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24.sz.

16 May 1940.

My dear son!

Your letter No. 8, dated 18 March, together with its enclosures, arrived yesterday. We already knew the beach picture, as you know, through Nandi, but we were very happy to receive it. In these difficult times, it is good to have this picture in our hands from time to time. You can get a great dose of reassurance and stimulation from it. May God grant that you may always have the opportunity to continue to chuckle at the world as serenely as you do in this picture. Based on the Romanian article, I retract what I wrote in my last letter about the fourth high school student. I realise that it is European pretentiousness to assume that people from there must know things about every European dirty country that we know (or perhaps don't know) here next door. After all, no one who hasn't had a child in Australia and hasn't read a book or two in the past is as knowledgeable about Australia as they are about Pest. The only difference is that these great Australian countries don't cause the world as much trouble and worry as the South-East Europeans. You certainly benefit from the ignorance of those there. Eventually, it was only by the skin of your teeth that events didn't give you Slovakia to write about. The last few days were full of news about this country, while now official dementia has set in. But what goes around comes around. There is no shortage of news and excitement, and developments in Italy in the last few days in particular indicate that the number of belligerents will increase within days. From our point of view, the more countries are occupied in the West, the more there is a prospect that the tranquillity of south-eastern Europe will not be disturbed. But I am very much afraid of possible Italian interference in our correspondence, especially if trouble should be found even in the Dutch colonies. If there were to be a cessation of flights, we would be practically cut off from each other, because then there would be no slow shipping at all, not even then. Mom's telling me to give her more room than last time. So just to let you know that even if contact is interrupted, my thoughts, good wishes and trust will continue to be with you at all times in the future. I kiss you, my dear son, a thousand times Apa