

MRS. ELEANOR ROOSEVELT'S OWN PROGRAM

May 30, 1940

Description: Broadcast time 1:15-1:30 PM over the NBC Red Network. In this Memorial Day episode, ER interviews a student from Vassar College and a student from Rutgers University about how to deal with the issues of war, preparing for the future, and promoting peace around the world.

Participants: Eleanor Roosevelt, Ben Grauer, Hulda Rhodes, Edward Bouts, NBC Announcer

(45:26)

[Ben Grauer:] This is *Mrs. Roosevelt's Own Program*, presented by SweetHeart Soap.

[Theme music 45:31-43:57]

[Ben Grauer:] As Americans from coast to coast tune in these stations, we are privileged to present Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. These friendly visits come to you with the compliments of SweetHeart Soap, one of America's best-liked bath and beauty soaps. Today, Mrs. Roosevelt greets you from Radio City in New York, and now she's taking her place at the microphone. Ladies and gentlemen, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt.

[ER:] Good day ladies and gentlemen. This is Memorial Day, and on this day for many years in every village, town, and city in the United States, young and old have come to decorate the graves of those who gave their lives in defense of their country. At first, we fought a war to free ourselves from the mother country across the ocean and later we fought again with that same nation in 1812 to establish our intention of preserving the free use of the waterways of the world. There were other wars including a horrible one among ourselves to prove that we meant to remain one nation, and finally, a war to end war fought overseas.

Today, Memorial Day, must mean to every youngster in this country not only a day when we go to decorate the graves of those who fought here and in other countries, but they must remember that during this last war fought in Europe, many gave their lives in the belief that we were coming to a time when wars would be removed from the world in which the hope of civilization was to establish other methods of international understanding.

What are the thoughts in the minds of these young people today as they see soldiers march, as they listen to church services, and as they read the news of the world? We should make an effort to understand what they have in their minds for the responsibility for what we do in the future lies largely in their hands and they should be included in the formulating of any new policies. Like the rest of us they may have to suffer and give their lives to preserve the things we all hold dear. On their understanding of what they want in the future depends what will come out of this troubled and bewildering period.

I have therefore asked two young people to join me today and to tell you some of their thoughts as they face the present world. From Vassar College comes Miss Hulda Rhodes, and her home is in Kansas City, Missouri. Miss Rhodes is now twenty-one years old and in her senior year majoring in economics. Rutgers University sends us Mr. Edward Bouts, who lives in DuMont, New Jersey. Mr. Bouts has now reached his junior year. He's been earning his way through college as an NYA [National Youth Administration] student partially by working as swimming instructor at the university pool. (48:56)

Now that we know a little about our guests, we can go on to hear some of their views. Miss Rhodes, I'd like very much to have your viewpoint on the conditions resulting from the present European situation. In other words, what adjustments do you think will have to be made in our present way of life to meet the changing situation?

[Hulda Rhodes:] Well, Mrs. Roosevelt, about the only thing I am sure of is that we will have to make changes of some kind. I'm really not experienced enough to know what the changes should be but I do feel we'll all be much happier if we prepare ourselves now to make those changes.

[ER:] That's a good way of looking at it, Miss Rhodes. As a student of economics, you probably realize that lots of the troubles in the past could have been avoided if people had been more ready to make the changes that new conditions demanded. Have you thought of any adjustments that we'll have to make because of the possible economic changes in other parts of the world?

[Hulda Rhodes:] Of course as I see it, we already have made gradual changes in our economic life. And if some of the European countries had been as willing to change as we have, they have might have avoided many of their present troubles. I think as far as the future is concerned, we should continue to look for economic evils as they arise and try to correct them gradually.

[ER:] I'm glad to see you have an open mind about the future so that you won't be handicapped by opinions that are too set and rigid. Now here's another question I'd like to ask you. What kind of a peace would you like to work for in the changing world?

[Hulda Rhodes:] Well that's a pretty big order, Mrs. Roosevelt. I do know I want to work for a peace that's going to last. In other words, I don't want to work for a peace like that which followed the last war. I think that the statesmen will have to work out some way of making it possible for all the countries of the world to work together and live together.

[ER:] I agree with you there. Now here's something else I'd like to know. What are the things you feel are most vital to our defense?

[Hulda Rhodes:] Of course I'm not an expert who knows what kind of guns or airplanes we need, but I do know there's another kind of defense that we should build at the same time we're improving our military and naval defense. It won't help much to strengthen our anti-aircraft equipment if at the same time we don't strengthen our faith in our own democratic government.

[ER:] Miss Rhodes, it has been a pleasure to talk with you, and I'm sure that your thoughts on these important issues have been interesting to everyone in our audience. Thank you very much for visiting us.

[Hulda Rhodes:] Thank you, Mrs. Roosevelt. (51:25)

[ER:] And now before we introduce our next guest on this Memorial Day broadcast, let's listen to what Mr. Grauer has to tell us.

[Ben Grauer:] Thank you, Mrs. Roosevelt. Ladies, please don't think of SweetHeart Soap's five million new users as just another of those boxcar figures we're so used to these days. Think of them as five million individuals, folks like yourself and your friends. People who wanted a fine, pure soap with a lovely fragrance just as you do. Why, if even fifty of your friends decided to change to one single, favorite soap, you'd be pretty much impressed. You'd think it a wonderful recommendation. And SweetHeart's new friends alone number in round figures at least five million. Now, what's the reason for this dramatic nationwide trend? Friends, we invite you to make that your own personal discovery. Try

Sweetheart Soap this very day then see if you don't say, "there's no other soap like it." And now, we return the microphone to Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. (52:29)

[ER:] It has been a special pleasure for me to hear the views about the present world situation as expressed by Miss Rhodes. I believe her thoughts reflect the increasing interest of our younger women in politics and world affairs. I remember when I was a little younger than Miss Rhodes, I was spending my honeymoon traveling in Europe and went to stay in Scotland. Lady Helen [Hermione Hamilton-Temple-Blackwood, 1863-1941], wife of Ronald Ferguson, asked me to explain the difference between the state and federal governments in America. I remember my complete embarrassment in not being able to furnish a satisfactory explanation. But since then I have, like millions of other American women, made it my duty to learn about those things. And now, let us hear from our guest from Rutgers University who has come to give us his thoughts on this Memorial Day.

Mr. Bouts, you've already faced the problem of supporting yourself. Have you decided what you would like to make your life's work?

[Edward Bouts:] I've pretty well decided what I'd like to do, Mrs. Roosevelt, but I'm not yet sure how I'm going to do it. I've been studying business administration and I'd like eventually to do personnel work.

[ER:] That sounds like enjoyable and worthwhile work. Now, a little while ago Miss Rhodes told us that she felt it was necessary for young people to adapt themselves to ever-changing conditions. Do you agree with Miss Rhodes on that point?

[Edward Bouts:] I do and I don't, Mrs. Roosevelt. I think it's important to be ready for some changes, but I believe it's just as important to see that some things are not changed such as our free speech, our civil liberties, and all the other things we value in our democracy. The changes that I would like to see made are such things as making more work for those want it and more education for youth.

[ER:] I think that is just about what Miss Rhodes had in mind, but you have clarified the point a little more. Now, what about the question of national defense? I'm thinking more about those things of a non-military character. In other words, aside from mechanical equipment such as planes and battleships, are there any other ways which you think will help safeguard our nation?

[Edward Bouts:] Yes, Mrs. Roosevelt. I feel sure that our industrial system can equip us with the mechanical necessities for self-defense. But I think there are other important things: the health of our young people, for example, having enough to eat and proper medical care. In other words, the general well-being of the people, it seems to me, is very necessary to our national defense.

[ER:] I think that's a very good point, Mr. Bouts. Now let's try to look into the future to the time -- and we hope it will be soon -- when there is peace in the world again. What kind of a peace would you like to see, and how can we work towards it in a changing world such as we will probably have to face?

[Edward Bouts:] My answer to that, Mrs. Roosevelt, may sound a little simple, but it seems to me that if all the money that is now being spent on armaments and military equipment could be used for the benefits of the people, then there would be the kind of peace that I would like to see. If all the nations were at peace, trade would flourish and that would benefit us all.

[ER:] That sounds pretty easy, Mr. Bouts, but it looks as though we would have to use a good deal of money for armaments and military equipment before we can attain a world where all these things might be done away with. I have always felt, as you do, that when that is possible we can do a great deal more to

make life worth living for the people as a whole. I'm afraid, however, that the conditions as they are today make the kind of a peace you have in mind rather remote and not as easy to attain as one might wish. It is true that if one could have peace without armament and remove trade barriers, many countries would probably find themselves in much better condition and many reasons for war might be eliminated. I believe Miss Rhodes expressed herself as being opposed to the kind of peace that followed the last war. Miss Rhodes, would you prefer the kind of a peace that Mr. Bouts suggests? (56:45)

[Hulda Rhodes:] Well, I'm not sure I understand it. Mr. Bouts, you said that the money now being spent for armaments could be spent for the people. But isn't it true that by the time peace comes there will be little money left in Europe to help the people out of their misery?

[Edward Bouts:] I suppose that's true, Miss Rhodes, but I guess this country will have to help relieve the suffering after the war, and if it's for peace, I'm pretty sure we'll be willing to do it.

[ER:] You have evidently grasped the point, Mr. Bouts, that after the war it will undoubtedly be necessary to alleviate suffering. But just exactly what is going to be possible for us to do cannot be settled until the war comes to an end. Then and then only will we know what kind of a world we are living in. Then and then only can any of us begin to make up our minds as to what we, in this country, must work for and what we can do for the rest of the world. In the meantime, one thing is sure: all of us can prepare ourselves to be better citizens in our own country for the preservation of democracy, and that is important for the young people as well as their elders.

I am afraid that we have now come close to the end of our program, but I do wish to thank you, Miss Rhodes, and you too, Mr. Bouts, for an interesting and pleasant visit. (58:12)

[Hulda Rhodes:] Thank you, Mrs. Roosevelt.

[Edward Bouts:] Thank you.

[Ben Grauer:] Thank you very much, Mrs. Roosevelt. Well ladies, summer is practically here which makes this a fine season of the year for you to discover SweetHeart Soap. The long, hot days when you want so many extra baths and clean-ups, that's when you'll appreciate Sweetheart's wonderful gentleness most of all. It is so pure and therefore so mild that it can help even normally sensitive skin stay soft and smooth. Here's one soap you can enjoy as often as you want a refreshing bath or clean-up. Its gentle purity agrees with your skin. And remember: you're right in style this year with the SweetHeart complexion, that is your natural skin charm helped by SweetHeart's gentle, thorough cleansing. The cost? Only a few pennies for a big, oval cake. Get SweetHeart Soap this very day. It's a perfectly grand way to start your summer right.

[Theme music 59:10-59:27]

[Ben Grauer:] [music continues softly] And this brings us to the end of another informal visit with Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt. Mrs. Roosevelt comes to call again next Tuesday at this same time, over these same stations when we sincerely hope you'll all be with us. Meantime, be sure to provide yourself with the fine product that brings you these programs: SweetHeart Soap, famous for fifty years as the soap that agrees with your skin. And now it's goodbye until next Tuesday when you'll again hear [music crescendos, cuts] *Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt's Own Program*. This is Ben Grauer speaking. (1:00:01)

[NBC Announcer:] This is the National Broadcasting Company

[NBC chimes]

(1:00:10)

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