

THE ELEANOR AND ANNA ROOSEVELT PROGRAM

November 19th, 1948 (air date)

Description: From Hollywood, Anna Roosevelt talks about the appointment of John Foster Dulles to Acting Chief Delegate of the United Nations. From Paris, ER interviews a French female journalist about the recent French elections. Anna Roosevelt argues that the best way to prevent communism is to combat poverty and prevent economic depressions.

Participants: ER, Anna Roosevelt, John Nelson, Geneviève Tabouis

(0:08)

[John Nelson:] From Paris and Hollywood, the American Broadcasting Company brings you Eleanor and Anna Roosevelt.

[Anna Roosevelt:] Good morning and thank you, John Nelson. Soon we'll hear from Mother and our guest Madame Geneviève Tabouis, France's famous woman journalist. First though, I'd like to talk about President Truman's appointment of John Foster Dulles as our acting chief delegate to the United Nations. Mr. uh Warner Austin has done a magnificent job as chief delegate, but his health is not of the best and he may resign. We're sorry to see him go, but the President would seem to have made a wise choice in appointing Mr. Dulles. In so doing, Mr. Truman has shown his continuing faith in our bipartisan foreign policy. Now, there may be aspects of our foreign policy you don't like, certainly we've made mistakes and will again. It's said that marriages are made in heaven, but foreign policy definitely is not. Bipartisanship, however, is one of the strongest points of our foreign policy. After all, whether we're Republicans, Democrats, or vegetarians we all have a stake in the peace, which by the way doesn't mean I'm trying to make a bad pun by mentioning vegetarians and steaks in the same breath. If Governor Dewey had been elected president, Mr. Dulles almost undoubtedly would have been our secretary of state. Dulles is a big man with a heavy unsmiling but friendly face, keen somber bespectacled eyes, and a distinguished background as the Republican Party's expert in the field of foreign policy. He's made enemies in the extreme American left wing and Soviet leaders term him a warmonger, but truthfully it's hard to see how the mild and conservative Mr. Dulles can be called by such a name. It's hard too, to quarrel with the statement which Dulles says represents the essence of his philosophy. "There's only one way," he says "to solve the problems of a troubled world, that way is to apply the principles of the great religions." His father was a well-known Presbyterian minister in Watertown, New York. So as a boy, John Dulles got plenty of religious training, enough so that it practically ran out of his ears. But his grandfather, John Watson Foster, was secretary of state under President Benjamin Harrison and young John is said to have much preferred grandad's reminiscences to so much church and Sunday schooling. But somewhere along the way, Dulles says he's discovered that diplomacy alone will not solve the world's problems. Good luck, Mr. Dulles. And now, for other word of people in Paris, to my mother and our guest the brilliant French journalist, Madame Geneviève Tabouis, transcribed earlier by shortwave radio telephone.(2:55)

[ER:] Thank you, Anna. I know there is tremendous interest in America today on what is going on in France, particularly I think because of the French mine strike and the recent French election. So, it is a great pleasure to have as our guest today a noted French woman journalist, who knows her native land perhaps as well as anyone in the world. She is Madame Tabouis, who is not only a noted French newspaper woman, but also an old and dear friend of mine. Madame Tabouis it's very kind of you to be

here today. I noticed that General [Charles] de Gaulle scored quite an impressive victory in the recent French election. What do you think is the explanation of his victory?

[Geneviève Tabouis:] Well Mrs. Roosevelt, first I thank you ever so much for all of what you said. Despite de Gaulle's success in the November 7 senatorial election, Gaulle's succession to power is not certain. Ninety to one hundred senators elected by de Gaulle are not numerous enough to change the balance in parliament. This parliamentary balance is, on the contrary, heightened by the increase in middle of the road elements. If the head of the government, Monsieur [Henri] Queuille and his Minister of the Interior Monsieur [Jules] Moch succeed in reestablishing domestic order in raising the level of life and lowering prices, then Gaulle's chances will dwindle. For Gaulle is an authoritarian [unclear term] and um and alarmed the French who are more individualist than ever. (4:36)

[ER:] Well, I wonder what you think uh or rather I wonder whether you noticed that in the same election Communists lost a good many seats. Now, um at home we have rather a funny situation. Uh Mr. John L. Lewis, uh who is the mine leader in our country, has uh been attacking our government because they did not use um influence on the French government to improve the miner's lot. But with the laws that the French communists seek, I am beginning to wonder two things. How strong do you think the communists are in France now, Madame Tabouis? And do you think the communists were responsible for the French mine strike? That would put Mr. Lewis in a little peculiar position because while he is for the miners he certainly is not for the communist [laugh], so I now ask you that question.

[Geneviève Tabouis:] Well Mrs. Roosevelt, although there are still one hundred and eighty-three communist members in the Chamber of Deputies who were voted in at the last elections by five million French men who voted the communist ticket, incidentally the party claims only one million in card members, still these imposing figures do not tell the real story about communism in France. The greater part of the five million who voted the communist ticket did so to register their dissatisfaction with the government incapable of capitalizing prices and raising the level of life. Moreover, among the million [unclear term] communist, many voted for the party because they were acting under pressure that no one can deny. Others voted communist because they were a [unclear term]. With this fact in mind it is easy to understand why, in spite of the 125 million francs that the Kremlin is spending daily to support the coal strike and to intend to stir up a general strike, in spite of this expenditure the price are petering up. Thus the Common Forms plan which seeks to keep up social education till the government is willing to accept the communist in the cabinet has failed. All the possible municipal and parliamentary elections and particularly the senatorial elections of last November 7 showed that the communist were losing ground. Thus while the communist at eighty-two members in the senate before November, they have now only sixteen. And it is probable that the next election for the Chamber of Deputies will confirm communisms decline in France. (7:43)

[ER:] That's, from our point of view, satisfactory. Now I wonder, I'm sure this question could be asked to any country in the world, but I would like to know how the--whether the French people um are thinking about and how they feel about the dangers of a new war soon.

[Geneviève Tabouis:] No one in France believed wars possible before eighteen months or two years, but the majority of my fellow countrymen don't believe it will come at all. They believe that Stalin, like Hitler, is seeking to win a war without fighting it. What really alarms the French, is the materialism and the present push of the conform wall, that is to say Moscow's insidious propaganda, which in its latest phase is working to set up numerous organizations, societies [unclear term] and so on in the midst of non-communist communities. Just for example, the new organization Combattants de la Liberté or Fighters for Liberty among the men of the resistance and the Christian progressives among Catholic circles are centers of very questionable propaganda. However, the vast majority of my fellow countrymen are convinced they will win this war being waged by the Cominform thanks to the application of the Marshall Plan which they owe to generous America. (9:15)

[ER:] Thank you very much Madame Tabouis for the interesting interview on the situation in France. Now, back to my daughter, Anna, in Hollywood.

[Anna Roosevelt:] Thanks Mother. And Madame Tabouis, we found your discussion most enlightening. It's important to know such things as Madame Tabouis indicates, for instance that the de Gaulle to power movement can result in a regime as totalitarian on the right as communism is on the left. One extreme is apt to lead to an opposite extreme. As Madame Tabouis says high prices and low standards of living are the chief reasons for French unrest. In one of her columns, Mother mentions a striking and pathetic example of this. She visited the home of a lovely and cultured French lady, now in her declining years. As a student visiting Paris, Mother had lived in this lady's home, and now Mother says she was grieved to find the French woman barely able to keep body and soul together on what used to be a perfectly adequate income. The woman's gratitude, when asked to give my son Buzz a few French lessons, Mother said was extremely touching.

When we think about it, we know that communism flourishes wherever there's deep poverty and an injustice, that the best and unbeatable way to combat communism is with prosperity and true democracy. California's Congresswoman Helen Gahagan Douglas said these things in her own way at a radio news club luncheon in Hollywood yesterday. The charming and dynamic representative claimed that "the best victory communism could have would be an economic setback in this country." For this reason as well as others, she spoke of the urgent necessity of preventing such a depression. I especially liked something Mrs. Douglas said about labor, about the laboring men and women, who she said "form the hard core of our society." It was that labor has always had a position of dignity and respect in this country; that it has never known in any other and most of us are laboring men and women in one way or another. I noticed that the A-AF of L, in its Cincinnati convention, voted to stay in politics permanently, to maintain its league for political education. It seems to me inevitable that labor will stay in politics--management, industry, finance always have been in politics, but unfortunately not always so openly. It was suggested that Joe Keenan, the chief of the AF of L Political Education League may be our next Secretary of Labor. If it is predicted Maurice Tobin takes over another cabinet spot. I believe it was Mr. Eric Johnson, head of the Motion Picture Association of America and one time president of the US Chamber of Commerce, who once told a gathering of the National Association of Manufacturers, "Gentlemen you're wailing about the power of labor unions. Don't you realize that you've brought this condition on yourself by unwise use of your own formerly unlimited power?" Thank goodness an increasing of labor leaders are realizing the vital necessity of using their new and growing power most wisely. That many of them are coming to understand, as Cyrus Ching, the federal conciliator, told the convention "strikes should be used only as a last resort, and never to force the public to its knees." It's believed that the new Congress will speedily repeal the Taft-Hartley law. An informant tells me this law sets up a confusing welter of legal machinery and such a hopeless bureaucracy, that it just simply won't work anyway. (13:00)

Well they say it's a man's world, but after reading the December issue of a magazine called *Woman*, I wonder. In it, I found the following comparisons: if a woman is short, she's petite; if a man is short, he's a runt. Lacking bravery, a woman is timid; a man is a coward. A woman who can't earn a living is the domestic type; a man is a ne'er-do-well. The woman with a job in the masculine field, such as engineering, is a pioneer; a man dressmaker is a sissy. A girl stays single because she prefers a career, a man because he is egotistical and selfish. A woman who jilts a man is an ex--merely exercising a feminine prerogative; a man who jilts a woman is cruel and heartless. When a couple gets married, a girl is set for life; the man is hooked. So, is it a man's world? [Anna Roosevelt and John Nelson laugh](14:02)

[John Nelson:] Anna, you're making me feel terribly sorry for myself.

[Anna Roosevelt:] Well if you do John, here's an old saying for you: life is hard by the yard, but by the inch life's a cinch.

[John Nelson:] I hope it works out that way. Well, listen Monday and each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at the same time over most of these ABC stations for Eleanor and Anna Roosevelt. The portion of this program for Paris was transcribed earlier by shortwave radio telephone. And this is ABC, the American Broadcasting Company. (14:32)

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