

**To the Chief of Police of Caylus: Caylus**

*Cantayrac, Municipality of Loze,  
June 14, 1848*



Police brigadier general of Caylus:

Through my brother Juan, you have conveyed that you have a warrant of arrest to all persons found with religious habit. I wish to know if it is true that you have issued such order. In the event, inasmuch as this order and prohibition was not communicated to me legally, I am not bound to consider it, and then if it is legal, inform me so that I will submit to it.

If without law or higher order you executed some arrest, for only finding us with religious habit, without notifying us legally of the prohibition, I will charge you in justice the process of the arrest and will hold you liable and the due punishment for the illegal arrest. The arrests of June 22<sup>1</sup> has been illegal. I have pardoned you, but by the prohibition that you communicated to us obliged me to charge you of the illegality of those arrests. Neither you nor the Mayor of Caylus had the right to prohibit us to wear our habit without informing us that the law prohibits it. I have the right to demand from you to show this law, and I ask in the name of Liberty of which every citizen has the pleasure to dress as he or she likes.

I enclosed a letter I have just written to the Mayor regarding this matter. Please read it for your information and kindly forward it to him.

“Health and fraternity.”

I have the pleasure to be your fellow citizen.

Francisco Palau, priest

P.S. If you will not respond to this letter, give me the information of the order, I will ask my lawyer in Montauban to sue you in justice for the illegal arrests of May 22. You entered my cloister and rooms without the intervention of the Mayor of Loze, searching my house in my absence and without any order or warrant. You violated the sacred right of my dwelling place; I will charge you in virtue of my right of property. In spite of having shown you the passports in order according to the regulation of the detainees, you arrested and detained those persons in prison for three days against their rights and without any higher order. The court of justice will be summoned to judge whether those arrests were legal or not. If you have gone beyond the limit of your power, you will suffer the punishment of the law. You obliged me to send my attorney-at-law and arbiter to the attorney-at-law of the Republic to inquire about this order of arrest, as well as to the chief Lieutenant of the Policemen of Montauban.

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<sup>1</sup> Could be interpreted May 22 as corrected in P.S.

## WHAT DID HAPPEN?



On May 22, 1848, through arbitrary actuation, the head police of Caylus arrested some of the hermit companions of Palau. According to the police, there was a law allowing arrest of all hermits wearing religious habit outside of their compound. Reaction of Palau was strong: he asked to be shown the exact order and the exact law; in contrary case he was not going to obey. And if arrests would continue, he was promising to bring whole thing under supreme

authorities. After many days of exchange of letters, talks and encounters, the issue got closed without more transcendency. But for Palau it became a kind of warning: even after eight years in France, even with so many friends, even having fame of holiness (or maybe because of it), he would always be a foreigner in the strange land, protected only by laws applied to the foreigners, not to the French citizens. If he wanted to be protected by French laws, the only way was to get French nationality. Without it, even the famous liberal French Constitution would mean nothing...

## THEMES OF LETTER:

This letter is a passionate answer of Palau to the situation that he didn't agree with, unjust and harmful for him and his companions. And it's quite paradoxical: living in a country that was considering itself the most liberal of all, suddenly there are such restrictions in a thing that, logically, has no greater meaning. Who cares what kind of clothes you wear when you happen to live in times of total liberty? Palau believed that the law (not whatever kind of law, but Constitution!) was for all, that all were equal under it. What a surprise... One may believe that there is freedom of expression, but not for all. That there is equality under law, but also not for all. Sad reality that Palau was forced to face, and that many people in today's world are also forced to face.



## IN REALITY...

We live in the world saturated by information. Whatever social red we open, it's hard to follow all the news that are streaming there. In this time of pandemic, information is really the fourth power. It can bring calmness; it can also provoke fear. Many believe that "**freedom of expression**" means that one can write whatever he/she thinks, feels, believes, giving one's own impressions and interpretations. Sometimes it's shameful to see private issues being washed in public forums. Even more, when the information posted in social media result being fake news. In present time, when we have even more immigrated into the virtual world (due to restrictions in social contacts), the question

arises: *how do we understand and practice the freedom of expression? Is it really allowed to share anything in public forums?*

The other reality to ponder is the ***equality of all under the same law***. We have seen examples of simple people being arrested for not following rules on quarantine. We have also seen examples of famous people to whom the same rules seemed not to apply. The symbol of justice is a woman (goddess Temida) carrying a weight in one hand, and a sword in the other; the woman's eyes are tapped by a piece of cloth, as a sign of her impartiality. But maybe in time of pandemic the cloth is tapping her mouth, not her eyes (like a face mask we should all wear). She can see the social differences, but cannot give just sentences. And maybe the ***"new normal"*** to which we are called is the one where ***we judge people not based on their social status, but on the laws of justice, impartial and not afraid to get contaminated by surrounding ambience.***



Video: FREE (Lighthouse Family) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IoUSCrpXkGs>

*I wish I knew how it would feel to be free;  
I wish I could break all the chains holding me;  
I wish I could say all the things I should say,  
Say them loud, say them clear, for the whole wide world to hear.*

*I wish I could share all the love that's in my heart,  
Remove all the vice that keep us apart.  
And I wish you could know how it feels to be me,  
Then you'd see and agree that every man should be free.*

*I wish I could be like a bird in the sky:  
How sweet it could be if I found I could fly.  
Well, I'd soar to the sun and look back at the sea  
And I'd sing 'cause I know how it feels to be free.*

*I wish I knew how it would feel to be free;  
I wish I could break all the chains holding me;  
And I wish I could say all the things I should say,  
Say them loud, say them clear, for the whole wide world to hear.  
Say them loud, say them clear, for the whole wide world to hear.  
Say them loud, say them clear, for the whole wide world to hear.*