

## THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT PROGRAM

May 17, 1951

Description: This episode was recorded in London while ER attended the United Nations Human Rights Commission. In the opening segment, ER and Elliott Roosevelt respond to a listener's question about the dismissal of General Douglas MacArthur in Korea. In the interview segment, ER's guest is Frederick Elwyn Jones, Labour MP.

Speakers: ER, Elliott Roosevelt, Frederick Elwyn Jones

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[ER:] How do you do? This is Eleanor Roosevelt speaking to you from Europe, where I'm attending a meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Today we have another of the interviews Mrs. Roosevelt has been recording in England especially for this program. For those of you who've been following the recent split in the Labour Party within the British government, today's guest should have a story well-worth hearing. He is Mr. W.E. Elwyn Jones [1904-1989], member of Parliament on the Labour side of the fence. We'll join Mrs. Roosevelt and Mr. Jones a little later on in the program. Now though, as soon as we've had a message from the sponsors who make our recorded program possible, we're going to have a special discussion on some matters we'll hope you'll find interesting.

(Break 1:02-1:18)

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Mother, I have a question for you this afternoon, which I'd like to uh put to you. That before you left for Europe we discussed the MacArthur situation, but there's another angle to it that was posed to me the other day, and I wondered what your thoughts on this might be. Everyone knows how the Oriental regards uh loss of face, which in their eyes must be the case with General [Douglas] MacArthur [1880-1964], uh for instance, the method for his dismissal. Do you think this will have any serious repercussions with the Japanese people themselves and also with the people of Asia in general?

[ER:] I don't really know. Uh I don't know enough about the Orientals to have [ER clears throat] much knowledge of that particular-that particular reaction. We couldn't, I don't believe, have discussed the MacArthur question before I left home, because I don't think that it came till after I was over here though. Yes, I guess it did, it had just---

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Yes, we just--

[ER:] Yes, we just--

[Elliott Roosevelt:] We had discussed it just before you left.

[ER:] Before I left. But um [ER clears throat] I um I would suppose that even though they may have felt it was a loss of face on his part, it would not affect the general um feeling um about United States or the um government um or the occupation government because he is succeeded by someone else who will carry out their policies and precede with whatever needs to be done and I--

[Elliott Roosevelt:] You mean with the--

[ER:] It might--

[Elliott Roosevelt:] United States policy?

[ER:] Yes, it might hurt the um uh- it might possibly hurt their feeling of -- about General MacArthur, but I shouldn't think it would affect the general feeling or the general influence um of the United States in the Far East, it was purely domestic situation brought about by a um particular uh act of um the general himself uh in a political field, but I shouldn't think that it would have any lasting effect.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well uh, the reason that I asked this question is that I noticed that uh-uh, Emperor Hirohito [1901-1989] made a personal visit to General MacArthur before he departed uh from Japan, which is the first time in history that the Emperor Hirohito has ever called on anyone, a foreigner or otherwise, uh himself.

[ER:] Well, I think that was a very nice gesture, because I think he felt that General MacArthur had treated uh him and his people uh very well. The Emperor should certainly be grateful for General MacArthur because General MacArthur has kept him where he is, on his throne. And um I think on the whole, the policies that General MacArthur has put through have been um a restoration to um the same conditions that there were before, with certain modifications, which uh have been concessions to the fact that the world has moved around a certain amount in the last few years. But, by and large, the-the Emperor has a great deal to be grateful to General MacArthur for. (5:28)

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Uh but don't you think that the fact that General MacArthur did not hand over to General [Matthew] Ridgway [1895-1993] the-the control and the operation of uh bringing about democracy in uh Japan uh in a- in a graceful manner, so that he handed on the powers that he held uh so that all could witness that fact that General Ridgway was his successor, uh was harmful to our occupation policy?

[ER:] I doubt it. I think it will depend on how General Ridgway takes his own place and continues um the policies. Um either uh they are United States policies and he may not carry them out in exactly the way that General MacArthur was carrying them out because he's another man and he's in command, but um I don't think that it will--the fact that General MacArthur didn't uh make any transfer of any particular way will matter at all. The transfer was made when the orders were received. And I think that's all that needs to be done. (7:03)

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well then, the other point that I am interested in finding out, and I think a great many people in America are interested in, is the administration in Washington, our government, knew for a long time that General MacArthur was in favor of a much broader uh basis of aggression in uh Asia, and uh they knew that General MacArthur was in disagreement with the policies being followed in Washington. Why they not remove him much earlier? (7:44)

[ER:] Well, probably because General MacArthur had a great many friends in Congress. Um secondly, he was a hero, and he had begun a job and if it had been possible it probably would have been better for him to finish the job which he had begun. Um in addition to that, he was not only the United States' general in charge of the war in Korea, but he was the United Nations' general in charge of the war in Korea, and it uh would upset uh the whole picture when that sudden change had been made. The United Nations had to be notified. Um there were a number of things that made it more-or-less difficult to do it before, and I think, probably, they hoped that in some way General MacArthur would not um run counter to the administration. You would--I think many people forget that the President of the United States took the trouble to go all the way out to Wake Island to meet General MacArthur and try and come to a clear understanding as to how uh they were going to continue. And I think that was a very um--a very kind and

also very wise thing to try to do. But in the last analysis, it didn't work out as they hoped it would, and the only thing that could be done was to take drastic action. Drastic action is never pleasant, and it's never um good in the reactions that come immediately. And in this particular case, exactly what they feared, the feeling that a man was a hero, and who had done a wonderful job, was being treated severely, uh made the first reaction a reaction of um being sorry for him. And the American people are always sorry when they feel something isn't uh--is unkind to someone. Uh it couldn't be any different, but it was never the less unfortunate. And I-I think that probably nobody would of preferred to have it different um more ardently than the president himself. (10:22)

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well, uh now that we have uh reached this point. Uh we do find ourselves in very curious position with General MacArthur in returning to the United States and recounting his position in the Far East. as you mentioned in a previous question-and-answer period with me. has failed to ever refer to himself as having been the United Nations commander and responsible primarily to the United Nations and to his command as a United Nations commander. That is what worries--

[ER:] Of course in Korea, but not in Japan.

[Elliott Roosevelt:]: No. Uh but in the battle [ER: Yes.] in Korea, uh he has referred to this as a battle of primarily of United States forces, uh and not as a mandate under which he was operating from the President of the United States and from the United Nations as being a United Nations commander fighting a United Nations battle, in which the United States troops were fighting on the instructions of the United Nations, not on our own initiative.

[ER:] Yes, I think that it's funny that he's never done that, but I think in all probability he feels that he is reporting to the Congress of the United States, and that they are only interested in so far as their own troops are concerned and their own policy, and he is primarily interested, I gather, in trying to persuade them that the policy that he advocates is the only policy that will bring the present war to a close. Now that he has perfect right to do, now that he is back in the United States no longer in--under the orders of his Commander and Chief, um-on-in a policy situation. So that he has a perfect right to try and persuade the Congress and the people of the United States that by broadening the area of the war, he will win the war in Korea more quickly. It's a debatable point. It's one I don't happen to agree with, but I think he has perfect right to put it before the people as his point of view. After all, [Claire Lee] Chennault has been writing articles for a long time saying that if he were given a certain number of people, he could win the war in China. [Elliott Roosevelt: Right.] So there's no reason why General MacArthur hasn't a right to state his point of view.

[Elliott Roosevelt:]: All right, with that I think we must call this part of our program to an end and pass on to our announcer, and then we'll come back to our interview. (13:52)

[Break 13:52-14:02]

[ER:] During a very short visit to London, I've had the opportunity of talking with several members of Parliament of both the Conservative and Labour parties. As you listen to their discussions, you will discover as I have, that just as many Republicans and Democrats have differing views within one party. There are strong divergences of opinion within the two major British parties. My guest today, Mr. Frederick Elwyn Jones, is a Labour Member of Parliament from a London constituency; he's held many important official assignments, and among them was that of British prosecuting counsel at the Nuremberg Trials. I'm happy to introduce to you, Mr. Jones. (14:49)

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Thank you very much indeed and uh, and may I say how proud I am to be participating in this series of programs.

[ER:] Thank you, Mr. Jones. Now I'd like to ask you uh since Great Britain and the United States have differed on the occupation policy in Germany, what are the major differences as you see them?

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Well, I think that uh to answer your question, Mrs. Roosevelt, uh I ought to go back a little to the beginning because the differences asserted themselves very early. It was, I think, the view of the Labour Government that to uh accomplish the necessary change of the German outlook, it was necessary to alter the basic social structure of Germany. It was our belief that the forces, which have in the past driven Germany to aggression, were the forces not only of German militarism as such, but the forces of the big industrialists and financiers of Germany who provided the momentum for the politics of aggression, and therefore we felt, certainly 1945 and 1946, that power should for all time be taken out of the hands of individuals who had shown they could not be trusted and had made mischief in the past. And therefore, we were advocates of the socialization of the great industries of the Ruhr and the Rhineland. (16:26)

[ER:] I see, well in a way, I suppose the Schuman Plan will help towards doing that.

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Well, I-I think uh it-it may conceivably do so, but, of course, with our anxieties with regard to the Schuman Plan was the answer to the question: In whose hands would the economic power ah effectively remain? What we feared in regard to the Schuman Plan was that um i-it would still effectively remain in the hands of the prototypes of the crooks and the French Comité des Forges, who quite frankly we have no great confidence in. But i-if I may revert to your or-original question about the differences i-in American and British occupation policy, it has seemed t-to some of us that uh originally you too had the same views as us about the necessity of changing the social structure of Germany in order to change the political outlook of Germany. An-and indeed you-you went as far to prosecute the crooks and the-and the other industrialists, the [IG] Farbens [a German company] and the [Friedrich] Flicks, which is really more than we did. And- and I-I have discerned an extraordinary contradiction between what you had done in the juridical field in prosecuting these major industrialists and what you have done in effect in the industrial and political field in doing all you can to keep their system alive. (17:53)

[ER:] Well, that's an interesting criticism. You hear that uh from a few people at home, but I don't think many people um really understand um what is happening there. Of course, the answer that um some of us have had on that question is that there is really no change in the basic uh plan because um the people um who have come into power again and will always be under restrictions. I'm-I'm not sure that um-that that uh is a very safe basis. But that is what you're told when you ask questions on the subject. And um I wonder--one of the things at home there's been a great deal of question about, of course, is the release of the war criminals in Germany. And um some of those, of course, were apparently cases that uh clemency was asked for from very high quarters in different parts of Europe. Um I wonder what the feeling--your feeling is about the effect of releasing some people that were released. (19:24)

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Well, the view that I take is that of course it is right and in the best t-tradition of-of American and British justice that the case of every man who is kept in prison is reviewed from time to time, and I don't have an objection to that. But what um has disturbed us about the releases, which Mr. [John J.] McCloy [1895-1989] authorized of [Alfred] Krupp [von Bohlen und Halbach, 1907-1967] and his co-directors, of major generals, of leading ministers, and even I regret to say some of the worst thugs of the SS movement, was that the nature of those mass releases and the statement that accompanied those releases, has seemed to us to go very near to a condemnation of the offenses themselves that those men committed. The whole object of the-these war crimes trials, in which America played the outstanding part -- America has a prouder record in that field than even the British authorities, if I may say so. But uh the object of those war crimes trials was after all to assert the existence of international law as a life-force with teeth in it. Uh Mr. [Robert H.] Jackson [1892-1954] said so eloquently at Nuremburg, after all he

was the main architect of this matter, the great American jurist; uh he said that-that the object of those trials was to assert the existence of international laws as a life-force. Well, you-you can-can't do that in 1945 and then say in 1951, "Oh, but the interest of political expediency require a different approach now." Because if you do that then you will lead the Germans, for instance, to say, "Well, of course, international law doesn't really exist. We always told you so. It's all a question of political expediency and this goes to show that uh these were trials merely the product of the mood of victory in 1945, and were an-an embodiment of the will of the victor being asserted over the vanquished." And therefore I'm-I'm greatly afraid that uh-uh-unless more discretion is exercised with regard to these releases in the future the effect will be to completely discredit the whole effort that was made by Mr. Justice Jackson, Mr. [Francis] Biddle [1886-1968] and others of us in Nuremberg to assert the continuing validity of international law. (21:57)

[ER:] Plus Mr. McCloy feels uh that what you said at the beginning about it being in the democratic tradition to give um any prisoner uh who claims to have uh a change in the condition since his uh um sentence was passed um a-a chance at appeal and at uh review. Um and uh Mr. McCloy, I think, would say that that is what he had done. Now, I have talked to both uh people who did the review of some of them and uh have had a long letter from Mr. McCloy, and he insists that uh in the first place they were only undertaken because of the claim there was new evidence, and appeals had been made um on their behalf, on that basis, and uh that um only such people were released as actually had a difference made by what was shown. Now uh that is of course, I suppose, open to question, and I'd like to ask you whether you think there should be a distinction made between various categories of war criminals in considering their release. (23:28)

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Yes. Well, uh reverting to what you've just said about Mr. McCloy's explanation, I-I must say we'd be a little reassured if he had published some of the new evidence. He hasn't done so. An-and what surprised some of us in regard to the whole nature of this clemency board is that although the American authorities allowed the defense to make eloquent representations to them, they didn't invite the prosecution to be present. And that-that is e-extending generosity a very long way and might be able to produce--

[ER:] Yes! I should have to think that's extending their generosity a long way! [ER laughs]

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] [Laughs] Might be able to produce injustice in the result.

[ER:] Well, that-that-that's a question we'll have to ask of the uh reviewing board and find out what they say about it! But, for just a minute we'll have to stop this conversation and uh, let our announcer have a word and we'll come right back! [Frederick Elwyn Jones laughs]

(Break 24:31-24:41)

[ER:] Now we come back to the talk between um Mr. Frederick Elwyn Jones in London. And I think you didn't quite answer my question, sir, about the various categories of war criminals and the consideration that should be given in their release.

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Well, I think it's a difficult question to answer, because it is hard to-to say uh which of the different groups were the more responsible for the abominations that took place in the Third Reich, for the mass extermination of millions of people, for the exploitation of conquered territories, for the wars of invasion which resulted in so much death and destruction, uh a-and I-I am reminded of- of again an observation of Mr. Justice Jackson who said at Nuremberg that it is at all times been the position of the United States that the great industrialists and of Germany were guilty of all the crimes charged in

the Nuremberg indictment quite as much, he said, as its politicians, diplomats, and soldiers. So if there is equality of guilt it is a little-little difficult to know how you can distinguish between them.

[ER:] [ laughs] You can't distinguish I should say if they were all pretty well responsible in different ways, I'm afraid.

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] But, I-I would naturally p-prefer to-to give the least consideration to those actually guilty of murder and killing. Naturally they-they have [ER: I think those--] have the least entitlement of consideration. [26:11]

[ER:] I-I think that's the way that the people who read uh some of the things that were done in the camps would feel. [Frederick Elwyn Jones: Yes.] I think that would be the answer. [Frederick Elwyn Jones: Oh, yes.] What is the difference then between the occupation policy in the United States in British zones now? I mean, what-what would you say is the difference today?

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Well, I don't think there is a great deal of difference now. The tripartite uh-uh-uh working of the administration is resulting in-in substantial agreement, I think, on most matters. In regard to the battle of socialization, if I may return to ride my hobbyhorse, I-I'm afraid you've won! And uh that is-is a battle which has been lost. And the social structure of Germany remains what it used to be unfortunately.

[ER:] I see, well, do you believe that the United States uh really forced the hand of French and British on occupation policy?

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Well, those are unkind words, Mrs. Roosevelt-- [ER laughs] "Forcing the hand." I-I think it-it's the considered view of-of American representatives, not only in Germany, if I may say so, but in Japan, that the free enterprise system has in itself intrinsic virtues which ought to be encouraged. It has been our bitter experience in the continent of Europe that it has intrinsic vices which ought to be dealt with. And-and uh I am afraid that is the basic difference to our approach in these matters. (27:48)

[ER:] Well, I-I suppose that naturally would be because, of course, we are a free enterprise country, and uh the mere word "socialization" frightens most of our law makers almost to death.

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Yes, I'm very sorry, [ER: So--] because we're all so respectful and law abiding, especially in the Labour Party. [ER laughs]

[ER:] That sounds wonderful, but you should just talk to some of our people in-in office. Well, you think the United States is responsible for keeping the Bund government in office then? That's what you think.

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Well, a-a-again I think that's rather a harsh generalization. I think that um-if there was an election in Germany at the moment, the Bund government would probably have great difficulty in securing reelection. That is because at the moment of time, there is a strong feeling among the German people against rearmament. And President [Konrad Hermann Joseph] Adenauer [1876-1967] has-has committed himself to a very substantial degree to the issue of rearmament. And therefore, that being a topical question in Germany at the present time, I think he would be in great danger for defeat. But um I-I-I think the American government has probably done it's best to avoid giving the impression of being the government that-that has put Adenauer in its place, and it's very right that it should be cautious to avoid that impression from being created. (29:22)

[ER:] Well, what-what is happening to the decartelization policy as you see it?

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Well, I think that uh a lot has been put down on paper but little has been carried in practice. In these matters of decartelization it matters a good deal who you put in charge of the job and what permanence there is in your projects. And he-the difficulty in Germany is that uh you have entrusted with the temporary administration of these great cartels a lot of men who are themselves essentially cartelists. You did, if I may say so -- I-I hope I'm not sounding too critical -- you did much the same in regard to Japan with the great family trusts there. When it came to breaking the trusts, you appointed a member of the executive of the trust to carry it out. And with a polite hiss, he saw that it wasn't carried out.

[ER:] Well, um I suppose that's always debatable, because I find that uh while we have people at home who say that nothing has been done to decartelization, we also have other people who say that substantial improvements have come about. And there seems to be a feeling uh, an-and I gather that you don't join in the feeling from what you said earlier, that the Schuman Plan will do a great deal to prevent the cartels from having their old power. Um I wonder if uh you could go a little further than you did on your first remarks on the Schuman Plan.

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Yes, well, we uh in the Labour Party in this country uh are naturally very sympathetic towards any development which creates democratic or constitutional control over the powers of private industrialists. But uh what disturbed us about the Schuman Plan and its inception was that it was by no means clear to us that the supranational authority that was contemplated would be an authority that was subject to either democratic or constitutional checks. We have been relieved to find that the organization that is being set out has taken a form which was rather better than was originally contemplated. And as the Labour government, for whom incidentally I am not speaking in this conversation, [ER: Yes.] but as the Labour government uh spokesmen have said they view the developments with a great deal of sympathy. But uh it must be realized, if I may say so, that for our country, coal and industry, is the basic industry, more basic than even in the case of Germany. And we really cannot run the risk of being uh committed to-to control their basic industry by uh a supranational group whose-whose credentials we are not even now absolutely certain about. We cannot play ducks and drakes with our economic uh well-being in that way, I am afraid. (32:36)

[ER:] Uh that's interesting uh coming from a member of the Labour Party because you do believe in um-in um pooling and socialization, and um-um is it just a question of the machinery that's set up? [Frederick Elwyn Jones: Well I think it's principle, it--] Or is it still a national feeling that you want control what nationalization goes on within your own country? (33:03)

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Well, I-I-I hope you won't be thinking that we are merely national socialists after all [Frederick Elwyn Jones laughs]. But uh what we feel is we want to be quite certain that these organizations that are to be set up are organizations that are democratically controlled by parliaments, and-and are not going to be effectively controlled by the great captains of industry, like again, the crooks of Comité des Forges. We have had a-a quite bitter political struggle in--within our own country for the control of our own steel masters and we don't, having won that victory, to be placed in the danger being controlled by the German and French steel masters, if I may say so. (33:46)

[ER:] Well, that, of course, I think is a very laudable desire, but um I-I-I think there might be some question as to whether that wasn't also the desire that lay back of the Schuman Plan [Frederick Elwyn Jones: Yes.] And that will remain, I suppose, to be seen. [Frederick Elwyn Jones: Well--] And I imagine that is why the Labour government um is speaking more kindly about it, but is still holding--waiting. (34:12)

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Well, we are. I think we've kept an open mind about it. What we objected to at the beginning was that we seemed to be--to be being committed in advance to decisions which obviously were of great difficulty and complexity.

[ER:] Yes, well, that's understandable. Well now, I'd just like to come back for just one minute to the question of the occupation. Do you think it has actually accomplished anything that is worthwhile or not?

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] I think that uh for the German people occupation was, of course, in any event essential because of the complete breakdown of the German government. But uh and-and I think it has accomplished something in the sphere of the administration of justice, for instance, whose standards have been utterly debased by Nazism. In the sphere of education, we've done a good deal to cleanse the curriculum, uh in the sphere of administration by introducing higher standards of integrity. But unfortunately, I'm alarmed to see the growing power of-of the uh-the old factors that made-made so much mischief in Germany.

[ER:] Yes, I can understand that alarm. But um one more question since we only have a few seconds. Is German rearmament in your opinion essential to Western defense?

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] I-I think uh at the moment German rearmament would be uh a factor in increasing the difficulties of Western defense. (35:42)

[ER:] Increasing the difficulties.

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Uh I think it would be a factor which might well uh create new political dangers and bring the threat of war nearer, myself. There is no prospect that it will have any military advantage for us. The Germans are against it. If we got any arms to spare, there are far more trustworthy hands, in my opinion, in the West who are capable of bearing them.

[ER:] Uh thank you, I think this uh interview has to come to an end. And I am very grateful to you because I think it is well for us in the United States to realize that in Great Britain too there are differences of opinion as to what should be done. And I want to be--again say how grateful to you, Sir Frederick Elwyn Jones, for being with me today.

[Frederick Elwyn Jones:] Thank you very much indeed. (36:36)

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