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Roosevelt Must Have Dictatorial Economic Powers to Win War, Hoover Says

By the Associated Press

New York, May 20.—Herbert Hoover said tonight that if the United States is to win the war President Roosevelt "must have dictatorial economic powers" because he said "plain Fascist economics" is necessary to triumph in total war.

"There must be no hesitation in giving them to him and upholding him in them," the former President said. "Moreover, we must expect a steady decrease in economic freedom as the war goes on."

"We must start our thinking with a disagreeable, cold, hard fact. That is, the economic measures necessary to win total war are just plain Fascist economics."

Speaking on "The Limitation on Freedom in War," Hoover told the National Industrial Conference Board, Inc., a research organization, that "from a philosophical viewpoint" he would like to see "the

sixth columnists given a little more liberty."

He defined sixth columnists as "ones who discuss the war or speculate or even criticize in private conversations."

Bars Personal Abuse

At the same time, he said "moral limitations on the liberty to smear should be increased drastically as a war measure."

"No public servant can be free of criticism if democracy is to continue to live. But the first rule of criticism is that it must not take the form of personal detraction and abuse."

"We Americans have pioneered in the sadistic and higher art of abuse—that is, smearing. The great officers who lead our people in war must have respect."

But neither Congress nor the public, he said, should be criticized for exposing mistakes and wrongdoing

in conduct of the war on the ground that such exposure lowers morale.

He continued:

"It is not the action of Congress in exposing these things that lowers morale; it is not the action of criticism by citizens that lowers it. It is the terrible stuff that is exposed which lowers morale."

Offers Three Goals

Hoover said economic freedom must suffer most by the war but stressed the need to keep personal liberties alive.

Asserting the three major tasks before this country are winning the war and after the war securing "recovery of suspended liberties" and "lasting peace," he added to these ends three suggestions of his own:

1. A "more definite" war council embracing in its membership the civilian heads of the great war agencies.

2. To "think out" now postwar economic reconstruction, prepar-

ing for it by objective research and public debate.

3. Preparedness for peace through "setting up of moral, intellectual, economic and political forces over the whole world which will produce and hold peace."

In his advocacy of more liberty for persons he described as "sixth columnists," Hoover said:

"The American people have always been a debating society. They get immense satisfaction out of gossip. They always have views. They are profoundly anxious over the fate of their loved ones and the welfare of their country. All of this cannot be stamped out of them by a hobnailed heel. Those who would like to reduce us to a collection of parrots do not know the meaning of America."

(President Roosevelt in a press conference March 24 said there was a sixth column which wittingly or unwittingly spreads the poison of fifth columnists in the press, in

idle conversation and at cocktail parties and tea fights.)

To win total war, Hoover said, "President Roosevelt must have dictatorial economic powers. There must be no hesitation in giving them to him and upholding him in them. Moreover, we must expect a steady decrease in economic freedom as the war goes on."

"We must start our thinking with a cold, hard fact. That is, the economic measures to win total war are just plain fascist economics."

"But there are two vast differences in the application of this sort of economic system at the hands of democracies or by dictators. First, in democracies we strive to keep free speech, free press, free worship, trial by jury and other personal liberties alive."

"And second, we want to so design our actions that these fascist economic measures are not frozen into American life, but shall thaw out after the war."