4/5 Autobiography - Correspondence 1941, 1985-1999
Dunmole Hall  
Mr. Towcester, Northants.  
12-12-41

My dearest Elsie,

I was so pleased and thankful about your letter—now all our hopes to get Mother to safety and peace to live near yours are broken again and all your efforts in vain. You can imagine how intensely my thoughts have been with Mother and you since yesterday. There is one only thing left: Faith and trust, then there is a meaning and a greater purpose in all that hardship and in the new one added to it now.

I have written a Red Cross Message
to Mother yesterday and shall try to do so as often as possible to help her a tiny little bit in her loneliness. I suppose that is what you will be doing from now. If only they would leave her at home! Do you know how she is living now - the last Red+ message I got from her, written on my birthday (9 Oct) had a new address. Are the people she is living with nice?

Susie, dear, try not to be too disappointed and despair, please!! I do my best too, believe me! And let us write to each other a little more often now. We do need each other more than ever before, don't we?
I was very much surprised to read that you met Dr. Swannensley
—in Madison, of all places in your large country. Give him my very kind regards, will you? I am glad you like him— it shows we still have some likes + dislikes in common!

Selma had a very happy, satisfied letter from the Schwabachs a short time ago. They saw Wilhelm for the 1st time in 5 years when he came to see them during his first leave in the autumn.

Surely, I know there are some very good modern American children's books — I used to have one which
W. disappeared last year. Do you think you could have a look-out for me one day - it does not matter what as long as they are really good and for very young children (2-5 years). Don’t send them to me - or at least not without further order, but tell me their titles, authors, etc. and what they are like. I shall try to get one or two in London before I ask you to get them for me. Do you think you could possibly send me my book «Psychoanalyse der Kinderselle» or let me know its original English (or American) title.
I and Press? All this only if it does not give you too much trouble and there is not the slightest hurry about it either.

I am at the moment carrying on with more energy than enthusiasm, an attitude I don't like at all!

Let me hear from you very soon, please.

I love you very very much, my little sister!

Yours Gretel.
Tunscote Hall  
nr. Towcester, Northants.  
19-1-42

My dearest Susel,  
I got your postcard, written on Dec. 6 to day before yesterday. 
I do hope you have had some of my letters in the meantime.
Unless you got them they must have gone lost, because I certainly did write since Sept. 27th. I am so very sorry you have been without any news from me all that time and can understand that you have been a bit worried. Don’t worry about me ever, Susel! What were your last news from Mother?
How is your work going on?
I am most probably going to leave here before long but don't know yet when and even less what I am going to do afterwards.

I shall write again soon.

Much much love from your Gretel.
Innate Hall
nr. Towcester, Northants.
23-1-42

My dearest Susie,

I am so very unhappy about the fact, that you on Christmas day have still been without any post from me. I cannot understand it — unless my letters have gone lost on their way to you. I have written quite often, I am sure. I do so hope, you have at least got one letter in the meantime.

Your last air mail letter took nearly 4 weeks (I got it yesterday.) If only your dream
about the telephone message from Lisbon could possibly be true! But is there any more hope now? I just cannot and dare not imagine what our poor Mother feels like being completely cut off from any of us. But we shall see her and each other again, my dear, dear Sue! I am not going to drop that hope and conviction ever! Don't you either, please!

I am very glad you feel a little relieved about today; it must have been a heavy burden on your mind all the time.

I have sent several Red Cross Messages to Mother during the last months, always telling her that I am alright and very well. And I am — comparatively. At the moment I do feel very unhappy, disappointed and strained about my work. I never never realized I would so completely fail with the children. I am going to leave
here at the end of February; fortunately it is possible without any personal difficulties with other people or anything like that. I can live with the knowing as long as I want or need it, but I hope I shall be able to do some work work immediately.

I have not heard from Settel and the Behrend's lately. Settel had to leave her post and I have not heard yet whether she has found a new one. I shall very soon write again—and I love you so very, very much. Give my kindest greetings to B. Swarmlingly, please. Many, many
The Norland Nurseries
Summer Hill,
Chislehurst, Kent 4-2-43

(but please write to the Wembley address as I shall be back there before your next letter reaches me.)

My dearest Isobel,
A week ago today the training I told you about started. It is very nice and interesting and I am glad to be back with children. I am at the moment in the toddlers department—babies between 12-20 months. We do the practical work and also have a few lectures.
I had my first afternoon off today. I went to the next town with another trainee; we had tea in a very nice tea shop, spent a long time in a bookshop and in the public library and enjoyed ourselves very much.

There is not very much else to tell you today. I am reading a book by the Chinese author Lin Yutang, "A leaf in the storm" and I like it so much I think I'll go on with it a bit tonight. Have you read or seen or done anything interesting lately?

So you'll excuse me - to go to bed with my books, won't you? yours very, very much love to you! fretel.
As for my profession—I don't know at all where I stand at the moment. I am so glad you met a friend in Dr. So. and I am most grateful to him for keeping up your spirits. Life is strange! There you are—spending Chanukkah with Mrs. S. while I am spending Christmas with Pastor Busing's family!—not even knowing the date on which Chanukkah fell last year.

I quite agree with you that it does not matter much which of the two we spend with our friends—so long as they are just social occasions. And I agree even further that it might not matter very much which religion we have—as long as it is real religion and there I believe most sincerely that it is the one thing that matters, the one thing that is wrong with us all and
the solution of which is the best only way out of personal troubles and with them out of world troubles as well. I have never really regretted to have changed my religion—or rather having changed it on the paper, because I have never had one before I did so. But the effect it has had on me was completely different from what one would expect it. Immediately after it I felt somehow free to approach Christianity and nearer on the way to it than I could ever have been without that step. My dreams about that problem Bell me what you say in your last letter: that I don't know where I stand, but they do not, of course, say, as you say, that it does not matter much!

Axel had a Red Cross Message from Mother written on Dec. 16th, his birthday, saying that she was well and in good health. Let us not worry too much. I do love you so much! yours, Freda.
June 14, 1985

Dear Senator Levin,

having been appreciatively and fondly aware of Senator Alan Cranston—and less fondly of his opponent—for many years, I am gladly contributing to Senator Cranston's present campaign for re-election.

However, I would like you to know, dear Senator Levin, that this particular contribution is meant as a token of my very specific respect for, and gratitude to you: In its June 1st, 1985 issue, the publication Reflector of the Jewish Community Federation of Richmond published an article by you under the title "Senator Links Jewish Concerns with Universal Causes."

Born shortly before WWI,
and brought up in a highly (and somewhat confusingly) assimilated German-Jewish family, my growing-up and formative years happened during those "best of times and worst of times," between the two World Wars. I remember vividly, even though I was a child, the great misery of the German people, ourselves too, in some respects, after World War I. I find your conclusion that such miseries always require scapegoats, very logical. Whether such scapegoating (for which Jews have always been so readily available) can really be avoided — and whether any "best of times" is at all feasible — I do not know. But I am deeply
convinced that Jewish caring about the universe's, people's, and neighbors' great, essential concerns is asked of us by our religion and is vital to the survival of all of us. Maybe it cannot avoid bad times, but, perhaps, it can prevent "the worst of times" from becoming "the ultimate holocaust."

I hope that you have too many supporters to be able to afford the time to personally read letters like this one. But I wanted to write it anyhow.

With kind wishes,
Sincerely,

Margarete Hirsch
Liebe Gisela,
ich habe in den letzten Wochen besonders oft und intensiv an Dich gedacht — aber darüber hinaus ist es nicht gekommen! "Entschuldigungen" gibt es keine; Erklärungen, natürlich ja.

Schn und wir geht es in jeder Beziehung wirklich gut. Was wir mit den 18 Stunden des Tages tun, siehe unten! Wir hoffen beide sehr, noch einmal nach Europa — Deutschland, England, Schweiz, Israel, zu kommen, und dann wird ein Wiedersehen
mit dir oben auf der Liste stehen. Und wir werden es dich wissen lassen, so bald wir können. Wir hoffen auf nächstes Jahr, aber noch nicht genaueres.

Also zum zum 24-Stunden Alltagsleben! Susi ist noch immer sehr aktiv (trotz offiziellen Ruhestand) in ihrem Beruf. Man holt sie noch oft als Beraterin, dass sie in 40 Jahren lang die Direktorin der Physiotherapeutenschule war — besonders wenn Sachen schief gehen! Und dann, ausserdem, unterrichtet sie "Leute über 60", Senioren, in Gymnastics, "Easy Exercises" heißt das. Ich bin eine ihrer Schülerinnen, und es ist ganz "prima"! Man fühlt sich wirklich gut und 'nen Nach 1½ Stunden, das merkt man, ganz auf dem tiefen Boden. Als letztes von Susi: und für sie das wichtigste ist, dass sie vor fast 2 Jahren eine Ausbildung in der "Feldenkreis- Methode" angefangen hat, in der sie dann Ende dieses Sommers offiziell ein Diplom erhalten und unterrichten können wird. Reine Nichte weiss sehr wahrscheinlich von Feldenkreis und ihn vielleicht auch, denn seine Arbeit (er ist vor 3 Jahren etwa 82 Jahre alt, in Israel gestorben) ist anscheinend
in Europa und Australien, auch Kanada, länger und besser bekannt als hier in den U.S.A. wo es gerade anfängt. Sisi ist sehr beeindruckt von der Methode und glaubt, dass die Zukunft bestehen wird, dass es eine richtig heilmethode, wovon auch Theorie ist. jedenfalls fällt es Sisis Leben aus. Übrigens ausserdem ist sie auch noch sehr beschäftigt mit einer Gruppe von Menschen, die vor 30-40 Jahren Poliomyelitis hatten, oft ganz normale Leben geführt hatten (Beruf, Heirat, Kinder, Erfolg) und die nun plötzlich viele Symptome haben die ihnen das Leben sehr schwer machen. Sisi hatte einige dieser Menschen (vor 40 Jahren!) als Kinder behandelt und ist jetzt natürlich sehr daran interessiert ihnen zu helfen. (Der Tag hat 24 Stunde, nicht!)

Bei mir ähnlich aus.

Ich bin sehr - beinahe sort. - völ. "Tag und Nacht" mit der Gruppe von Flüchtlingen aus Kambodschia beschäftigt, die hier in Richmond angeseziedelt worden sind. Leider kommen fast keine neuen dazu, aber in den Lagern in Thailand sind noch Hunerttausende, die nicht heraus...
Können. Die 6-Köpfige Familie (4 Kinder, 5-15) die wir und unsere Gemeinde adoptiert haben, hat sich recht gut eingelebt, aber es gibt doch noch fast täglich Probleme. Für mich ist es viel Arbeit und eine sehr große Freude und Befriedigung.

Lieber Gisela, wir müssen beide sehr daran denken, vielleicht einmal hier in Richmond Besuch den Kölnfest! Im Frühling und Herbst (Oktober) ist es besonders schön. Im Sommer wird es manchmal etwas zu heiß, aber das dauert auch meist nicht zu lange. Unser liebes Haus hat ein nettes kleines Gästezimmer, das immer für uns frei ist. Die Stadt ist interessant und die Umgebung berühmt schön. Wenn etwas davon dich lockt — das ist der Zweck der Sache!

So lasst es dir bitte sehr gut gehen, lieber Gisela, und lasst uns bald wieder einmal von dir hören. Grüße auch meiner Schwester und meiner Nichte, Ute, und Ursula James.

Mit sehr herzlichen Grüßen,

Deine Gretel.

[Unterschrift]
Dear Susanne & Bertel -

We send greetings to you 2 and hope you have a healthy 2000 ahead.

We are all still in the same town: Paolo is now a busy junior at Penn State, Enzo will finish high school in June and Celsus wishes he were all grown.

Happy Holidays

Celsus wishes as always to you

Much love as always to you from Alan & Anne
1999

Alan Sica's Sons

Enzo + Carlo Sica '99