

## THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT PROGRAM

January 15, 1951

Description: In this segment, ER reads a letter from a listener regarding older women returning to work.

Participants: Eleanor Roosevelt, Elliott Roosevelt

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(Pause between 0:00-0:07)

[ER:] I have received a very good letter full of good ideas from Mrs. Helen Paterno of Bellerose, New York, which I would like to read to you:

"Dear Mrs. Roosevelt: I listened to your discussion today regarding older women going back to work. It is true that large organizations seek youthful employees, especially in clerical lines. However, I know from personal experience, that smaller concerns who need help realize the older woman is more reliable and they seem to favor them. Recently, I worked in a fundraising campaign and needed help urgently. A number of older workers were found through friends and did an excellent job. Our younger workers, in that instance, happened to be very inefficient. All of these older women had worked in offices and some were home for ten years but responded at typewriters and with shorthand notes quite as if there had been no break in employment. In addition to cashing in on hobbies, which is a fine suggestion, I think women in the home who never worked have a wonderful asset: housework. In the case of some friends of mine who felt the urge to return to work, they found work in restaurants, minding groups of children for working mothers, light factory work, and cashiering in stores and theatres. A very old but robust woman in her seventies took a job as matron in a theatre and hospitals simply cry for the services of matronly women, to assist with food and in the office. These may not sound like glamorous jobs, but any sort of work which fills the hours and is gainful should interest an ambitious woman. I also recall a friend of mine, just a housewife, who was left to care for her small son and stepdaughter. She demonstrated food in stores and shows and now works in a school kitchen. Her only asset was her ability to cook simple things and her neat appearance. Incidentally, her job is finished at 2pm and she's free to come home and take care of the home. The possibilities are really endless if one isn't discouraged too easily. Another friend of mine made application at an agency for part-time work, either office or otherwise, and was given very little encouragement. About two weeks after she had secured a fine part-time job through another source, she had two calls from the agency which had discouraged her. It is simply a matter of making a start and keeping after it. Your programs are very interesting and I find myself listening with great attention. Yours truly, Helen Paterno." (3:12) That should give some of my listeners who are anxious to work outside the home some good ideas.

(Break 3:19 – 3:35 with some background noise and voices)

[ER:] Good afternoon, this is Eleanor Roosevelt. My son Elliott and I have a most charming guest to introduce to you, after we try to answer a question written in by one of our listeners.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Thank you, Mother. Today, Mother's guest is a very special one, beloved by us all: Mary Margaret McBride. Miss McBride holds a unique position in American--in the American household. No one enjoys greater affection and respect. Before Mother and Miss McBride's recorded visit, which takes place in Mother's living room at the Park Sheraton Hotel here in New York, I want to bring Mother's attention to a letter just received from a Mrs. Sylvia Berkowitz of Brooklyn. Her letter

touches upon a subject that is close to many Americans today. But before we get underway, a word from Ben Grauer, who will speak for the people who make this program possible.

(Pause from 4:33-4:46)

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