



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **JFK: A PRESIDENT BETRAYED** PREMIERES ON DIRECTV NOVEMBER 7<sup>th</sup>

### FEATURE LENGTH DOCUMENTARY REVEALS 35<sup>TH</sup> PRESIDENT'S SOLITARY MISSION TO END COLD WAR DESPITE EFFORTS TO UNDERMINE HIM FROM WITHIN

Los Angeles, CA, October 22 – Agora Productions announces the debut of its newest documentary film, **JFK: A PRESIDENT BETRAYED**, narrated by Academy Award® winner Morgan Freeman, on DirecTV, Thursday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, at 8 pm, on the Audience Network (channel 239). The film will also air on DirecTV On Demand starting November 14<sup>th</sup>.

In a story never before portrayed on film, **JFK: A PRESIDENT BETRAYED** reveals how John F. Kennedy secretly reversed official U.S. policy to embark on back-channel peace efforts with former Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev, Fidel Castro and other sworn American enemies. This aspect of Kennedy's Presidency has been overlooked by documentary filmmakers and seldom reported.

Princeton University professor, author, and award-winning former Assistant Managing Editor at *Newsweek* magazine Evan Thomas (featured in the film) had this to say about the documentary, "*JFK: A President Betrayed* is a masterful portrayal of a dangerous time in American history. This powerful, poignant film vividly captures the struggle of the young President Kennedy, ill-served by his hawkish advisers, to stand up to Soviet communism without dragging the world into nuclear war."

Featuring new, probing interviews with advisors to both Kennedy and Khrushchev, **JFK: A PRESIDENT BETRAYED** uncovers declassified top-secret documents as well as rare photographs, such as those taken when Nikita Khrushchev received a critical message from President Kennedy via his back channel envoy, the journalist Norman Cousins, which laid the groundwork for the limited nuclear test ban treaty of 1963.

The film examines the 35<sup>th</sup> president's desperate, solitary struggle to mitigate armed conflict and makes clear the extent to which he risked political capital – and, ultimately, his life – to pull the world back from the brink of war and possible nuclear annihilation. Additionally, the film brings to light Kennedy's determination to negotiate for an end to the conflict in Vietnam, and how these efforts were subverted.

**JFK: A PRESIDENT BETRAYED** serves up an impressive group of eyewitnesses: Viktor Sukhodrev, Khrushchev’s English translator; Alex Akalovsky, Kennedy’s Russian translator; Sergei Khrushchev, the Soviet premier’s son; James Galbraith, son of then-Ambassador to India John Kenneth Galbraith; Dan Fenn, former White House Special Assistant to the President; William Vanden Heuvel, Special Assistant to then-Attorney General Robert Kennedy; the daughters of writer and peace activist Norman Cousins, who accompanied their father on an extraordinary, secret mission to negotiate with Khrushchev on Kennedy’s behalf; as well as other authors and Kennedy experts.

Following its Direct TV debut, **JFK: A PRESIDENT BETRAYED** is scheduled to be broadcast in November on Japan’s NHK, Al Jazeera in the Middle East and North Africa, and screened in theatres throughout the United States.

“People are going to be surprised by some of the details presented in the film,” said Cory Taylor, the director and executive producer of **JFK: A PRESIDENT BETRAYED**, “The extent to which Kennedy pursued peaceful relations with his adversaries has been underestimated.” Taylor, a primetime Emmy award winner, previously directed the acclaimed feature-length documentary, *The Power of the Powerless* (2009) narrated by Jeremy Irons about Vaclav Havel and the Velvet Revolution. Taylor also directed the award winning films *Another Way of Seeing Things* (2004) with F. Murray Abraham and *A Quiet Revolution* (2002) with Meryl Streep.

**JFK: A PRESIDENT BETRAYED** was co-executive produced by Darin Nellis. Alexandra Ryan (**HEMINGWAY AND GELLHORN** and **ALIVE DAY MEMORIES: Home from Iraq**) and Lionel Friedberg served as production consultants.

“We live in a polarized world,” said Darin Nellis, on the making of the film. “At a time when government gridlock, economic uncertainty and the threat of ethnic and religious violence have many people feeling fearful about their future; when the lack of positive role models in government has prompted younger generations to dismiss politics as a waste of time, a re-examination of John F. Kennedy’s leadership during his presidency provides reason for hope.

Agora Productions is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization incorporated in the State of California, USA, with a mission to promote humane values, enhance critical thinking skills and expose people, particularly young adults, to positive role models through film, art and educational materials.

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