

PAN-AMERICAN COFFEE BUREAU SERIES

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Description: ER interviews Leo S. Rowe, Director General of the Pan-American Union, then discusses her resignation from the Office of Price Administration.

Participants: ER, Leo S. Rowe

[Dan Seymour:] This is Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt's regular Sunday evening broadcast, sponsored by the Pan-American Coffee Bureau, representing seven good neighbor nations. This evening, Mrs. Roosevelt has as her guest Dr. Leo S. Rowe, Director General of the Pan-American Union. But first a word on that vastly important Latin American subject, coffee.

Every day more and more people thank us for suggesting that they drink more coffee, for they find that coffee does help give them extra energy, extra steady nerves. They find that coffee does help them get more out of their work, more out of every moment of relaxation, and of course they also find that the more coffee you drink, the more you like coffee. For every cup of coffee is the same refreshing, delicious taste experience. Have you tried drinking an extra cup with your lunch, an extra cup during that mid-afternoon let down period, an extra cup with your evening meal? If you have, then you know what we mean when we say "get more out of life with coffee." And now we present Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt.

[ER:] Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Tonight, I have as my guest Dr. Leo S. Rowe, Director General of the Pan-American Union, who has just returned from a meeting of the ministers of foreign affairs of the American republics, held at Rio de Janeiro. Will you tell us something of the background of this meeting, Dr. Rowe?

[Dr. Leo Rowe:] Certainly, Mrs. Roosevelt. Since 1890, the American republics have met periodically in what are popularly known as Pan-American conferences. The outbreak of the European war led to a new series of meetings known as meetings of consultation of the ministers of foreign affairs of the American republics. The first of these assembled at Panama in 1939, and was concerned primarily with the rights and duties of the American republics as neutral. The end in view was to keep the European conflict as far removed as possible from the Western hemisphere. With the fall of France and the resulting danger that French possessions in America might come into Axis hands, the second meeting was called in Havana in 1940. There it was agreed that in case of such danger, the American republics would take over the administration of these possessions. The attack of Japan on the United States combined with the declaration of war by Germany and Italy and the resultant danger to the safety of the entire continent was the reason for the third meeting held last month at Rio.

[ER:] Dr. Rowe, what was the significance of the Rio meeting? What were some of the concrete results?

[Dr. Leo Rowe:] The Rio meeting, Mrs. Roosevelt, was the most important as well as the most fruitful of the long series of conferences held by the American republics. In a resolution of outstanding importance, the assembled ministers of foreign affairs recommended the immediate severance of diplomatic relations with Japan, Germany, and Italy. At the present moment, ten of the American republics have declared war on the Axis powers, and nine have severed diplomatic relations. In addition to the severance of diplomatic relations, steps were taken to break all commercial and commercial-financial relations with the Axis powers. Another momentous decision was the establishment of an inter-American defense board, composed of military and naval representatives of the twenty one republics with a view to coordinating plans for the protection of the entire continent. This inter-American defense board will be supplemented

by an inter-American commission on political defense, whose function it will be to unify the measures adopted by the American republics to prevent espionage, sabotage, and other subversive influences. Finally, mention must be made of one of the outstanding accomplishments of the conference, namely, the settlement of the longstanding boundary dispute between Peru and Ecuador, which has been a disturbing influence in inter-American relations for nearly a century.

[ER:] How will the results of the conference affect the activities of the Pan-American Union, Dr. Rowe?

[Dr. Leo Rowe:] The Rio conference, Mrs. Roosevelt, entrusted to the Pan-American Union the formulation of plans for carrying into effect the most important conclusions. This was but natural in view of the fact that the Pan-American Union is the official organization of the twenty one republics of the American continent, and serves as the permanent organ for the Pan-American conferences. As you know Mrs. Roosevelt, the Pan-American Union is governed by a board composed of the Secretary of State of the United States, and the ambassadors, ministers, and chargé d'affaires of the twenty republics of Latin America.

[ER:] Dr. Rowe, how would you estimate the future of Pan-Americanism?

[Dr. Leo Rowe:] At no time in our history, Mrs. Roosevelt, has the outlook for Pan-American unity been brighter, and at no time has the need for such unity been greater. The Good Neighbor policy inaugurated by President Roosevelt in 1933 finds its highest expression in the agreements reached at Rio de Janeiro, and has assured us of a continental system based upon justice, equality, and respect for the pledged word. To the American republics, peace means something more significant than the mere absence of conflict. It is a positive, constructive concept demanding both cooperation and mutual helpfulness. The constant adherence of the American republics to these principles means that their moral influence is destined to play a most important part in the reconstruction period. The Americans ask for no selfish advantage for themselves, but they will insist that any world order that is established in the future be ruled by law and abide by those basic principles of justice and fair dealing which have contributed so much to the wellbeing and prosperity of the Western hemisphere. Thus will the Americas make their greatest contribution to the welfare of humanity, and thus will the Americas render their greatest service to the survival of democracy.

[ER:] Thank you, Dr. Rowe, for joining us today and giving us this first-hand description of the work of the Pan-American conference. In the past week, Singapore has fallen, and a fight took place in the channel in which two Nazi battleships in the fog took a desperate chance and made-made port. They were apparently much damaged, but the British lost a number of planes, which meant also a number of young lives lost. Other battles are going on, but in spite of these heartbreaking and important events, more time was spent in Congress, over the air, and in the newspapers discussing what would seem to be relatively unimportant things. As these things have been made so important, however, and as some members of Congress have seen fit to make me of greater importance than I've ever before thought I possibly could be, I'm taking this opportunity to explain to those who listen to my broadcast why I think civilian mobilization is necessary on two fronts. No one will question the advisability and the importance of protection, as far as possible, of property and human life against possible air raids and fires. But many of us realize that this protection will be uncertain and inadequate if it consists only of a concern for blackouts, the training of more policemen and more firemen, and the providing of more emergency medical care. In the long run, the strains that we in this country will have to endure are the strains of uncertainty. Anxiety for loved ones far away, anxiety for ourselves in case of attack, the stress of the need of greater production, which will require longer hours of work, and less loss of man-hours of labor because of illness and accident. The inclusion of women in the program of production, with the adjustment in our everyday living to sacrifice and discomfort which we have not had to bear in the past. This necessitates, I think, better nutrition, better housing, better day by day medical care, better education,

better recreation for every age. Day nurseries and nursery schools must be established where needed. Organized recreation must be provided for every age, but particularly up to working age.

And now, to meet the explicit attacks which have been made. I have resigned from the Office of Civilian Defense, and I am therefore free to speak my mind as a private citizen. I suggested Miss Mayris Chaney's name to the director of physical fitness who appointed her, at a salary which was fixed by responsible authorities for the work which she was expected to do. I suggested her because I thought she was qualified to do the work on a program which she herself had worked out and thought might be of value. Had I known nothing about her, I think any executive would have had a right to question my suggestion. I believe in physical fitness, and I think it is important for the nation as a whole, no matter where the program is finally carried on. I should like to quote what Dr. Jesse Feiring Williams of the Department of Health and Physical Education and Recreation teaches college Columbia University has to say on the subject: "Let no one suppose that physical exercise is for youth alone. It is the basis of active vigor in all persons. Our duty seems to be clear. It is to keep fit today, not only for the better individual lives which we can live, but also for the better service which the nation so sorely needs." I believe that dancing --not fan dancing, which was just a slur put in for the sake of clouding the issue--but rhythmic dancing, ballroom dancing, folk dancing, has a place in physical fitness for young and old.

As to Mr. Melvyn Douglas, it seems to me that we in this country should have a feeling of deep gratitude to the writers, actors, artists, and musicians who always give so generously of their time and talents to charitable and civic institutions of the nation. It is apparently alright for businessmen to come to Washington to give their services on an expense basis, but not for an actor. We should be grateful to these business men, and we should be equally grateful to men like Mr. Melvin Douglas. Generosity of money and time and talent is something for which we may be grateful, but because people have fought and stood for liberal causes, they need not be branded as communists in this country, which gives us freedom to be Republicans, or Democrats, reactionaries, or liberals. I do not want a program which I consider vitally important to the conduct of the war, and to the wellbeing of the people during a period of crisis, to suffer because what I hope is a small but very vocal group of unenlightened men are now able to renew under the guise of patriotism and economy the age-old fight for the privileged few against the good of the many. There is not now, and never will be in this country or anywhere else in the world, unity between these two groups. Perhaps we must all stand up now and be counted in this fight: the virtuous Westbrook Peglers on the one side, the boondogglers, so-called, on the other. But I think, if the people of this country can be reached with the truth, their judgment will be in favor of the many, as against the privileged few. This is not a question of Republican or Democrat, it is a question of privilege, or equality. I have resigned because I do not want to bring on a good program and on good and valued public servants the attacks and criticisms which are bound to be made on some of us in this fight. But if there has to be a fight, I'm glad I'm enlisted as a common soldier with the many. There is nothing that matters in the least to me which those who have raised this hue and cry can give me or take away from me. What makes this country in the long run a better place in which to live for the average citizen, what makes us strong to win the war and the peace, because our needs are met and because we are given the sense of security --that matters. For that, I intend to fight.

[Dan Seymour:] Thank you Mrs. Roosevelt, and thank you Dr. Rowe. We're sure this Washington birthday program will be remembered by good neighbors everywhere who have been listening to your words. Remember there's no better way to make good neighbors for your own home than to serve them delicious, refreshing cups of coffee when they drop in to see you. For coffee is the drink of friendship, as well as the drink which gives us the extra energy, the extra steady nerves we need in these difficult times. Help your neighbors as well as yourself. Drink a cup of coffee now, enjoy it. But more than that, see for yourself how much it cheers you up, releases new energy for you. Test for yourself the Pan-American Coffee Bureau's slogan, "get more out of life with coffee." Next week, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt will speak to you again at this same time.

[Unknown announcer:] This program came to you from Washington. This is the Blue Network.

[NBC chimes]

(14:33)

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