For Mrs. O'Donovan Rossa
Clonakilty. Co Cork
Ireland -

Rahpy -

Saturday 5 P.M. July 9/70

My Dear Wife I have just recieved your letter of the 7th. It is some ease of mind to me to hear from you, and it is a pleasure to me to hear that you are so strong. Well, I did surely anticipate the pleasure of having a history of your life from you besides any information & advice you could give me as to the course I would adopt at this Inquiry. But I must tell you that independent of any advice you or any one else could give me I had determined to pursue a certain course. and tho' your letter may lead me to think that you would disapprove of it, still I will not alter my mind. That course is to give evidence before the Commission, if they see there is anything relevant to their inquiry contained in a part statement which I laid before them on Monday the 4th. I did not make this statement as a complaint. I only stated simply matters that I experienced by virtue of prison discipline and left it to them to examine me or not as to the truth of what I stated. I was led to adopt this course by thinking ~~that~~ the most of what I stated to them. were matters that were one way or another canvassed and contradicted in the world, and, whatever your opinion or my opinion of the Commission be, I concluded that I would not leave it in the gentleman's power to say that my refusal to give evidence was proof that those statements could not be substantiated. After a conversation with the gentlemen and my expressing a willingness to be examined if they desired: the decision was — that they would take the paper I gave them as a part statement, that ~~I could have~~ they would not go into my examination until they would come again on Tuesday the 19th: that every day till then I could have my wife's assistance in preparing my case (that is if my wife came) and that then I could give them the rest of my statement, if I wrote any more. Here is one paragraph of your letter: "Even while I could understand another man putting aside all considerations, but the satisfaction of meeting his wife, I cannot understand it in you who have since I first knew you held public interest far in advance of mine or your own gratification. To take advantage of this permission to assist you in preparing your statement for the Commission of Inquiry" when the Inquiry was already about to be inaugurated at Chatham — to take advantage of it *merely* for the satisfaction of an ordinary interview &c. &c.x.x This I would look upon as selling one's right like Esau for a mess ~~a mess~~ of pottage, as putting one's character in pawn for an equivocal reward!! In your mind as seen in these lines, you over value me, and undervalue me. ~~and when you compare the value of one of your company for a fortnight which could be~~

~~Esau's~~
~~had I suppose if you came, to a mess of pottage~~.
~~Why, you estimate yourself as nothing~~. Where you
think too highly of me is where you think that I ~~you~~ have
made such sacrifice of my happiness convenience gratification
for "public interest", and where you think too little of me
is where you think that I would now put aside all
considerations for the satisfaction of meeting my wife—
Where you think that I think so little of public
interest as to sacrifice it "merely for the satisfaction
of any ordinary interview. Well I am not so
much in alarm as you are in these matters. I will
pursue the course I have indicated, if the authorities do
what they have stated they would do. and I have
no fears as to doing wrong, or as to injuring the
public interest. (out || I understood that the interview
was not to be an "ordinary" one, ~~that~~ the prisoner
✳ would have his assistant in his cell with him
~~every~~ day till the inquiry & pending it. If this
is not so the governor will please say so to you on the
margin of this letter. And if it be so|| I cannot
see, suppose nothing else but the "public interest"
was concerned, how a history of my prison life to
you would not counterbalance the advantage
the government would derive by saying that I
had your assistance in preparing my case. However
ye outside know the world and ye must judge.
Before I knew this offer would be made us, of
having an interview with our friends I had
applied for a private visit from you. and
it was refused. I then applied for an
ordinary visit and it was granted. and ~~+~~

now that I can have a private visit, the "public interest" will not permit you to avail of it. This is rather hard. It puts me in a very peculiar position for if you know my mind you know that I cannot at any future time, with any face, ~~ask for~~ under these circumstances go before a director and ask him for a public or private visit from you. He might say to ~~you~~ me How do you know that your wife wants to see you?

I am really pleased Mollie that you are so strong, that that sickness of expectation & hope deferred, is left you, and that you have made up your mind for the worst, for it is only thus that you can act for the best. I was in awful suspense till I got your letter, but it is not a letter, it is only a note, and therefore by post return, write me a long letter. and as it seems to me that you write under a misapprehension of the time for visiting me ~~has~~ being past, and seem to be un-aware ~~that~~ there is over a week yet. I would wish you to be final on this point. and it would be well that you would – by the Car driver – send a telegraph to Bandon for the Governor of the Prison saying as to whether you would come or no. As I allude to this, I will expect you to do it, and then I will make up *my* mind. I did not get the printed letters, nor the poems nor the photographs. I must I suppose wait till I see Mr Fagan. When did you go home, why did'nt you tell me? Did you go by Dublin?

I have permission to write while the Commission sits, on matters connected with it. I wrote to Mr Pigott & Mr Downing M.P. already and to your father, and you can tell them, your father & Mr P. at least, they may keep writing to me if they have anything to say or send.

"Dont therefore abate or alter, after so long endurance, any of your principles beliefs or inspirations &c" 'Tis funny to see you writing these words to me, if, as I hope you are, acting in this matter on your own advice. 'Tis so different from ~~that~~ threatening notice you sent me from America, of not living with me if I neglected my family in future. but I am glad that you are at last, Strong. Yours dear Mollie ever fondly

Jer. O'Donovan. Rossa