

## OVER OUR COFFEE CUPS

March 22, 1942

Description: ER defends President FDR and his administration, stating that they should not be the only ones held responsible for the wage and price freezes.

Participants: Eleanor Roosevelt

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ANNOUNCER: This is Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt's regular Sunday evening broadcast, sponsored by the Pan-American Coffee Bureau, representing eight Good Neighbor coffee-growing nations. Mrs. Roosevelt speaks to you this evening from Los Angeles, and a part of this great metropolis is Hollywood, glamour capital of the United States. Speaking of glamour, do you know a beauty secret of many of the famous motion picture stars here in Hollywood? When they are on the picture set...when they have to look their very best...they always take time out for a refreshing, relaxing cup of coffee. They find that coffee helps give them extra energy - extra steady nerves. They find coffee helps keep them fresh-looking, no matter how many retakes or how long the day's work on an important picture. Why not take a tip from your favorite glamour stars? After a hard day, when you wish to look your very best, why not try a cheery cup or two of delicious coffee. See for yourself how much it will do to make you look cheerful...attractive...bright eyed...vivacious! See for yourself how you can "GET MORE OUT OF LIFE WITH COFFEE."

And now we present Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt.

MRS ROOSEVELT:

Good evening. I want to point out a few things this evening which have been borne in upon me by newspaper comments, radio commentators and letters from certain individuals throughout the country. There seems to be a curious misconception in some people's minds as to what I meant when I said that I thought it would be well if women as well as men, could be registered and if people, as a whole, could be told where they were needed, when they were needed, and what they actually had to do. I consider registration valuable solely for the purpose of enabling the government to analyze the man and woman power available in the country to meet whatever needs may arise.

The implication in many statements I have seen seems to be that guiding people to useful work, is something which can only be done by the Federal Government. A very well known commentator remarked that people wanted leadership, but that the Administration was letting them down because it did not lead.

The gentleman seems to forget, and I think perhaps some of the rest of us forget, too, that in a Democracy leadership lies with the people, and that means that it lies in the individual [unclear] communities. That is one of the great lessons to be learned from John Steinbeck's latest novel.

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MRS ROOSEVELT: (CONTINUED)

No Administration can say to each one of us as individuals, "this is the particular job we want you to do" - but if we are registered and the registrations are classified, it will give our communities the opportunity to find out what they have to call on for their own use. Then when the state or the nation calls for people to meet specific needs, the communities can speak up and say, "We have the people to meet that need.. they have been doing thus and so for us .. and we would gladly relinquish them for service elsewhere if they are more needed.

I think this is something which, if we do not do it ourselves in our own communities, we will deeply regret later on, because we are learning now the technique of getting together, neighbor with neighbor, community by community, surveying our resources, seeing how best to meet the needs with the resources which we have before we call upon other communities to help us.

The problems are frequently of a nature where they require cooperation and direction from the state and Federal Government, but the things which knit us together as individuals into a community are our own particular interests in that community, and that is where we all long now to be called for service. That does not require leadership from the administration .. that requires recognition on the part of the Federal Government that total registration and analysis of people's capacities are necessary to assist the communities. On the part of the localities, it requires leadership to use their own citizens, and to prepare for present and future needs now.

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MRS ROOSEVELT: (CONTINUED)

Again it is not the President and the Administration who should be held solely responsible for policies such as freezing prices, profits and wages. People seem to forget that for a long time groups like the Chambers of Commerce have clamored for freezing of wages, but they haven't clamored for the freezing of profits and prices in the same way.

What really is necessary is for people as a whole to realize that these three go together. When they demand that action be taken along all three lines simultaneously, it will be quite easy for the Administration to follow the will of the people, whereas it is extremely difficult for any administration to bow before the will of certain interested groups and choose between them. That kind of Administration would mean that John Jones had his say today, and then you had to hurriedly recede from that position because you had overlooked John Smith's interests and this would lead to a chaotic and ever-changing policy with no unity and no consideration for the whole picture.

I think perhaps the best beginning in the way of meeting this whole question has been made in Morrow County, Ohio. There the county has one industry, so it is partly industrial, but also the center of a large agricultural area. The people themselves have begun to lead. To keep a movement going such as they have undertaken, requires stimulation on a wider scale. It may be necessary for many other communities to follow their example, and men of good will in states and, finally, even nationally, may have to back them up and work with them, but they are leading.

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MRS ROOSEVELT: (CONTINUED)

I am not minimizing the value of what the higher-ups can do, but the beginnings I firmly believe must come from the grass roots. This is in all-out war and curiously enough I think victories are dependent upon what we do, each one of us, at home in our community; upon our determination which we build in ourselves and in our communities to win in the end.

Again the John Steinbeck book comes to mind and the remark that herd-men win battles, but free men can fight on in defeat so they win wars. Those are significant words but they point to the fact that in a war such as we are now engaged in, the state of mind of the people has to be created, community by community. They have to decide as workers that they are going to do the kind of work in factories which makes production possible. They have to decide as employers that they are going to allow that kind of rapid production, that they are going to expand, even if they do not see what will be the result when the war is over. They are going to organize so as to reduce shortages of materials whenever possible and they are going to watch the health situation on every front and see to it that every willing labor-man may be used to the maximum.

The farmers and their wives will have to realize that what was once a necessary frame of mind, a frame of mind brought about by an economy which mean scarcity for many people, is now over. What we need now is abundance which may wipe out certain agricultural plans of the past, but now we are planning for the present and the future.

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MRS ROOSEVELT: (CONTINUED)

The production of food of every kind in abundance is war work today, war work for men and women on the farms. This work will be wasted, however, by a poor marketing system and here the localities and states and the Federal Government will have to coordinate production and marketing.

These things were all realized in Morrow County, Ohio. On February 22<sup>nd</sup>, the people met in Opera House in Mt. Giliad, Ohio, decided to mobilize their entire community on the domestic front and adopted as their slogan, "Production, Now!" This is a simple plan and a natural out-growth of community life within our own experience.

There are four basic steps:

The people meet, agree there's a job to do.

The people count their facilities for doing the job – tools, techniques, talents.

The people measure their facilities against the work to be done, and work out new uses of those facilities where necessary.

The people tackle the jobs.

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MRS ROOSEVELT: (CONTINUED)

In the words of the author of this plan, Mr. Frederick B. Sweet:

~~"Production, now!" is advanced as a practical program for creating the broadest possible popular base of participation in the job of war production. Without the enthusiastic and knowledgeable support of the people themselves, that job cannot be geared to its highest potential. And that kind of support is not possible without participation by everybody concerned.~~

~~"It is a matter of first importance that the American people bear constantly in mind the purpose of this unsought struggle; to rid the earth of a philosophy opposed to the interests of the plain people of all lands. A corollary to that purpose is the common character of the struggle among the peoples of all lands, and the responsibility for success in the struggle among the people of America itself. Unless it be made unmistakably clear that this is a people's war, that the people themselves understand it as such and that it can be won by the fighting and working of the people themselves, then there is grave danger that it will be followed by a peace which is not a people's peace.~~

~~"In the light of the Truman, Tolan, Vinson, Roberts and Murray reports, there can be no doubt that there remains to be released the vast energy, creative enthusiasm and production genius of the grassroots – of the little people of America. The plan presented here is meant to tap the eagerness of all America to share, each in his own way, the task at hand: winning a war.~~

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MRS ROOSEVELT: (CONTINUED)

~~"It is a plan for countryside mobilization for war production. It proposes a new pattern for action to meet a new situation. It requires the formation of a community-wide base among workers, farmers, housewives, little businessmen. It calls for leadership capable of understanding plain people and the part they must play."~~

~~So much for the philosophy that underlies this plan. Here is what was done. Eighty people met together – they were members of the county trade union, Grange and farm bureau members, American Legionnaires, Daughters of the American Revolution, preachers, teachers, Federal Agency representatives, county and townships officials. There were men from the management side of the county's only industry...there were a large number of women and young people. They had some tough propositions to consider. First, the farmer brought up his problem:~~

~~"Up on our place this year we'll grow spuds enough to feed 10,000 soldiers for a year, at three bushels per man. But we've got to get spray materials, and labor or we can't deliver the goods. This "Production, Now!" idea sounds like a good way to get the whole country busy breaking bottlenecks."~~

~~The president of the local union:~~

~~"Our guys, some of them, are driving 25 to 30 miles to work. We're going to be running out of tires. Maybe this "Production, Now!" will be what we need to get the whole country helping us work out a car-pooling plan, or some bus lines, so we can get to work to build the presses that have got to build the bombers that got to relieve MacArthur."~~

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MRS ROOSEVELT: (CONTINUED)

Then the suggestions began to come. The vocational agriculture teacher: "we've got about three times as much machine power on our farms in this county as we'd need if it was all used efficiently. This year we're going to be short of hands. We'll have to make those machines do more work. Looks like "Production, Now!" is what we need to take a census of tractors, combines, cornpickers and such. We could spot them on a big county map, and a man in Washington Township wouldn't have to chase all the way to South Bloomfield to get his beans cut, if he found there was a combine for hire right down the road."<sup>22</sup>

From a housewife:

"Why not get the papers to print low cost menus worked out by different ladies in the county, so our men and children can get most strength at the least cost? And why couldn't the women who live in town go out and help farm wives with the housework while the farm women are helping in the fields? And is there any reason why we women shouldn't catalogue all the available rooms for refugees in the county, in case of bombing attacks along the coasts?"

There is no dearth of ideas anywhere when the people of a community get together.

Finally they decided on the machinery to keep their idea going. They selected a committee including representatives of all the groups present. These met and nominated a slate of permanent officers, arranged an agenda and planned several special projects on which work could be undertaken the following Monday morning.

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MRS ROOSEVELT: (CONTINUED)

These are the kind of plans and groups which the defense councils all over the country must be deeply grateful for when they find them cropping up. Every defense council must, I think, set to work to find out how it can possibly help any groups of this type to carry out its plan successfully.

I could tell you many more specific things they are planning, but I have time for just one or two more examples. They decided to establish a pool of usable machinery parts found in farm junk piles so that if a shortage occurred there would be a place where people could go to find material for minor repairs.

The farmers are estimating their labor needs and making a survey of the county before they contact the State Employment Service in search for man power. If it is impossible to obtain in that way, they have a plan ready in their minds which they will work out to meet the emergency.

The local union has organized a special production committee to sit down with management to work out answers to production problems and any number of other things are being tried. Some of them will succeed and some of them will not, but out of it all will come a real participation of every individual and a realization that in doing your own work, you are doing war work.

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MRS ROOSEVELT: (CONTINUED)

Before closing I want to say a word especially to the women of the Nation. A group of three women farm leaders representing their organizations, came to see me not long ago. They were distressed because so many women feel that to really do war work they must leave their homes; whereas if the goals set for farmers alone are to be met it will probably require the full time work of every man, woman, and older child on the farm to meet them.

I wish citations could be given to women who raise their egg, milk and vegetable quotas in this coming year, so that they would realize what their work will mean in the war effort as a whole. Of course, if one has spare time there is Red Cross work and community work to do. But when you have a skill and a job which is vital to the war effort, you are doing war work in doing that job...and that goes for the women who are doing their jobs as stenographers, or as chemists or as housewives. Scientists or scrub-woman, whatever you may be doing, you are doing war work if you do your job well and contribute to the efficiency of the whole community set-up.

ANNOUNCER: Thank you, Mrs. Roosevelt.

At the beginning of this broadcast we called Hollywood the glamour capital of the United States...and so it is! But these days this part of the country, all of Los Angeles, is much more than that. For Los Angeles is a great American coastal city on the alert for any enemy tricks. Los Angeles is a city of busy people –

working not only at their own daily tasks, but at the extra tasks of community and national defense. That's why so much coffee is being enjoyed here in Los Angeles. For busy Los Angeles folks have discovered that coffee gives them the extra energy – the extra steady nerves they need for their work...that coffee helps them get more out of each precious moment of relaxation. In other words, Los Angeles knows how to "GET MORE OUT OF LIFE WITH COFFEE."

Next week, at this same time, Mrs. Roosevelt will be with us again to give another of her vital and interesting talks on world events.

Until then, this is \_\_\_\_\_, saying good evening for the Pan-American Coffee Bureau. And remember, you too can "GET MORE OUT OF LIFE WITH COFFEE."

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