

stro-stry

Strunk

April 13, 1947
Rt. 2 box 217
Tracy, Cal.

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt,

I doubt if any young man feels more keenly than I the great depth of gratitude and indebtedness so many millions of us owe that great man, your husband.

Having just left high school at the beginning of the depression, my senses were rudely awakened to the great ebb and flow of circumstances during the ensuing half dozen years.

It would take pages for me to list the many, infinitely worthwhile benefits that I realized directly as a result of Mr. Roosevelt's deeply human perspectives. But needless to say, my first job, my all but given up education (finally given new hope and direction through N.E.R.A) and my very political philosophy itself- I owe directly to Mr. Roosevelt's great vision and warm humanitarianism.

To say the least, if I, a nameless youth could have benefited so much through the vision of one great man, what must all the world have benefited! Not alone those that are- but those that are to be. And not in material benefits so much as in social and spiritual benefits.

My feelings I have tried to put into this poem that I send to you in the warmest and most sincere spirit of gratitude I have ever known.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Strunk

THE GOOD NEIGHBOR

O God, how we will miss that guiding hand
That ringing voice none could misunderstand!
But long, too long, the world must wait I fear
before another like him shall appear.
How desolate of joy and hope the whole world lay--
Who will-- who can forget that dreary day?
Then like a spark of some unconquered flame
Warming and cheering along the way he came.
How rich the color that again infused
The cheeks so pale-- and oh so long misused!
The slow pulse leapt and made the heart rejoice!
A happy thrall rung warmly in each voice!
His joy became our joy-- his heart our heart
And sounds of work grew sweeter from the start;
For where was there a music to compare
With that of song and tool that filled the air?
But hard and long indeed the way he chose
The heart aches that were his nobody knows.
Though he knew starless nights-- days lacking sun--
Night shall not fall upon the goals he won!
There was no task too great-- no man too small
For which-- for whom he would not give his all--

THE GOOD NEIGHBOR (page 2)

O God! The proof of these poor lines indeed!
Is there a heart that yet has ceased to bleed?
Is there an eye no longer dimmed by tears?
Who will-- who can forget those happy years!
The golden glory of the sun shall fade
Before the years disturb the marks he made!
Kings learned the joy of toiling by his side
While ragged urchins for him would have died--
His heart was huge and warm and one with all
His glorious smile fell on the great and small.
Now jeweled heads bow in deepest sorrow
While damp-eyed youth strives toward his tomorrow.
Love fills our breast-- with pride our warm eye glows
At mention of the name the whole world knows.
But long-- too long-- the world must wait I fear
Before another like him shall appear!