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Press Div. Kametichis

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Letter from Mrs. Anna Roosevelt sent 4/26/47

Mrs. Anna Eleanor Roosevelt
Val-Kill Cottage
Hyde Park,
Dutchess County
New York

RESEARCH

..I recall that you remember faces. Mine was more than six feet off the floor, thin, olive, moustached, and, I believe, somewhat agitated. Perhaps you remember that I came to see you down in the Village as a result of my objections to one Betty Knowles Hunt's objections to you.

COPY

..The problem this time is a positive one, one which, I feel, you will find to your liking.

ART

A brief bit of background and then to the point. I have, before and since the war, been in and out of the army, editorial chair as assistant to LIFE's military editor; became then machinist, technical writer and editor, and for the past year and half have been employed as writer, production editor, and finally, managing editor of an industrial publication house in NYC.

LAYOUT

With reference to this last place of work, I was up to my neck in anti-semitism, anti-unionism, hate-liberals, hate ideas, and so on. My employer had no knowledge of publications yet he attempted to run production as he did sales. His constant playing every one against every one else eventually brought such and elaborate state of confusion that when he abruptly fired more than half of his staff no protests were forthcoming. After having given me two weeks notice previous to this incident, I suddenly discovered that I was to be retained as managing editor.

PRODUCTION

Because of circumstances related to a large Navy contract the fellow was forced to continue work until he figured a way out of completing the contract. During this period I found myself in position to break bread with him, since no one stood between us, and it became bitter bread for him. I never trusted a word he said at any time altho he was promising me a magnificent future. But you should know that the basis of his business philosophy rests in the fact that his business is not vital to his survival. Consequently it became my passion to destroy, if possible, such an employer. I shall never forget the faces of those he fired.

I am satisfied that I have at least complicated his future.

**All this is to the point. A friend of mine, working beside me, had acquired his belly full also. Together we examined the practicality of treating workers like members of the human race. Our discussions gathered momentum until it came about that we both desired to go into business for ourselves. His experience combined with mine covers an excellent range and at that time of planning the potential success was excellent.

Unfortunately, I brought into our business only my experience, talents, and potential contacts. Consequently, my friend has financed our incorporation. Our name, you note, is PUBLICATION SERVICES, and I am managing editor. Our offices are directly on the square in Stamford.

We have acquired a substantial contract as subcontractor to Frier Instrument Company of Baltimore to do a weather instrument manual for the Navy. This guarantees our first six months of life. Other prospects are developing which will lead us in the direction we intend to go, which, incidentally, is not that of technical manuals.

Our primary concern is in research, promotion, and advertizing, not ignoring, of course, that any publication, including technical manuals, are not to be sneezed at at the moment. This organization consults with clients and suggests the best methods of handling the particular problem whether it is in industrial design, packaging, or the market creating end of manufacturing needs. We design the job, write, and print.

- * One reason why I wish you to have a fairly clear view of what we intend is this: we represent a reaction to reactionary management. We have put ourselves up as examples of management with a human interest before us -- service to our clients, and to our organization.

John and I are determined that those who work with us shall share in the profits. Because we have had several exposures to industrial and business thinking we are not idealists. We are as practical as conventional business men, and yet are determined not to become sickened by the conventional. Management^{and labor} are two parts of the whole. We have not found that insecurity is the exquisite root of incentive. Neither do we believe that the haves and have nots are the flowers of destiny, or original sin.

- * Another reason is this: recently when my very good friend Max Lerner attempted to get me into a liberal weekly it was discovered that most publications were firing instead of hiring. Altho I have long wished to become a writer on such a periodical it was forcibly handed me that if the weight of such a person could do nothing for me I had little chance on my own merits.

Now the hardest thing in the world for liberals to do is to belong. In the agitational stage the radical liberals are bound by a common offensive; but the approach of the constructive non-adrenalin stage cause them to lose their adhesive impulse and to become easy pickings for the anties. When Max associated himself with a newspaper, and when you yourself decided against remaining out of the continuing fight, I

felt that this was a firm stem -- liberals associating with organization.

You will then grant me that there is a place for liberals not merely in business at large, but especially in the advertizing industry. I like the smell of it somehow, altho I'm not certain, anymore than my associate is, just what the future is like for us. This much we seek however..

..To establish our business as a precept of democratic behavior.

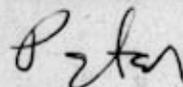
To survive we must meet the competition. To meet the competition we shall make our own insides as sound as we can possibly make them. But we need business.

Mrs. Roosevelt, I am turning to you and our other friends. We seek direction and help where direction and help may be derived. The kind of help that we require is in opened doors. And with this in mind we should like to enlist your thoughts and aid in doing business with the UN. To be sure we have no idea of the amount of publication, advertizing, and promotion involved. Yet there certainly must be required a great deal to maintain an informed and receptive public.

We are in a position to meet any contract with the capacity to produce.

* Altho I have discussed with my associate the desirability of seeking work with the UN, I have written to you entirely on my own and without having involved you in our discussions. It is only because of the sincere democratic impression which Mrs. Roosevelt made on Mr. Kamitchis which prevents me from having any hesitancy to call upon you in a matter of this sort. If the liberals need power to fight power then I am convinced that those of us who can create it where their talents lie are the surest of success. Consider this as a business proposal from a friend, if you will. At any rate, I am eagerly awaiting your reaction and suggestions.

Cordially yours,



Peter

Kamitchis
Managing Editor