FIRST LADY DENIES YOUTH GROUP IS RED

Thinks a Small Section of Its Congress Has 'Intellectual Interest' in Communism

TALKS ON U. S. PEACE ROLE

She Tells Foreign Journalists Stability Will Be Aided If Many Nations Take Part

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt came to the defense of the American Youth Congress again yesterday, saying it was a Communist organization and urging a policy of cooperation rather than of hostility toward it.

The First Lady expressed this opinion at a luncheon given in her honor by the Association of Foreign Press Correspondents at the Hotel St. Moritz, 50 Central Park South, when she submitted to questions from the floor on a variety of subjects concerning foreign and domestic affairs.

Asked whether she thought it wise to encourage Communist tendencies through her support of the American Youth Congress, Mrs. Roosevelt replied, "I do not consider it wise to encourage Communist tendencies anywhere, but I do not consider the American Youth Congress as a whole has Communist tendencies."

According to Mrs. Roosevelt, there is a "small group" in the organization that has an "intellectual interest" in communism, a group speaking for youths in large cities, but its views are not representative of the congress as such.

"As most of you know, the Communist party is well organized, with trained leaders, and their point of view is well put and can appeal to youth if youth is made to feel that it can get more from communism than from democracy," Mrs. Roosevelt said. "The only way to fight communism is to give youth something vital to solve their problems."

Faces Questioners With a Smile

Wearing a tailored navy blue dress, trimmed with a white satin bow, and a navy blue jockey styled hat, Mr. Roosevelt smilingly faced 150 correspondents and guests, representing thirty nations.

She answered without qualification the question whether the United States would find itself in an "unhappy position for upholding democracy" in the event the Allies lost the war.

"I believe it would," she replied.

Asked to explain the contradiction between the present strong isolationist attitude of the American people and their "cry of 'Stop Hitler!'" before the outbreak of the war, Mrs. Roosevelt said:

"I don't know what the answer to this question is, and if I did it would be very unwise to talk about it. I am perfectly willing to criticize myself and my own country but I believe it is unwise to criticize others, don't you?"

To the request that she comment on the address delivered in Toronto by James H. R. Cromwell, the American Minister, in which he upheld the cause of the Allies against Germany, Mrs. Roosevelt said she had "no comment whatsoever," adding, "that will come from someone else."

"Not under any circumstances," was her reply to the question whether she would accept a nomination for the Presidency.

One question suggested the possibility that Under-Secretary of State Sumner Wells had been sent to Europe by President Roosevelt to groom Mr. Welles for the Presidency.

"I should think that would be going a little too far," Mrs. Roosevelt replied. "We have nominating conventions in this country and those who nominate might feel they had not been included in the preparations."

The U. S. and Peace

Asked whether she thought the United States should keep out of the peace conference at the end of the war in view of the fact that it was not a participant in the conflict, Mrs. Roosevelt replied, "Yes, if the belligerents wanted it to."

"If there is any way in which the United States could be helpful, we should be willing to do so," she added. "But it is up to those who fought the war to determine their own course. Having fought the war, the belligerents might well feel they want to make the peace. But a little larger outlook makes one feel that the more peoples can be interested in making the peace, the better it will be for the stability of the future."

Replying to another question, Mrs. Roosevelt said any proposal to bring children from belligerent countries to the United States for the duration of the war would be feasible "under proper guarantees," but would require Congressional approval.

Asked whether she thought Mayor La Guardia would make a good Vice Presidential candidate, she replied: "I think Mayor La Guardia would do almost anything he wants."

Mrs. Roosevelt declared, in response to a question, that she approved of press conferences as a part of democratic procedure and said she enjoyed yesterday's mass interview "very much."

Robert Waithman, correspondent of The News Chronicle of London, and president of the Association of Foreign Correspondents, presided at the luncheon. He said the foreign newsmen working in this country had a profound admiration for the statesmanship of President Roosevelt and a great regard for Mrs. Roosevelt.

According to Mr. Waithman the foreign correspondents here send about 200,000,000 words annually by cable and radio to their newspapers.

"Whether all these words are wise is a matter for solemn meditation," he added.

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