

## MRS. ROOSEVELT MEETS THE PUBLIC

March 18<sup>th</sup>, 1951

Description: In this episode, ER sits down with Secretary of the Army Mr. Frank Pace Jr., the Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Charles P. Matthews and the Secretary of the Air Force, and Mr. Thomas K. Finlette to discuss the increasing tensions in the Korean war. And to address the problems with the rivalries between the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

Participants: ER, Frank Pace Jr., Charles P. Matthews, Thomas K. Finletter, and Jack Anderson

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(31:03)

[Unknown Announcer:] Sale prices today at a store near you

[NBC Announcer:] Next Mrs. Roosevelt Meets the Public for a timely discussion, this is WMBT New York Channel 4.

[Theme Music 31:16-31:35]

[Unknown Announcer:] From the Colonial Room of the Park Sheraton Hotel in New York City NBC Television presents *Mrs. Roosevelt Meets the Public* to discuss today the state of our national defense. Mrs. Roosevelt's guests are the secretaries of the Army, Navy and Air Force and to introduce them here is Mrs. Roosevelt.

[ER:] Good afternoon, during World War Two the different branches of our armed services learned a great many lessons about working together as a single team. In both in the Pacific Theatre under General MacArthur and the European Theatre under General Eisenhower we had not only all branches of our own services, but also the units of our allies integrated by one supreme commander. As a result of the lessons learned in World War Two the United States has unified all branches of its services into a single Department of Defense. This was not accomplished without a bitter battle in the halls of Congress and on the front pages of our press. But now with a hot war being waged in Korea and a greatly expanded defense program, the public is beginning to find out what unification means and how it is working out. I know from personal experience something about the keen rivalry between the services. My husband always considered himself a navy man, my four sons were all on active duty in various branches of the service during the last war but the one in the Air Force always said that he had a hard time because the others were in the Navy and the Marine Corps, so I think we have come a long way today where we can have the Secretaries of the Army, Navy and Air Force sit down together peacefully to discuss their common problems and aims. I want to introduce my most distinguished guests the Secretary of the Army Mr. Frank Pace Jr., the Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Charles P. Matthews and the Secretary of the Air Force, Mr. Thomas K. Finletter, and I also have some members of the public who have questions that they want to ask of these gentlemen. And so we will begin at once and ask Mr. Jack Anderson who is a businessman from New York City to state his question. Mr. Anderson. (34:39)

[Jack Anderson:] Can we defend Europe chiefly with the support of our Navy and Air Force as claimed by Hoover, Taft and others?

[ER:] Well I think that question we better begin uh with you Mr. Finletter.

[Thomas K. Finletter:] No Mr. Anderson I don't think we can defend Europe just with the Navy and the Air Force. When you defend a land area the brunt of the battle has got to be carried by the ground soldiers the sure airpower, the airpower of our allies, the airpower of the Navy and the airpower of the Air Force are indispensable to the ground operation but all must be in it.

[ER:] Would you like to say something on that Mr. Matthews?

[Charles P. Matthews:] Uh-huh I-I agree with Mr. Finletter that we couldn't defend uh Europe, uh or defend an attack against Europe with just the Air Force and the Navy, but I'd say that we couldn't defend uh Europe without the Air Force and the Navy either. It's necessary to have all three services in order uh to properly protect the interests of this country in a situation of that character.

[ER:] You want to say a word Mr. Pace?

[Frank Pace Jr.:] Uh, only this Mrs. Roosevelt that I'm in complete accord with my colleagues uh obviously we feel in the ground forces in the Army that it's an essential and integral part of any defense of Europe. We're satisfied that historically that's been proven, that Korea has reiterated it and uh the studies of all concern indicate that that true.

[ER:] I wonder if you would say that uh perhaps the hope that only navy and air force would be necessary [ER coughs] is more a question of trying to think of our defenses primarily as being close to or own shores rather than to think of this as a worldwide defense. And our defenses being far away from our own shores.

[Thomas K. Finletter:] Yes well Mrs. Roosevelt the question was whether you could defend Europe [ER: Europe] uh without uh-uh w-without ground troops and there's no doubt about that question. I think that there something in the in the uh idea of those who have the idea that we should not send ground troops to Europe that we should not possibly defend Europe and I disagree with that I think that a defense of Europe is part of the defense of the United States.

[ER:] That's very interesting and I wanted to uh have that just said

[Frank Pace Jr.:] Now another factor, if I could just say it very briefly and that is to eliminate the fighting man on the ground seems like a simple solution, a simple and an economical solution but it is not in my estimation a practical solution.

[ER:] Well that also's an important thing to say. Now we'll come to our second question Miss Susanna Arhn an artist in New York City. (37:37)

[Susanna Arhn:] It sometimes seems that we have unification of service in name only. How much unification do we have, is it saving our government's money?

[ER:] Well now that's question I'm going to start with you Secretary Pace.

[Frank Pace Jr.:] I think we've moved a long way uh in uh establishing unification. I think Korea itself has proven practically and on that ground that uh the Air Force, the Navy and the Army uh can be and are a working team. Uh it's proven itself in terms of the competence uh in our function in Korea. As to the question of saving uh the taxpayer's money I'm satisfied that it has done that on the battlefield. But likewise it's important to know that in the establishment of the Munitions Board that coordinates uh the procurement policies of the three services, and the Research and Development Board that plans the total policy for research and development so that uh each of the services is part of a coordinated whole rather

than an individual integrated operation, I'm satisfied that you've moved far in saving the taxpayers' dollar. (38:51)

[ER:] Well that is very interesting. Would you like to say something to that Mr. Matthews?

[Charles P. Matthews:] Yes I'd like to emphasize what Secretary Pace has said, there isn't any question but what we've accomplished real unification uh among the three services and uh that of course makes it possible for us to consider uh the problems each of us secretaries, to consider the problems of the other departments along with our department individually and as a result, we know how what happens in one department affects what happens in the other departments and uh we can work together as we do uh happily and very harmoniously for the purpose of uh developing the best systems, making the best use of what we have ourselves and we find frequently that in the other departments there is equipment, there are resources which we can use and which are not necessary in the other departments at the particular time. That works for economy and-and effectiveness.

[ER:] I remember a time [ER coughs] because of course my husband was connected with the Navy, I remember a time when it used to be said the Navy always had everything that the other services wanted because they thought far ahead. And even in World War Two, I can remember my Air Force son saying that when he wanted certain things that he couldn't get from the Army he always went to the port where the nearest ship was coming in and got it off the ship. [ER laughs]

[Thomas K. Finletter:] Well I'm glad you said that Mrs. Roosevelt because some of those things are still said, and I want to point out that when they are said it's the job of the three of us to get together and see that they can no longer still be said. I don't say that we've achieved it but it's our purpose is to avoid uh unfairness. I'd like to comment on the lady's question though if I may, the emphasis was on saving money now it's highly important that the taxpayers' d-uh-dollar be spent as effectively as possible. [ER: But you would say lives, that's more interesting still]. But there's one question that's more important than that and I wish the question was phrased that way and that is "through unification, are we achieving the most effective fighting force that we can and to protect this country and if possible to prevent the happening of war and establish peace." And on that I-I would like to say something, I think we're doing reasonably well. It's not perfect at all and I hope my colleagues will allow me to say that uh their personal attitude uh has had a great deal in-in assisting- in our working out our problems together. Now also I noticed a certain justified impatience in the question "why don't we have more unification?" Well the-the question should be why don't- have we achieved the best degree of unification? For example take the Marines, here you have a separate corps. Well I suppose you might say that on unification you'd merge the Marines with some other uh branch of the service that would be unified, personally I would oppose any such handling of the Marine question [ER: so would I]. I think the magnificent record and the magnificent morale of the Marines is something that has got to be preserved and they are not in favor of unification if unification means that. And the same thing applies to the other services in-in their morale and in their esprit.

[ER:] I'm-I'm very glad you brought that out because I do think a great deal is lost if you lose that individual uh pride in a particular record that's been made. And yet I think the unification that does mean better coordinated service is highly important.

[Thomas K. Finletter:] Highly important and in some case consolidated service where one uh body such as the munitions board serves all three of the services and does the work for all three I've the audience would not be interest in going into details on that but the Army does a lot of things for us we don't set up different quartermaster corps and so forth.

[ER:] Well I suppose you could spend all of NBC's time for a long while if you really went into details on all this. Well now we'll come to our next question Miss Angela Tanebene who is a stenographer from New York City will you ask your question?

[ER:] Yes uh it is always said that wars are fought with the tactics and arms of the preceding war. Are we using the Korean War as an opportunity to try new arms and material?

[ER:] I think I'll ask you Secretary Pace to start that off.

[Frank Pace Jr.:] A great deal of the fighting uh Mrs. Roosevelt has been uh on the ground and we've had the opportunity to test out uh many of the weapons that we have developed since World War Two. I think it's clear that we are not relying on World War Two thinking we're taking the benefit of World War Two experience, but we are moving ahead progressively in the field of ideas. Specifically let me say that uh new tank that we recently uh unveiled at Aberdeen uh Walker Bulldog uh the uh M-41 I think is the best light tank in the world, not only in terms of mobility, uh not only in terms of mobility uh not only in terms of the engine that is in it but the firepower as opposed to other tanks is uh in my estimation at least the equal and uh the-the better of uh of what we know has been produced elsewhere. In the whole anti-tank field, in the whole field of communications we're actively using the experience of the Korean theatre. Our field commander who has the practical responsibility of determining what weapons can practically be used has been over there and is back now and Mark Clark tells me that our weapons are working well. It's the confidence of the men in the new weapons that are there that makes that difference, and, if I may take only one moment I'd like to say that the Bazooka, the three point five Bazooka that has really won the respect of every man who has used it was gotten over to Korea approximately three weeks after we got into the battle and it was actually only in the hand production stage a short time beforehand. The reason we were able to do that was because my colleagues in the Air Force and in the Navy recognized the importance of getting it over and gave it priority and got it there fast. We're using it as an experiment uh but at the same time we are not letting it control our thinking. (45:25)

[ER:] That's very interesting is there anything you'd like to say on that question?

[Charles P. Matthews:] Yes I'd like to uh supplement what Secretary Pace said and uh [pause 45:33-45:40] mention the fact that in the Navy we're using pretty generally the things we had in the-the past war. The ships that we have are the same ships they're very few new ships however uh as in the Army and in the Air Force we have progressed and we have developed in special weapons and uh-uh in the airplane and in other ways so that we have improved facilities and means of meeting the needs of modern warfare as it is today [ER: right] but generally speaking uh what we have uh is what we had in the uh last world war and we're happy that that's true, that means much to the taxpayers because if we had to build new ships and all the ships that we need uh the-the cost would be tremendous. That fact is due to the foresightedness of the men in the Navy who put away the ships at the end of the last war, and uh kept them in mothballs so that now they're available and all we need to do is put on them the-the new weapons we have the new developments in-in air and uh on the ships and uh.

[ER:] I thought I saw something though the other day about a new type of submarine.

[Charles P. Matthews:] We have uh a new type of submarine yes, of course the submarine problem is our great problem uh in the future. We haven't had any trouble with submarines uh warfare in this particular Korean campaign but we recognize the hazard that's involved and the menace that the submarine is. We almost lost two wars on account on the submarine and uh we're determined if possible uh not to lose the next war if and uh when it comes because of our inability to meet the submarine threat.

[ER:] Well I always like to think of what we're all doing now uh when I think it's what keeps our people steady, as being preparation to prevent war. And I think it's important that we have a feeling that we are doing research in new things because that is what gives the confidence uh to our people that what we do

[Charles P. Matthews: I think that] may keep us from having a war which is I think is a desire of all the people.

[Charles P. Matthews:] I think that the armed forces generally, the three departments, uh recognize that the best prevention for war is to be ready uh in case war comes.

[ER:] Do you want to say something to this? (48:05)

[Thomas K. Finletter:] Yes Mrs. Roosevelt, I would. The problem with the Air Force is different from that of Navy, it's more like that of the Army. We are trying to get rid of all the types of planes that were used in World War Two just as rapidly as we can and to supplant them with newew types of planes and we're pretty well along the road already. Uh in the uh fighter field the smaller planes and in the interceptors we've nearly achieved that. Uh in the case of the bombers we are rapidly moving towards that end, we do not now use in our bomber fleet any bomber that was used in Europe. We do use the so called "Super Fortress" the V-29 that was used in the war with Japan and we will at some time or other and just as soon as it can be done phase that out of our program. This leads me into something that bears on what you said about the effect of these weapons in deterring war. This bomber fleet that we are building has got to be new, it has got to have the very best planes that man can build in it because the defenses against bombers are also being built by others and we want to have a weapon in our strategic air offensive, and by that I mean the planes that carry the atomic bomb, we want to have a weapon so terribly powerful that any nation that might take it into its head to attack us will think several times before it does it. Our great hope is that by having this weapon, this strategic air arm, just as strong as we can make it, we will thereby convince those who might be thinking of war that it isn't a good idea and give time to the statesmen to work out a system of enforced peace through the United Nations.

[ER:] As Anthony Eden said the other day eh "give time so that diplomacy eh can work" but I would also so that our conception of economic aid may have an opportunity also to work, because it would seem to me that that is one of the necessary things for which we are gaining time.

[Thomas K. Finletter:] Allow me to comment on that Mrs. Roosevelt, I agree that diplomacy and economic aid are important but I think that what is necessary is a new view and a daring view which will make out of the United Nations the guarantor of the peace.

[ER:] I do too I think that is very important

[Frank Pace Jr.:] I'd like to agree with that, I'd like to say one other thing in relation to the original question and that is that we've had experience in two services working together, in three services working together not just in weapons but in the whole field of tactical error, in the experience in the air drop that we had, in the amphibious landings, and the amphibious evacuations that long-range are going to be tremendously beneficial. One very quick point that is important, some weapons we cannot use because we're afraid that if weapons are used and the position is overrun they'll fall into the hands of the enemy, we've been extremely careful to avoid uh having that information get into the hands of the opposing forces.

[ER:] Yes I understand that now we'll come to our next question Mr. Alfred Veccione interior decorator from Jamaica, Long Island.

[Alfred Veccione:] Well I should like to know why the army has to draft men when the Navy and Air Corps can depend on volunteers.

[ER:] That's evidently your question sir.

[Frank Pace Jr.:] I seem to be the recipient on that very quickly. Uh I'd like to point out in relation to unification I didn't want to give the impression we agreed on everything, I just wanted to give the impression that we had a method of working out our disagreements on an intelligent basis. I think uh the reason that the Army has to draft [Frank Pace Jr. coughs] while uh the other services are depending on volunteers uh is based on a variety of reasons, and maybe my colleagues will disagree with me. One the Army is the largest service, I is having to expand with great rapidity. Uh-uh as far as Korea is concerned uh-uh the ground forces have taken the brunt of the losses, the arm has about 45,000 casualties out of the reported 55,000 casualties. Naturally that being true you're not going to get the same uh interest in volunteering in the uh Army as you will for the other services but I think that uh-uh in terms of our long-range planning we can work towards a solution that will be equitable between the three services. Uh we have that in mind, we recognize it not as a problem of the Army or the Navy or the Air Force but a problem of how do we produce the best defense. Uh the Navy and the Air Force recognize that a good army is necessary my-my colleagues have said so and I'm satisfied that that situation is being and will be worked out. (53:02)

[ER:] Do you have anything you want to say gentleman on this question?

[Charles P. Matthews:] [Charles P. Matthews clears throat] I'd like to say that uh with respect to the Navy we have in a problem in the matter of uh securing [Charles P. Matthews clears throat] personnel which uh involves uh-uh the period of service we need men who serve uh for a longer period than uh the proposed term for instance of uh-uh the-the draft or the uh universal military service. In the Navy it's uh uneconomical, very uneconomical, for us to have men who are twenty-four months or for twenty-seven months and we're able so far to get volunteers to serve a longer period of time and that's one reason why we prefer to-to secure men through volunteer methods than-than through the draft.

[Thomas K. Finletter:] Yes but I do think Frank that we've got to be careful not to take our own particular difficulties and say the other fellow hasn't got any. Now you do have these difficulties in the Navy you have a pretty complicated machine but we've got a pretty complicated machine too, our people have to know how to handle electronics and all that sort of thing, but I think that you and I have got to recognize that the Army has a pretty complicated machine too and I think that the real answer to this question is to is to study it more than we have studied it, although we have as we all know worked pretty hard on it, I think we've got to get into this and figure out what's the best in terms of the national interest, in terms of the allocation of manpower and that must be the standard. Obviously we've all got to look out for our own services but I know that we are really basically in agreement on the principle of this thing, don't you think so?

[Charles P. Matthews:] Yes we are in agreement but still [Charles P. Matthews clears throat] we do have uh and-and the principle but still we do have uh differences just the same on some of these questions.

[ER:] Well I-I should I would have said that the Air Force uh perhaps had an easier time because the Air uh Service is a service that is new and-and young and lots of young people are more interested in learning to fly than they are in being soldiers of other of other branches of the service. That should that's, well now Mr. Anderson you have a second question so will you ask your question?

[Jack Anderson:] Were the casualties in the last war much heavier in the ground forces than in other branches of the service? (55:18)

[ER:] Well I think I'd better ask that of you Secretary Pace.

[Frank Pace Jr.:] I think this is illustrative of the fact that the Army is likely to catch the brunt of the questions at this particular time. Uh the answer to that is that they were heavy uh in the last war uh than they are [Frank Pace Jr. clears throat] than uh other branches of the service.

[ER:] Well you have more men

[Frank Pace Jr.:] We have we have more men [ER: percentage-wise how would you?]. On a percentage-wise basis I can't answer it exactly. I know in of -terms of officers the Air Force had heavy losses. I think in terms of uh total men I the percentage of total men uh was much higher on the ground forces. I-I know that the percentage in the Korean War where the fighting has been mostly on the ground is primarily a-a loss in the ground forces. That includes the Marines as well as uh the GIs.

[Charles P. Matthews:] Well I want to say that I think, uh I don't know the figures I've never made that comparison, but I daresay that uh an investigation would develop the fact that a percentage of losses in the Marines uh was comparatively high also in the last war, of course in-in the amphibious warfare in-in the Pacific. And uh I-I wouldn't want to concede exactly that in departments of the service that uh the casualties were higher in percentage in the Army than they were.

[ER:] I think the Marine Corps I certainly

[Frank Pace Jr.:] That's-that's is correct but I've-I've conceived of the Marines as ground forces. Although the Marines although they've in the Navy and have special problems uh in the Amphibious field they are still men on the ground. I share Secretary Finletter's feeling about the fact that here is a great service it is a ground service it functions properly under the Navy.

[Charles P. Matthews:] It should be a-a shore service a service on the shore. [ER: on the shore]. The-the Marines in-in my opinion where they are now in Korea are somewhat out of their sphere they're-they're originally what they were originally intended to do.

[ER:] Do you want to say anything?

[Thomas K. Finletter:] Well Mrs. Roosevelt I don't know the figures, I-I'd see some a short while ago in which my, in which my in which as I remember them, they showed a higher percentage of loss in Air Force fliers. Now I don't know about ground troops uh and I don't think the discussion is very profitable I think everybody takes a very heavy beating and.

[ER:] I think so too, well we have only one minute left and perhaps time for this question. Mrs. Arhn would you ask it?

[Susanna Arhn:] Who is MacArthur responsible for?

[ER:] Now gentlemen who wants to answer that question?

[Thomas K. Finletter:] Who is General MacArthur responsible to?

[Frank Pace Jr.:] To, to, responsible to.

[Thomas K. Finletter:] Well, uh Secretary of the Army I think it's again designated. [all laugh]

[Frank Pace Jr.:] Well uh-uh General MacArthur wears a great many hats. Uh he is of course [Frank Pace Jr. Clears throat] an army officer a five-star General, just responsible to the Army. He is also uh-uh commander of Sincfe, which is the combined forces in the Pacific in that respect uh he reports uh through the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the Secretary of Defense and ultimately to the Commander in Chief uh who is the President. He likewise in terms of his responsibility for running Japan, is responsible to a uh definite group of nations uh which includes a number of Asiatic Powers and I also think includes Russia, finally he's responsible to the UN. (58:50)

[ER:] Alright I'm sorry that I have to stop this but our time has come to an end and I want to say thank you gentlemen for being with me today and thank you for asking the questions. And now I think

[Theme Music 59:09-59:36]

[Unknown Announcer:] Next week only NBC television will present *Mrs. Roosevelt Meets the Public* one hour earlier at 2:30 PM, we invite you to join us then when Mrs. Roosevelt will bring you a special Easter program, with as her guests Dr. Franklin Fry, the Cantata Singers and Base soloist William Warfield.

[Music 1:00:00- 1:00:25]

[Unknown Announcer:] Portions of today's program which originated in the Colonial Room of the Park Sheraton Hotel in New York were on Motion Picture film.

[Music from 1:00:34-1:00:39]

[NBC Announcer:] NBC Television

[NBC Notes]

(1:00:46)

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