

## THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT PROGRAM

November 27, 1950

Description: In the interview segment, ER interviews radio talk-show personalities, and married couple, Jinx Falkenburg and Tex McCrary.

Participants: ER, Elliott Roosevelt, Jinx Falkenburg, Tex McCrary

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[ER:] Today, I'm going to turn the tables; my guests are a very attractive young couple well known to radio and television audiences. They spend a great deal of time interviewing people and getting them to tell interesting stories. It so happens, however, that few of their guests have more interesting stories to tell than they have themselves. I'm very happy to introduce to you Jinx Falkenburg and Tex McCrary. Mr. and Mrs. McCrary.

[Jinx Falkenburg:] Hello, Mrs. Roosevelt, how are you?

[Tex McCrary:] Thank you very much for introducing us as Mr. and Mrs. McCrary, because generally it comes out as Mr. and Mrs. Falkenburg, [ER and Tex McCrary laugh] I don't mind, but it's—

[ER:] Well, I'm very glad that I did it the right way.

[Tex McCrary:] Thank you very much.

[ER:] You know that to thousands of people you typify Manhattan, but I think you both were born many miles from here, weren't you?

[Jinx Falkenburg:] Yes, Mrs. Roosevelt, I was born in Barcelona, Spain, in the Pyrenees as a matter of fact, by accident, because my father happened to be an electrical engineer there and so that was very far from home, which is New York now.

[ER:] But it's a very lovely place to have been born. And how about you?

[Tex McCrary:] Well, Mrs. Roosevelt, I was born in a place called Calvert, Texas, which gives me my favorite joke: I'm the only man I know who switched from Calvert.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Oh! [Elliott Roosevelt laughs]

[Tex McCrary:] I'm sorry, I apologize.

[Speakers overlap here]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] That's alright.

[ER:] Oh, that's a lovely—

[Tex McCrary:] Fred Allen writes my material.

[ER:] That's a very nice one uh I hope you won't mind, I know that I have no right to call you eh Tex and Jinx, but uh that's the way you're known to the public, so if you don't mind, [ER laughs] I'm going to call you two young things by [ER laughs] your--the names you're known by. (1:53)

[Jinx Falkenburg:] I hope you will, that's what our children call us, by the way, and I'm sure that most people don't approve, but they do call us Tex and Jinx because everybody calls us that.

[ER:] Do they really? Oh, I think that's rather nice, I know some other children that call their fathers and mothers by their first name. [Tex McCrary: It's nicer that way.] I think it's nice. Well Jinx, you were once well known for your swimming and tennis playing, did you achieve that in Spain or did you come home beforehand?

[Jinx Falkenburg:] No, I went uh to South America after Spain, where my father was also electrical engineering for Westinghouse, and uh I started playing tennis in Chile because my mother was a tennis champion, and I used to sort of watch a lot of tennis and do a great deal of swimming, and I became junior swimming champion of Chile when I was thirteen, and just sort of naturally did tennis and swimming, did both, until I moved to California where it seems that's almost all they do, so I was well equipped.

[ER:] You were well equipped to enter right into the life, huh? [Jinx Falkenburg: Yes.] Well how about you Tex, you were a newspaper man, was that when you were in Texas or when--did you come to New York to start there?

[Tex McCrary:] Mrs. Roosevelt, When I got out-out of Yale, uh I'd say that um in a low voice in this Harvard atmosphere, [ER laughing] when I got out of Yale I went back to Texas and tried to write short stories. I studied architecture at Yale, as you remember, in 1932--as you remember very well, people weren't building many things in 1932. [ER: No, they weren't building much.] I went back to Texas and tried to write short stories, with no success. I went to seven different newspapers in Texas and offered to work beginning at twenty-five dollars a week and winding up offering to work at nothing, and uh finally came back to New York and started as a copy boy on the *World Telegram*.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Tex uh where--where did you apply for jobs on the seven newspapers, did you ever apply to Amon Carter?

[Tex McCrary:] I didn't apply to Amon Carter, but I applied uh to the *Dallas Morning News*, I applied only to the papers that came to my home town, and as you know the state [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] --the big papers, cover um pretty well cover the state, but um Fort Worth covers the west and the other papers covered my part of the state. [Elliott Roosevelt: That's right.] I never thought of it but it might have been a good idea. [ER and Elliott Roosevelt laughing]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Yeah.

[Jinx Falkenburg:] Mrs. Roosevelt, I can tell you that when we went back to Calvert about three years ago to have our oldest boy christened ah we walked down the main street of this tiny town where Tex was born, and in front of the drug store, they told me that when Tex was about ten years old he used to write on the blackboard in front of the drug store his version of the day's news. So I think that's when he became a newspaper man. [Elliott Roosevelt laughs]

[ER, overlapping:] That's when he became a newspaper man, he started really young. Oh I think that's a nice story. Well now, where did you two meet? In New York, after coming from the ends of the Earth, or somewhere else?

[Tex McCrary:] I think Jinx better answer that one, what I have to say might be used against me [ER laughing].

[ER:] Alright--where did you meet?

[Jinx Falkenburg:] [overlapping ER] Well, we-we met oh June third, 1940, uh the first day of the rehearsals of an Al Jolson show called *Hold Onto Your Hats*, and it was my first day in New York alone ready for a career to work. And I met Tex that day, who was then on the *Daily Mirror*. And uh my mother still remembers my writing home to California and saying "today I met the nicest newspaper man I've ever met." Of course, I'd never met a newspaper man before either. [ER and Jinx Falkenburg laughter] (5:12)

[ER:] So that's why he was the nicest you've ever met!

[Speakers overlap here]

[Tex McCrary:] Otherwise she'd had run back.

[Jinx Falkenburg:] But he was nice and he impressed me very much--[ER:] And you were just starting off on-on-a career in New York, what had you been doing up to that time?

[Jinx Falkenburg:] I'm afraid I'd just been uh making Spanish movies for Latin America in Hollywood and playing a great deal of tennis, I'd not really worked seriously.

[ER:] Well how did you--how did you come to decide to go to work?

[Jinx Falkenburg:] Well uh let's see, I uh became the Rheingold Girl, you know [ER: Oh yes.] the girl on posters, and Al Jolson saw that poster and said "send that girl, I'd like her in the show," so uh I came east and went into the show and as I said that's the day I met Tex. But uh we went to Rockefeller Center for a lemonade that night, after rehearsal, you see, after a slight interview which was work, and he advised me to be very careful in New York, it was a big city and it was a dangerous city, and uh he would sort of look after me, which is what he did for about three years [Tex McCrary laughing].

[Tex McCrary:] I felt that she had to be looked after, Mrs. Roosevelt, because I was sitting there waiting for her to show up, she was late the first time we had date, she's been late ever since. [Elliott Roosevelt and ER laughing] I was sitting there waiting for her to show up, and she came in, this was in June, she had on a brilliant red light thin wool coat the way you can only wear and get away with in California, and she was swinging a white carnation on the end of a long stem, she walked down the steps, and she said "you know, I've heard that New York was an unfriendly town, and I think that's wrong, because as I was walking down Fifth Avenue and five or six men stopped in their cars and offered to take me where I was going, and don't you think that was friendly?"

[Tex McCrary, ER, and Elliott Roosevelt laughing]

[Tex McCrary and ER overlap here]

[Tex McCrary:] I figured-I figured she needed a body guard.

[ER:] Oh, that was a nice--I think she needed a bodyguard, I think you were right. To start out to be a bodyguard at once. Well then what happened to you?

[Jinx Falkenburg:] Well uh, I was all for marrying Tex right then and there, I was about twenty-one I think, Tex-- let's see this is about ten years later. That's my one--I'm so sorry about that because we could have gotten married when I was twenty-one, and instead we waited until I was twenty-six. Tex waited, I think the war had something to do with that. So it was really about five years later that we got married.

[ER:] Well now what happened to you both, did you go off in the war and? What happened?

[Jinx Falkenburg:] Oh well Tex certainly did go off in the war, I saw him uh the last time before he went overseas in Miami, when he was with Officers Training, OTS, [Officer Training School] and I'd just returned from the Canal Zone on uh, the first USO [United Service Organizations] tour where I'd been [ER: You went on USO tours?]. Yes that was in September of 1942, and um I got back to see Tex graduate, had to go back to Hollywood and make a movie. And he said "don't worry, I'll see you in two weeks." Well, two years and nine months later we met in Cairo. It was a long two weeks!

[ER:] Good heavens--in Cairo! What were you doing in Cairo, USO again?

[Jinx Falkenburg:] I was coming home from China, yes. And uh [ER: Where you've been for USO?] Yes, also where I'd been to for CBI [China Burma India Theatre] for four months, and in Burma I got a wire signed [Lt. Gen. George E.] Stratemeyer and it said "ok for you to meet McCrary in Cairo December eighth." The best wire I've ever- ever had. [Elliott Roosevelt: Ah, that's wonderful.]

[Tex McCrary:] And the way I found out that she was going to be in Cairo was that a nurse that I'd met in Russia found herself in the same cot with Jinx in Cairo and told Jinx where I was, and then that nurse came on to Italy and told me how to get in touch with Jinx. And so I have a feeling that somewhere a plan was written before we were born, that our paths would keep crossing until they, you know, went down the road together like the end of a Charlie Chaplin movie.

[ER:] Well that's--that really was er kind of a wonderful story, I think, that you should have crossed and re-crossed like that.

[Jinx Falkenburg:] It was a flight nurse, Mrs. Roosevelt, who was returning from Russia to Italy, and you see, I was then on my way over to China [ER: Oh yes, oh yes.] and that was the night in Cairo that we met in a joining cot and I was sitting there by candle light putting up my hair, and she said, "I think I've heard about you from Tex McCrary," and that led to the discussion and I said "Please call him up when you get to Italy tomorrow," and she did and so three months later we met in Cairo. [ER: Oh, I think that is--oh, I--]

[Tex McCrary:] [overlapping with ER] Wasn't it--wasn't it lucky that the flight nurse said that I talked about Jinx instead of something else? [Tex McCrary and ER laugh]

[ER:] Well I think it was a really a very--a very nice story. I'll tell you one in return, I was in-in- uh Australia and uh seeing nurses who were back from the islands on--in a rest house there, and-and suddenly one little nurse-- I'd asked a number of questions to get them started talking, and--one little nurse looked up and said, "You know I've seen you before," and I said "Have you, where?" "Why, in Syracuse in the hospital. I was taking care of Leo Casey, who happened to be a New York state trooper who got hurt." [ER laughs] So you see, you go to the ends of the Earth, you hear about people who you knew at home [ER laughs].

[Tex McCrary:] I think you can Jinx both known that this is a very small world, because I don't know any two dames, if you'll pardon the expression, who travel more than you two. [Elliott Roosevelt and Tex McCrary laughing]

[ER:] Well it's a small world, that's true. Well, now uh you must--you both worked hard during the war, now tell me you're still working hard, why do you do it?

[Jinx Falkenburg:] Well, I think I could answer that one very well, by saying I do exactly what Tex likes, I'm under his complete command [Tex McCrary: Mhm]. And uh if I ever write the story of my life it will be called "I Married a Working Man," and Tex is only happy if he's working and has much more to do than he can possibly do, and so I think that's why I do it.

[ER:] Well, how do you find time for your two very lovely children, Patty and Kevin?

[Jinx Falkenburg:] Well, I don't know that parents will approve of this, but I have them on a rather strange schedule, they go to bed late and they wake up late and very often we take them with us places at night, or at least I do, and uh we take them um oh--a great many place that I don't think they would ordinarily go to if-if we weren't busy and do sort of strange and exciting and interesting things.

[ER:] You know children are adaptable, but now I think we have to stop a minute and let our sponsors have a word.

(Break 11:30-11:37)

[ER:] Well Jinx, we were talking about the children and I'm interested because I think you're doing just what people should do with their children. And I'd like to know whether you're going to teach them to speak Spanish as well as you do?

[Jinx Falkenburg:] Oh I-I am, I'm doing my very best, and Patty, our four-year-old, already can ,uh say-- he knows what cabeza, he knows that that's uh head, and that nariz is nose, and ojo is eye and--I talk to him in Spanish as much as I can, and I think he understands pretty well, I find that it's been such a great help to me to be able to speak Spanish. [Jinx Falkenburg and ER overlap] It's- it's been wonderful.

[ER:] Well, he may not think so much of it now, but oh he'll be grateful when he grows up, so I hope you really do make him learn because now's the time. They can't reason now but they just soak up anything that comes through the eyes or through the ears, [ER laughing] and so I hope you really will teach him, but, um-- I'm going to ask you something very personal now: everyone who's in the public eye has seen criticism of their work, are you--do you mind it, are you sensitive to it?

[Jinx Falkenburg:] Oh, I mind it terribly, that is my weakest spot. I uh well I think Tex could explain that if anyone says anything critical or writes anything critical I get terribly upset about it, very hurt, and think about it, brood about it, and uh almost decide then and there that I will never speak on the radio again, I'll never do anything again, I'll just crawl up and go away. And uh especially criticism about the children, having them on the radio or on children, which we've done it a couple of times, and um--I've had letters saying "why do you exploit your children like that?" And I get so depressed--one letter, there may be a hundred that say "it's wonderful and I think you should do it," but if one comes saying you shouldn't I think that's the only one that counts, and I-I-I hate it.

[ER:] Well, let-let a very old lady give you some advice,[ER laughs] it's good to-to pay attention, particularly when the criticism is constructive, and can help you to do something better, do you see. But the rest of the time forget it because you never can please everybody and the only person that's really essential to live with is yourself and the people you love. So, if you don't get criticism from the people you love, and you feel all right, don't worry about it.

[Jinx Falkenburg:] What about some criticism I had just the other day? A-A critic said that during something I asked some pretty silly questions. That's not even a bad enough criticism to worry about, and yet it's still upsetting.

[ER:] Don't worry about that. [Jinx Falkenburg: No?] No, don't worry about it! [Elliott Roosevelt laughs]

[Tex McCrary:] Thank you very much for telling her what I try to tell her, she won't believe it from me.

[ER:] Oh, well I don't know that she'll believe it from me, but it might make life a lot easier for her [ER laughs].

[Tex McCrary:] Well, she stopped talking when you told her, that's a good indication that it sank in. [Elliott Roosevelt and Tex McCrary laugh]

[ER:] Well now that you've tried New York for five years after having made pictures in Hollywood, would you rather move back there and do your television show from there, or do you find New York is a more satisfactory city in which to live, and work, and raise your family?

[Jinx Falkenburg:] Oh, I'm all for New York, I love it. And um I'd never like to love right in the city--we live outside of the city, but I love to work in the city, I love to be near it, and I love all the things that go on in New York. I think um things happen here in one day that happen about once a year in California. At least they did when I was out there, and I like the excitement of the city.

[ER:] I love New York because I think it's a stimulating place to be, but now, I think we ought to get back to your husband.

[Jinx Falkenburg:] So do I [ER laughs].

[ER:] Tex, how do you feel about New York?

[Tex McCrary:] Well, I-I feel that New York is-is almost the last frontier city in America, because the only frontiers left are ideas and to New York come all the best ideas, and they come here first and they receive their severest test. I still think although Wall Street's influence has moved to Washington um although um the movies have left New York for Hollywood, I still think that more thought, the pattern of more thought is set in New York City, than in any other city in the world in history, especially now that that United Nations is here. Another thing that I feel so strongly about New York is that it doesn't belong to New Yorkers, it belongs to the world. I know we have a thing we put on every Sunday--every summer, called "The Billion Dollar Glee Club," where we have the presidents, the chief executive officers of all the large corporations, get together and sing. You know, they let-let what hair they have left down, and each time we do that we find that anywhere from seventy-five to eighty-five percent of the men who run the great corporations of New York City are not New Yorkers, they were born in Kansas or Podunk or some other place, you know so that when you speak of New York as an alien city, which so many Americans do, I don't agree with it at all--it's-- uh it's the last American frontier city.

[ER:] Of course there are very few people really eh--who were born in New York, [ER and TexMcCrary overlap here] they almost all come from other places [ER laughs].

[Tex McCrary:] Well, the New Yorkers --New Yorkers run Texas now, which is all right.

[ER:] I was born in New York, [ER, Tex McCrary, and Elliott Roosevelt overlap here] and I always can come back to it.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Me too.

[Tex McCrary:] couple of the last natives. [ER and Elliott Roosevelt laughing]

[ER:] Well, you've been in the newspaper business and the news reels, and radio, and television--which medium have you the most freedom for your ideas?

[Tex McCrary:] Well, that's a very tough question, you know we say that uh we say that we get away with a lot on radio because we think that all the executives are still asleep at NBC, but we've found lately that some of them listen in their cars, and actually we don't try to get away with anything on radio. Uh, for a long time, I was the editorial chief of Mr. Hearst's largest newspaper, always without a contract. We had a very simple understanding in the *Daily Mirror*. Uh there were a lot of things that I wanted to say that I was not permitted to say, but I was never made to say anything I didn't believe. Which I think was a pretty fair deal. [ER: Yes, that's a fair deal.] And eh I think that's exactly our situation on WNBC now. We are not made to say anything we don't believe, some of the things we'd like to say we can't say on WNBC. Well, uh—

[ER:] There are a lot of us who can't say all the things we'd like to say, not only on WNBC [ER laughs].

[Tex McCrary:] Something your husband once said, I've always remembered, he said: "the most important speeches a man can make are the speeches he makes to one person at a time." So you don't need- you don't need a tremendous audience, you don't need radio, the only thing you need to do is to remember uh basic principles and not compromise too many of them.

[ER:] Have an objective, [Tex McCrary: Mhm.] stick to it. [Tex McCrary: Mhm.] Do you ever have any problems with your guests not showing up or saying something you didn't expect on your show?

[Tex McCrary:] [Tex McCrary chuckles] Well um we don't have as many as we used to because we've learned uh we've learned to anticipate problems, but the only guest who actually never showed up was a man who got lost in the bowels of NBC. [ER: Oh!] And he was the one-the one man that you would not expect to get lost, because all during the war, he was the chief of the Dutch Underground. [Elliott Roosevelt and ER laughing] He was staying in--he was staying in the Waldorf, and we were doing the show live from the studio each morning at 8:30, and uh staying at the Waldorf, all he had to do was to walk five blocks to the studio. He'd left in plenty of time, we went on the air, and he hadn't shown up, so we started ad-libbing around, and suddenly he walked in--about five minutes to go. And rather than getting flustered, Jinx just said "where have you been," and uh and he sat down and started to explain. And the description of a man being lost in NBC was like that famous joke of the Western Union boy who went into the Pentagon and came out a colonel, you know? [ER laughs] But he-he said that he finally wandered into a studio, somebody grabbed him, pushed him in front of a microphone, handed him a script, and pointed a finger at him. They thought he was a missing actor. [ER and Elliott Roosevelt laughing] He's the only that one we ever--that we ever really had any trouble with saying-not-not showing up.

[ER:] Well, that shows that people are very time conscious [Tex McCrary: Yeah, I guess] when they uh have the radio on their mind. And I was once late on a radio show just after I got back from abroad in forty-eight, for my daughter. Uh and she uh--all I could say when I arrived was that I'd forgotten what New York traffic was like [ER laughs].

[Tex McCrary:] That's a perfectly acceptable alibi. [Everyone laughs]

[ER:] Well, now I'd like to ask one more question, have you ever undertaken any particular crusade or campaign on your program?

[Tex McCrary:] Well, we had one continuing campaign, and that's one that I think Elliott will understand very well. Um one campaign that we believed in for a long, long time and that is--first, it was for an independent Air Force, and then it was for a proper appreciation of the use of airpower, and uh that campaign is going to have to be renewed in the new Congress, because unfortunately, the role of air power in Korea has not been fully appreciated. I think we appreciated it on this program because forty-five days before the collapse in Korea, because of something General George Kenny told me, we went on the air that morning and said "by October fifteenth, the reds will collapse in Korea." We said it every morning thereafter, until they did collapse. And the only way we knew and the reason we'd believe it was that we felt that the day on which the Air Force--working with the Naval Air Force, and the Marine Air Force, achieved six hundred air sorties over the enemy, we knew that nothing could live or move on the enemy's side of the line for another forty-five days. And it's only unfortunate that--that--that fact was not fully appreciated uh in areas of command because if it had, twenty-four thousand casualties might have been avoided, and the Inchon Landings could have made--been made--uh you know, they could have started the war in Korea with the Inchon Landings instead of being pushed backed to Pusan. But that is a fight that's going to have to go on. And uh I know that the Air Force looks upon you and Elliott as--as allies in that fight to appreciate the proper role of the only weapon in which we are superior to the enemy.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well Tex, in view of your answer to that last question, I'd like to pose just a few more questions, if I may, in the last closing minutes, but before I do, I'd like to explain that I know something of a little publicized part of Tex's career and that is his wartime service in the second World War in the Air Force. Tex served on the staff of General Ira Eaker as his photographic officer. And in that capacity he flew many missions with the Eighth Air Force bombers. General Eaker had the job of proving the value of daytime bombardment, which the heads of the RAF said was an impossible of accomplishment. In addition to the heads of the RAF many of our own military leaders felt that the military value of strategic bombing was limited. Ira Eaker proved them wrong, and Tex McCrary provided the photographic proof to back up General Eaker's statistics. Tex, you and the combat photographers who came under your command provided this photographic proof, and also provided much combat film, which was of tremendous use to our training command back in the United States. But I believe that also much of the film, which you were responsible for obtaining, has been used in some of the great movies epics which have been made uh about the boys who flew combat during the war. Do you remember any of the pictures which used this film?

[Tex McCrary:] Well Elliott, um the first picture that used that film was *The Memphis Belle*. And uh about that picture, just one thing that I'd like to say, although I was in command of the combat units in the Eighth Air Force, the man who was in immediate command of that particular unit that shot most of the film was Willie [William] Wyler. Willie Wyler, who was born in Germany um he was a man then, I suppose, certainly past forty, he had two children and a wife of whom he was terribly fond, and yet he went on missions himself, past forty, to get that film. And further than that uh Willie was a Jew. And at that time um people were a little uneasy about what would happen if a Jew was shot down over Germany--over Nazi Germany. To me the supreme test of courage is when a man does what he doesn't have to do, because he thinks he should do it. And Willy did that. And the *Memphis Belle* was--was largely uh his doing. Other film that was shot later by--by men in--in our units showed up here this last year in a great movie: *Twelve O'Clock High*. A lot of the combat film was shot by those kids [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] eh--in those combat units. Uh but primarily uh that film was turned over to intelligence, uh a lot of the film which never got into news reels or anything else uh was used to develop the tactics by which guns that used to be in the tail of a B-17 were put in the nose of a B-17, and then the chin turret. And uh--and the guys who were shooting the film were a lot more proud of the training use that was made of that film than the stuff that got to Hollywood.

[Elliott Roosevelt overlaps]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] That's right. But of course, our audience knows about pictures like *Twelve 'O'Clock High* and the *Memphis Belle* and I think they're always interested to know how those pictures actually came into being [overlap begins here]

[Tex McCrary:] A lot of them were not fakes [Elliott Roosevelt: They weren't.] and a lot of kids died to be sure they weren't fakes.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] That's right. Now, I also seem to remember that you volunteered for paratroop duty in southern France, do you mind telling us about that?

[Tex McCrary:] Well um I think um-- I think the business of volunteering for paratroop duty is um--uh, let's put it this way--the reason I joined the paratroop was because I was scared of flying in an airplane and I wanted to learn how to get out of one. And uh I did, and I actually found out that it was exciting to the point of intoxication to violate that one fundamental instinct of-of human preservation to look down--which you're not supposed to do and--uh and-and to jump. You know, just-just to jump. That to me was the supreme test of confidence in people you didn't even know. The people who packed that parachute, the people who made that parachute. Uh you're training uh the-the intelligence officers who mapped the area in which you were to jump. When kids went in--and incidentally, I trained with the unit from Israel--um uh when kids went in and made a night jump, um they had to believe that everybody else had done their job. And thank goodness, I-I think--I-I think that there were very few jump casualties, there were very few failures, far fewer failures in-in--at-at that stage of combat than in anywhere else in the war.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Tex, that jump was made uh at the time of the invasion of-of southern France, was it not? [overlap of Elliott Roosevelt and Tex McCrary] In France so far, ground troops coming ashore.

[Tex McCrary:] Yes, after the--uh I went in there, then I went in with the British in-into Greece later.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Mhm, now later in the war when you headed Public Relations for our B-29 outfits in the Pacific, you were one of the first people to go into Hiroshima after the atom bomb fell there. I believe you took a group of correspondents in. Can you describe something of that experience?

[Tex McCrary:] Well Elliott, that was a um- um that was a peculiar operation because um I knew what was going to happen and nobody else did. I married Jinx on June tenth, she took off for Italy three or four days later, and I headed for Japan, my orders were changed at that last minute, fortunately to go to Japan by way of Europe--or rather to go to the Pacific by way of Europe--I couldn't tell her what it was all about, I couldn't--[cut off]

(Break 29:25-29:37)

[Repeat of earlier conversation recording begins – 29:37-31:50]

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[Tex McCrary:] Yes, after the--uh I went in there, then I went in with the British in-into Greece later.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Mhm, now later in the war when you headed Public Relations for our B29 outfits in the Pacific, you were one of the first people to go into Hiroshima after the atom bomb fell there. I believe you took a group of correspondents in. Can you describe something of that experience?

[Tex McCrary:] Well Elliott, it was a very special group of correspondents. The other correspondents out there called them the 'Gangster Journalists' because we ran off with all the best stories first. But, ah they were correspondents assembled for the specific job of covering the atom bomb, even though they didn't know what they were being taken out there to cover. I hauled them back from all around the world; they were the best, most competent war correspondents. We gave them a quick training course in Eglin Field in Florida, and we took them to Europe and showed them what traditional bombing could do, then we took them to Chungking and waited for the bomb to fall on Hiroshima. Then we went to Guam, and Okinawa, and flew on in. Um we were forbidden for various reasons to go into Hiroshima until after the signing of the peace on eh the battleship Missouri. But also, for various reasons, we chose to disobey those orders and we went into Hiroshima while the Japs were still kicking and screaming and dying in the streets. Um the purpose of indoctrinating these war correspondents--getting experienced ones--was that we wanted the American people to understand that the atom bombing of Hiroshima was absolutely necessary to save the lives of at least a hundred thousand American kids on the beaches, had been forced to invade Japan in the way that other islands had been invaded and conquered in the Pacific. We went into Hiroshima--and I think I can just tell you one thing that will sum up what we saw. Bernie Hoffman, photographer from Life magazine, who had covered Joseph Stilwell's retreat, who had seen some of the worst of the war through his camera, went in loaded with film, loaded with cameras. We walked in, he looked around, he sent a cable back to his editors of *Life* and said there was nothing left to take a picture of, "Don't wait for my pictures." That's the reason *Life* magazine, holding pages for the pictures of Hiroshima, had an artist make drawings instead. Because what Bernie said was true. There was nothing left to take pictures of. We searched the rubble for little things, we found uh freaks. The way you find in the wake of a hurricane, uh you would find flowers growing under the stump of a charred tree, you would find children dying of atomic burns, but the burns had taken on the pattern of their underwear, you know, the underwear had-ha-had shielded them from this intense heat, but their-their flesh was gone at the-the areas where they were exposed. Eh, you would find seared areas of earth, and you could see the shadows of people, or shadows of trees, cast across the ground uh where the protection had-had, uh--of the tree, or whatever object was standing there, had protected the earth from-from the blast. Right at point of impact in Hiroshima, the oddest freak was that we found safes--steel safes-- with the doors forced in by concussion, and yet there was a radio aerial standing untouched, untwisted, with all the paint burned off, right at point of impact. Just a freak, you know. But um the other thing that we noticed was--that we kept asking these questions of the survivors, "How did you feel, " when, you know uh ""when-when this happened? " Remember the people of Japan had been shielded from the fact that they were losing the war. Uh and we always uh kept pushing the questions, and we said: "Did you know when the atom bomb fell that you were beaten?" Every one of them said, "We only stopped fighting because the emperor told us to quit." They didn't think they were beaten. The other thing was that there was absolutely no bitterness, no resentment anywhere. We were warned by General MacArthur's headquarters that we would be torn apart if we went into this-this town. There was no resentment anywhere. And another very

interesting thing--the Japanese children who survived, many of them uh came out after they found that Americans had come into the--into the city, with pictures of President Roosevelt and American flags made in Japan. [Elliott Roosevelt: Oh, my goodness.] Now, those children were innocent, I don't know who told them to soften us up, by making us feel at home, but in the rubble they set up American flags and pictures of the president to-to uh you know, soften us up. [Elliott Roosevelt: Soften us up.] Yeah, but no resentment.

[ER:] That's an extraordinary story.

[Tex McCrary:] There was no bitterness, we had done it as you probably know, the people of Hiroshima, Kyoto, and Nagasaki began to wonder toward the end why their cities had not been touched by bombs. Uh they began to think that the gods were especially kind to them, they weren't touched, they were being saved as test tubes for this weapon.

[ER:] [ER sighs] It all seems perfectly horrible though to me, even today, I mean, it's uh--I-I don't know why from that we didn't learn a lesson which really turned the hearts of all men against war. And we don't seem to have.

[Tex McCrary:] No, no we don't. We don't. Unfortunately the people who should have seen Hiroshima never got a look at it. Um I went back to Hiroshima with the Russian mission and went through Hiroshima with the Russians who took notes--clinical notes, I'm sure. And I'm sure the Russian people have no conception of what atomic warfare means. I'm afraid we don't either.

[ER:] Well I'm afraid-I'm afraid of that very same thing, that there isn't enough knowledge among the peoples of the world. But now I have to end this most interesting interview and I want to thank you both, Tex and Jinx for coming and being with us today.

[Jinx Falkenburg:] Thank you very much, I've loved listening to Tex and you and Elliott talk. And also it's been such fun to have been asked questions for a change.

[Tex McCrary:] Thank you both very much, and Elliott, I hope you and your mother stick with the Air Force, we'll be needing you this winter.

(38:45)

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