

## THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT PROGRAM

October 11, 1950

Description: In this segment of her inaugural episode, ER and Dr. Ralph Bunche discuss his Nobel Peace Prize and ways to solve international conflicts.

Participants: ER, Elliott Roosevelt, Ralph Bunche

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[Elliot Roosevelt:] And now Mother has a very great gentleman to bring to you on this first program.

[ER:] My final distinguished guest this evening is a man well known to everyone. The top ranking director of the United Nations Department of Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self Governing Territories. And he has won world acclaim as a peace maker. It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you Dr. Ralph Bunche.

[Ralph Bunche:] Thank you, Mrs. Roosevelt, and good afternoon to everyone.

[ER:] First, Dr. Bunche, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on being the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize. To my mind, no more fitting award could have been made and you certainly deserve it. Perhaps, Dr. Bunche, before we begin our discussion you would tell our listeners just a little bit about the Nobel Peace Prize, what it means to you. (1:18)

[Ralph Bunche:] Well, quite frankly, Mrs. Roosevelt, from a purely personal viewpoint, I was completely overwhelmed by the announcement from Oslo that I had been selected as the recipient of this great and historic Peace Prize. It makes me very happy of course, but not so happy as to permit me to lose sight of the sober implications of the prize in the hazardous times in which we now live. The Nobel Prize is a peace prize, but we are living in an anxious period in which it's exceedingly difficult to maintain even a most insecure peace. Indeed, the prize was awarded to me as a result of my work for the United Nations in connection with a bitter, most unfortunate, and utterly needless war in Palestine. That war, as you know, was stopped by the United Nations. But it was not stopped before very great destruction and loss of life had occurred. Before deep wounds had been inflicted on the relations between the Arab and Jewish people of the Near East. Wounds, which in fact, remain unhealed and before the peace of the world was gravely threatened. Indeed, in the determined effort of the United Nations to stop that war, Count Bernadotte, a great internationalist and humanitarian, and ten other servants of the United Nations in Palestine gave their lives. The Nobel Award is a tribute to them also and as well to the several hundred other international civil servants and military observers who formed the unarmed United Nations Peace Army in Palestine. But perhaps the greatest significance of the prize is that, in this particular instance especially, it had to do with the peaceful settlement of a dangerous international dispute. The Palestine mediation effort has been encouraging to a war-weary world only because it has demonstrated that it is possible for bitter enemies locked in violent conflict to be induced by international intervention to renounce force for reason and negotiation in the settlement of their dispute. The Arab states in Israel also share in this award, for their willingness to embark on the peaceful road of negotiation and for their willingness to negotiate seriously and sincerely.

[ER:] That is a very interesting way to look at your own achievement and draw everybody else into it, Dr. Bunche. From your many peace making experiences in different parts of the world including your service as mediator for Palestine, what, Dr. Bunche, is your general opinion as to the outlook for the

future of the world. Do you think people all over the world are aware of the tremendous efforts that are being made to bring about peace so that they may, in their own way, assist in its accomplishment? (4:50)

[Ralph Bunche:] I could only wish that they were much more aware than they are, Mrs. Roosevelt, because world conditions present a grim picture. Bad human relations are almost universal. Dangerous suspicions, fears, and bigotries characterize the relations among peoples. Human misery is surpassed only by human anxiety for the future in this atomic age. Local wars break out with disturbing regularity and there are many potentially explosive situations in the world. The United Nations is constantly hard pressed to keep the peace or restore it when it has been broken. The most recent and most dangerous episode of this kind is found in Korea. Where for the first time the United Nations, and entirely justifiable, has itself had to resort to force in order to protect a peaceful people against violent aggression and to preserve the larger peace. But even so, I am reasonably optimistic about the future of the world. And this optimism of mine, Mrs. Roosevelt, is based on a number of considerations. First of all, the United Nations grows stronger each day. It has met its greatest test in Korea with colors flying. Even the most dyed in the wool cynic cannot but be impressed by the prompt courage of the United Nations in the face of the Korean challenge. I believe that despite all the difficulties and crises, which inevitably lie ahead, the United Nations can and will succeed in its mission of world peace. Secondly, I have an abiding faith in the good reason, the good sense, and the essential goodness of people. People may be misguided and often are and victimized by dangerous emotions but there is in them a great reservoir of good will, which the United Nations and UNESCO are slowly learning how to tap. And thirdly, the instincts of people everywhere, as I see it, whatever the immediate policies of some governments may be, are essentially peaceful. Universally, I believe that people long for peace and all the more so as they slowly come to realize, fully, the dreadful implications of atomic war. (7:29)

[ER:] What do you, Dr. Bunche, think is the best course toward world peace?

[Ralph Bunche:] Well, seems to me that there is really but one sure course to world peace. It must be made increasingly and abundantly clear to all would-be aggressors, to any who might be tempted to break the peace to further their selfish ends, that the civilized world will not tolerate such crimes. The forces of peace must be mobilized to the point of invincibility. In this regard the spontaneous support of an overwhelming number of the members of the United Nations for the United Nations Peace Action in Korea has been extremely encouraging. The future may well demonstrate that the Korean intervention will have been a decisive object lesson in human history. If the nations of the world can once be convinced that aggressive wars cannot possibly be won, that international crime cannot pay off, then the road to peace becomes much clearer. For there are really no differences among nations and peoples which could not be worked out adequately and amicably by peaceful negotiation, all that is needed is a minimum of good will and good faith. (8:58)

[ER:] I'm very happy to hear you say that, Dr. Bunche, because that of course is the goal we must achieve. Thank you greatly for being with me this afternoon and I'm sure our listeners have enjoyed your interesting discussion. And now Elliott looks as though he had something to say.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] [Elliott Roosevelt Laughs] Yes I do, Mother. Dr. Bunche, uh we're more than happy that you could find time to record your views on the chances for world peace for future generations. But personally I'm proud you have participated on this first program of my mother's for two reasons: One, because it is her first one of this series, and also because we are celebrating her birthday today, so we're glad to have you at her birthday party.

[Ralph Bunche:] I'm especially glad to be here on this day. [Ralph Bunche laughs]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Thank you, sir.

(9:53)

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