

MRS. ELEANOR ROOSEVELT'S OWN PROGRAM

May 23, 1940

Description: This is a partial transcript. Broadcast does not include opening announcement, the introduction of ER, or the first commercial. Broadcast 1:15-1:30 PM over the NBC Red Network. In the first part of the program ER talks about the work of Dorothy Draper, gardening, and modes of travel. In the second half, she discusses the importance to our national security of ensuring the needs of all citizens are met.

Participants: ER, Ben Grauer, NBC Announcer

(15:58)

[Recording begins in the middle of program with ER speaking]

[ER:] Dorothy Draper, who started out as an amateur, has become an authority on the decoration and remodeling of hotels, apartment houses, and clubs. And, she's also developed interiors and exteriors for small houses. She believes that everybody living in a city wants to be reminded of the country, and so she insists that in some way, either through window boxes or flowers on window sills or roof gardens or backyard gardens, we should bring the country to the city. She tells me that this means a certain amount of daily effort, and particularly emphasizes the fact that we must remember that the design is important in city areas because it has to remind one of the country in winter as well as in summer. I have seen her turn twenty-five feet of ground into a most enchanting spot with a fountain playing and a shaded hidden light to illuminate the snow in winter as you sit by a warm fire inside. She believes, too, that if we would use more flowering shrubs and fruit trees in the yards of small houses, we would find the pleasure in very small grounds around suburban developments infinitely enhanced. One small house that I know gives one a sense of spaciousness because a terrace built out of the living room with an awning over it seems like a continuation of the room, though it is really part of the garden where plants grow and furniture is strewn around designed to be comfortable, and yet not to suffer from contact with the elements. These gardens do require thought and care, but they are vastly rewarding.

Now, having kept you so long a time on things which touch the home, I wonder if you are not feeling the lure of spring as I do. If you would like to go off into the country, I recommend that you take a road like the one we took yesterday by automobile from Washington to West Virginia. That affords the most beautiful mountain scenery. The people of West Virginia say that their state is the Switzerland of America, and I only wish that I did not know how much sorrow to human beings has come through the conditions surrounding the production of coal which lies beneath these beautiful hills. I could enjoy the scenery more. But as it is, even with all my knowledge of the poverty and want and hardship in certain areas in the state, I could not help but enjoy the beauty of the drive yesterday. There is something in sitting behind the wheel of a car and seeing the miles melt away which gives one a sense of freedom.
(18:42)

There is one other way of travel which emphasizes this even more, and that is traveling by air. I was talking not long ago to my friend, Mr. C. R. [Cyrus Rowlett] Smith, president of the American Airlines. He is enormously proud of the safety record which has been made by all commercial airlines in the past year. I notice as I travel about that more men than women travel by air, and I suppose it is because this method of traveling is particularly valuable to busy men as it gives them more time for their

business which they travel to transact, and they still have a chance to return to their families sooner than by other modes of travel.

Even though fewer women seem to feel the urge to travel by air, the number is increasing. A few women use planes because they are businesswomen, but others do so because they find it pleasant and easy. You arrive at your destination feeling fresh and clean, and there is something exhilarating about moving through the air high above the earth. If you've never seen a sunrise or a sunset from an airplane, you have a treat in store for you. The desert and the mountains and the water look different from the air and give you an entirely different picture from that which you get from a train or an automobile. This is a new sensation and there is adventure in it, and women like adventure as much as men do.

The railroads and buses have a longer safety record than the planes have, however. And for many of us, they are more practical ways of transportation at times. I have often felt a greater sense of connection with the landscape from a train window than I could acquire from any other mode of travel. Perhaps when the spring gets into our blood and we get the feeling that we want to wander, we should really take turns wandering in all the ways open to us. And I would add canoes on our streams and rivers, and boats of all kinds on other expanses of water. All methods of transportation have their own particular charm and the more you love your home, the more you will enjoy letting yourself go to the wandering spirit now and then. And none of us will ever quite get out of our blood the spirit of our forefathers which brought them to this country and drove them from one side of the continent to the other. But before I say any more, let's return for a moment to New York City and listen to Mr. Grauer. (21:15)

[Ben Grauer:] And I'll be only a moment, Mrs. Roosevelt. Friends, there's a wise old saying that goes as follows: Experience is the best teacher. Well, we believe that proverb, and so we say: please try SweetHeart Soap. I can tell you all about its purity and thoroughness and lovely mild fragrance, and you can learn from me that SweetHeart is a fine bath and beauty soap. But you won't know how fine and how much pleasure it can give you until you find it out by personal experience, by your own actual use of SweetHeart Soap. So take a tip from your five million fellow Americans who changed to SweetHeart in the last two years. They have learned by experience that for purity and gentleness, there's no other soap like SweetHeart. The next time you go shopping be sure to ask for SweetHeart Soap. And now back to Morgantown, West Virginia, and Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. (22:09)

[ER:] Just now, it seems to me that all of us who live in this country should make it a point to know our own country increasingly well. The better we know it, the better equipped we will be to really help our representatives to make this country and nation impregnable, not only from the point of view of its material defenses, but impregnable because the people who live in it feel that their interests are tied up with the success of the country and its continuance as a democracy. We cannot realize our dreams for the well-being of each and every citizen if we do otherwise.

Someone said to me the other day that he could not understand the attitude of a certain senator who demanded that we curtail all unnecessary expenditure in order that we meet the costs of armaments for defense. This, of course, could only mean curtailment of programs to meet human needs, unless our representatives and senators know of ways so far hidden from us in which we spend money unnecessarily. To those of us who are primarily interested in the stabilizing of democracy from a spiritual standpoint as well as a physical one, to curtail expenditures which have made life worthwhile to our people would seem to be as criminally dangerous as to refuse to further our defense program. To show how differently different people think, a young man asked me on the same day that the senator made the above statement how I explained the fact that we were now voting for great defense expenditures when up to this time Congress has insisted that the people would not countenance the spending of any more money to alleviate the suffering of the unfortunate people in our midst. All the studying ways and means to permanently solve such things as unemployment.

The answer, I think, is that people are more afraid of what may happen to us if we are unarmed than they are of taxation, but they have no realization of what might come through neglect of certain difficulties that face a part of our population. Today, people are more afraid of an attack from an unscrupulous and powerful nation, so they're willing to pay for what they look upon as protection against such an attack. They're not willing to pay for the continuation either of efforts to do away with unemployment, or of assistance to those who suffer from the results of unemployment unless they recognize that this is an equal danger to their safety. That is why I feel that we must stress the fact that a democracy must be supported with the strongest material defenses, but that it must in turn be backed by a united nation that believes heart and soul in democracy and knows that a democratic form of government can solve the problems of our era in a way which will benefit the whole people. (25:11)

I've never had any patience with the old story that we used to be told of the ostrich who when in danger-- when danger was approaching buried its head in the sand. I have no patience with people who behave like the ostrich. There is plenty of room for argument as to the ways that we should go about solving our world problems, but there is no argument that seems to me to hold water to keep us from continuing to use every possible method to find the ultimate solutions. We must make the people of the United States of America feel that we know what difficulties they face and that we're giving everything we can give to the solving of these difficulties.

I'm going this afternoon to see how a self-help cooperative, started on a shoestring in a mining region near here called Scott's Run, has worked out. When I was here just a year ago, they'd opened an outdoor bakery. Now, they have a number of new projects to show us. Perhaps, what I'm going to see will answer some of the questions which I've had in mind: namely, can miners become successful farmers on a cooperative basis? In this region, can they eke out a livelihood by supplementing their farming with other activities? And will these boys and girls who have attended school when they had clothes and been kept out of school when they had none, who've often been hungry, and whose opportunities for recreation are negligible, be able to fit themselves for a start in life here or elsewhere? Here, there is little future for them. Perhaps I can get enough information to tell you some of the answers in a future broadcast. (27:00)

[Ben Grauer:] Thank you very much, Mrs. Roosevelt. Ladies, do your pictures flatter you? Now if you look more attractive in snapshots than you do in reality, perhaps it's because the camera doesn't register dull or roughened skin. Get exquisitely fragrant SweetHeart Soap to help your skin stay soft and radiantly clean and smooth. SweetHeart's wonderful purity means it's gentle, a true friend to a lovely complexion. Its amazing ability to cleanse means it's thorough. SweetHeart removes stubborn surface impurities, and that's another way it helps your natural skin charm. So ladies, take a good look in your mirror. If what you see doesn't quite come up to your favorite photograph, get SweetHeart Soap this very day and just see if it can't help you look as pretty as a picture.

[Theme music 27:51-28:16]

[Ben Grauer:] [music continues softly] Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt comes to call again next Tuesday, same time, same station, when the makers of SweetHeart Soap invite each and every one of you to be again with us. In the meantime, remember to stock up with the fine product that brings you these programs: Sweetheart Soap, famous for fifty years as the soap that agrees with your skin. And now it's goodbye until next Tuesday, when you'll again hear [music crescendos, cuts] *Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt's Own Program*.

[Theme music 28:46-28:57]

[Ben Grauer:] [speaking over music] This is Ben Grauer speaking.

[NBC Announcer:] [speaking over music] This is the National Broadcasting Company.

[Theme music fades 29:02]

[NBC chimes]

(29:08)

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