

MRS. ELEANOR ROOSEVELT'S OWN PROGRAM

July 11, 2940

Description: Broadcast time 1:15-1:30 PM over the NBC Red Network. Esther Lape and ER take turns interviewing one another. Topics include the League of Nations, world peace, US involvement in international affairs, and paternalism.

Participants: Eleanor Roosevelt, Ben Grauer, Esther Everett Lape, NBC Announcer

(00:28)

[Ben Grauer:] This is *Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt's Own Program* presented by the makers of SweetHeart Soap.

[Theme music 00:33--1:00]

[Ben Grauer:] Again, America welcomes Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt who speaks to us today from New York City. These programs come to you with the good wishes of the makers of SweetHeart Soap, the fine, delicately fragrant bath and beauty soap which right now is offering our listeners a wonderful opportunity to save money. Listen for the details a little later. And now, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt.

[ER:] Good day, ladies and gentlemen. Today, I've asked an old friend of mine to share this broadcast with me. She is Miss Esther Everett Lape, who has for many years headed the American Foundation, an organization which studies important world trends and publishes their findings for the enlightenment of the American public. Miss Lape is, therefore, well--equipped to answer a great number of the questions which you have sent me, and which I in turn would like to ask her.

[Esther Everett Lape:] Thank you very much, Mrs. Roosevelt. I certainly would be happy to try to answer some of your questions.

[ER:] In view of the work that you have done for the World Court and for international relations, Miss Lape, I wonder if you would tell us if you think there is anything that we in the United States can do now to help bring about a more permanent peace in the world.

[Esther Everett Lape:] Yes, Mrs. Roosevelt. I think there is a great deal that not only can, but must be done. I think the first and most important thing is this: in the present though state of world civilization, we must achieve maximum defensive strength for this country. That strength should be more than the power of arms; it should be the strength of a country united in its will and its purpose. The second important step is to interpret our responsibility in this hemisphere in a way that will make us look upon everything south of the Rio Grande as democracies in the making and not merely as trade depots. The third thing we should do is to achieve an understanding on the part of every man, woman, and child about the responsibility which now faces our nation. Militarists, pacifists, and the huge in-between class all have to pool their ideas for the benefit of the nation as a whole. (3:18)

[ER:] I have read recently, Miss Lape, [Esther Everett Lape clears her throat] that the staff of the League of Nations has been practically disbanded. In your judgment, does this mean the death of the idea of the League?

[Esther Everett Lape:] No, Mrs. Roosevelt, I don't think so. It may mean the end of this form of the League which was by and large an attempt at political cooperation. But political cooperation must be preceded by economic cooperation, and that is one of the places where this League failed. I believe the present League, or the League now fleeing before war, has nevertheless been an evolutionary stage for a greater League of Nations through which all of the countries will face those problems which are the real causes of war: namely, the exchange of raw materials, the distribution of manufactured products, and the problem of surplus populations.

[ER:] Do you think, Miss. Lape, that there is any change in American public opinion regarding the place of this country among the nations of the world?

[Esther Everett Lape:] Yes, Mrs. Roosevelt, I think there is a greater awareness of our position in the world, but I personally am doubtful about the present basis of that awareness. By that I mean we think now about America's part in world affairs chiefly because of fear. It is not difficult to make people aware when their lives are in jeopardy or when their pocketbooks and their homes are threatened. But that is not enough, because that kind of awareness lasts only so long as the threat is imminent. What we need now and forever in this country is an awareness which is not dictated by concern about money, or the lives and homes of individuals. Our concern about world affairs should rest on the belief that we have, in this country, the ideal of a government of the people, for the people, and by the people. That ideal must be preserved as a beacon light for all the people of the world. The awareness we need today is the kind for which Lincoln pled at Gettysburg when he said, "We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain. That this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

[ER:] Up to this point, Miss Lape, I've been burdening you with most of the questions. Now, I should like to give you an opportunity. It is only fair for us to change places. But first, let us pause for a few moments to hear a brief message from our announcer. (6:07)

[Ben Grauer:] Thank you, Mrs. Roosevelt, and I'll be just a moment. Ladies, here are the thrilling details of SweetHeart Soap's wonderful money--saving offer. We want to give you a full--size cake of SweetHeart Soap for only one penny. You buy three cakes at the regular low price, and you receive along with them an extra full--size cake for which you pay just one cent. And this generous offer actually stands good for all the SweetHeart Soap you buy in this one--cent sale. So the more SweetHeart Soap you stock up with today, the more of those big, creamy, white oval cakes will be yours for only a penny apiece. But please, don't delay; when dealers' present stocks are gone the offer must end, and SweetHeart Soap will go back to its regular price. In a word, ladies, get SweetHeart Soap, the soap that agrees with your skin. And it is again my pleasure to welcome Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt back to the microphone.

[ER:] Friends, today we have the pleasure of having with us Miss Esther Everett Lape, prominent for her studies and writings about world affairs. Up to this point, I have asked Miss Lape a number of questions. And now, it is her turn to question me.

[Esther Everett Lape:] Mrs. Roosevelt, [ER coughs] I have for some time been curious to know how you answer a number of the questions which I am sure you are asked over and over again. For example, what answer do you give when people say, "What right have we to concern ourselves with world problems when we have so many unsolved problems right inside our own nation?"

[ER:] Well, Miss Lape, [ER clears her throat] I say to those people that it has always been impossible to isolate oneself completely, and it is less possible today than ever before. Our national problems are

frequently the result of international problems which go deep into the conditions existing in many nations. Therefore, without the concern for international problems, there are many internal shortcomings which cannot be improved on a strictly internal basis. I am sure that many times in history, the same question has been asked, but in every case it was necessary to realize that we cannot basically improve one nation without some concern for the rest of the world. (8:31)

[Esther Everett Lape:] I'm sure, Mrs. Roosevelt, that many of your listeners have heard time and time again about the need to do something for our country, but I am afraid that they have been given little more guidance along these lines than the suggestion to knit socks and more socks.

[ER:] I have said over and over again that it is the duty of every woman to do the job she is now doing to the best of her ability. In her home, in her career, in her community. Every woman knows that it is the woman uh--the women of a community who make the spirit of the community. Where we find hysteria, social and religious prejudice, you may rest assured that the women of that community are not doing a really good job in contributing the right spirit of security and Christian charity.

When fears are running high and war is abroad in the world, it is extremely easy to awaken in people a sense of grievance over things which ordinarily would pass unnoticed. We must beware in this country that being on the watch against real subversive elements does not cause suffering to innumerable innocent people by allowing unfounded suspicion and cruel action to be undertaken within a community, without any effort being made to ascertain the facts and act justly.

[Esther Everett Lape:] I heard your broadcast last Tuesday in which you spoke about political conventions and campaigns. In such times as this, we hear a great deal about leadership. What is your idea, Mrs. Roosevelt, of the difference between the democratic and the totalitarian concept of leadership?

[ER:] First I would like to say, Miss Lape, that there is a great deal of difference. Totalitarian governments ascribe almost supernatural powers to their leader in order that he may have the unquestioning loyalty of his subjects. A democracy gains its force and power because of the organized sentiment of the people. Government officials may have an opportunity to inform the public, but it must be the basic qualities of character in the people which give the actual leadership to any democracy.

[Esther Everett Lape:] I think that is a very interesting and correct distinction. Speaking of leadership, Mrs. Roosevelt, what about paternalism in government? Do you think that is something we should guard against? (11:13)

[ER:] [papers rustling] I do, Miss Lape, and I think it might be well to try to define paternalism. The word "pater" comes from the Latin which means "father." I am afraid of paternalism in the sense which implies the organization and safeguarding of the life of every child, rather than affording him an opportunity to live freely and organize himself. In a democracy, people must do things for themselves, and all they should be provided with is the opportunity to develop their individual abilities and a sense of responsibility.

[Esther Everett Lape:] We hear much these days about those things that challenge democracy. What would you say, Mrs. Roosevelt, is the greatest present challenge to democratic government?

[ER:] I would say that the greatest challenge to our form of government is the ability of the individual to discipline himself of his own free will. Now, in a totalitarian government, people are disciplined forcibly. Our democratic system will prove superior if through individual discipline we can harness the same energy which dictatorship gets by force.

[Esther Everett Lape:] What you have just said, Mrs. Roosevelt, has to do with adults. How about American children? How can they be taught what America means?

[ER:] It is obvious that the love of country and the meaning of democracy is not conveyed to children simply by teaching the national anthem, or even by studying our history. Children must be given an understanding even in their own little world of what democracy means. Incidentally, a democratic home is the beginning of a democratic nation. On the other hand, children should also be shown the undesirable things in the totalitarian creed. A child will begin to learn very early in life the value of individual personality, of equality of opportunity and cooperation to achieve happiness for themselves and for those around them. And now, Miss Lape, I want to express my thanks for your kindness in visiting with me today. I am sure that our listeners enjoyed hearing you as much as I enjoyed having you with me. (13:18)

[Ben Grauer:] Many thanks to you, Mrs. Roosevelt, and our thanks to you, Miss Lape, for a most enjoyable quarter--hour visit. Remember ladies: SweetHeart is the mild, gentle soap that can help your skin stay soft and smooth in spite of long days outdoors in the summer sun. It's the thorough soap that foams away clinging impurities ever so gently, yet effectively, to help reveal all the charm and allure of your skin's natural loveliness. And, SweetHeart is the fifty--year favorite soap which now offers you one full--size cake for just one penny with every three you buy at the regular low price. So stock up to your heart's content. Buy enough SweetHeart Soap at this dramatic saving to last you the rest of the summer. Warm weather, you know, calls for lots of extra baths and clean ups, so place your order for SweetHeart Soap: the soap that agrees with your skin.

[Theme music 14:14--14:36]

[Ben Grauer:] [Music continues softly] And now, we say goodbye until next Tuesday, when Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt again comes to call on all America. Don't forget SweetHeart Soap in the penny sale. Include an ample supply with your order from the store today. And don't forget to invite a few friends to listen with you next Tuesday, same time, same station, when SweetHeart Soap again presents [Music crescendos, cuts] *Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt's Own Program*. This is Ben Grauer speaking.

[NBC Announcer:] This is the National Broadcasting Company.

[NBC Chimes]

(15:20)

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