Complete

AN APPROACH TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND THE ADVISORY COUNCIL OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR BREAKING THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

Midtown International Center
 152 West 56th Street, New York 19, N.Y. USA

Sydney 1st November 1964

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is to express my happiness of having found contact with you at last, since my approaches in June of this year. Your Executive Director Mr. Kaito informed me by letter, just received, that your next meeting will be on the 9th November, and therefore I hasten to write to you this duplicated paper. Typing without a draft directly on to the wax stencils, I beg beforehand forgiveness for any typing mistake, awkward sentence, or not nice drawings in these pages. I have to work fast, should all this be in your hands in a few days time. Excuse also any other shortcomings in my approach to you.

Perhaps a set of my 3 books on Semantography, lent by one of the Public or University Libraries of New York, will also be before you. They are out of print, and I have not the money for making a typeset new edition. Moreover, I am now in my 68th year, and I feel that my life is coming to an end. The more so am I happy to know that the idea, on which I worked for 22 long years, is now taken up by energetic men and women who are going to make the idea of international symbols for breaking the language barrier a reality.

During these 22 years I have approached literally thousands of responsible people in the United Nations, in Unesco, in governments, in universities and colleges, and especially in the committees responsible for road safety. I felt that they will be the first to appreciate a set of pictorial symbols by which any meaning in road safety can be expressed. But the very same symbols can also be used for travel agencies, hotels, restaurants, ships, airplanes, and public places.

At first I could not understand why road safety signs in different states of the United States of America, or Australia, or other federal countries are different. My many approaches to the men responsible for these differences taught me a terrible lesson in human behaviour and human nature. No official will admit that an official from another state has a better idea. No official will readily agree that his own sign in his own country should be removed from thousands of signposts and replaced by the better symbol designed by another guy from another state. One official told me quite bluntly, in spite of my most polite and most humble approach: "Mr. Bliss, not you or anyone else is going to tell us how to run our business!"

And you are going to face this hurdle too. No matter how wonderful your designs will be, you may be rest assured that some guy from a hotel organisation, or travel organisation in another country will come up with another sign, and sooner or later, there will be a new Babel of pictorial signs which will defeat its purpose, and bewilder the travellers from many countries. How then can this development be countered?

By the argument that there is already a set of pictorial symbols available which can in combination express any desired meaning in international travel, commerce, industry and science, even in religion and poetry. This I have convincingly demonstrated in my 3 books. Any scholar who took the time to study my work, was full of praise for it. I do not claim special intelligence, or special mental capabilities. I believe that the spark of a new idea flares up in many a mind, and I am one of them. What I did, was working ceaselessly for 22 years on this idea. I am a retired industrial executive, and all my life I have manufactured practical and marketable things. I know when any

thing or any idea is not practical. Moreover, I have a university degree in chemistry, and I have approached language with my training in chemical analysis. H_2O does not only mean water in all languages, it shows also the elements of which water is composed, and even their ratio.

Starting with this assumption, I analysed the meaning of many words and tried to separate the basic meaning elements. I then gave each element a pictorial symbol, and then built up compound meanings by combination of these basic pictorial symbols. This is one of the main reasons why my symbols should find your favourable attention. It may well be possible to express some meaning in international travel with an appropriate picture, but then every traveller would have to carry with him a booklet showing the meanings of hundreds of such pictures. However, a traveller, who knows the basic symbols of my system, and who has already seen how they look and work in combination with other symbols, will have little difficulty to guess or read the meanings of new symbol combinations.

The second consideration which favours my system is that I hold vital copyrights on these basic pictorial symbol elements, and also their likely derivations and deviations. These copyrights could help you very much, in so far, as you could warn and stop anyone who wants to introduce his own system, and thus create a new Babel. Moreover, anyone who is going to make money from these symbols, be he a publisher of travel books, or a printer, or a manufacturer of public signs, etc. etc. will have to pay royalties, and this money would help you and help me in further publications and further attempts to make this system world-wide in use. I feel that it is here necessary to clarify the question of copyrights. The fact, that my copyrights are registered with the Patent Office in Washington, and practically in all other countries under the Berne Convention is of vital importance.

Now, I have said in my books that I do not want to make money for myself. I give my symbols free for the use of mankind, provided that two conditions are adhered to. The first condition is that nobody must alter the symbols, except with the approval of the holder of these copyrights, because any alteration will only create a new Babel. The second condition is that the words in the native languages are always displayed underneath the symbols. Thus a native would see the symbols in his country, would learn their meaning because he reads it in his own language underneath the symbols, and thus he would recognize the symbol when he travels to another country. I am sure you will agree that these two conditions are only reasonable.

Another important point would be the agreement as to how and by what name this symbol system should be referred to in international communication. At first, I believed that my term of Semantography (from the Greek words of semantikos, significant meaning, and graphein to write) would be international. However this term has proved too long, and a tongue twister, and it has been misquoted as to Semantology, Semology, Semitology, and other similar false spellings in books and journals. Furthermore, some scholars have used the term already as a general term for any symbol system. This is the reason why my friends are advocating a new term which should signify my original pioneering semantography from any other semantographies. They advocate the term of Blissymbolics. But as this too is too long, they speak of Blissymbols (making it one word) or simply of Bliss. They even go so far to say prophetically:

Today blind mankind write in Braille.
A day will come when seeing and thinking
mankind will write and think in Bliss.

The reference to "thinking" is made with regard to my system of semantics and logic, and even ethics, which is embodied in my system of symbols. I have a number of manuscripts on these different aspects, which I hope to see in print during my life-time. Should I die before, then I have made provisions that these manuscripts be printed. In order to draw attention to all this, I make it a condition of the use of my symbols that my name be used to mark these symbols, as indicated above as "Blissymbols". The fact that I am now 68 and at the end of my life, may tell you that I am not seeking cheap publicity or the limelight, but simply want that all my endeavours be named and spoken of under a simple general term, and this would be "Blissymbols" or simply Bliss.

Having said all this, I wish again to state that I am giving my symbols free for the use by mankind, but anyone who is going to make money by commercially exploiting these symbols would have to pay royalties, be he a publisher, or a printer, or a maker of public signs, or a typewriter manufacturer.

To you I would give the symbols free for use, but we must draw up any agreement in order to be prepared in our approach to any publisher of travel books, and any manufacturer of such signs for hotels, ships, airplanes, etc. etc. This incoming money shall be used for the further propagation of these symbols by you and by me. I do not want a single penny to go into my pockets, but I am most anxious that anyone who makes money from these symbols should contribute a small royalty which will help him too, because this money will be used for the propagation of such symbols, and will help that publisher and manufacturer in turn.

Having said all this, I ask you kindly to consider all this, before you make any decision. I am still alive, and I could help you greatly. It would be a pity if other considerations would make you reject my offer of co-operation.

I have now before me the words, which, according to Mr. Kaito's letter, are now up for your consideration to be translated into pictorial symbols at your coming meeting. I ask you for your kind consideration and utmost benevolence in realizing that all these meanings could be pictured elaborately with real pictures, instead as I do with symbols of utmost simplicity. But I beg you to realize that this simplicity is a necessity, because my symbols can also be typed on a special typewriter. Thus, a traveller who gets a receipt for a booking can also see in typewritten symbols that the booking is for a double bedroom with bath, or with shower only. There are hundreds of such instances which need be typed down on bookings, reservations, tickets, etc. and all this must be done with a typewriter. I was in touch for many years with the large typewriter companies, especially IBM and Varityper. They agreed to make a demonstration model for me, but it would cost several thousand dollars, and the companies were not prepared to spend money on something which is not yet a practical reality.

In the following lines I shall show some symbols from my large chapters in my 3 books. In my first letter to Mr. Walters, dated June 8, I have listed the page numbers of some of these chapters, and I repeat them here

SEMANTOGRAPHY FOR TRAVELLERS, HOTELS, ETC.	Volume II	Pages 335 - 341
AN INTERNATIONAL MENU CARD FOR RESTAURANTS	" II	" 319 - 327
AN INTERNATIONAL PASSPORT IN ALL LANGUAGES	" II	" 342 - 350
BANKING AND BUSINESS IN INTERNATIONAL SIGNS	" II	" 247 - 267
SIGNS IN SHOPS AND STORES	" II	" 257 - 263
DIRECTIONS ON MERCHANDISE, PARCELS, BOXES, ETC.	" II	" 263 - 266
INTERNATIONAL SYMBOLS FOR SHIPS AND PLANES	" II	" 236 - 240
SYMBOLS FOR RAILROADS AND MOTOR ROADS	" II	" 224 - 227
ROAD SAFETY WARNING SIGNS IN SEMANTOGRAPHY	" II	" 357 - 365
INTERNATIONAL CUSTOM FORMS AND OTHER PAPERS	" II	" 261 - ff
SYMBOL CABLES AND INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE	" II	" 266 - ff

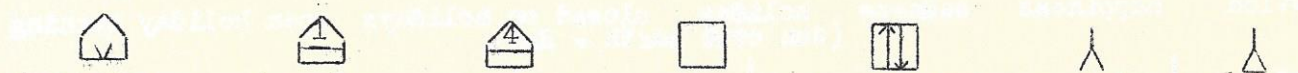
To give you an idea of the range of subjects which I have explored and for which I worked out my symbols, I enclose with these papers only one copy of the pages showing the index of my 3 books. I do this, in case you were unable to borrow my 3 books from any of the New York libraries which have them.

In the next lines I begin now to show you my symbols, by showing you also the basic symbols which I then use in combination. But the symbols shown below are only a few and only those which Mr. Kaito mentioned in his letter to me.

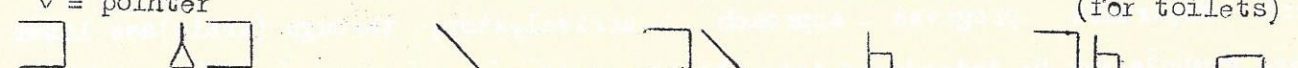


 ground - walls roof house man wheel travel traveller hotel

These few symbols will give you an idea how I combine symbols.



 groundfloor 1st floor 4th floor enclosure escalator man woman
 (V = pointer) (for toilets)



 room roommaid writing pen writing room chair lounge table

I ask you kindly to compare these badly drawn and duplicated symbols with the printed symbols in the attached leaflets. This will show you that the symbols when printed or painted perfectly are very representable, and easily observable and understandable. I continue with the symbols for hotels. More such symbols are to be found in the chapters in my books mentioned before.

baggage	porter	enclosure	baggage cloakroom	baggage check in	baggage check out		
paper, ticket	travel ticket	baggage ticket	book travel book	conductor			
letter	messenger	letter box	post office	electricity	telegram		
wings	airmail	mouth, speech	ear	language	electricity telephone		
eye	theatre, showhouse	bowl	full	house full	musical note	concert hall	
bowl	water	bath	bathroom	rain	showerroom	steam	steamroom
bed	bedroom	flame, fire	door	entrance	exit	fire exit	fire stairs
mouth	cigarette	smoking	yes	no	no smoking	spitting	no spitting
bowl	spittoon	hand	don't touch	turn handle	push	pull	

I am now coming to the symbols for time, and for an international calendar working with the symbols for sun and moon. The meaning of time is depicted by the face of a watch. Hours are expressed in numbers of four digits as used by military, and as it will be used later on everywhere, instead of a.m. and p.m. More time symbols are to be found in chapter on SYMBOLS FOR TIME P. 105 - 108

time	6 a.m.	6 p.m.	open	closed	door open 8 - 12 a.m.	closed 1-2

sun	earth	sunrise 5.46 a.m.	morning	day	sunset	moon	evening

sunday	monday	friday	saturday	moon	january	march	may	december

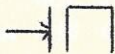
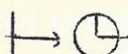
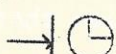
ticket for friday 25th	april 8 p.m.	limits	timelimits	year (full cycle)

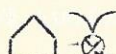
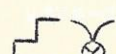
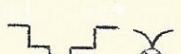
emotion	happiness	sadness	holiday	closed on holidays	open holiday morning

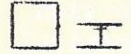
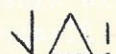
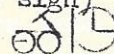
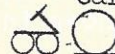
start	departure	progress	approach	arrival, stop, through (train)	see later

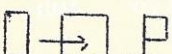
These symbols can be introduced into all time tables for railways, ships, airplanes, etc. Please realize also that all the symbols shown in these pages can be typed as small as letters. For instance this is the symbol for a man , this for his mind , which shows the outline of his skull. This is a thinker and so on.

Many of the symbols shown on the foregoing and the following page are useful not only for hotels, but for all places for travellers, as for instance, travel bureaux, airterminals, railway stations, ports and ships, theatres and other public places. I hope that you become convinced of the versatility of them, because, as you can see for yourself, I use the same basic symbols again and again.

    
door stop no entrance through to cloakroom departure 9 p.m. arrival 3.45 a.m.

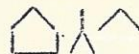
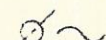
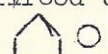
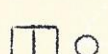
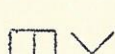
     
wings wheel airplane airterminal board airplane change airplanes

     
belt close belt landing safety first (international sign) caution hand handle with care
     
car of any kind motor car limit time limit hire-car, taxi car per day (car rental)

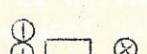
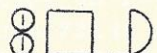
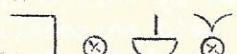
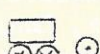
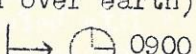
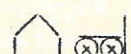
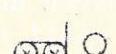
     
medicine (rod of aesculap) doctor first aid box first aid station pharmacy health clearance
     
toll bar (customs) customs officer earth flag country entry visa

Please realize that these symbols may seem at first not self-explanatory. But please realize that no pictorial symbol can be self-explanatory. Take for instance the arrow symbol. It is international. But to a primitive bow and arrow hunter it depicts only an arrow. He would not know that it is a direction sign. We have seen the arrow many times as children, but it took us questions and guessings, until we became accustomed that it is a direction sign.

My idea is that the basic symbols and their derivations, as shown here in some samples should be displayed in every travel book, and that travel folders should be available in any travel office, which shows the symbols, and in say 10 vertical columns the meanings of this symbol in 10 different languages. But once a traveller has grasped the meaning of such pictorial symbols, he would not forget them, the more so, as the words in the native languages are printed below.

      
man roof, protection policeman police station car car parking no parking
      
mouth (all food comes from the earth) earth food water drinkwater no drinkwater danger
     
restaurant (food) waiter drinkglass drinkwaiter menucard drink card

I am now coming to the symbolization of money, and I have chosen the first sign for a dollar, namely a piece of eight. Paper money and a check and traveller check are depicted as shown below, also paying, receiving and exchange, etc. etc.

    
money (piece of eight) paper money coin money check traveller check
      
bowl pay in pay out exchange money exchange bank night safe (moon over earth)
    
bureau for air, ship, land travel bus eye sightseeing bus start 9 a.m.
    
railway railway station sleeping car dining (food) car change trains

This must be the last page if I want to post this paper today. I must therefore use this space in a rather disjointed manner to show you the rest of the symbols for the rest of the meanings mentioned in the letter of Mr. Kaito. Please realize that some of these meanings are before me for the first time. It may well be that in a few days time I might have a better meaning symbol devised for them, than the one which comes up in my mind right now. You must realize that I am working hard and fast to get this paper into the mail today.



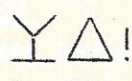
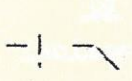






room eye happiness beauty beauty parlour for women or men



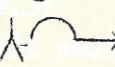



this side up wineglass fragile or no break! coin insertion dialing

Please note that I don't show you in this paper the grammatical inflections as close up, don't close, don't break, breakable (fragile), etc. I direct your attention to the list of basic symbols which I attach in one copy only. It shows in 19 pages many more meanings than the ones shown here.









man mind thinker leading on director, manager, jacket, life jacket
(outline of skull)











eye sun light on off(stop) fire hot cross out cold

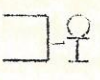


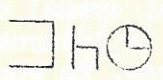







look out!! ear listen!! big small child look out!! children!!



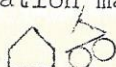




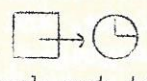
nursery transit lounge(through) waiting room open up! close, lock!
chair chair (use of exclamation mark)





water wheel fuel, petrol car car up for repair repair station

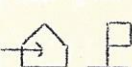




out check out time writing pen mouth name write down name





register here your name flag earth country immigration station

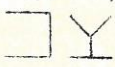
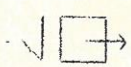








money receive(into) paper receipt pay out bill(to pay) paid
(bowl) (crossed out)





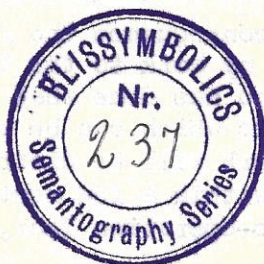
wine glass bar take out(hand) no pay (free, gratis) make 1 line 2-lines

The last meaning refers to road warnings, and they are written differently than symbols on paper. For instance proceed on paper looks so , but proceed on a road sign looks so . There is one meaning in your letter dear Mr. Kaito which is not clear to me. It is "flight attendance called" If you mean that attention is to be drawn to an announcement in the airterminal then my symbols for look out!! and listen!! (shown above) should be useful.

Closing now my paper to you, I hope that I have shown to you that I have given my serious attention to this matter for many years, that I have worked and written on it in many papers and books, and that it is in fact the work of my life. I said in the beginning that my life is coming to an end, and that I do not see publicity and all that. But I want to see my work coming to life before I die. Long letters cannot say what can be said personally by answering questions immediately, and showing the proper symbols. In my first letter, I said that I assume that the hotel organisations and other institutions have surely provided money for your work, and I suggest again that you provide for a short visit to New York as guest of one airline and a hotel, so that I can show you all the symbols you need. I am

Sincerely yours
C.K. Bliss
C.K. Bliss

2 Vicar Str., Coogee, Sydney, Australia



Sydney 23 May 1965

PROPOSED SEMANTOGRAPHY SYMBOLS

in answer to the circular containing 37 symbols suggested by

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR BREAKING THE LANGUAGE BARRIER

Midtown International Center
152 West 56 Street, NEW YORK 19, N.Y. U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Kato, and Ladies and Gentlemen of the Committee,

I refer to my mimeographed approach to you, dated November 1, 1964 in which I showed you how my basic pictorial symbols can be used to be combined to any meaning needed in international communication by rail and road, plane and ship, hotel and public places, passport and customs, etc. etc. I also included various issues of my Semantography Series about my symbols, and urged you to inspect my 3 volumes on Semantography at the New York Public Library, Columbia University, and elsewhere. I also refer to our correspondence dear Mr. Kato.

I received then your yellow circular, showing 37 proposed symbols, and asking for approval or suggestions. In my letter of May 4 to you, I expressed my bitter disappointment with the suggested symbols. It shows that all my labours, and all my papers sent to you were in vain. Now that you have sent me the yellow circular, the only thing I can do is to show you my proposed symbols for the meanings. But in order to show you how I compose compound meanings from the basic symbols, I find that the space in your yellow circular is too small for this demonstration. I see no alternative than to write these pages in response to your circular, by referring to your proposed meanings and symbols which I number herewith in the order you have arranged the symbols, namely from left to right and from top to bottom. But before a few words.

Some of your symbols are pictorial, as for instance POLICE, others are geometrical abstractions as for instance EXIT, ENTRANCE, ARRIVAL, DEPARTURE, etc. In my previous letters I have said that strict pictorial representation becomes obsolete as the picture of the new innovations change, as for instance with a telephone. With other pictorial representations, the picture may be downright false. Your picture of the half of a policeman shows one resembling a Parisian policeman with his kepi and baton. But London or New York policemen look quite differently with their helmets or caps. Italian policemen look like coming straight from the Carmen opera, whereas Spanish policemen look like toreadors in outline. In contrast, my symbols for man and protection (see later) are independent of any uniform, any country, and any time. Moreover, my symbols showing the policeman as a man who protects people against criminals is one which would even please the police whose public image is much distorted nowadays.

As to the abstract geometrical symbols for ENTRANCE and EXIT, DEPARTURE and ARRIVAL, and others, I can only say that they prove that you have utterly ignored all my approaches to you, and all my symbols. I am a practical engineer, who has a life-long training in realizing which thing is more practical than another one. I would gladly say that your symbols are better than mine, if they really were so. But they are not simpler and not better than mine, as I have outlined in my letter of May 4, and as I shall do so in the following pages.

You must forgive me my expression of bitterness. For more than 23 years have I worked and fought for this idea. Now that other people have realized the soundness and workability of pictorial symbols, it is for me depressing to see that I and my work are utterly ignored, and put aside. Must a pioneer die first before his work is recognized and used?

Before you finally reject my symbols, please realize this. The United Nations have promoted the use of pictorial symbols. Following this up, the Australian Government has asked the Australian National University for an appraisal of my

my work. This proved highly favourable, and in consequence the Australian Government has advised the proper committees to submit my work to the United Nations for promotion. There is no man in the whole world who has done what I have done: a simple system of about 100 pictorial basic symbols which can be used in all fields of human co-operation. The second edition of my work will be distributed to hundreds of newspapers and magazines throughout the world within a few months. Articles will be published in conjunction with International Co-operation Year, showing my symbols for various meanings.

What is going to happen, when you go on ignoring my symbols, and promoting your own symbols? Inevitably, people in many countries will make comparisons, and will realize that my proposed symbols are simpler and better, and moreover universal, as they can be combined to thousands of other meanings, whereas your symbols cannot be used in this way. The result will be a condemnation of your work, and when it becomes known that you have known of my work and ignored or rejected it, it will be interpreted very much in your disfavour.

These are harsh words, but the history of any new idea, and the life of any innovator of a new idea show this pattern. In writing to you all this, I feel that I have spent all my powers of begging and pleading with you. This is my last approach, and you must consider earnestly the possibility that the men who have organised your committee may in the end reject your symbols, simply because mine are more versatile, more universal, and more simple in outline.

My pleading may be more understandable if some financial gains for me were involved. But I have said time and again, that I don't want any money for myself. The copyrights I hold on these symbols and their possible variations and deviations, which copyrights extend to the year 2005 are only here to prevent a new Babel of pictorial symbols. Those firms who will make money from printing, painting, engraving and displaying these symbols, should pay a small royalty which will only be used for the propagation of these symbols in travel books and brochures, folders, etc. Not a single penny should go into my pocket. I refer to my lengthy explanation in my approach to you of November 1, 1946.

DISCUSSION OF THE 37 SYMBOLS PROPOSED BY THE COMMITTEE IN THE YELLOW CIRCULAR as numbered there from 1 to 36, and the appropriate semantographic symbols

- | | | |
|-------|---------------|--|
| No. 1 | <u>TOILET</u> | These 3 meanings can be considered together, because the words MEN or GENTLEMEN, and WOMEN or LADIES denote a toilet WC and usually also a wash bowl. For this reason we need only two symbols to stand for MEN and WOMEN. There are two such symbols proposed which show the outline of a man in trousers, and a woman in a skirt. They are good, but mine are better, because they are much simpler, and can be typed on a typewriter as on mine:  and used in thousands of combinations. |
| No. 2 | <u>MEN</u> | |
| No. 3 | <u>WOMEN</u> | |


MEN


WOMEN

As to the symbolization of a washing facility, this too can be best expressed by the following symbol elements and their combination:

 water

 bowl, container

 LAVATORY

- | | | |
|-------|-----------------------|---|
| No. 4 | <u>EXIT</u> | These 3 meanings can also be discussed together. The symbols proposed by the committee show an arrow pointing downward, or upward from and into an enclosure, being square or circular. Not only is the direction of the arrow misleading, another arrow need be added if these symbols are displayed in a corridor, and the lost wayfarer must be told in which direction he has to go to reach the EXIT or ENTRANCE. This disadvantage is non-existent in my symbols which show directly in which direction the doors are. They are developed here: |
| No. 5 | <u>EMERGENCY EXIT</u> | |
| No. 6 | <u>ENTRANCE</u> | |


gate, door

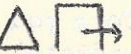
 EXIT or EXIT

 ENTRANCE or ENTRANCE

The usual emergency for which an emergency exit is provided is fire. This holds true even in a bus or airplane. We shall therefore first show the symbol:


flame, fire

 FIRE EXIT or FIRE EXIT

 EMERGENCY EXIT

No. 7 ELEVATOR My symbol shows the following combination:

 enclosure

 up and down

 ELEVATOR

No. 8 INFORMATION This meaning is expressed with the following combination

 open
opening

 enclosed
enclosure

 question

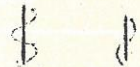
 answer

 INFORMATION

The question mark is international, and your symbol showing the mark within an enclosure comes very near to my symbol. But my symbol has the advantage that it can be used for the meaning of answer, as in a questionnaire, etc. Also the symbols for opening and enclosure are versatile, as for instance shown in the symbol for elevator. I do not show here how the grammatical difference between closed and enclosure is expressed. This is usually not necessary. The closed symbol hung on a closed door, makes the meaning clear: CLOSED. Similarly, the other symbol open displayed at a consulate, museum, etc. with the appropriate hours next to it, makes it clear that the door will be open from 9 - 5, etc.

No. 9 FIRST AID The symbol of the cross is known everywhere, and is a good international symbol, provided it is displayed on a box, or a pharmacy, where people expect to get first aid. However, the cross as a symbol is at a great disadvantage in Non-Christian countries, and a number of Afro-Asian countries have rejected the symbol of the Red Cross and have adopted the Red Crescent, and other symbols.

I therefore proposed a symbol much older than the cross symbol, namely the symbol for Aesculapius, God of Medicine. It shows a serpent wound around a staff, and every doctor displays this symbol on his car. Medical officers in many armies display it on their lapels, or sleeves. Hospitals and pharmacies too show this symbol. And it can be combined with many other symbols for any meaning needed in first aid and medicine.

 Aesculapius sign

 enclosure

 FIRST AID BOX

 house

 FIRST AID STATION
HOSPITAL

No. 10 POLICE The symbol proposed showing the upper half of a uniformed man with a baton is inadequate, as explained on page 1 of this paper. Policemen in various countries have very different uniforms and caps. My symbol show the policeman in a new light, as a protector of people against criminals.

 man

 roof, protection

 POLICE

No. 11 DANGER (see next page)

No. 12 DON'T SMOKE This symbol is quite good, but the oblique stroke meaning NO, and DON'T is only understandable to those people from Europe or elsewhere, where traffic signs are employed showing the oblique stroke. In those countries where no such signs are displayed the stroke is meaningless. I employ the symbol for a flame, fire (shown on page 2 (with FIRE EXIT), and the outline of a stick, also the negative(minus) symbol and the international exclamation mark for emphasis:

 plus

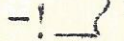
 minus

 yes!

 no!

 flame

 cigarette

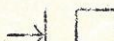
 NO SMOKING

No. 13 DON'T ENTER As said before, the oblique stroke is not generally known. The horizontal line is wholly arbitrary. I use these:

 progress, forward

 stop

 door

 STOP ENTERING

or

 NO ENTRY

The symbols for STOP, and for DON'T or NO as shown above can be used for many more meanings as DON'T TOUCH, DON'T do this or that. Once a person has learned the symbol for no -! he or she will immediately recognize this meaning in conjunction with other meanings.

No. 11 DANGER (from forgoing page) The equal-sided triangle as a safety sign is already internationally used and recognized, and therefore I have adopted it too. But in my system it takes on a higher meaning, as it stands for any creature, preferably a human creature, which can come to harm. To emphasize the symbol I attach to it the exclamation mark, and even two marks:

 creature, creation
  DANGER! or
  DANGER!!

It isn't necessary to pile one triangle upon the other. However, the death skull is a good sign, and it can be used.

No. 14 AIRPORT The proposed outlines of airplanes are quite good, but they don't mean AIRPORT, but only airplanes. I compose the meaning of an airport by the following basic symbols:

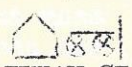
 wheel
  wings
  airplane
  ground
  house
  AIRPORT

No. 15 SEAPORT Similarly, the outline of a ship, does not mean a seaport. I use the following basic symbols, which can be combined in various ways:

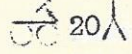
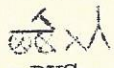
 water
  ship
  ground
  pier
  SEAPORT

In my books I have shown many symbols for every meaning in seatransport.

No. 16 RAILWAY STATION The symbol shown is rather indistinct. At best it means a train, but not a station. I use the symbols

 wheel
  ground
  travel
  carriage
  railway
  house
  RAILWAY STATION

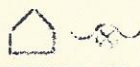
No. 17 BUS This picture is good, but it has not the possibility of simplification for typing in letters of travel agents. This is important. I use therefore a simplified outline of the steering wheel to indicate a motor car, and attached to it, the symbol combination for a group of persons. I admit it is rather complex, but it can be typed on a typewriter.

 carriage or
  carriage
  motorcar
  man
  many(multipli-
cation mark)
  group
 20 people
  car for 20 people
 or simply
  BUS

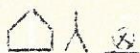
No. 18 TAXI Here the addition of the word TAXI was necessary. Taxi is an international word, but it is easy to symbolize with a symbol which can be used for any hiring of anything for a period of time.

 time(outline of dial)
  limit
  time-limit
  car for time-limit
  TAXI

No. 19 GASOLINE STATION The first proposed symbol is the familiar outline of a pump (already superseded by smaller lower machines). But the second symbol is difficult to read. I can't see its meaning. My symbols are again composition of basic meaning elements:

 wheel
  water
  any liquid
  liquid for travel
  house
  GASOLINE STATION

No. 20 HOTEL This is a very indistinct symbol, showing only a two story house which cannot mean a hotel. Here the addition of the word HOTEL would be appropriate, because this word is already international and used in all countries. But even this meaning can be easily symbolized:

						
wheel	ground	travel	man	traveller	house	<u>HOTEL</u> (house for travellers)

No. 21 RESTAURANT The word itself is international, and so are the shown symbols, which are usually displayed on time tables to indicate a dining car. Again these symbols cannot be typed on letters, and therefore my symbols are to be preferred. However, it is necessary to explain my symbols and as I said this many a times, this can be done in travel books and folders. The symbol of the crossed forks is displayed and explained in every time table, which carry quite a lot of meaningless symbols. So, the introduction of my symbols which have a distinct meaning, once it has been explained, should be simple. In this case, we must realize that all our food comes from the earth, either as grown vegetables and fruit, or as animal food. Hence I use the combination:

						
mouth	earth	food	house	EAT	dining car	<u>RESTAURANT</u> (all food comes from the earth)

No. 22 PHARMACY This is quite a good symbol, but as pointed out with the symbol for FIRST AID, the cross is not favoured in Non-Christian countries in Asia and Africa. But here again we have the age-old symbol for medicine, displayed by every doctor on his car, and even by many a pharmacy, the serpent around a rod, the sign of Aesculapius:

			
sign for medicine serpent around rod	simplified	a room open to the road the symbol for a shop	<u>PHARMACY</u>

No. 23 CURRENCY EXCHANGE Though the symbol chosen is quite good, it is not to be favoured in view of the fact that every type-writer has already symbols to designate currencies. Why then not a special symbol for money in general, together with a simple symbol for exchange? We have even such a symbol, which has been developed even before the time money was invented, and this symbol is displayed on many banks. It is Hermes, or Mercurius the god of merchants, the messenger with the rod with 2 serpents around

				
Mercurius symbol for merchant trade	simplified for <u>money</u>	bowl, vessel	To take in	to give out

				
to pay in	to pay out	to exchange	or to exchange	<u>CURRENCY EXCHANGE</u>

No. 24 ARRIVAL These proposed symbols, so indistinct, and difficult in
No. 25 DEPARTURE meaning are for me most depressing, because they prove to me that the proposer of these symbols has not even looked into my simplest symbols. Indeed my symbols are almost self-explanatory:

						
start, begin	departure	progress	approach	arrival	<u>START</u>	<u>ARRIVAL</u>

Either the start or the departure symbol can be used for the meaning of DEPARTURE.

No. 26 PLATFORM, GATE This symbol proves to me too that my simple symbols have been ignored or wilfully altered to be less distinct. The proposed symbol shows a roman arch. At best it is a gate, but how many gates have roman arches nowadays in our time of straight architecture. But surely a roman arch cannot mean a platform. Here are my symbols:

			
door, gate	<u>GATE No 7</u>	platform	<u>PLATFORM No. 7</u>

No. 27 TICKET This is an indistinct symbol. It may mean even paper money. Our symbol must indicate a ticket which gives admission not only into a railway car, bus, airplane, or theatre, but also anywhere else where people have to pay money to buy a paper piece which gives them the right to go into. These 2 meanings are symbolized:



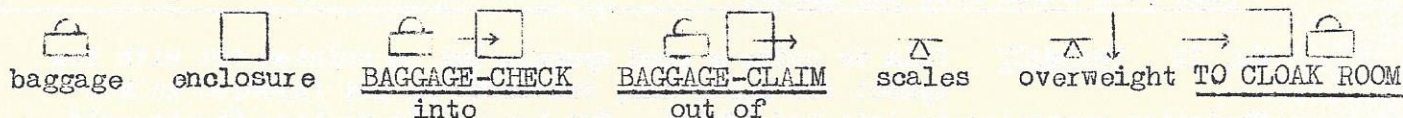
In my books I have simple symbols for tickets for railway, bus, ship, etc. and also for theatre (a showhouse as symbolized by the eye), and here again made distinct in simple symbols an opera theatre, or musical comedy, or ballet, or drama, or cinema, or races, boxing, and any other place where people pay for admission. We must not forget the tribulations of foreign tourists who are never sure whether the ticket they buy is for the performance they want. They can read the date, because the names of the months and often days are similar in different languages, and then there are the numbers of the day and the months. But now we have simple symbols for every ticket, and for every order for tickets.

No. 28 BAGGAGE-CHECK

No. 29 BAGGAGE-CLAIM

The first symbol shows the outline of a scale, and therefore its meaning can be understood. But the second symbol showing a window is not distinct, as there are many travel places where the

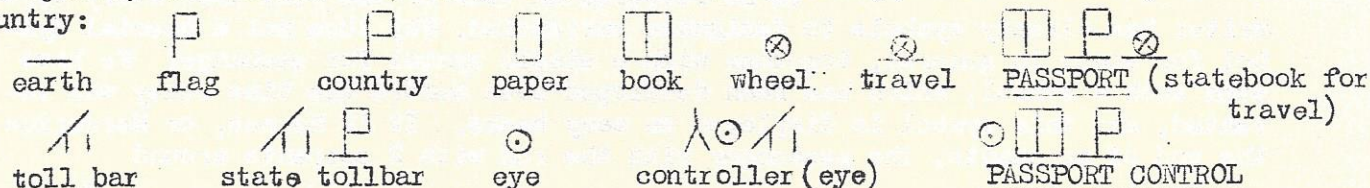
baggage check is done through a window. Here we have a few simple symbols which can be applied to any meaning needed in this part of travel business:



No. 30 PASSPORT CONTROL

This symbol is used in some European and other countries. But it is wholly arbitrary and meaningless without the words added.

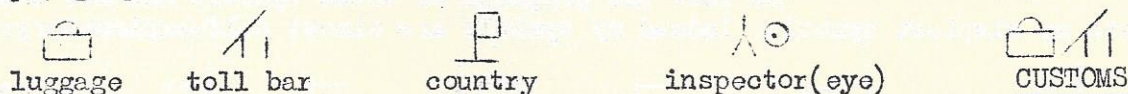
My basic symbols can be used for any meaning in this passport business, and in my books I have shown complete passports which can be read in any language. Herebelow are only a few such symbols. I use the age-old outline of a toll gate bar which is usually lowered to stop traffic and is then lifted to let the person or vehicle pass after scrutiny of papers and the paying of the toll. For the meaning of a state, or country, I use again an age-old symbol, the outline of a flag over a certain territory, which indeed symbolizes that country:



We must realize that many travellers and tourists pass through such controls without being able to speak a word of the language of the country. But with my symbols they can make themselves understood, and in my books I have shown many examples of such conversations in writing.

No. 31 CUSTOMS

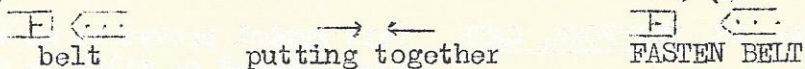
This is again a wholly arbitrary symbol which is in use in a number of countries, and which is meaningless without the words added. When the traveller cannot understand these words, he cannot know that they mean customs. Here again we have a simple symbol, and we have explained it already in the foregoing paragraph where we have outlined a toll bar, and a national flag over a territory.



No. 32 FASTEN SEAT

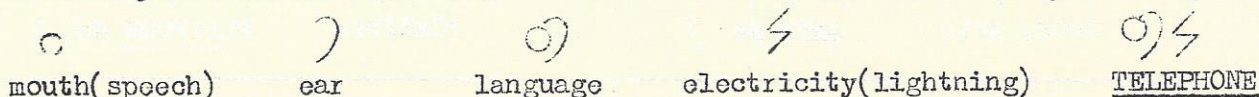
BELTS

For this meaning no symbol has been proposed. Here again my symbols can be used for the outline of a belt, and for the meaning of getting both ends of the belt together.



No. 33 TELEPHONE

I have said in previous letters that the outline of technical apparatuses changes so quickly that any outline symbol chosen may be obsolete in a few years hence. This holds true with the telephone. Hence my basic symbols:



No. 34 POST The posthorn is an age-old symbol, but utterly obsolete today.
 No. 35 TELEGRAM The outline of an envelope is good, easy to recognize, and it is used all over the world to mean mail. I have used this symbol too, and I have shown in the leaflets sent to you how it can be used with other symbols to indicate any meaning in postal communication. Again I see that my symbols have not been followed up, because, though I show too the outline of a lightning, to mean electricity and a telegram, you have shown the outline of a telegram with a flap. Such telegrams are used in the U.S.A. but not in Australia and many other countries. Here are a few of my symbols:

letter	letter correspondence	wings	airletter	electricity	<u>TELEGRAM</u>
enclosure	letter box	house	post office	postman	<u>POSTAL COMMUNICATION</u>

No. 36 WET PAINT This is an unfortunate symbol, because the open hand as held by a traffic policeman to stop the traffic is already used to mean HALT STOP. Now with the oblique stroke across it, it may mean NON STOP. People would not know that it means WET PAINT. Here again, we can use our basic symbols for this meaning:

hand	minus	no!	<u>DON'T TOUCH</u>	liquid	<u>DON'T TOUCH WET PAINT</u>
(thumb and finger)					

No. 37 TRAVEL AGENT Here you have not proposed a symbol. But here again it is easy to symbolize the meaning of agent with my basic symbols which can express the meaning of between. And as the word in English says, an agent is a "go-between", a man between the traveller and the travel facilities by rail, road, ship and airplane. This is easy to symbolize:

before	after	<u>between</u>	man	<u>a go-between, agent</u>	road, ship, airplane travel
<u>TRAVEL AGENT</u>		shop (room open to street)		<u>TRAVEL AGENCY</u>	

End of the yellow circular

In coming now to the end of my demonstration I again refer to my first paper dated November 1, 1964 in which I have shown the built-up for meanings you wanted to have symbolized. As said again and again, I can symbolize any meaning needed and wanted. Now the I.B.M. has made a typewriter with a kind of ball which carries all the letters of the alphabet. In advertisements they have shown a similar ball which carries only symbols, and which can be easily interchanged with the alphabetical ball. Thus, any meaning can be simply typed on a paper, and on all the papers needed in international travel and the hotel business. If this consideration does not convince you, nothing will, and I can only assume that you simply do not want my work used and applied for the very business in hand.

From the letter which accompanies the yellow circular I learn that you have sent out the yellow circular to over 300 organisations "who have responded with enthusiasm" and now you are submitting to them the above mentioned 37 symbols for approval and suggestions. Some of these organisations may or may not know of my work, but they should be informed about it, and then asked to decide whether my recommendations are perhaps the best ones and should be followed up. Seeing that not one of the 37 symbols resembles my own symbols I feel bitter about it, because, you have not shown them in addition to the ones proposed by you.

I make you therefore the following proposal. Entirely at my own expense, which shall include even the mailing cost, I am ready to send out, or have send out by you, my suggestions to these over 300 organisations. They should be given an opportunity to judge not only about your symbols, but also about mine, which have an advantage unheard of in any writing system ever invented by man. My symbols can be typed on a typewriter and can be combined to any meaning, and can be read in any language. If you continue to ignore my work, It will be counted in your disfavour. I am, awaiting your response to my proposal

Yours sincerely
 C. K. Blio

2, Vicar Str., Coogee, Sydney, Australia

Mr. Soichi Kato
Executive Director
International Committee
for breaking the language barrier
New York, U.S.A.

Sydney 14 October 1965



Dear Mr. Kato,

Your last letter of October 1 has finally convinced me that you, and perhaps some members of the committee, have decided against my work. You have first excluded me from your first phase, the circular to 300 organisations which meanings should be symbolized, and you have then submitted other symbols than mine to these 300 organisations for approval or suggestions. Thus, you have effectively shut out my work from the knowledge of 300 organisations, which are all actively interested in this idea. You have submitted to them only your symbols, and you have not responded to my plea that my symbols too should be submitted for judgement to these 300 organisations, entirely at my own expense.

You went further. You did not study what I say in my explanatory letters. In your last letter you ask me to show the position of my symbol for EXIT in various situations. Yet, I have shown just this in a detailed letter with drawings dated May 4. Apparently you have not read it, and you have also not considered my detailed explanations, as this becomes evident by your arguments with which I shall deal in coming paragraphs.

This is my last plea to you and your committee. I will make one more attempt to convince you that my work is superior to anything which anyone tries to attempt. In order that you may submit this letter to others I am sending you some copies of it. I am sorry having to argue with you, but you leave me no choice.

Your reaction is quite natural. Your committee has been constituted in 1964 by the hotel, travel, and business organisations, which have made you an executive director. Naturally, you have started your work brimming with new ideas for international pictorial symbols. Every man in your position would be chagrined and disappointed then to receive a letter from down-under Australia from an unknown chap Mr. Bliss who can prove that he has solved already the problem for all meanings, and that there remains now nothing more for you to do than to acknowledge this, and to take steps to use the Blissymbols for the hotel, travel, and business organisations who are paying you for finding the best possible symbols - not your symbols only. Naturally, you try to defend your symbols, and you try to find arguments against my symbols. What are your arguments? I shall cite them below.

You write: "Your symbols must be introduced as a system, not as pieces, otherwise people would not understand it." This is simply not true. Show this symbol of mine  to a child, and tell him that it is the outline of a man, and it means a man. Do you need to tell the child any other symbol of mine? NO! Put my symbol on the door of a toilet with the word MEN underneath, and the child would know that it means a toilet for men, and nothing else, and nothing more. Here you see just one symbol of mine, not my complete system, and it is self-sufficient, and even children would understand it. Then show this child my outline for woman  and it will readily recognize the difference, picturing the outline of a skirt. Put this symbol on a toilet for WOMEN with this word underneath, and the child would understand it, and would never forget it. Do you then need to explain my complete system to this child? Not at all. These two symbols depicting man and woman are enough.

And now let's have a look at your symbols for man and woman. You have proposed a tophat and a mirror. Do these pictures mean men and women? They do not! You have proposed the ancient signs for Mars and Venus for man and woman. Show these signs to any child and to most adults. Would they know that they mean Mars and Venus? Just try it. You have proposed square outlines of hardly distinguishable faces for man and woman. Who has a square face? would any child ask. At last you have shown two symbols which are elaborate versions of my symbols, the man with legs apart, and the woman with a skirt. But my symbols are easier to paint, to write and they can be typed with a typewriter for any meaning concerning man and woman in international travel, hotel, and business. Just judge and condemn your own symbols and agree that my symbols are better and simpler.

Is it then true what you write that my symbols must be introduced as a system, not in pieces? No, it isn't true, and your argument is false. Just ask anyone, and everyone will agree that my symbols can be represented each one for itself.

You may argue that my outline symbols must be explained what they mean. But this holds true also with your symbols. Look at your symbol for a hotel. It shows a one story house. Do hotels nowadays have one story only? No, they have many stories. Anyone seeing this your symbol will never think that it means a hotel. It may look like a cottage, not like a hotel. Your picture of a motorcar means a motorcar only, but in order to mean it a taxi you put the word TAXI underneath. So, your symbol is simply not pictorial wholly. You use words underneath. Besides, taxis in London for instance, are different in outline. Your symbol for police shows half the body of a policeman of Paris. But policemen in other countries wear helmets, or caps of quite a different shape. So your symbol is simply misleading. Even your celebrated symbol for not smoking, showing a cigarette with an oblique line across it, is only understandable by those people from those countries where such an oblique line is used to mean no! And so on, and so on. I could prove the disadvantage of almost every symbol you have proposed.

Now, how are you going to inform the travelling public of the meaning of your symbols? There is only one way to do it, and this is that your symbols must be shown in the same way as traffic symbols are shown in the travel guide of every country. Your symbols must be shown on folders to be available in travel bureaus, hotels, restaurants, shops, anywhere where traveller come. And this would be the same with my symbols. Under the heading INTERNATIONAL PICTORIAL SYMBOLS my symbols will be shown first as a picture of man (for instance) followed by my outline symbol for man, and then in 10 columns (or more) the meaning in the word of ten languages (or more). Look up any travel guide, any handbook which translates words for the traveller, and you will find that every such book contains symbols and each symbol must be explained in the language of the traveller. But whereas you must explain your 37 symbols, you have not explained any other meaning above the number 37. For any more meaning you need more such symbols of yours. In my basic symbols this is often not necessary, because the traveller can guess the meaning from the combination of the basic meanings, which he has seen already.

You write: "Your system requires education. I wonder how many hours one must spend for acquiring your symbol language, and how many pages of a text book are required." To this I answer that your symbols need more education, and more hours, and more pages of textbooks than mine, simply because you have to invent a new symbol for every meaning, whereas I can combine basic meanings which you can never do with your symbols. This fact proves that you have not grasped my work, its simplicity, and its superiority above any other symbol system, including yours. Your reference to Esperanto shows too your misunderstanding of my work. Esperanto is a new foreign language, and people don't like foreign languages. They babble in their mother tongues, and hence they can readily understand my symbols.

I ask you, and your committee therefore for the following two steps:

- (1) Submit my symbols to the 300 organisations for judgement at my expense.
- (2) Postpone any decision until my book is on the American market, and until the reviewers of American newspapers and magazines have had a chance to examine it, and to compare my symbols with yours. The book will be available in about 2 months time, not a long time, and besides this is not the travelling season, so you can readily wait with any decision, and in the meantime you can submit my symbols to the 300 organisations for judgement. I just received from the printer a few pages of my forthcoming book, and I ask you to study it without prejudice. Look at the first page no. ²²⁵ Showing the various uses of the arrow symbol. Ask anyone to look at this page, read the explanation underneath, and ask him then whether he understands them immediately.

If you don't do this, if you don't submit my symbols to the 300 organisations, if you don't study the advantages of my symbols then you do not live up to the mandate given to you by the men who have installed you in this office, and who pay your salary. They will not understand why you let me wait for 4 months until you at last answered my urgent letters in 1964, why you did not take the trouble to go to the Public Library of New York, or Columbia University to study my books, and why you have not submitted my symbols to the 300 organisations.

I am an old man, and on the threshold of death. I don't seek any money, and any publicity. I only want that my work should be recognized and used by mankind. If you insist on your attitude, I shall fight you. I shall go directly to the men who have trusted that you will impartially chose the best symbol system. I shall go to the American press, and to the American public. You will not win. Please realize that with my symbols you can stay in your job for a life-time. Against them, you will be soon out of a job. I am

Yours sincerely
C. K. Bliss
C.K. Bliss

237 Str., Coogee, Sydney, Australia



Sydney 23rd November 1965
2 Vicar Street, Coogee,
Australia

P R O T E S T

to the

BOARD OF DIRECTORS and ADVISORY COUNCIL

of the

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR BREAKING THE LANGUAGE BARRIER INC.

152 West 56th Street, NEW YORK 19, N.Y. U.S.A.

Gentlemen,

One and a half years have passed since I wrote in vain letter after letter to your Executive Director Mr. Soichi Kato. More than one year has passed since I sent him 13 copies of a paper on my international pictorial symbols addressed to each of you personally with the request that he shall distribute them to you, so that everyone of you shall get a copy. To this very day, I don't know whether he has given you your copy, and to this very day I don't know what your reaction and your decision concerning my work is. All I know is that Mr. Kato is against my work. He uses arguments which are obviously false, and only good enough to defend his stand against my work.

I have now written one last letter to Mr. Kato, and to make sure that you know of its content, I am sending you herewith a copy. Please read it, and please realize that throughout the one and a half years my letters to him have been utterly submissive, polite and pleading. But there is a limit which a man can endure, especially when this man is the inventor of the first universal comprehensive and simple system of pictorial symbols, which in combination can be used to express every meaning in international travel, international hotel and international business. It is the complete solution to your problem. All it needs is a fair approach, and a fair study, which so far I couldn't get from Mr. Kato. Hence my approach to you personally.

I have stated time and again that I don't want a penny, that I don't want publicity, that I only want that my work be used for the benefit of the international travelling public, and for mankind as a whole. I have stated time and again that I give your committee the use of my copyrights under certain reasonable conditions, so that you will not have to spend a penny on the use and propagation of my symbols. What more can a man do to prove that he is not selfish, and does not seek any material gain? All I want is to prevent a new Babel of Confusion by tens of thousands of different international pictorial symbols which would bewilder the travelling public, and which would defeat the very idea, and the purpose for which your committee has been set up.

What do I want? Nothing but a fair trial. Mr. Kato has already successfully prevented to inform over 300 organisations who are all interested in this idea. All I want is that these 300 organisations should be given a possibility to study my work, and its practicability. And I have stated time and again that I shall carry all cost and all expenses of this approach to the 300 organisations. What could be more fair than that?

If I cannot get this fair trial from you, I shall have no other recourse than to approach the leading men in international travel, hotel, and business who have set up this committee to help the travelling public. I feel sure that you will help me to a fair trial, and therefore I am writing to you.

I hold myself in readiness to send you whatever information about my work you need, in order to study its working and its simplicity and superiority about any other symbol system. I am hoping to have your response

Yours sincerely

C.K.Bliss