

THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT PROGRAM

July 11, 1951

Description: In the opening segment, ER and Elliott Roosevelt respond to a listener's concerns of a reconstructed Germany. In the interview segment, ER discusses the war in Korea with American fighter pilot John C. Meyer.

Participants: ER, Elliot, Colonel John C. Meyer, Ben Grauer

[ER:] How do you do? This is Eleanor Roosevelt. Every Monday through Friday my son Elliott and I have the opportunity to visit with you here in my living room at the Park Sheraton Hotel in New York City. Each day it is our desire to bring interesting guests that we are hopeful you will enjoy meeting. Elliott, will you tell our listener's today's plans?

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Colonel John C. Meyer, America's outstanding living air ace in total number of enemy aircraft destroyed has said that if the communist pilots in Korea ever learn how to shoot accurately the United Nations airmen will have something to worry about. Mrs. Roosevelt is honored to have Colonel Meyer with her today to tell us more about actual combat in the Korean War and some of his observations on its conduct. Before we hear Colonel Meyer's very interesting story Mrs. Roosevelt and I have a problem which we will discuss. We will get to this just as soon as our announcer brings us some messages.

[Break 1:07 - 1:16]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Our letter today is from F. Miller of the Bronx in New York, and I'm sorry to say gives no street address so we cannot answer w-one request in writing. Uh the request is for recordings or transcripts of the program, all these programs are extemporaneous, and therefore we regret there are no scripts nor are transcripts available. As to the question in uh F. Miller's letter here it is: "I should also like to pose this question. Why are we rearming and rebuilding Germany? The denazification program was discontinued in 1948, I believe most of the criminals released from jail including [Gustav] Krupp, the biggest crook of all except perhaps for [Walter] Schuck, including members of the German army in the North Atlantic army. I'm afraid after we have armed them, build up the Ruhr to capacity, the Germans will go right over to the Russians against us. The Russian system is more like theirs and they only love force and hate us as they consider us soft, even though we beat them in two wars. The French who know the Germans better than we do are against the whole plan including the North Atlantic Pact but as they need Marshall Plan aid they'll not oppose us too strongly. I hope you'll be able to enlighten me as I cannot understand the reason for the whole plan. It just seems to me that all those fine American and English and French boys died for nothing in World War II."

[ER:] Well, I think you are a little too pessimistic um it is, of course, true that um we cannot allow Germany to regain her position of being the central uh strong power which practically dominated the whole of Europe. I think you are wrong in saying that the French are opposed to the Atlantic Pact, I think the French are for the Atlantic Pact. I think the fact the Schumann Plan has gone through, that the Council of Europe is now in existence is one of the safeguards against the rise again of Germany uh into the economic position that it once was and unless it rises to that economic position it can never again rise to its military position, therefore this Schumann Pact was all important as a basis for making a unified Europe. It is the first step in the removing of the economic barriers which have made Europe a--into separate camps of nations fighting each other economically and in the end in a military way. Uh now they

can go on and learn to cooperate so as to gain greater prosperity for all of them and give greater assurance to the small nations that they are not going to be overwhelmed by the growth of power in any one of the bigger nations. The Council of Europe is a very first beginning on the political side. I--just as the Schumann plan is the beginning on the economic side. Now I personally uh feel that to rearm Germany to a great extent, I mean beyond the point of a police power and a power to guard her borders, um w-is perhaps premature, but I do not think that we can ignore the fact that we have to depend on Germany to carry her share, no more than her share, of the defense of free Europe. And if she has a will through--in her um strength with the Western powers then she will take her share, but under the new regimes that are being set up, she will never be permitted to take more than her share and she will always do it as a part of the free nations of Europe and no longer as a part of -- as-as one nation dominating all the other nations of Europe. And that is what all the effort is being directed to today, to create um a federation of Europe rather uh than a group of individual nations, each of them fighting each other economically and politically and finally militarily [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] So uh I think we have to, of course, walk cautiously but I also think that we have to remember that the defense of Europe is primarily against uh against aggression from the East is primarily the business of Europe with the help and inspiration that the United States and the other nations in the United Nations can give. (7:05)

[Elliott Roosevelt:] All right now, is this statement correct in this letter. That the denazification program was discontinued in 1948?

[ER:] Well, I think, if I remember rightly, that certain phases of the formal thing um certain formal things that had been undertaken and labeled that way were given up, but the real denazification program, of course, goes on all the time. A denazification program depends largely upon the conviction that what they are being offered, and the example which is being given them by uh the democratic nations that are there in occupation, um is really better than what they are offered uh by the example of the East Germany. As a matter of fact, the Germans who are so close to East Germany, which is dominated by the USSR, I think are probably more opposed to communism today than they might have been before the last war even -- because they now know what actually the USSR rule has meant in East Germany, and you will find that every single German who is familiar uh with that regime is extremely anxious to tie up with the free world rather than with the slave world, [Elliott Roosevelt: Yes.] as-as seen in the government of East Germany.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] All right now, there's one other point I'd like to touch on more fully. This paragraph that says, "the French who know the Germans better than we do are against the whole plan including the North Atlantic Pact but as they need Marshall Plan aid dare not oppose us too strongly." You had um programs eh and conversations with uh Monsieur [Robert] Schumann, who is their Foreign Minister, and Monsieur [Jean] Monet, who is the originator of the Schumann plan, the author of it. Is it not in your opinion a fact that the two instigators of bringing the Germans in under a plan of co-collaboration and cooperation and a building up of uh and rebuilding of Germany that the French are very definitely interested in just that as exemplified through the Schumann plan?

[ER:] Yes, I don't mean to say that they're not afraid of Germany. Of course, they're afraid of Germany; they-they've been their traditional enemy for years, and they know what it is to be invaded, and they know what it is to live under a foreign yolk. And of course, they're afraid and uh the fact that they've had Marshall Plan aid hasn't prevented their telling us quite frankly that they were afraid of rearming Germany. But they've had the intelligence to offer a plan in the Schumann Plan, which they felt would be the beginning of a real-making it worthwhile for Germany and France to stand together. Um and they've gone whole heartedly into the Council of Europe with the feeling that if all the nations stood together then no one nation would get the great advantage. And they know, the French know, better than anyone else I think that the basis of war in Europe is an economic basis and that the beginning of the Schumann Plan and-will be the beginning of uh economic collaboration instead of economic competition.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Right. Well, then uh in your opinion things are working in Europe toward a c-uh much closer confederation of the various nations of Europe, and uh this last sentence that uh “the Americans, English, and French boys who gave their lives” uh cannot be said to have been wholly lost as yet because of course the-the success uh depends on the intelligence with which the leaders of the country uh attack this whole problem.

[ER:] Well, the success depends on our ability to ward--to keep from World War III though strength and collaboration and on our ability as we keep out of World War III to build a strong collaboration rather than a com-competitive um groups in Europe, [Elliott Roosevelt: Right.] and if we can do that and eventually draw in more areas of the world even if our political governments at home differ uh we will have a peaceful world but we won't have any other way.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Thank you very much, I think that answers this letter and now we will go onto another part of the program.

[Break 12:25 - 12:40]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] The effectiveness of the Russian plane known as the MiG now being used in Korea is not being underestimated by any of the men who have tangled with them. To hear a first-hand account of actual combat with these planes and many other things about the war in Korea, Mrs. Roosevelt has invited America's outstanding living air ace to be her guest today. Mother, will you introduce the colonel to our audience?

[ER:] Certainly, Elliott. It is an honor and a pleasure to present to you Colonel John C. Meyer, who recently returned from the Far East where he commanded the 4th Fighter Interceptor Group flying F-86 Sabres. Colonel Meyer.

[John C. Meyer:] Thank you very much, Mrs. Roosevelt. I'd just like to say that I'm proud of the opportunity to meet with you and talk with you this morning.

[ER:] Well first, Colonel Meyer, would you tell our listeners how many missions and how many planes down has given you the record of top living American ace.

[John C. Meyer:] Uh yes, ma'am, I flew two hundred missions in World War II. Uh being credited with the destruction of thirty-seven and one half German aircraft, and uh I flew thirty-one missions in Korea and uh I was fortunate enough to down two Russian built MIG-15s.

[ER:] Well, if memory serves me, the late Major [Richard] Bong who is still top ace of all time had only a half plane edge on you. His record being forty, and yours thirty nine and a half. Tell me, Colonel Meyer, why didn't you stay in Korea long enough to top Major Bong's record by half a plane?

[John C. Meyer:] Well, that's a somewhat difficult question to answer. Uh my primary responsibility and my primary interest was uh unit success rather than personal success, and uh my involvement with enemy aircraft was in a sense incidental to this other objective. Uh furthermore, the air force is very much interested in rotating though the Korea experience uh a major number of their key personnel, and uh I had my time over there in effect and I'm coming back so that someone else can go over there and gain similar type experience.

[ER:] Uh I'm going to ask you something which you may think foolish but I think a good many people will wonder as I do, how can you get credit for half a plane? (15:30)

[John C. Meyer:] Uh Mrs. Roosevelt, that's a question that is very frequently asked. And uh it's simply that two people are involved in the destruction of one enemy air craft.

[ER:] Oh and then you each get credit for half uh for half the destruction in other words.

[John C. Meyer:] Yes, ma'am, that's correct.

[ER:] I see. I couldn't imagine how one-one assessed a half a plane. Well Colonel Meyer just what is the essential difference, or perhaps I should say what are the essential differences between the Russian MiGs and the F-86 Sabers used by the United Nations forces?

[John C. Meyer:] The aircrafts are remarkably similar. They're remarkably similar in appearance and they're remarkably similar in performance. That of course, was somewhat surprising to us. Uh that fact that the aircrafts were as good as our F-86 Sabers, I would say that the aircrafts are almost exactly equal in their performance characteristics. And the fact that they are just about as good as the F-86, which is our foremost fighter in our tactical units, indicates to me that uh the Russians have the potential of first rate air power. We have a tough job ahead of us. I would prefer to fly a F-86 in combat to a MiG-15 mostly on the basis of our superior armament system.

[ER:] In other words, we carry-we can carry a better uh [someone sneezes] performance as far as shooting goes and uh--

[John C. Meyer:] That's correct.

[ER:] And uh bombing, I suppose, or whatnot.

[John C. Meyer:] The uh armament systems--

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Armament's not bombing

[ER and Elliott Roosevelt overlap]

[ER:] Not bombing -- has to have another kind -- Guns.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Right. This is the guns that they carry. (17:24)

[John C. Meyer:] The armament system includes the guns and the sight, and uh we do have a very excellent sight.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well, would you say that the uh that the flying of an F-86 and its success in Korea is uh to a large extend uh due to the pilot's skill superiority over the uh enemy pilot?

[John C. Meyer:] Yes, that's quite true, [John C. Meyer clears throat] Mr. Roosevelt. Uh in the 4th Fighter Group we have the most experienced air fighters in the world. Uh all of the leaders and most all of the pilots had extensive experience over there were you were in the last war fighting against the Russians in air to air combat. We had the same people, we had a select group, and uh we had an all-star team and that is a primary consideration. I'd say that plus the armament system, or that plus the guns plus the sight are superior to the pilots the guns and the sight in the MiG-15.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Mhm.

[ER:] Um it interests me um because, and this is a little perhaps digression, [someone sneezes] because I remember in the beginning of the last war that one of our greatest difficulties was that we found our American planes uh were in some uh measure not up either to the enemy planes or sometimes to those of our allies, and uh um we had to learn a great deal at the beginning of World War II as far as aviation went. Now we seem to be on par with the uh greatest potential enemy that we have in our United Nations forces, and um I think that means that we have learned a considerable um amount, and that in rearming we must be using um the knowledge and um some of the experience, uh which cost us dear at the beginning of the last war, because I can remember, Elliott, I can remember when you were struggling to get a faster plane for reconnaissance and found it very difficult, and um I think lost a good many men on that just that account. Isn't that true?

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well, in North Africa we lost ninety out of ninety-two pilots in the first six weeks.

[ER:] Well, that's-that's uh something that I have always remembered in the back of my head as something we should never allow ourselves again to lose in the quality that uh we could keep that up. Even if we didn't-weren't producing the quantity that we should do it in-in uh-by constant preparation and research and-and keeping on um with all of the inventions possible, rather than-than making it a question of quantity which can be increased uh as need goes but the quality can't be unless you have the experience and the research being done it would seem to me. Is that correct? Am I right in that? (21:02)

[John C. Meyer:] I think that's quite true. You say in effect that uh we are--if we consider this the beginning of the third world war, we are ahead of where we were at the beginning of World War II. Uh that is an encouraging fact and uh most important of all is that a-talk about quality being a primary consideration, it certainly is a second best aircraft is very much like a second best poker hand.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Mhm. It's a total loss. [Elliott Roosevelt laughs]

[ER:] [ER laughs] A total loss is a good description. Well now, I'd like to ask you are the Russians using the MiGs for attack or for defense?

[John C. Meyer:] Uh [John C. Meyer clears throat] the Russians have in Manchuria, I'm not sure exactly how many MiG-15s, uh but uh I'd say the Russians--the Chinese communists have in Manchuria several hundred. Uh they are only employing a relatively small portion of that force, approximately one hundred aircrafts, in the business of crossing the Yalu River and coming down attempting to attack our armored forces and our tactical support fighters [Elliott Roosevelt coughs]. Uh so I would guess -- I would presume that the remainder of that force is being held back in Manchuria in anticipation of the possibility of American airpower raiding bases in Manchuria. So the major portion of them to answer your question I presume are being used for the defense of Manchuria if that should become necessary for them. And this relatively small portion, of course, are-use-being used to attack our forces in Korea. (22:51)

[ER:] For-for aggression then?

[John C. Meyer:] Yes, ma'am.

[ER:] It's--they're being used for both purposes in other words [John C. Meyer: Right.] both uh held back for defense and yet using a portion of it for aggression. Well now, do you think the Russian pilots are as well trained as ours um I-I say Russian but I suppose I might as well say Russian or Chinese.

[John C. Meyer:] Yes, that uh-uh the MIG-15 is a Russian build aircraft we know that, there's no equivocation there. Uh what kind of pilots are flying them? We just don't know but I think I can say

unequivocally that they are not as well trained or at least not as well trained as the pilots of the 4th Fighter Group.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Yes, but the pilots of the 4th Fighter Group are a picked uh group of pilots. How would you say that our younger pilots who had no experience in World War II have come-uh become graduates uh an-and are now in our various other groups and have not yet gone into combat. How do you think that they would fare against uh these enemy trained pilots?

[John C. Meyer:] Uh a few months before I left Korea, we started getting some of those pilots that you're taking about and for just the reason that you're mentioning, and we have found that in general their uh training is somewhat nearly equal, their abilities nearly equal, or about the same with the Russian pilots in most phases except again in gunnery. [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] Our people are able to shoot better

[Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] than the-than the uh Chinese communist pilots.

[ER:] Uh that is a matter of both equipment and of training, of course, because you can do better if your equipment is better and-and um uh also you've got to have the training.

[John C. Meyer:] Yes, ma'am. We're able to measure their gunnery in-in uh two phases by the uh types of errors that they made and some of them we could clearly attribute to the fact they lacked equipment, but in other cases it was obvious it was a matter of pilot training and skill.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Mother, before you ask any more questions, I think we'd better uh pause for a moment for a message from our announcer and then we'll return immediately to this uh very interesting interview that you're having with Colonel Meyer.

[Break 25:21 – 25:26]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] And now uh we return you to Mrs. Roosevelt's interview with Colonel Meyer, who is a member of the United States Air Force and America's greatest living air ace. Mother, will you take over the interview and continue the questions?

[ER:] Yes, I have many questions I want to ask Colonel Meyer. First one is: are our jet pilots mostly very young men, Colonel?

[John C. Meyer:] As surprising as it may seem to you, uh I'll answer that question by saying no, because age is a relative thing and I'm using it relatively um comparing the age of our present jet pilots to the men that were flying our fighters in World War II. Uh in the squadron I had in World War II I was the second oldest member of that squadron at twenty-three years of age. In our present unit over in Korea the average age of our pilots is about twenty nine most all the flight leaders are people about thirty years of age who were the same youngsters who fought in World War II.

[ER:] Well now, I just wonder whether jet piloting is harder physically than piloting other types of planes.

[John C. Meyer:] Per unit time it is harder. Uh that is to say the physical strain of combat, especially at speeds approaching, and sometimes at, the speed of sound, the aircraft is uh a tough job to handle and is physically wearying however the jet airplane because of its terrifically high speed doesn't stay airborne nearly so long. And whereas uh we were flying four and a half, five, six and even sometimes seven hour missions in World War II, two hours is considered-considered quite a lengthy mission in uh our present time jets.

[ER:] Yes, I can see. Would you say that it really took it out of a man more in two hours than it did uh the longer missions?

[John C. Meyer:] I'd say Mrs. Roosevelt that we'd come out about even.

[ER:] About even on that. I see. Well now, what restrictions are there on where the United Nations planes may fly in this Korean situation?

[John C. Meyer:] Uh within Korea we have no restrictions, but uh, of course, we are not flying our airplanes under any circumstances on the other side of the Yalu River, that's the North Korean Manchurian border and uh that affected our combat problem to quite a great extent the uh MIG-15 pilots were able to take off under our noses in effect, we could see them across the river, and climb up to altitude and oft times if we didn't deliberately give them the tactical advantage of altitude uh they wouldn't bother to come across. That is to say if we kept climbing and we held the altitude advantage then they would turn around go back in and land, so we would have to give them a break, then they would come over and we would try to get them as far south as we could of the river to make things more even--

[ER:] Make it a little harder for them to get away.

[John C. Meyer:] Yes, ma'am. [ER laughs] (28:47)

[ER:] Well, what coordination is there in actual combat between the Air Force and the ground troops?

[John C. Meyer:] The uh [John C. Meyer coughs] the coordination in my opinion is uh very, very excellent. Uh the Air Force, I believe, is doing a very fine job of uh support of the ground troops, and uh I've heard many many of the--especially at the lower echelons the GI, the guy who is carrying the rifle and doing the fighting has had nothing but praise for the coordination and uh the work that our Air Force is doing in the direct ground support.

[ER:] Must be a great comfort I should think to the ground troops. And now I'd like to ask a question which I know you can't answer numerically really, but you may be able to give us an idea in comparison. Uh none of us know how many planes we have lost but many of us would like to know whether we've lost more than the Russians or not.

[John C. Meyer:] I could answer that in-in two ways. One most specifically I can give you the exact numerical figures on the uh losses and success of the 4th Fighter Group, that's the F-86 fighting against the MIG in air to air combat. We have destroyed, as of the seventh of June when I left there, 31 MIG-15s, damaged sixty, and we have lost one F-86 to the MIG-15. Might even go as far as to say we were only hit once by a MIG-15 in something like a thousand individual encounters.

[ER:] Goodness. Well, that looks to me as though--

[Elliott Roosevelt:] That would indicate a wide margin of superiority.

[ER:] Well, n-not only that but it would indicate much more skill on our part uh but then you are a crack unit that's what you've emphasized, isn't it, all the way though.

[John C. Meyer:] Yes, that is correct. I don't think these figures should uh lead us into complacency.

[ER:] No, I don't either because we couldn't expect quite uh that margin everywhere. How deep into South Korean territory do the MiGs fly?

[John C. Meyer:] Uh [John C. Meyer cough] since the F-86 has been in Korea uh they have confined themselves in general to a strip of twenty to thirty miles South of the Yalu river, with two exceptions uh in w-which case we did find some of them down as far as Pyongyang and uh Sinanju. In both of those cases we engaged them and engaged them quite successfully and our primary mission I might say the 4th Fighter Group's primary mission was to keep the MiGs in that twenty or thirty mile quarter the Yalu river so that our tactical air people could continue their primary mission of close support of ground forces.

[ER:] Well, I know that you have other Air Force um uh nationalities uh-uh with you in Korea and I wondered if the different nationalities get on well together.

[John C. Meyer:] Uh I have had very little personal experience with that, Mrs. Roosevelt, from all reports uh we've gotten along very well together. Those who uh have been fighting side by side have the mutual respect that men in combat generally do for their brother in arms.

[ER:] Do you expect to return to Korea, sir?

[John C. Meyer:] Uh no, ma'am, I don't expect to return to Korea. I hope that things will be over in a short enough period of time that uh my turn for rotation to Korea will not come up again.

[ER:] I-I hope that too with all my heart. Well now, I wonder if you'd tell us a little more about your old fighter group. Were there a number of aces from World War II in that group?

[John C. Meyer:] Yes, ma'am, we had quite a few of them. Uh Jim Jabara perhaps you recall returned here only a week or so ago and become the first uh jet ace in history, and he was a boy who destroyed in uh nine air craft during the last war over in uh in Europe. It is interesting to note that uh right after it was announced that Jim Jabara became the first jet ace in history and that we had destroyed thirty MiG-15s that Radio Peiping said that that was not so that they had the first jet ace in history uh a guy by the name of "One-Shot" Son who shot down one more airplane than Jabara, [Elliott Roosevelt laughs] and he shot them all down with just one shot. And that the uh people at Antung had destroyed thirty-two F8-86s. (33:48)

[ER:] That is wonderful, what tales can be told [ER laughs]. Well now, I, as an outsider, would feel that the enemy had a tactical advantage in Korea. Would that be your feeling or not?

[John C. Meyer:] The uh MiG-15 that uh we were fighting certainly had a tactical advantage in that he was fighting from behind a uh a sanctuary so to speak. The experience of us fighting with a MiG-15 along the Yalu River reminds me of the experiences I had when I was a youngster and some boy who was wearing glasses would step up and say uh-uh take his -- he would take his glasses off uh take a swing at me and before I quite knew what was happening he'd have the glasses back on saying "glasses, glasses."

[ER and Elliott Roosevelt laugh]

[ER:] That's a good one [ER laughs]. Well, I think you've pretty well given us the feeling that the experience of World War Two um has been a-better pilots where-whenever they've had that background of experience.

[John C. Meyer:] I think we could say our pilots are ring wise.

[ER:] Well, that um is very uh valuable to know because also one can feel that um they are gaining experience at the present all the time, which is valuable--

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Can I ask one personal question before you bring this uh [ER: Yes.] interview to a close? Would you say that our reconnaissance units in Korea were doing uh a good bang up job?

[John C. Meyer:] Yes, they are. We have a B-45 that we're using for reconnaissance in Korea, and uh they apparently are doing a very excellent job because whenever the B-45 gets up near the Yalu uh the boys from Andung take off in force and go after it very aggressively. They want that B-45 [Elliott Roosevelt: Mhm.] And every time they're up there we have to send up a very large force to escort them and uh they wouldn't be so interested if the B-45 and its reconnaissance business wasn't doing a first rate job.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Mhm.

[ER:] Well, I regret to say that it's time to bring this interview to an end but I'm sure it's been most interesting to our audience, and I hope that this experience is going to be so valuable that it will not be the beginning of World War III, but it will be the beginning of seeing some kind of chance to avoid World War III. I want to thank you, Colonel Meyer, very much for coming and being with me today.

[John C. Meyer:] Thank you, Mrs. Roosevelt. It was indeed a pleasure.

[Break 36:33 – 36:48]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Before we bring the program to a close there is a special announcement I'd like to read to you. The WAVES national reunion for 1951 will be held at the Benjamin Franklin Hotel, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on Saturday the twenty-eighth of July 1951. This reunion marks the ninth anniversary of passage of legislation authorizing the procurement of women for active duty in the US Navy. The first WAVE reunion in New York City, New York, in 1947 resulted from the enthusiastic response to a spontaneous idea: that Navy women might enjoy getting together once a year to bat the breeze with old shipmates. The reunions are planned and managed by a committee of inactive WAVE reservists or veterans with assistance from the assistant personal officer for women in the district in which held and are attended by WAVES of the regular Navy, the Naval Reserve and WAVE veterans. The fact that from five hundred to fifteen hundred waves had at their own expense attended past reunions is evidence of their love for and loyalty to the United States Navy. As a result of invitations graciously extended by the Mayor and the Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce the waves, who gathered in Chicago in 1950, chose Philadelphia for the 1951 reunion. When plans are completed information will be sent to WAVES in all parts of the United States. Meanwhile those interested in attending the reunion should write to WAVES Reunion Committee, Building number Four, US Naval Base Philadelphia 12, Pennsylvania. Hotel reservations should be made individually by writing Mr. Robert C. Bennett, Sales Manager, Benjamin Franklin Hotel, Ninth and Chestnut Streets Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I'll repeat those addresses. Those interested in attending the reunion should write to WAVES Reunion Committee, Building number Four, US Naval Base, Philadelphia Twelve, Pennsylvania. Hotel reservations should be made individually by writing Mr. Robert C. Bennet, Sales Manager Benjamin Franklin Hotel, Ninth and Chestnut Streets Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Any of the WAVES who will attend the reunion will remember the USS Ben Franklin, as WAVES quarters in Philadelphia during World War II.

[Break 39:36 - 39:42]

[Ben Grauer:] Friends, this is Ben Grauer speaking. You know vegetable soup without vegetables would be about as inspiring as apple pie without apples. When you serve Habitant vegetable soup don't ever worry about finding vegetables. Every can of Habitant vegetable soup is generously blessed with all kinds

of plump, juicy garden favorites, oodles of them. And the broth is extra rich because it's made from the natural vegetable juices. Perfect seasoning and slow simmering bring out the heavenly flavor of Habitant vegetable soup. One good spoonful deserves another and another until you're craving for good old fashioned home cooked soup is satisfied. Of course, you will enjoy just as much wonderful Habitant pea soup, the genuine old French Quebec-style pea soup and zesty tangy Habitant onion soup. Golden good aswim with tender juicy onion slices in pure meat broth. Whether you get the large family size or handy small cans, you'll truly enjoy Habitant vegetable soup, Habitant pea soup and Habitant onion soup. Get Habitant from your grocer in the yellow can. Now Elliott has a letter from a listener to discuss with Mrs. Roosevelt.

[Break 40:58 - 41:07]

[Ben Grauer:] Following our discussion period it's guest time now at *The Eleanor Roosevelt Program*. In just a moment eh Elliott is going to tell us about our guest who will be interviewed by Mrs. Roosevelt. I'm just glancing at the program listings for today on WNBC and they're a number of real favorites I'd like to just remind you about for your afternoon and evening listening. At two o'clock *Double Or Nothing*, a long time favorite radio quiz game, uh understand that May Jeffery of West New York, New Jersey, will be at the microphone and see whether-how May Jeffery gets along in the exciting *Double or Nothing* sweepstakes. In the evening, the second chapter of our new summer program *Pete Kelly's Blues* with its uh interesting and warm nostalgia of the 1920 period, also *The Falcon* at eight thirty *Mr. D.A. -- Mr. District Attorney* -- at nine thirty, *The Big Story* at ten, and Rex Harrison in the *Private Files of Rex Saunders* at ten thirty, all on WNBC afternoon and evening. And now here is Elliott Roosevelt to tell us about today's guest.

[Break 42:14 - 42:32]

[Ben Grauer:] We didn't realize just listening to Colonel Meyer uh chatting with the Roosevelts how the time had gone by. It is time for us to give our regular identification midway pause in our interview for today. This is WNBC AM and FM New York and you're listening to *The Eleanor Roosevelt Program* recorded in Mrs. Roosevelt's living room in the Park Sheraton Hotel in New York. Now here again is Elliott.

[Break 43:00 - 43:22]

[Ben Grauer:] This is Eleanor Roosevelt concluding her interview for today with uh America's top ranking air ace, just back from the fighting in Korea, Colonel John C. Meyer. Before we say good afternoon for today, I want to remind you again of some of the features on WNBC's listening schedule for to-this afternoon and evening. *Double or Nothing* at two o'clock this afternoon that longtime favorite radio quiz game. And the evening schedule includes some of the very attractive perennials of broadcasting on WNBC as *The Falcon* at eight thirty, *Mister District Attorney* at nine thirty, *Big Story* at ten, and Rex Harrison in *The Private Files of Rex Saunders* at ten thirty, and also the second chapter of the new program *Pete Kelly's Blues*. *Pete Kelley's Blues* goes on at eight o'clock tonight on WNBC and uh we'll have another chapter in this new series of jazz era dramas recreating some of the nostalgia of the 1920 period, the F. Scott Fitzgerald period. That's at 8 o'clock tonight on WNBC. This has been *The Eleanor Roosevelt Program*, recorded in Mrs. Roosevelt's living room at the Park Sheraton Hotel on the corner of 55th Street and 7th Avenue in New York City. Today Mrs. Roosevelt's guest was Colonel John C. Meyer. Tomorrow a motion picture star will be Mrs. Roosevelt's guest, Ralph Meeker, is currently starring in the film *Four In a Jeep*, which was filmed in Vienna and deals with some of the drama in connection with the four power occupancy of that ancient capital and of the tensions growing out of that borderline between the free west and communist Europe expressed in those four occupying powers in that Jeep in the film. Ralph Meeker tomorrow. On Friday July 13, a representative of CARE uh organization

will be with us. CARE as you know, to give its full title Committee for American Remittances to Europe, is the organization which through its food packages has been bringing much needed help not only to Europe to-but all around the world. In fact, Mr. Gregory who is public relations representative for CARE in South East Asia will speak of the problems of a relief worker in the Far East. On Monday, July 16, a very distinguished guest will be with Mrs. Roosevelt. The President of Ecuador, the Honorable Senior Galo Plaza. There's our guest list for the conclusion of this week and we certainly enlist your listening eh each day at the usual time. Mrs. Roosevelt and Elliott Roosevelt will be with you again tomorrow with film star Ralph Meeker and every day Monday through Friday from twelve thirty to one fifteen pm. Till tomorrow at the usual time then this is Ben Grauer bidding you good afternoon.

(46:30)

Transcribed from holdings at Franklin D. Roosevelt Library (FDRL)

File(s): 72-30 (196)

Transcription: Julia Goldman

First edit: Ruth Tornell

Final edit: Seth LaShier

The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project