Campobello Island
New Brunswick, Canada

Dear Mr. Kennedy:

I imagine you saw the very disagreeable article which John O'Donnel wrote as a result of a letter sent out by your representative to all newspaper correspondents in Washington.

Your desire to contact people who were opposed to my husband, as well as those in agreement with him, I quite understand, but I think you have to choose your people and try to have at least people who have some honor. For instance, Mr. Mark Sullivan or Mr. David Lawrence.

John O'Donnel and Westbrook Pegler should never be the recipients of any attention from reputable people.

It seems to me that Jimmy who is much more conscious of the type of political attack which anything connected with the
family would bring about, should be allowed to check on these letters and the list to whom they are sent. I have a feeling that unnecessary attack is not to be courted.

Very sincerely yours,
Dear Mr. Kennedy:

I imagine you saw the very disagreeable article which John O'Donnell wrote which was the result of a letter sent out by your representative to all newspaper correspondents in Washington.

I quite understand your desire to contact people who were opposed to my husband, as well as those in agreement with him, but I think you have to choose your people and try to have at least people who have some honor. For instance, Mark Sullivan or David Lawrence.

John O'Donnell and Pegler really should never be the recipients of any attention from reputable people.

It seems to me that Jimmy who is much more conscious of the type of political attack which anything connected with the family would bring about, should be allowed to check on these letters and the list to whom they are sent. I have written Franklin, junior that he should not be critical without knowing some of the facts better but nevertheless I have a feeling that unnecessary attack is not to be courted.
April 26, 1947

Dear Mr. Kennedy:

I quite see that you may have to dramatize my husband in order to make your picture on one of the Four Freedoms, convincing. I am willing to have you do this and I understand that a picture of this kind may be extremely helpful to the country at the present time.

When you have had the opportunity to prepare a script, I shall be glad to go over it, and I shall be glad to help in any way possible to get you authentic information. I will be glad also, to tell my husband's friends and co-workers, whom you feel it necessary to contact in order to make the picture valuable and authentic, that I hope they will find it possible to cooperate with you.

I am sure that my sons, James and Elliott, will carry out their obligations to the best of their ability, and I am sure that anything which they approve will be within the bounds of good taste.

Of course, I am sure you realize that I have a very busy schedule and that I can not do more than I have outlined in this letter. I shall be glad to arrange to see you at any time you come East, though from the 9th of June for two weeks, I shall be working five days a week at Lake Success with the Human Rights Commission drafting committee.

It is not my desire to impose in any way my thinking on your interpretation of the theme of the picture, except to insure that any interpretation of my husband shall be accurate and in good taste.

My good wishes go to you for success in your undertaking and I hope you will attain the ideals which you and James and Elliott have set for yourselves.

Very sincerely yours,

[Signature]
1601 Riverside Drive
Burbank, California
May 16, 1947

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt
Apartment 15-A
29 Washington Square, West
New York 11, New York

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

In my letter of May 6, I indicated I would send you a list of the names of people whom James, Elliott and I felt should receive the letters which you offered to send, indicating the value we placed on the cooperation of these people in our efforts to prepare the story.

Since then, I have had to go to San Francisco. On my return, Jimmy raised the question of the differing and varied types of approach which might be advisable to some of these people. Because I realize how busy you are now, and because I myself would like to concentrate on the story, I felt that perhaps Jimmy might put his thoughts down on paper and that when you come out here for the Jackson Day Dinner he can give them to you at that time.

I expect to be at the Jackson Day Dinner myself and look forward to the opportunity of seeing you again on that occasion.

Sincerely,

Jay Richard Kennedy
June 18, 1947

Miss Malvina Thompson
29 Washington Square West
New York 11, New York

Dear Miss Thompson:

Colonel Roosevelt asked that I return the enclosed "FOREWORD by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt."

He also asked that I tell you that he thought it was quite good in every way.

Very truly yours,

Malcolm K. Hash
Secretary to
JAMES ROOSEVELT
FOREWORD

By Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt

After my husband's death when we were going through the various things in the house at Hyde Park, which we were not leaving there permanently, my husband's secretary, Miss Tully, told me that in the little study which he always used when he was home, there were a great many red, cardboard cases, on the backs of which was written: "Family Papers". He had always intended to go through them at some time, but he said that if anything happened to him, I was the one to have these particular cases.

I moved them over to the upper part of my garage near my cottage, and it was not until this spring that I finally began to go through the cases. Then I found that I had all of the letters which my husband had ever written to his mother, and all the letters which my own children had ever written to their grandmother, and quite a number of other items of business and of purely family interest.

As I began to read these letters, I realized that probably my husband had intended someday to go through them and put them in order as an interesting record over a fairly long span of years. Whether he intended to publish them, I do not know, but I feel sure that to many people who were fond of my husband in this country and abroad, a record such as these letters make, will be of great interest.
FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT'S INVENTION OF THEIR FRIEND

and educators and women's groups are the ones who often make a contribution that will be of use to the country. I hope that in their future these losses among the world

the consciousness with other people on human matters,

the consciousness of a mind and the intelligence of humanity, the consciousness of knowledge, the development of a personality, the consciousness of a society, I think, one can weigh the

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opportunities which you have, but to live your project

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Dear Jimmie:

Enclosed is an article by John O'Donnell which you may have missed. Of course, the article is disgusting, but that is not the point of this letter.

What worries me is the letter from Mr. Kennedy to O'Donnell, which appears to be a form letter sent to all Washington news men of the Roosevelt era. To be specific, I disapprove of the following quotes:

1. "After conferences with Eleanor Roosevelt, it was agreed that her husband should be dramatized in this film in connection with his strong personal conviction that 'there is nothing to fear but fear itself.' It is my understanding that only one conference was held with mother and that she was quite reluctant about the whole idea. The inference of the above statement is that she feels that 'her husband should be dramatized.'"

2. "Other members of the family who are assisting me concur in the belief that perhaps no other of his public statements have as much significance and importance today as this." It is my understanding that only you and Elliott qualify as the other members assisting. Unfortunately, the above statement infers that the rest of us are also assisting. Speaking for myself, I am not at all sure that I feel that this statement of father's is today the most significant and important.

3. "Mrs. Roosevelt is helping me to enlist the cooperation of her husband's friends and co-workers." This is an exaggeration, to put it mildly.

My main objection to Mr. Kennedy's letter is that it infers that mother is greatly interested in the picture, in cooperating in the research and production and in enlisting support of outsiders. This inference is contrary to the facts and is an obvious attempt by Mr. Kennedy to use mother's name for his own personal advancement and gain. The only members of the family financially or otherwise interested in this film are you and Elliott and I want now to request that you ensure that in the future...
that Mr. Kennedy will only use your names and will not use
those of any other member of the family, including mother.
May I also point out that if Mr. Kennedy had marked his letter
confidential and personal, even John O'Donnell might not have
been able to use it as the basis for his disgusting smear piece.

You know how strongly I feel about any of us being
mixed up in commercial enterprises dealing with father and, of
course, that is the reason why I am so upset about this Kennedy
letter.

Love to Rommie and the kids.

Love,

Mr. James Roosevelt,
623 North Bedford Drive,
Beverly Hills, Calif.
Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt  
Hyde Park  
Dutchess County, New York  

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

I have just gotten back to California and this is the first free minute I have, which I take to thank you once again for the hospitality and excellent company which I enjoyed during my stay at Campobello. On the plane I studied those notes I took down so feverishly Sunday night. I feel that if I reach all the people who were suggested, guided by the thoughts expressed by you, Elliott and Miss Thompson, I will wind up with a well-rounded and interesting picture of Louis Howe. In the light of all the things we discussed, that should constitute the solution to a big part of the problem of correctly conceiving "FREEDOM FROM FEAR."

I am enclosing a copy of the letter which Jimmy and I okayed early in July and sent to the public relations office for mailing to the trade union publications. You will note that the letter conforms to the approach which we discussed on Sunday night. It makes clear that the dramatization of Franklin Roosevelt would be in specific relationship to the picture's theme, "Freedom from Fear." On the other hand, it does not attempt to amplify in any sense how much or how little of Franklin Roosevelt would appear on the screen. I might add that in the many responses which I have received from labor publications, none of them got the wrong impression which the gentleman from Flint, Michigan had that I was intending anything like a biography. All these responses make reference to the theme of the picture, "Freedom from Fear," and the attitude of trade unionists to that theme and Franklin Roosevelt's expression of it.
I have already begun to indicate to some people here that "FREEDOM FROM FEAR" will not be exhibited before the 1948 elections and that you were in accord with this decision of mine and were writing to me to that effect. In order to prove that I mean this, it may be necessary for me to make some public moves on my other picture. (It deals with the democratization of the American penal system. I enjoy the approval and active cooperation of the American Prison Association regarding it.)

Am having breakfast with Jimmy on Monday, at which time I will report to him the various things we discussed and will try to communicate to him how thoroughly I enjoyed the lighter moments of those four days.

I look forward to seeing you again in the fall. Please extend my best regards to Miss Thompson and Elliott and my warm feeling to Chandler, Tony, Scoopie and David. And by all means, please pay my respects to Fala, Frannie and Basy.

Cordially

Jay Richard Kennedy
July 11, 1947

Editor
FORT WAYNE EVENING HERALD
935 Lincoln Tower
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Sir:

I am assuming that you have heard about the motion picture which I will make dealing with Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

After conferences with Eleanor Roosevelt, it was agreed that her husband should be dramatized in this film in connection with his strong conviction that "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Other members of the family who are assisting concur in the belief that no other of his public statements has as much significance and importance today as this.

Mrs. Roosevelt is helping me to enlist the cooperation of her husband's friends and co-workers. Many of these have already generously indicated their readiness to help in whatever way possible. In addition, a research staff is now assembling all printed material and other data which may give some clue to the direct personal effect this belief of the President's had upon the daily life of the average American.

In the last analysis, published material is no substitute for the direct expression of opinion by the people themselves. Recent events, such as the Taft-Hartley bill, indicate that the American working public must be vitally interested in giving assistance to any effort which aims at preserving the ideals of FDR, drawing forceful attention to the progress achieved under his administration. Because it would be impossible to draw a fair picture without some expression of opinion from laboring people, I hope that you may help me reach your members in an effort to obtain from them their personal reaction to the President's credo about "freedom from fear" and its use as a motion picture theme at the present time.
This will constitute an important contribution to what could, with proper and sufficient assistance, be one of the significant motion pictures of our time. Letters concerning the above should be addressed to Jay Richard Kennedy, 1601 Riverside Drive, Burbank, California.

Sincerely,

JAY RICHARD KENNEDY

JRK’ fm