

1943

C H A P T E R 38
AN EXCELLENT IDEA.

One day, we read in the newspaper that there was a shortage of doctors in the United States on account of the war. That gave me an idea and I explained it to Hedy: I saw a chance for me and Francis to get visas for the United States. We had to make a drastic step: She and Johanna should return to New York, should apply for a hearing in Washington and explain our situation. I figured that she would make a good impression there and would achieve the result, visas for me

and Francis. Hedy got tears running down from her eyes, but she saw that I was right and agreed. I had at that time the money for their voyage and a little more for the beginning, till she would find a job. She knew there a couple from before, Michael and Amelie Rosen, where she could find a place to stay. And I and Francis found also a place to stay, with friends, Mr. and Mrs. Zobel, who lived nearby, and we moved there into a nice room. For food there was Lisa, also nearby. So, Hedy and Johanna left - it was in May, 1943 - this time by plane to Miami, where she visited Mrs. Wagner, and from there by train to New York.

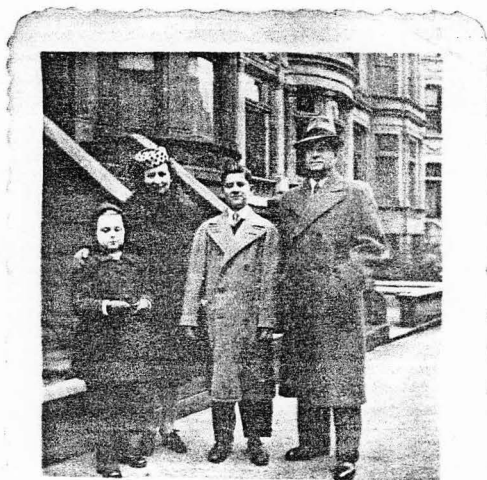
They got a room in the apartment of the Rosens, who took them even along for a summer vacation somewhere in the Catskills. Hedy prepared herself very well for the hearing in Washington, got advice from a lawyer, Mr. Milton Pariser. He had told her to buy government bonds for the war effort, which she did, also to do voluntary work for the Red Cross, and she did that too, making gauze bandages for wounded soldiers.

The day of the hearing in Washington came and she took the train. She had a paper prepared by the lawyer, but she had to do much talking on her own and she cried there too. She was asked about government bonds and voluntary work for the Red Cross too. The result was as expected: Visas for me and Francis, which arrived around Christmas time, and, extremely happy, we started right away with our preparations for the trip, which was not an easy undertaking, since we had accumulated quite a lot of things in over 5 years, from October 1938 till February 1944, among them two big display boxes filled with butterflies and other insects. For the last two days

THE FOLLOWING 4 PAGES

The following 4 pages show a petition which Hedy had prepared for her hearing in Washington D.C., and following these 4 pages a letter of the Department of State to the U.S. Embassy in Habana approving the issuance of immigration visas to me and Francis. A great success! Another dream came true.

in Havana I had hired a taxicab to take me to the many friends to say "good-bye". In the laboratory Vieta-Plasencia I had left a large amount of ointment for a long time to come and I told them that I would probably come over from the United States to prepare more ointment for them. The formula I did not give them and they did not ask me for it, since I had great plans for Viperin for the United States.



On Garfield Place in Brooklyn
on March 12, 1944

The undersigned, Hedwig Mechner, makes the following statement on behalf of Adolf Mechner, her husband and Franz Mechner, her son, who are applying for visas to enter the United States.

I am a resident of the United States since my entry on December 2, 1939. The only time I left this country was on October 1, 1940 and proceeded to Havana, Cuba, taking with me my daughter Joan, to join my husband and son. I returned to this country on June 15, 1943. The delay in returning was due to the fact that the re-entry permit for my daughter Joan was returned but mine had been mislaid in the office of Immigration and Naturalization Service in Philadelphia. On January 26, 1943, we were so advised by letter and a new re-entry permit was issued. Since June 15, 1943, I have resided together with my daughter at 721 Carroll Street, Brooklyn, New York.

At the present time, I am employed by the United States Basket Co., 10 East 23 Street, New York City, and earn \$25.00 a week for part time work. I also do knitting and crocheting at home and earn an additional \$10 to \$15 a week. This work is supplied to me by Union Art Crochet Co., 1165 Broadway, New York City. I have approximately \$500 in savings banks in New York City and have already purchased from my earnings several United States War Bonds. My landlord, a Mrs. Rosen, takes care of my daughter Joan while I am at work and when Joan is not at school. Joan is at the present time attending a public school. I am serving as a volunteer worker with the American Red Cross at its office in the Academy of Music, Brooklyn, New York.

I met my husband Adolf Mechner in 1920 when he was a medical student in Vienna. He studied at the Medical University in Vienna for five years and received his degree in 1924. He served an internship in Vienna Hospital for four years and thereafter took a position as a

physician in the Sanitarium ~~Coop~~ of Vienna, the outstanding institution of its kind in Austria. He remained in that position for two years.

In 1928 we were married and my husband opened an office as a practicing physician and also became a doctor in the Social Security Division. In addition to his activities as a practicing physician he occupied his spare time in scientific research. In 1936 he made an important therapeutic discovery. He was able to prove that snake poison constitutes an excellent and successful remedy for coryza. After considerable investigation and research he was able to demonstrate that the serum could be applied by rubbing as an unguent into the skin of the arm. This discovery was presented to the Medical Society of Vienna, on June 19, 1936. A complete report and its acceptance by the Medical Fraternity is included in a statement prepared by my husband which will be submitted herewith.

In 1938, our situation became precarious, due to the developments of the political situation. At that time my daughter was two years old and my son 7. My husband took our son with him to Paris. On September 30, 1938 he left our son with an Aunt in Paris and he proceeded alone to Havana, Cuba, where he arrived on November 1, 1938.

On October 1, 1941, Mrs. Lisa Ziegler, ^{Rosegg} the Aunt, who is my sister, and my son, joined my husband in Havana, where they have continuously resided. On November 14, 1939, I left Vienna with my daughter with American Immigration Papers issued by the United States Consul in Vienna and on November 20, 1939 sailed for New York on the S. S. Rotterdam.

Since September 30, 1938, my family has been separated except for the period of time that I visited Havana, Cuba. It is our heartiest desire and wish for all of us to be reunited and to start

life anew in America. The opportunity to live together under one roof as a family unit and to give to our children the advantages of having both a mother and a father would be the greatest blessing that he could receive.

It was only due to unfortunate circumstances that my husband and son did not obtain their visas in the past. On November 25, 1941 the American Consul in Havana informed my husband that he had received favorable instructions from the State Department. Two weeks later the attack on Pearl Harbor brought an immediate stoppage to the issuance of visas. Immigration applications were filed by Mr. Saretzky and Rabbi Simon and these gentlemen did not understand the meaning of the notices for a hearing and wrote to us in Havana. In the meantime, nobody appeared at the hearing and the application was denied. Thereafter on my return to this country, I filed the new application now before this board.

My husband and son are both in excellent health, and have never suffered from any contagious or serious illness. My husband is an extremely well educated man, having a fine and excellent cultural background, in addition to his medical training. My son has been well educated as a young boy and gives promise of developing into a fine upright man.

My husband would welcome the opportunity of serving as a doctor in this country. He brings with him many years of experience as a general practitioner of medicine in addition to his abilities and discoveries in medical research. He has always been in sympathy and accord with the Democratic principles of government. He has never had and does not have any sympathy with the Fascist form of government, and have never given support of any kind to the Nazis or Fascists. My

husband was never a member of any political group, did not belong to societies other than medical societies. He never took part in Political organizations. He has always been a loyal person and I have no doubt that he will give to this country the loyalty and appreciation that the granting of a visa to him and to my son justifies and deserves.

My husband is not completely without financial resources, and has between \$1000.00 and \$2000.00 in cash at the present time. This money he earned doing laboratory work at a pharmaceutical factory, Vietta Plazinzia, in Havana.

I respectfully pray this board to recommend the issuance of visas to my husband and son, knowing full well that they will eventually become good American Citizens and show their appreciation by service to this country.

Hedwig Mechner

New-York, Nov. 10th 1943.



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

In reply refer to
VD 811.111 Mechner, Adolf

December 17, 1943

Mrs. Hedwig Mechner,
721 Carroll Street,
Brooklyn, New York.

Madam:

With reference to your interest in the visa case of your husband Adolf Mechner and son Franz Gerhart, I have pleasure in informing you that after further consideration of the case in the light of existing regulations, the Department has given ~~approval~~ advisory approval for the issuance of immigration visas to the American Embassy at Habana. Notification of this action has been sent by air mail.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "H. K. Travers".

H. K. Travers
Chief, Visa Division

