another and still, there is the last thing between us, that point of contact that can only be made with a kiss and for which no words would be necessary between us. Meanwhile, your voice still sounds in my ear as if we could see each other again in the morning and I could embrace you, take your hands and caress you.

By the way, I decided that once I get everything done here I will take a four-week vacation and I am counting *on you to accompany me*, because I will probably need a vacation desperately by then in order to start my new work with newfound strength. I am considering a trip to Palestine as a strong possibility. I will find out during my visit in London, and before I come over there I have to clear up a question concerning the

indemnity needed with the "Haavara." The people promised me to write to Tel-Aviv, and I hope that the answer will require less time than my request in June.

Now I want to air the room a little because I smoked and will bring the letter to the mailbox in the meantime. Since, to my knowledge, there will be no airplane tomorrow, I will send it by regular mail, otherwise it will stay here until Monday.

MOPE TO VERA

Leipzig, 16 November 1936

When I arrived here today around noon, I found two letters from you. I consumed this detailed pleasure before I went to lunch and to the store. Despite the call on Saturday that let me hear your beloved voice, I really missed your reports a lot.

You will be interested in a short report about my day yesterday, since the Zionist conference was of the highest order and your director at M&S, Rebecca Sieff,³⁰ spoke very well and showed the same movements that Weizmann does when he speaks. That was amusing to watch. She was wearing a belt that she kept moving back and forth with her hands and while one gets to see the suspenders every now and then during the parallel activity in Weizmann, one waits for a similar "revelation" (but admittedly in vain). Her speeches were in English, of course and were then translated. In the evening, I was introduced to Mrs. Sieff with the explanation that I was the fiancé of Miss Hirsch, an employee of M&S. Immediately, she said, "I know, she is in the welfare department," and I asked, "Do you know her personally?" and she answered, "No, but I intended to meet her. She is a friend of Mrs. Braham. Do you wish that I tell her something from you?" And I said, "Thank you, no, I telephoned with her last night, but please give her my love." Then she said something about "some good looking man" and I told her, "Please tell her that!," whereupon the "audience" was ended since there was a

30 Rebecca Sieff (1890-1966) was the sister of Simon Marks. She married Israel Sieff in 1910, and was a prominent Zionist, and a friend and supporter of Chaim Weizmann, later first President of the State of Israel. In 1920, Sieff was one of the co-founders of the Women's International Zionist Organization (WIZO). Both her brother and her husband were directors of Marks & Spencer, the British chain store at which Vera was employed.

vast number of people who wanted to talk to her. It was a great joy to me that she knew about you, something I had not expected. Other than that, I felt a little embarrassed because so many people were standing around listening. Her picture in the *Rundschau* is extremely flattering, by the way, because she looks at least twice as old.

Sunday evening before I left Berlin, I had sat down at Dobrin on the Kurfürstendamm so I could write to you and give you my fresh impressions concerning the evening with Mrs. Sieff. However, a really unlikable guy from Leipzig had the audacity to just sit down at my table and began to talk to me, and when I finally got away from him, it was getting really late and I was too tired to continue writing.³¹

MOPE TO VERA

Leipzig, 24 November 1936

You are right when you say that clouds are now moving above us and through us and that we are influenced by their darkness just as the rays of the sun wake light and joy in us. But if we are prepared to see that and actually know it, then we are strong enough to direct the clouds and the sun if they want to influence us psychologically. And that is the reason why we meet with postal delays or zones of disturbance in the inwardly wireless contact between us that sometimes sound like dissonances—heightened by misunderstandings that can be cleared up by letter. So long as we are forced to be so far apart spatially, we want to let the joy of our knowledge of one another rule over all moods of a negative nature. Herzl said when he talked about Palestine, “If you want it, it is not a fairy tale!”³² And we both want it!!

Unfortunately, I cannot yet determine the exact date of my trip to London because I am missing some documents that, as I have already

31 Café Dobrin was a famous Jewish *Bäckerei* and coffee shop. The “really unlikable guy from Leipzig” was almost certainly a Nazi official sent to spy on Mope’s activities and those of other Zionists. According to Rebecca Weisner, even in 1936, it was not unusual for the Gestapo to spy on the premises and randomly arrest clientele sometimes with fatal consequences (see Eric A. Johnson and Karl-Heinz Reuband, *What We Knew: Terror, Mass Murder, and Everyday Life in Nazi Germany: An Oral History* [New York: Basic Books, 2005], 49).

32 In his preface to his utopian novel, *Altneuland* (1902), Theodor Herzl (1860-1904), the founder of political Zionism, introduced the famous motto, “If you wish it, it is no dream”.

written to you, the PalTreu had promised to provide. A letter-exchange with Palestine could be accomplished in ten to fourteen days, but I am afraid that the people will take their time because they don't care that Lilongo and Mope long for each other. Nevertheless, I hope for a quick transaction since I described the matter as extremely urgent. Because I am still with the Gebrüder Felsenstein and they have now granted me unexpectedly generous liberties as long as I stay with them, I can hardly abuse this generosity in all good conscience—apart from the costs.

I already wrote to you about Mrs. Sieff, but I have no idea in what respect she is supposed to be “hard as nails.” I am curious to find out if she remembers to deliver my greetings.

VERA

Journal entry, 24 November 1936

I have not written anything in here for an eternity, because, whenever I have time to write, I write to my friend and lover.

I have a lot of work, and for the most part, it is very satisfying. I carry my Mope within me and I hope that he will come home soon and that we will find work for him here.

MOPE TO VERA

Leipzig, 4 December 1936

This evening, after quite a long break, I had another Hebrew lesson which stretched out to a quarter after 1.00 a.m. so that this epistle is being written in the train station waiting room once again. Since I can sleep in tomorrow morning, I have the leisure to contemplate my peculiar surroundings during my writing.

It is the same picture as always and is interrupted in its monotony only by a very striking-looking blonde who just appeared. She looks as if she could afford to use a hotel lobby to wait for the train, but she serves a “higher purpose” with the view she offers to the ones waiting here. Her cavalier who looks more like a gigolo is virtually ignored by her.

Blondie and gigolo are fighting at this very moment. I wonder if you and I will turn out to be sulky and upbraid each other at some

point. Or will we be sufficiently insightful to avoid such scenes when misunderstandings develop between us? It is certainly good to always remember that such moments are the sum of single trivialities that, seemingly insurmountable, lead to an explosion.

Now, the waiting room is filling with people in a way that I've never before observed. Most of them are not without alcohol and for that reason, things have become a little lively. The air has become thick enough to cut, despite the height of the room, because of all the smoke. At my table, two "gentlemen" sat down who are distressing themselves over street ballads in a fluent Saxon dialect, although they have not yet received their beer through which they can oil their sore throats. Blondie and gigolo left the restaurant separately—she with the suitcases. *That* marriage is broken. Then she came back one more time with inviting looks for me, but I did not feel up to serving as a baggage handler and so both of us remained lonely—but only on the outside where I am concerned.

Now I will bring the letter into the franking room at the main post office so that you will most likely receive it tomorrow. I would love to go on writing but I don't like the atmosphere here anymore.

MOPE TO VERA

Leipzig, 6 December 1936

There is nothing in the newspapers here about the affair of the King with Mrs. Simpson, except in the *Times*. Poor guy that he had to fall in love with, of all things, this young woman with a past. However, I can understand the attitude of the English who are also accusing him of not being religious while he, as the King, has to personify the head of the English church. Certainly, that thirty-eight-year-old young girl does have the strongest influence on him and takes the suggested long trip to let him come to his senses. Mistresses can be honored, but appear to me to be unsuitable as the queen and mother of an heir to the throne of a bigoted people.³³

33 Great Britain was in the middle of the Abdication Crisis. King Edward VIII, intent on marrying the divorcee, Wallis Simpson, was formally to abdicate the throne on 10 December. Edward's younger brother became King George VI.

MOPE TO VERA

Leipzig, 10 December 1936

It is true that we got to know each other because of all that work you had to do for Christmas last year, but the death of a king helped us to deepen the contact just a little more; and without that event, I hardly would have come by my first kiss at that time. Today, another king abdicated. I wonder if another joy is in store for me because of that!

Yesterday evening was very successful, although we learned that some things could have been done better, as is always the case. There was a lottery at which the single very large prize was supposed to be a trip to Palestine—which had been donated. The tickets were very inexpensive at 5 for RM 1.—and people snapped them up. The trip had a value of RM 250.—and those clever people only sold 1000 tickets (that is, for 200.—) while at least 5000 could have been sold, had more been available. As you can see, the Zionists are idealists and, in all their idealism, forget the calculations.

The speech was given by a very young Rabbi Nussbaum from Berlin.³⁴ A vain boy who imitated Joachim Prinz's voice and used the most catastrophically unconsidered comparisons. But you could see once again how pathos—if used correctly—stirs people, because, much to my shock, they were thrilled by that uncontrolled torrent of words.

I received a rather unsatisfactory answer from the Paltreu Office in Berlin today. Those people abuse their right in the most indecent manner—at least that is my feeling. According to my calculations, we will sustain a loss of approximately 18 per cent because of them, including the fees they demand, which are added to everything else.

Now it is outrageously late once again, but I lay down for an hour before I started the letter, because I was just too tired to write. In the greatest love—Your Mope

34 Rabbi Max Nussbaum (1908-1974) from Suceava, Romania, served as a community rabbi in Berlin. He and his wife escaped from Germany in 1940, and settled in the United States, where he became the rabbi of Temple Israel of Hollywood. A posthumously published volume of his sermons and articles, *Max Nussbaum: From Berlin to Hollywood—A Mid-century Vision of Jewish Life*, appeared in 1994.

MOPE TO VERA

Leipzig, 11 December 1936

This evening, I lit four candles. The first half of the eight-day festival of Chanukah is over already. For years, I did not do the lighting with any regularity, but this year, loneliness tempted me into doing it since I am already counting the days, and I can celebrate every day that brings me nearer to you with a new light.

Our family business does not close over Chanukah, because this holiday did not come into being until a later time—that is, after the time of the Bible. It is a holiday of the Jews, only it does have, as all of our celebrations, a religious note as well. The Romans had desecrated the Temple in Jerusalem and, after everything disturbing (pictures of idols and so on) was removed from it, there was no more olive oil in store—olive oil that had been pressed in the prescribed manner and sealed in containers by the High Priest—other than one small bottle the contents of which would have only supplied the candelabra for one day. The miracle of it all was that the light, despite the insufficient quantity of oil, burned for eight days, until new oil was available. That is where the tradition of the eight-armed candelabra comes from and the joy does not concern the victory but the consecration of the Temple and Chanukah means consecration.³⁵

Unfortunately, I haven't been able to read any books for the longest time, or I start to read them and can't go on. I cannot even finish my newspaper reading. By the way, did you read the Weizmann speech?³⁶ It is thought out so consummately and a historical document in its presentation of claims. You can tell from it what motivates us Zionists and what sweeps us along inwardly. We have set ourselves a high goal that is difficult to reach which we will fight for despite all resistance.

My heartfelt congratulations on the new royal family, please give them my kind regards and assure them that they are the only people that I would feel like visiting when I am there. However, in two weeks, we will spend this evening together and I cannot even describe my

35 Rather than the Romans, it was Seleucid forces under King Antiochus IV that desecrated the Temple, c. 165 BCE.

36 Mope is alluding to *Das Recht auf die Heimat* (*The Right to the Homeland*), a speech made in Jerusalem in November 1936 by Zionist leader and future President of Israel Chaim Weizmann (1874-1952).

delight when I look forward to that. Sleep well, my sweet wife and let yourself be kissed and embraced again and again by Your Mope

Mope was in London with Vera from Wednesday, 23 December 1936 through to 10 January 1937. Their correspondence resumes following his departure.