February 25, 1939

Dear Mr. Kennedy:

Pardon my delay in replying to your letter of February 15th. I have been so occupied that I have been unable to read my mail for the last few days.

Now as to signing your statement on "Democracy and Religion" I could not have done it as it now stands because of the first paragraph. With the balance of the statement I am entirely in accord and would sign it but I must protest against the opening paragraph. If democracy and religion could be so destroyed that humanity would be thrust back to the jungle and barbarism in the present struggle which I grant you is desperate, then I should feel that they had not the vitality which I believe to be in them to make a final decent world. They are not going to be destroyed, badly as they probably will be battered before we get through this thing. The two profoundest and most enduring qualities in man's nature are his instincts for freedom and religion. Those instincts have lifted him out of the jungle and they are going to keep him out, though I grant you they will have to fight hard to do it. So don't ask me to sign any such paragraph as this first one in your statement.

With admiration and sympathy for the efforts of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, believe me

Very sincerely

Mr. Reginald T. Kennedy
300 Fourth Avenue
New York City

Digital Image, 2009. The Ida M. Tarbell Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelletier Library