



Truro, Massachusetts.
June 4 48

My very dear, cherished Hermana Gabriela,

Your letter came yesterday, and the reason I reply so promptly is to indicate to you the truth: That I am always "answering" your word, for I think of you constantly and have many silent dialogues with you. It is a cruel irony, that you are in my country - and yet three thousand miles distant; whereas in so many ways my neighbors and compatriots close at hand are not in my country and infinitely farther away.

The reason I did not come to California this winter, was that my lecture tour was cancelled: I have become too "radical" for the kinds of audiences that pay, and these are the only kinds that one's Agent books one with. I am persona non grata. So I remain at home, and write my word. How I wish you could visit us here! If you do come east this summer, DO COME. If not, I am wondering if we may not meet next autumn. Have you given up your visit to Puerto Rico? Benitez told me you had been invited; he has asked me to come and give a few lectures in September or October, and I may accept. I am eager to hear what you think of him, and of his troubles at the University. There is also the very great possibility that we - my wife, the baby, and I - may go to Venezuela. I have been invited to go down there, in order to write a book on Bolivar. But the details of the arrangement have not become official, so please do not speak of it to any one, as yet. Premature news might spoil the entire project, since - as you know - I have many enemies in high places, in my own country. It would do me good to spend a long creative time again in America Hispana: I need the nurture of the warmth the human depth, of your America, which is also mine. My little voyage in Venezuela last winter was a heartening experience for me: to see these creative, generous men actually striving to govern; to feel the deep tragic humanity of the people. Verily, the one hope in the world today is in the "little" countries. The immense states - USA, USSR - are monstrosities, where the organized mass more and more stifles the human spirit.

Your having written me when you did, dearest Gabriela, at this crisis of Israel, moves me greatly, proving as it does the bond between us. That you declare this bond to be, and want it to be, gives me heart and courage. The fact is, that for weeks, now, I have been spiritually sick with the tragedy of Palestine, with the vile, the obscene hypocrisies and treacheries of England and our own State Department (we are most to blame, for we are strong, we can afford to be generous)... above all, with the sense of frustration. I have never been a Zionist. I have deplored (as you know) the tendency of American Jews in the past years to avoid confrontation with their own problems by escaping into hysterical enthusiasms about Zion. Moreover, I have been cool to the too often strident nationalism of the Zionists -- the Jews should have outgrown this infantile stage, generations ago; and ever since my visit to Palestine twenty years ago, I have mistrusted the British (perfidious Albion) and deplored the failure of the Jews in Palestine to create stronger ties with the Arab peoples. Nevertheless, the unassailable truth is, that the Jewish colonists have created a nation, that the Jewish Kibbutzim (colonies) are the most beautiful, generous social creations of our time: and to see all this threatened and destroyed by the hideous indifference of men who think only in terms of oil and "power" - and to be able to do nothing - nothing about it: not even to raise one's voice so it is heard -- this frustration has brought upon me a sickness of the spirit, a corrosive sorrow making it literally difficult for me to go on living -- to durar, querida amiga, as you put it in your generous letter. It has taken all my religious vision for me to survive. But I am winning this battle. The tragic situation of the Palestinian Jews is after all only the archetype of the tragic situation of Man. This is, this has always been, the privilege of the Jew: to act out completely, explicitly

[Carta] 1948 June 4, Truro, Massachusetts, [EE.UU.] [a]
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