

## THE ELEANOR ROOSEVELT PROGRAM

April 26, 1951

Description: In the opening segment, ER and Elliott Roosevelt respond to a listener's question about whether or not people who admit to having former Communist affiliations should have their livelihoods jeopardized because of it. In the interview segment, ER's guest is Paul Hoffman, author of *Peace Can Be Won*.

Participants: ER, Elliott Roosevelt, Paul Hoffman

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[ER:] This is Eleanor Roosevelt speaking. Elliott and I are very happy to be able to bring you this program each day from my living room here in the Park Sheraton Hotel in New York City. I hope you find the program we planned for today an interesting one. Elliott, will you tell us about it please?

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Thank you Mother, I will. Mr. Paul Hoffman has just completed writing a book in which he sets down a blueprint for a free world, and presents his recommendations for what must be done now to achieve peace. It's a privilege to have Mr. Hoffman with us today, and Mrs. Roosevelt will introduce him a little later on in the program. Today's mail has an interesting subject for discussion, which I'll bring up as soon we've heard from the sponsors who make this recorded program possible.

[Break 0:58-1:16]

[Elliott Roosevelt:] The letter that I want to read uh in part today is from Long Island City, Mother. It attaches a clipping covering Larry Parks' recent confession that at one time he was a communist. After her opening, the writer says, "According to the clipping I've attached, Larry Parks, star of *The Jolson Story*, said his movie career probably was ended by his testimony yesterday that he belonged to a film actors communist cell from 1941 to 1945. My question is not about Mr. Parks, it's about anyone who is now in this position. Do you believe a career should be jeopardized when the individual has had the courage to admit openly his former connection with the communists? If not, how should such an individual be thought of by all the people whose loyalty never slipped?"

[ER:] No, I think that um someone who definitely acknowledges that at one period he was uh a communist uh and that he changed and is able to prove his change by his actions um should be accepted just as anyone else is who's made a mistake and realizes his mistake. It shouldn't jeopardize a career, it shouldn't make them a useless um citizen of their o-of the country.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well we've talked about this before, and uh I sometimes wonder uh for instance, a c-a person who has become a communist has signed an oath to take all steps, even to complete ah outright lie, uh to be willing to sign an oath of allegiance which he doesn't even propose to live up to, uh and to destroy his country if necessary by force. Uh how much should you believe in anybody who's ever signed such a statement, a belief of purpose?

[ER:] Well I-I didn't realize that anyone who um [coughs] who joined in the past would have a rea-um to sign an oath as specific as that. I thought that many people had joined in the past uh without having signed anything as specific. And um that in many cases, particularly in the case of young people -- I have very little use for mature people who were grown up and who, accepted over a period of-- number of years, uh domination over their minds which very soon they would discover once they were members of the Party. But where young people are concerned, I've always felt that there was quite um an idealistic

appeal uh at one period when democracy did not seem to be meeting all the needs of people, and uh that it would not be surprising if a number of young people had actually believed in the idealism that was held out and –

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Do you think that that is true of the period of 1941?

[ER:] Well, I would not have felt it as true then as I did back in '29 [Elliott Roosevelt coughs] um [Elliott Roosevelt and ER overlap] and the early 30s –

[Elliott Roosevelt:] And the early 30s, when our economic condition was such that no young person could really find a job.

[ER:] -- Could get a chance. I felt then it was much more understandable. I don't understand it in '41. Um the only thing that I suppose might be possible was that um, there might have been among intellectuals a feeling that this was a great model experiment, and that uh possibly something very remarkable was coming out of it. I-I don't remember myself any great movement of that kind in the early 40's, but there might have been among some of the intellectuals.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well, not taking up Mr. [ER: In my point of view.] Parks' case as a specific one, but uh taking it generally speaking, uh where uh you are subpoenaed to appear to answer the question as to whether you are a communist or not, or have been a communist or not, uh and you are morally certain that the records are in the hands of the government, uh is there not a certain uh benefit that might accrue to making a clean breast of it in comparison to the people that hide behind the Constitution and say it might incriminate me if I answered such a question?

[ER:] Well, I think it's always much better to tell the truth anyway, and I think if you have anything and are really sorry about it, it's much better to say.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well, let's say that –

[ER:] But even if you were doing it from a selfish motive, it probably would be. It has been um -- that's why I said that I had very little use for mature people who had accepted ah communism for a number of years, because that domination of your mind is sure to come out after a few years. [Elliott Roosevelt: Let me ask you another question.] And if you are mature, I have very little use for those people, even when they confess, [Elliott Roosevelt: Right.] I have very little faith in them.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] All right. That goes for quite a number of people today. Uh now I'd like to uh to put a question to you: supposing you're a communist, and you knew that the records had fallen into the hands of the government, uh wouldn't the-it be much the smartest thing from the standpoint of the go-of of the communist uh-uh high command to advise you to go on and admit that you had been a communist, but that you had repented your ways? And that uh you had become a very misleading and a very useful uh person to throw in disrepute uh much of the democratic system by throwing misleading accusations against public figures? Uh, I have a very definite feeling that the Communist Party is employing that technique today, and that there are many people who are admitting to having been communists who are now appearing as witnesses uh against supposedly former cell mates and so forth, and I'm not at all sure that there isn't a great deal going on in this country today which is communist-inspired to undermine the faith of the people [ER: In their own leaders. Yes.] in their own government and their own leaders.

[ER:] I think that's very likely, very likely. But I don't know how you are to-to be sure.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well, wouldn't it be best to look with suspicion upon anybody who ever was a communist member -- not bar them from work, not bar them from citizenship, not bar them from uh activities, but I certainly wouldn't be inclined to take anybody who'd uh had agreed to lie, do anything necessary to further the communist cause, to believe that they had turned around and would never lie again.

[ER:] Well in other words, you wouldn't put them in government work where they could be harmful, and I wouldn't either.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Nor would I use them as primary witnesses uh to convict people. [ER: No, I wouldn't either, no.] Now I'm not saying that eh-that uh that the convictions of people who have been convicted because of the testimony of communists is wrong, uh or former communists, but I'm-I'm throwing a very serious question for to --

[ER:] -- Whether that is one of the ways that the communists use to destroy competence. I think it's very likely, and um I don't think they should be used, I don't think I would choose them as witnesses, I don't think I would trust them. Um, but I would not bar them from earning a living, and I would not um uh -- but I would certainly bar them from any kind of government work.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Oh, most definitely. But I-I'm very much interested--

[ER:] And I would probably keep a watchful eye on them.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] I think that [laughs] probably would be a very good thing to do. But I'm afraid that uh today, most people uh in high government position are-are not looking upon self-confessed communists as people who are not to be trusted, they are leaning more and more heavily upon them.

[ER:] Well I never have, I have always felt that I would be uh suspicious of-of anyone who was self-- and then turned states evidence, then-then offered [Elliott Roosevelt: Yes.] uh to tell about other people.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Well, in other words, in answer to today's question, uh which is uh should such an individual be thought of by all -- uh how should such people-person be thought of by all the people whose loyalty never slipped, you wouldn't trust them necessarily, [ER: No.] but you certainly wouldn't bar them from earning a living.

[ER:] No.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] Okay, I hope that answers this lady's question, and now I see that we must go on to another part of our program.

[Break 11:40-11:59]

[ER:] In a new book entitled *Peace Can Be Won*, published last month, Mr. Paul Hoffman sets down a plan for waging the peace upon four fronts: military, economic, political, and psychological. I'm very glad that today's program is going to give us the opportunity to have Mr. Hoffman himself talk about the plan he's outlined in his new book. And it was very nice of you, Mr. Hoffman, to take this time away from your duties at the Ford Foundation to be with us. I'm very glad to have you here.

[Paul Hoffman:] Thank you very much, Mrs. Roosevelt.

[ER:] I'm told you are referring to your book *Peace Can Be Won* as a cookbook, Mr. Hoffman. Why is this?

[Paul Hoffman:] Well, partly because I know my own limitations as an author. Uh it's short on rhetoric, but I do believe it has practical suggestions, and it -- perhaps a prac-practical recipe uh for waging the peace.

[ER:] Well, I call that uh a cookbook for the peace, which I think is a very good thing to have! Do you feel that war is inevitable, so that we should avoid another Pearl Harbor by starting a preventive war?

[Paul Hoffman:] Well I'm a bit simple-minded Mrs. Roosevelt, I never could see how you could-how you could prevent a war uh by starting a war. [ER laughs] And -- [ER: I agree with you.] Furthermore, I don't believe that we're faced by such a direful dilemma that we have no choice but to take mankind into another global war. I think that any attempt to crush communism with atom bombs would miss the objective. That would be about the same as a bull that charges the cape, instead of the matador.

[ER:] Well I think I agree with you again, sir. Is there any possibility of appeasing the present regime in Russia?

[Paul Hoffman:] Uh, I don't think so. Uh to my mind, trying to appease the present regime in Russia is, as Senator [Arthur] Vandenberg once said, surrender on an installment plan. [ER laughs] Uh at the present time, it's useless to try to do business with Stalin because his price is too high. That doesn't mean that we shouldn't always be willing to talk, but as of the moment, Mr. Stalin's price is that we cease re-arming Western Europe, we put Germany, Eastern Germany, under the Soviets and share the supervision of Western Germany with the Soviets, and as far as Southeast Asia is concerned, in fact all of Asia, uh he wants the free world included out.

[ER:] Well that's perfectly true. I think he'd just like not to have any free world. Would it be cheaper to spend our money in building up our own defenses without spending so much money in Western Europe?

[Paul Hoffman:] I-I wouldn't know how to do it. Uh I don't think it would be -would be cheaper, and I don't think it would work. I doubt that any defense could be devised to offer us safety if Western Europe were to be overrun by the Soviet Union. If --

[ER:] I'm delighted to hear you say that.

[Paul Hoffman:] Well I believe it very firmly, and I have seen quite a little of Western Europe in the last few years, and I've seen a great deal of the United States.

[ER:] Well I'm very happy because that's been my own feeling, and yet I, uh every now and then, get letters from people and so forth who uh say, "Oh, Western Europe is just a liability and uh if Stalin -- Stalin will surely overrun it, and if he does it will be a weight on him, and if we try and do anything it will be a weight on us," and I have a feeling that's very foolish reasoning because he would have an enormous productive capacity if he could take Western Europe. So that I uh personally um am terribly glad to hear that you, who know so much about it actually, have the same feeling that I have.

[Paul Hoffman:] Uh, I think that there's a real possibility that even if Stalin took Western Europe, that he couldn't hold it. I don't believe you could, that the s-the Kremlin could digest two hundred and seventy million Europeans. But it would bring a very dark period on the world if Stalin took Western Europe. It would be a period in which we would, by throwing radar rings around Rapid City, attempt to defend our country. We'd spend an untold amount of money. I think you'd find us rushing in, trying uselessly to spend a hundred and twenty-five, a hundred and fifty billion dollars, and in the process of that kind of expenditure, we'd lose the very freedoms we were trying to defend.

[ER:] Yes, I think that's quite true. Now I'd like to ask you something else: do you believe that the State Department should continue to administer the Voice of America? Because of course, I consider that part of our defense, and I –

[Paul Hoffman:] Well I think that the Voice of if -- if by the Voice of America you mean the entire program of information that's going out from me-from America, or the entire effort to wage the peace on a psychological front? Uh—

[ER:] Oh, well nobody could administer that.

[Paul Hoffman:] That's-that's correct, but still, the informational program is a very important part of that program. Now I-I believe, it's my opinion that we must create a single independent overseas information agency and give it clear-cut authority. Uh this is no reflection on the State Department, because I think they have the enormous responsibility of forging a foreign-- a positive foreign policy for us and administering that, and I think they should operate in the field of high policy uh rather than uh be an operational agency. In other words, I conceive their function as a very great s-staff function. I don't believe that the propaganda activities are any longer-should only-- any longer constitute a left-handed job for an agency of a department of government with other pursuits as its first concern.

[ER:] You would consider that it should undertake all the type of information that goes out, then, [Paul Hoffman: Well -- ] as a separate agency?

[Paul Hoffman:] I think my conviction on that flows from the fact that as-that ECA [Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs] was an independent agency working within the framework of policy set down by the State Department. I think there was general agreement that that division of responsibility worked well. [ER: Yes.] Uh it gave us in ECA the opportunity to make the kind of quick decisions you have to make when you're on-- out in the front line. At the same time, it was perfectly clear to us at all times that it was the State Department that was laying down the policy.

[ER:] I-I can understand that. Now what would be the cost of your program for waging the peace?

[Paul Hoffman:] Well, I think that your huge cost, somewhat paradoxically, of the program for waging the peace at the present time is on the military front. In other words, at this unhappy moment in world history, we have to wage the peace at high cost by building our defenses against Soviet aggression. I'm talking now about the free world, uh but particularly uh United States. I think that we can wage the peace on the other three fronts, that is the economic front, uh the political front, and the informational front, at a cost of not over three billion dollars a year. I don't think the fifty billion we're now having to spend -- we'll have to spend for the next three years, then perhaps we can drop down on our military expenditures to thirty billion. I don't think the fifty billion or the thirty billion will be meaningful unless we spend the three.

[ER:] Unless you spend the [Paul Hoffman: The spend -- ] money for the other programs, too.

[Paul Hoffman:] Unless you -- that's right, unless you appropriate -- [ER coughs] this is a-a thing that isn't recognized is that the Kremlin is carrying on its program for world conquest on four fronts. And we've got to wage the peace on four fronts in order uh to win the peace.

[ER:] Well now, many people doubt whether we can support such a program without uh causing a permanent inflation in this country. How do you feel about that?

[Paul Hoffman:] Well, I think that if we act courageously, as a people, if we support very unpopular moves such as higher taxes, if all of us are willing to make the necessary sacrifice, we can carry the present projected program without further inflation. We've had too much inflation; we've had unnecessary inflation because we have not acted with the speed and courage we should. But if we put the waging of peace as close to a pay-as-you-go basis as possible, we can avoid inflation.

[ER:] Well now, there's always the other side, besides the uh money side of it, can you support such a program without giving up some of our civil liberties?

[Paul Hoffman:] [sighs] Let me begin the answer to that question by saying that a decade of tension lies ahead! The Kremlin, as you well know, is quite deliberately creating-uh creating uh t-tensions and fears, which without our alertness will result in ill-considered or even hysterical actions. We must examine every proposal to curtail either civil or economic liberties as to their long-term effects. I believe we can avoid losing our civil liberties if we refuse to descend to witch hunting, but instead keep the Bill of Rights as real as today, and as up to date as tomorrow.

[ER:] Well now, I -- we have so little more time, I'm going to ask you just one question: how can private people outside of the government help in spreading propaganda about democracy?

[Paul Hoffman:] Well, I think in addition to the overseas information administration mentioned earlier, we should inspire and promote, and if necessary, help finance a non-governmental propaganda agency to supplement the work of such a government body, and to do some of the things that are outside of the province of government. The kind of agency I'm talking about should enlist millions of average men and women under its banners in a crusade for the free world doctrine. It should thus answer the question, "what can I do?" The people should be trained as a nucleus of oral missionaries here and abroad. [Elliott Roosevelt: unclear]

[ER:] Now I'm sorry that we have to stop a minute so that our announcer can have a word, but we'll come right back to this discussion.

[Break 23:29-23:36]

[ER:] Now I'm glad to come back to the discussion with Mr. Paul Hoffman, who is head of the Ford Foundation. And um I think I shall begin by asking you right away-ay what the difference is between information and propaganda, Mr. Hoffman?

[Paul Hoffman:] Well, he-there's quite a difference. I think that information endeavors to report the facts, and propaganda endeavors to persuade to a point of view. Propaganda uh contains uh-in it the eleme-uh-the element of propagating a faith.

[ER:] Why, I see. I had never really thought of those as separated quite as clearly as that. Uh one is really the knowledge of um of what actually is the case uh-eh which you want to state to people, and the other is really to be able to make them believe that you are stating the truth. [Paul Hoffman: That's right.] Uh that I find is sometimes very difficult with people who don't um know this country. For instance, within the United Nations, [Paul Hoffman: That's right.] I find they frequently, even when we say our intentions are thus and so, uh-don't believe us.

[Paul Hoffman:] That's correct. I think that it's one thing to give the facts; that's reporting, and that's information. But I happen to believe that we have a right to have a fighting faith in democracy, and therefore we have a right to attempt to persuade, to propagate that faith.

[ER:] Well that's a very good way to look at it. Now, you've interviewed many European statesmen recently. How do they feel about the chances of war in Europe in the near future?

[Paul Hoffman:] Well, that question is a little difficult to answer in the form in which it is asked. Many of the leaders I talked to had widely differing opinions as to the chance of war, but there was one point on which everyone agreed, and that was that the situation would be vastly improved once the free world attained what was described as a posture of defense.

[ER:] As posture of defense.

[Paul Hoffman:] Tha-those words came from George Washington, and have been used very often by General George Marshall. That America should attain a "posture of defense," which is something very different than the building of an army for aggression. [ER coughs]

[ER:] Of course it is. But I think it's an excellent uh -- I didn't remember um hearing eh General Marshall uh say those words, but I think that's an excellent way to put it. I'm very glad you brought that out. Um now, what is your feeling about continuing our support of the United Nations?

[Paul Hoffman:] Well my answer to that question can be very brief. The United Nations is a major vehicle for our e-for our efforts toward unity and dealing with other peoples. We must support it unstintingly.

[ER:] I agree with you, but I find uh a number of people in this country who have very little knowledge of what goes on in the United Nations and who are quite apathetic uh about it, which troubles me because I look upon the United Nations as machinery which has to be made to work by the peoples of the world. And when I find that in our own country, there are people who know as little about any uh achievement uh in the United Nations, I get really troubled for fear we are going to fall down out of sheer lack of knowledge.

[Paul Hoffman:] I think one of the difficulties is that the United Nations in the first instance was over-sold. People thought it would produce a magical result and quickly –

[ER:] I think they thought it would bring us peace [Paul Hoffman: At once.] just on a platter, at once.  
[Paul Hoffman:] On a platter, at once. And now, at the present time, I think they underestimate what the United Nations must do. Because without a United Nations, without a place where people of divergent views, or if I can speak colloquially, where the good boys and the bad boys can all gather and talk things out, there might very well be fighting instead of talking.

[ER:] Well that's exactly what I feel about it. But um I-I've been quite shocked occasionally at reactions from people, even some of them people of influence in their communities, big businesspeople, and people who just seem to feel that um, "oh, this was just a debating society."

[Paul Hoffman:] Well I wish you hadn't said just big businesspeople, because I don't think that [laughs] -- I think that business -- I think that –

[ER:] Well I think sometimes -- I find it among all the poorer people – [Paul Hoffman: Oh.] a lot of really um just everyday people who just don't want to be bothered to think about it.

[Paul Hoffman:] I think most of the businessmen I know who have dealt in business in a large way, or large business, uh just realize that America cannot prosper in isolation. So I don't think that you find among uh businessmen of large affairs uh any- [ER and Paul Hoffman overlap] -much trace of isolation.

[ER:] No, I was thinking primarily of those I've seen in-in small towns.

[Paul Hoffman:] Well, that's a lack of information.

[ER:] Yes, that's what it probably is. Well now, in your book, you propose an overseas economic administration. Would you explain what you mean by this?

[Paul Hoffman:] Well I-I mean just this. Uh that at the present time, there are numerous uh-government agencies uh that have uh some say-so as to what happens when American dollars go abroad for the-her purpose of aiding uh foreign nations or foreign peoples. I think the only way that we can get the greatest value out of dollars we send out is to have all those dollars go out under the direction of a single agency that's thinking in terms of how those dollars can best be used uh to promote economic welfare. And I would like to say this, that I think we have every right in thinking about whether to send those dollars out, as to whether its good business to send the dollars out. In other words, in handling the affairs of ECA, I never felt that I was handling a charitable undertaking. I felt -- [ER: You shouldn't.] I felt that I was acting much as I would've acted if I'd been in business and was putting direct-was directing the flow of a few dollars uh into promoting the kind of a business world in which we could do business. And I feel the same way about an overseas economic administration. An overseas economic administration with very few dollars, I'm thinking in terms of two billion dollars a year, could in my opinion do a great deal to help bring into being a prosperous world. And if we want to prosper in business, we do business in a prosperous world.

[ER:] Well now, an overseas economic administration of that kind, which would be, I gather, a United States overseas [Paul Hoffman: That's right.] economic administration would have to cooperate, wouldn't it, with the United Nations. [Paul Hoffman: Certainly.] Now, would it cooperate by grants to certain things that you had decided were good ways uh to use American dollars, therefore you would put your American dollars with the dollars coming from the United Nations to accomplish some specific end, or would you still ask the United Nations to put uh the United States in charge of some specific thing? Which is the way that you would feel that should be?

[Paul Hoffman:] Well I-I don't think you could settle those uh questions except -- where we get answers-answers to those questions except as the particular situation arose. All I can tell you is that working pretty much around the world. Uh --

[ER:] But they must work together, I imagine.

[Paul Hoffman:] Oh yes, working pretty much around the world. We never found any difficulty in working with the people from the United Nations who were on the working front. It's only back in the offices you get the jurisdictional problems, you see. [ER: Oh yeah.] In other words, when it came right down to getting results in Korea, or in other countries where the United Nations and the US were both operating, uh generally you found a dedication to a job. And with that the absence of any friction. I-I happen to feel that the first step is to coordinate our own activities; that sometime in the future, it might be very well to coordinate activity with other nations. But as of the moment, in view of the fact that it's our dollars that are being put up, I think that our dollars should have American direction, but the kind of intelligent direction uh that knows that you don't send those dollars out uh with-with uh labels on them uh --

[ER:] And doesn't work across purposes to any other --

[Paul Hoffman:] And you don't work across purposes, no.

[ER:] To any other work that's being done, [Paul Hoffman: Yes, that's right.] because um it seems to me that a duplication, um -- and that's one of the things that I sometimes worry about within the United Nations, uh if they don't coordinate programs by working together, they may get into real trouble, and-- and so that's one of the things that bothers me. Do you believe, Mr. Hoffman, as a closing question, that the free world can triumph over communism without actually going to war?

[Paul Hoffman:] Oh, I'm-I am-I'm sure we can. Uh, I think that if the free world uh acts with common sense and acts cooperatively, uh there's every reason to have hope that we can avoid World War Three and lay the basis for an enduring peace.

[ER:] That's the most encouraging thing that uh anyone has said to me in some time, and it coincides exactly with uh what I think myself, so I'm more grateful that you know for your being willing to come on the program today and, and I realize how difficult it is for you to take the time, and I want to thank you very much for doing it, Mr. Hoffman.

[Break 34:45-35:03]

[ER:] A topic of great importance, especially at this time of year, is cancer. I say at this time of year because April is Cancer Control Month, so proclaimed by the president. Cancer is not the hopeless subject so many of us unfortunately think it is. It can be cured. Last year alone, more than seventy thousand cancer patients were saved through radiation treatments and surgery. The important thing to know is how to recognize the early warning signals of the disease, and then to visit your physician at once. I am not qualified medically to delve into all the facts about cancer, but if you want to learn them, write to your unit of the American Cancer Society. The people there will be very happy to send you without charge their booklet of vital information. Of course, as you all know, the fight against cancer is far from won. Research scientists must continue to follow the many roads which may lead to new techniques and methods of analyzing and treating cancer, perhaps even to an overall cure. But this terribly important research cannot continue without our help. We must strike back at cancer. We must guard our families by joining the American Cancer Society's 1951 crusade. Help the ACS in its lifesaving programs of research, year-round education, and service for patients. Mail your contribution today to cancer, c-a-n-c-e-r, care of your local post office.

[Elliott Roosevelt:] And now it's time to close the program and to remind you that you've been listening to the Eleanor Roosevelt Program, which comes to you each Monday through Friday at this same time. And this is Elliott Roosevelt speaking and wishing you all good day.

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