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THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC INFORMATION

The Secretary of State

The Secretary of War

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THE GERMAN WHISPER

Mr. Citizen, you are now on the firing line.

Imperial Germany is not merely attacking on the western front. She is attacking in every community in the United States.

Her assault is under the direction of the German general staff. It has been prepared as carefully as the strategy and tactics of a military drive. As in Russia and in Italy, so here also a campaign of German propaganda—a gas attack of poisonous lies and rumors and false reports—has been launched successfully and is now under way.

The collapse of Russia was not a victory for German arms. It was a triumph of German propaganda. And the defeat of the Italian armies was achieved only after German agents, working with rumors, slanders, counterfeit newspapers, forged letters, and all the other weapons of German treachery, had opened an impregnable Italian position to the successful assault of an inferior German force.

America is now the strongest enemy that Germany has. A weakening of our public morale is as necessary to German success as the weakening of Russia's was. And the attempt to weaken us has already developed two main lines of movement. The first aims to destroy our unity of action with our allies by setting us against the French, the British, and the Japanese. The second proposes to destroy our domestic unity by encouraging among us every sort of class dissension, religious difference, racial prejudice, and political quarrel.

Slandering the French

The officials of the Red Cross report that many loyal mothers are refusing to let their daughters volunteer as nurses in France because of rumors of immoral conditions in the hospitals there. A detailed story has been circulated to the effect that 200 Red Cross nurses have recently been returned on a transport from abroad and secretly removed to maternity hospitals here as patients. There is not a word of truth in the story. It has been investigated by a Federal grand jury in New York City and found to be false. German sympathizers caught circulating it have been interned. The nurses in service in our hospitals in France have the same discipline and protection that they have here—and need it as little. The story has been invented to hamper the work of the Red Cross and to prejudice us against our French allies.

A similar aim is evident in the reports of drunkenness and immorality among our forces at the front. These charges, most circumstantially made, were even taken up by the national leaders of our prohibition societies and purity leagues, and an appeal was sent out to the readers of the religious press asking them to protest to President Wilson. The number of these protests showed the success of the slander.

As a matter of fact, no liquor ration is served to our troops either here or abroad. No Army canteen sells alcoholic liquors. By Gen. Pershing's orders, our soldiers in France are forbidden "either to buy or to accept as gifts from the inhabitants," any "alcoholic beverages other than light wine or beer." As there is little beer sold in France, Gen. Pershing reports: "Men who drink are thus limited to the light native wine used by all French people. Even

found fault with its performance. The difficulty is to catch and contradict the untrue stories with which these critics are sometimes deceived.

A great many such stories have been allowed to go unrefuted, because the Government officers who could reply to them have been too busy to do so, consequently an undue amount of pessimism about the country's war work has been allowed to accumulate. This pessimism, being confronted by the official optimism of Washington, usually explodes in an attack of bitterness. It forgets that an officer who is working 18 hours a day is invariably cheerful. His activity alone, if not his accomplishment, makes him optimistic. During the first crucial days of the German successes on the western front the New York newspapers reported that among the anxious crowds of citizens before the bulletin boards the men in uniform were remarkable for their cheerfulness. "In the quiet crowds that poured along Broadway," said one report, "there came a group of French sailors in their jaunty uniforms singing gaily. Somehow things seemed brighter as they passed. Strangely the men in khaki seemed most indifferent to the news from the front." Washington's cheerfulness is frequently of the same sort. The fact that "somehow" things have not seemed brighter because of that cheerfulness is perhaps due to the German whisperer in the anxious crowds. The critic has his place and his privileges, but certainly no harm would be done if the German agents, who so often start the hissing, were turned over to the police.

Mr. Citizen, if one of these German whisperers starts buzzing in your ear, send his name and address to the Department of Justice at Washington, D. C. If you do not know, or cannot find out, who he is, at least report his story to the Committee on

Public Information, 8 Jackson Place, Washington, D. C., so that an official denial of his slander may be obtained and circulated as soon as possible. The Committee is carrying on a nation-wide campaign against these poisonous rumors through its speakers, its pamphlets, and its press releases. It needs your help. It needs the help of all loyal citizens.

this is discouraged among our troops in every possible way. I hope to secure the cooperation of the French Government to prevent the sale of all liquors and wines to our troops. Personally, I favor prohibition in the Army, but it is impracticable and inadvisable to issue orders that can not be enforced without the cooperation of the French Government."

Slandering Our Soldiers

The charge of drunkenness among our Expeditionary Forces is a pro-German lie designed to alarm the mothers and fathers of the boys who have gone to France. The stories of immorality consequent upon drunkenness are equally baseless.

When the recruits for the National Army were first assembled in our cantonments, the medical examiners sent as many as 400 out of every 1,000 men to the hospitals to be treated for venereal diseases. The hospital admission rate for venereal diseases in those camps has since been as low as 64.4 per 1,000, and the rate for the men in our expeditionary forces in France has been as low as 44.2 per 1,000. That is to say, the statistics of the Surgeon General's office show that our soldiers in France have been almost ten times as free from the effects of immorality as the same sort of men were when they were first drafted into the Army. Physical training and strict military discipline have improved the health of the troops in this respect as in all others.

Using Popular Prejudice

These slanders upon the nurses and upon the troops are typical of the work of the German general staff. It has been their policy in their campaigns of propaganda to circulate in an enemy country the

falsehoods that most appeal to that country's prejudices. America, in its ignorance of all France outside of the tourist haunts of Paris, is easily imposed upon with stories of French vice. The German propagandist knows that. He is planning to take advantage of it for his own purposes. He is making a drive upon the sentiments and emotions of American women just as he first attacked the susceptibilities of the Italian women behind the lines in preparing the way for the Italian defeat. How well he is succeeding in America is shown by a passage in that appeal for a protest to President Wilson which was printed in the religious press.

It pointed out: "Throughout this country a feeling of bitterness, dangerous in the extreme, is arising and gazing with menacing eyes toward France. The mothers who have reared sons strong and clean, and who have given them with glad, aching hearts—women who have loved France and glorified her—are now muttering that our boys are wanted for the profits of their debauchery and not to take their deaths in strength and cleanliness." Such mothers are the victims of a German falsehood. So is the writer who thus described them and protested against the "debauchery" of their soldier sons. The reports of immoral conditions in France and the campaigns of protest against those conditions are equally the work of German agents, assisted by the prejudiced credulity of their American victims.

Mr. Citizen, the Committee on Public Information wishes to warn you against these snares. There will be more of them. In Italy anonymous letters were sent to the soldiers from their homes accusing their wives of infidelity. Our military censorship prevents such tactics among our men, but similar impostures will doubtless be attempted.

Already forged letters pretending to be from soldiers in France have been found in the lobbies of New York theaters, as if accidentally dropped there by the recipients. The letters are always in the angular handwriting of persons accustomed to using German script. So far they have contained little but alarming falsehoods about the alleged slaughter of American regiments.

Slandering the British

In order to set us against our British allies, several sorts of "whispering propaganda" are being used. There is the story that American soldiers are reeling around the streets of London, drunk. It has been disproved. There is the charge that while we are stinting ourselves to save grain the English are using it to make whisky—although we are saving and shipping chiefly wheat, which is little used in distilling, and the figures from England show that the English liquor traffic has been decreased by the war almost as much as ours. And there is the report that millions of British soldiers are held in England while the allies are "doing their fighting for them"—a falsehood that is sufficiently discounted by the fact that the British Empire has 7,500,000 men in the army and navy outside of India, Africa, etc.; that of these 70 per cent are English and Welsh, 8 per cent Scotch, 6 per cent Irish, and 16 per cent Canadians, Australians, etc.; and that the casualties among them have been 76 per cent English, 10 per cent Scotch, 6 per cent Irish, and 8 per cent Canadian, Australian, etc.

The German mischief-makers who first supplied arms for the revolt in Ulster against Home Rule, and subsequently shipped arms for the revolt of the Home Rulers—these same promoters of disunity are

now furnishing the Irish in America with any story, any argument, any slander that can arouse anti-English prejudice among us. On the Pacific coast, in the same way, they are rattling the dry bones of the yellow peril. The average organ of publicity that was pro-German before our declaration of war, no matter how pro-American it now pretends to be, almost invariably uses the anti-British and the anti-Japanese appeals. And just as the Zimmerman note tried to unite Mexico and Japan against us, so the enemy of our unity alternates denunciations of the yellow peril with appeals for a declaration of war against Mexico.

The German sympathizer who tells you the story of how a discharged Japanese servant boasted that the Japanese would soon "own America," invariably couples it with a lying account of how all Washington is saying that "the next war will be with Great Britain about the Panama Canal." On the Italian front, before the successful German drive, counterfeits of Milan newspapers were circulated, containing accounts of how bread riots had been suppressed in north Italian towns by British soldiers imported for that purpose, after Italian troops had refused to fire upon their own people. All over Italy the argument was used that the nation was merely "pulling England's chestnuts out of the fire." The same argument is now doing duty here, in spite of the fact that the United States only went to war in self-defense after we had endured every form of German outrage and injustice and exhausted every means of peaceful appeal.

Many of the agents of this sort of propaganda in America, both publishers and "whisperers," are protected by their American citizenship and by the traditional freedom of speech which our laws permit. The Government has no power to reach them.

They are often the innocent victims of guiltier minds. It is only possible to warn the public of the infection which they spread, and to mark them as "carriers" of that German propaganda bacillus which completely enervated the strength of Russia and so nearly broke down the Italian power of self-defense.

Working on Religious Prejudices

In the campaign to promote domestic disunity among us, the pro-German rumor-monger has been even busier. He is working here, exactly as he worked in Italy, upon religious prejudices. He has spread the report that the Masonic orders have protested to the Government against the Knights of Columbus being permitted to build recreation huts in the camps. No such protest was ever made. He has circulated stories that Catholic nuns were refused permission to do Red Cross work unless they wore Red Cross uniforms, and that Catholic soldiers—and Jewish soldiers—were being discriminated against by Red Cross officials. All such stories are outright inventions. At the same time he passes around every kind of rumor of Catholic disloyalty, such as the famous one that President Wilson's secretary, a Catholic, had been executed for treason. He has filled the mails with printed copies of an alleged "bloody oath of the Knights of Columbus," giving it on the pretended authority of the Congressional Record. It was printed in the Record because it was read into a debate before the House of Representatives on an election protest, in order that it might be denounced as a forgery and a libel upon a Catholic candidate. A pro-German agent has been caught distributing copies of this "bloody oath" in New Jersey and sent to prison for it.

In Spain and the Catholic countries of South America the Kaiser poses as "the Champion of Catholic Bavaria and Catholic Austria against Protestant England, infidel France, and socialistic Italy, the enemy of the Vatican." He does not preserve that pose in Catholic Belgium or Catholic Poland. And in America the Kaiserite uses this very claim of the Kaiser to arouse enmity against the Catholics, just as in Italy the German agent used it in an unsuccessful attempt to seduce the Italian Catholics, and now in America accuses the Italian Catholics of having succumbed to the seduction. As a matter of fact, the Catholic chaplains in the Italian Army were among the first to discover this propaganda among the soldiers, reported it to the officers, and combated it diligently.

Various persons and publications that made a living out of sectarian animosities before the war, are unconsciously doing the work of the enemy by assisting the spread of anti-Catholic and anti-Protestant slanders. They can only be stopped by an appeal to public reprobation. They are representing the trouble in Ireland as purely a religious trouble, and the opposition to conscription in Quebec as the same sort of thing. Even Rudyard Kipling recently fell into the trap and denounced the Pope and the Kaiser and the neutrals in one breath. Such denunciations overlook the fact that Cardinal Mercier, the Catholic prelate of Belgium, has been the most effective popular opponent of the Kaiser that Europe has produced. This is a war of nations, not of creeds. Prussia is as Protestant a nation as England is, and Belgium and Poland as Catholic as Austria. Anyone who raises the religious question in America to-day is acting as a German agent, whether he knows it or not, as truly as if he were blowing up muni-

tion plants. All loyal citizens should discourage him.

Aggravating Our Race Problems

Among the Negroes the German propagandist first began work in the South and failed. He has been more successful in the Middle West, where the presence of a large loyal German population gives him better cover. He is promising the Negroes that the Kaiser will give them social equality with the whites. An agent, recently captured in New York, was offering the Negroes a "Black Republic" under German protection, and he was denounced to the authorities by the Negroes themselves. Another was spreading reports of discriminations against Negro soldiers in the camps, reporting that the Negroes were being trained as "shock troops" to be sacrificed in the front lines, and even circulating a story that the German military authorities had ordered all Negro prisoners killed. Thus far this sort of German effort to aggravate a race problem has been an absurd failure. Its only danger is that it may lead to charges of disloyalty against our colored citizens and a suspicion of them which is not justified. To allow the German intrigue to arouse a prejudice against the Negro would aid the enemy as much as if he succeeded in organizing the Negro in disloyalty. Discourage such a prejudice wherever you find it, Mr. Citizen. It is being promoted by the Kaiserite.

Working on the Farmer

In order to obtain a supply of castor oil for lubricating aeroplane engines the Government contracted for the planting of 85,000 acres of castor beans in the Gulf States. After the contracts had been divided among subcontractors German agents

circulated a report among the farmers that castor beans exhaust the soil. There is no truth in that; but before the Government learned what was going on many of the farmers had canceled their contracts. The lie has now been contradicted and the beans are being grown.

This is typical of German methods not only in this country but abroad. In Italy the propaganda that opened the Italian lines was preceded by a long drive against the farming communities. An agrarian sentiment was procured against the war, against the high cost of labor and necessary supplies, against the drafting of farm workers, and against the Government control of the price of wheat and breadstuffs. Crop shortages resulted and a bread famine ensued. A similar campaign is now proceeding in America.

Alien-enemy farmers have been secretly counseled to hoard their wheat; several such hoarders have been caught by the Food Administration and their grain has been confiscated. For the loyal farmer a concerted attempt is being made to present his war-time problems to him as a class grievance. He is being assured that he alone is being hampered by price-fixing while all other industries and businesses are left free to profiteer. Men of undoubted loyalty, eager to increase our food supplies, are innocently assisting the German program by such statements as the following from a recent address made to eastern farmers by a college president:

“Why should the food producer be singled out for the role of a public benevolent institution?” “Why deny the farmer alone the market price of his skill and labor?” “Why attempt to regulate the prices of farm products?” “We have tried that experiment with wheat, and we have sent the price of corn above wheat, compelling the farmer

to feed wheat to his poultry and animals and discouraging him in the planting of winter wheat." "In spite of all appeals, the farmers have not planted substantially more winter wheat than they planted in 1914. I believe it is no exaggeration to say that we are confronted with the danger of starvation in the next 12 months. The energies of our farmers are paralyzed by price fixing and the fear of price fixing. Does the Government want to stimulate agricultural production? Then strike the shackles off the farmer and leave him as free as other producers. In the name of common sense, of justice, and of patriotism, I make this appeal to the President and Congress."

Farmer Not Discouraged

As a matter of fact, it is not true that the American farmer has been discouraged in the planting of winter wheat. He has seeded this year 42,170,000 acres of winter wheat. That is 2,000,000 acres more than the year before, 150,000 acres more than ever before, and 7,000,000 acres more than his average acreage before the European war began. The December estimate of the Department of Agriculture placed his yield of winter wheat at 122,000,000 bushels more than last year's crop. And the reports that have since been received by the department indicate that the December estimate was too low by 30,000,000 bushels.

It is equally untrue that the "price of corn has been sent above wheat." The figures collected by the Department of Agriculture show that the average prices received by the farmer during the three years previous to war were, roughly, 86.9 cents a bushel for wheat and 66.5 cents for corn, and the average war prices which he has received have been \$2.00.6 for wheat and \$1.38.8 for corn.

The increase over the prewar prices has been 131 per cent in the case of wheat and only 109 per cent in the case of corn. Difficulties in transportation have altered the relation of these prices in some localities, especially in the East, but for the farmer generally the price of wheat has been consistently higher than the price of corn.

The Truth About Price Fixing

It is not true that there has been an attempt "to regulate the prices of farm products." There has been no attempt to regulate the price of any farm product but wheat. The allied Governments in Europe had set up single agencies to buy food supplies in America. Their purchases of American wheat were sufficient to control the price. They could drain America of its wheat and leave our poorer classes to starve. In order that rich and poor might be treated alike, it was necessary to establish a Government control of price and distribution. And the price of \$2.20 a bushel for No. 1 northern wheat, based on Chicago, was agreed upon by an independent commission, appointed by President Wilson, upon which commission the farming community was represented by 6 members out of 11.

In some instances the Food Administration has intervened, at the request of the producers, to obtain a settlement in a local dispute about the price of milk. In the case of pork products the Food Administration, on the recommendation of the producers, undertook to use the purchases of the allied Governments for the purpose of maintaining a minimum price for live hogs in Chicago. Beyond this invited assistance in the case of milk and pork, and the regulation of the price of wheat, the Food Administration has not interfered with the price of

farm products, except in so far as the control of sugar prices has affected the price of sugar beets.

There has been a report in circulation that the Food Administration has fixed the price of tomatoes. It is untrue. The Food Administration has not done anything of the sort, nor tried to do it. It sent out to tomato growers an announcement that the Army and Navy were ready to receive tenders for canned tomatoes based on a stated price per ton for raw tomatoes. No canner was required to bid, and no limit was set upon the price that he might ask. He was simply told that he might make an offer to the Army and Navy on the basis mentioned, if he wished. The Food Administration has no power to fix the price of tomatoes and has shown no desire to obtain the power.

The Food Administration undertook a campaign of education to persuade the American people to save meat, so that our allies abroad might have sufficient. The German submarines prevented us from transporting our increased surplus to Europe. It accumulated in the cold-storage warehouses, and it backed up on the farms. The Food Administration consequently stopped its campaign for meatless days. It met with the representatives of the live-stock associations and undertook to do everything possible to clear out the "freezers" by hastening shipments to Europe and by increasing the Government purchases of the higher grades of beef. There was, consequently, criticism of the Food Administration for having preached the necessity of meatless meals. The propagandists did not blame the submarines. They blamed the Food Administration in an attempt to divert the farmer's resentment against Germany into a resentment against the Government's measures of food control.

The Truth About Profiteering

Those measures of food control have been directed more against the middleman than the producer. While fixing for the farmer an arbitrated price for his wheat, they have established a system of licensing, by which millers, bakers, grocers, and wholesale and retail dealers have been prevented from profiteering on the farmer's dollar. The Fuel Administration has fixed the price of coal, because the miner would not work for reasonable wages as long as the mine owner was making an unreasonable gain. Profiteering in Army and Navy contracts and in shipbuilding has been stopped by the power obtained from Congress to fix the price at cost plus a reasonable profit; and the increase in cost has gone to the workman, not to his employer. All profiteering has not yet been ended. The way to end it has not been found in any country. But the tax on excess profits and on swollen incomes confiscates the illicit harvest and pours it into the country's war chest. The grievances that remain are not class grievances. They are chiefly the inevitable common hardships due to a war that has drawn millions of productive workers into the world's armies and increased the cost of the necessaries of life by decreasing the available supply. In that hardship the farmers share, as we all share.

Kaiserites on Both Sides

Along with this campaign to set the farmer against the Government's war measures there has been proceeding a twin campaign to arouse feeling against him by accusing his western farmers' leagues of disloyalty. That is equally a work in aid of the enemy. The western farmers have contributed their quotas to enlistments and to the

drafts as loyally as any citizens. They have subscribed to the Liberty Loans and contributed to the war relief work with unflinching patriotism. They have had their quarrels with the men whom they suspected of exploiting them, just as labor has had its quarrels with its employers. But it is an economic quarrel, and as long as it is conducted without interfering with the Nation's war work the charge of disloyalty is itself traitorous. In all these disputes it is certain that enemy agents will be found on both sides. They at once preach violence among the I. W. W.'s, and lead mobs to attack workmen accused of being I. W. W.'s. They play the same game in every quarrel with which they can hope to divide the country. Beware, Mr. Citizen, of any attempt to make you believe that any class of American citizens, as a class, are disloyal. It is a German lie.

The Prussian Socialist

The leaders of a section of the Socialist Party here, as in Italy and in Russia, are attempting to do the Kaiser's work, and are obtaining German support in it. They are trying to divide the country in a class quarrel that would leave us as helpless to resist the German military autocracy as the Russians are. This section of socialists was first organized as a political party in America by German exiles. They have always been led by German sympathizers. It has been a rule among them that a man is not a socialist unless he pays dues to the party leaders, accepts all the party nominees of those leaders without question, subscribes to every plank of the party platform, and votes only a straight ticket under the party emblem. He did these things or he was expelled. That is a Prussian idea of organized servility and unquestioning

obedience. It has succeeded in Germany, but it has never succeeded here.

At the outbreak of the war in Europe the Prussian Government, by means of false news and distorted dispatches, made the German people believe that their country had been invaded by Russia and attacked by France, and for a time all the German socialists supported their Government's war of imperial conquest, believing that it was a war of self-defense. Since then the independent socialists in Germany have learned that they were deceived. They are now fighting the German Government in Germany as the independent socialists are fighting the German Government here, under the leadership of men like John Spargo and Charles Edward Russell.

Soon after the war broke out a member of the German Reichstag named David made a speech in which he said: "Germany must squeeze her enemies with a pair of pincers; namely, the military pincer and the pacifist pincer. The German armies must continue to fight vigorously whilst the German socialists encourage and stimulate pacifism among Germany's enemies." It is upon this stimulation of pacifism in America that our Prussian socialists have been most busily engaged. They have been recently denounced by the Social Democratic League of America and the Jewish Socialist League, under the leadership of John Spargo, J. G. Phelps Stokes, William Edlin, and Henry L. Slobodin.

The work of our pro-German socialists has been nullified by the unjust terms of German peace forced upon the Russians and by the continued German invasion of Russia since peace was signed. The same events have greatly strengthened the loyal support of the war by American socialists. Consequently there seems to be now no danger of a

successful Bolshevik faction in this country procured by German agents. We have passed that danger point as the British have passed it. The independent socialists in all countries are fighting the Kaiser and his commercial war of imperial conquest. And when the pro-German socialist in this country asks, "Why do you blame German socialists for supporting their Government and yet blame American socialists for not supporting their Government?" the answer is, "Because in both cases they are wrong; in both cases they are fighting against freedom and democracy in support of military conquest and autocratic rule."

Another German Trick

In our Western States another sort of class cleavage is being widened by German sympathizers. There, for a decade past, a political struggle has been proceeding between reformers and corruptionists. In many States the reformers have won. They have broken the political bosses and ousted their henchmen. When the Government boards at Washington called for volunteers in the work of organizing the trade and industry of the country many of the defeated political enemies of the western commonwealths volunteered for service and were accepted. The assignment of such men to war work has been used "to give the war a black eye." It is argued that the dark powers which so long exploited the West are "running the war." It is hinted that the Government at Washington is innocently under their control. And German agents and German sympathizers are using that argument and giving that hint.

It was inevitable that some discredited politicians should find their way into the ranks of a volunteer army of war workers so hastily assembled. Such

men would be eager for the chance to rehabilitate themselves. They might even be genuinely loyal to the country at large, though they have never been loyal to the best interests of their home communities. It is as absurd for anyone to turn against the war because of the participation of these men as it would be absurd for him to withdraw from the trenches if he found old political enemies serving beside him. It is his business to see that political crooks in war work are watched as carefully as suspected renegades would be watched in camp. Meanwhile it is a work in aid of the enemy to let suspicion of such men weaken support of the Government in its prosecution of the war.

Not a Rich Man's War

It is German agents, of course, who are most eager to arouse the feeling that this is "a rich man's war." They spread that lie in spite of the fact that the rich can not buy exemptions from conscription in this war as they could in our Civil War; in spite of the fact that no one can hire a substitute to take his place in the trenches, as one could in the Civil War; in spite of the fact that the only exemptions are allowed to poor men with dependents or to workingmen in vital industries; in spite of the fact that the war taxes fall most heavily on the rich, and the measures of price control are designed to prevent them from exploiting the poor, and the excess-profits tax deprives them of the fruits of any such exploitation.

And it is the German agents who are encouraging the western feeling that this is "a business man's war," because when the Government called for volunteers to help organize the business of the country on a war basis the business men were most free to respond and most fitted by experience to

fill administrative positions. There are innumerable rumors that some of these men are taking advantage of their official knowledge in order to make fortunes for themselves. It would be the miracle of the world if no such betrayers of public faith were ever found among them. And doubtless, in this country, as in other countries, congressional investigations will discover the occasional grafter and dishonest administrator. But it is none the less true here, as abroad, that the great body of business men who are serving the Government are as loyally self-sacrificing as anyone who is behind the fighting lines.

Not in War for Markets

Recently, in the White House, President Wilson was asked by one of our most famous financiers to appoint a commission that should safeguard our foreign trade during the war, and see to it that new foreign markets were made ready for our peaceful penetration after the war. And the President replied that the Government would not appoint such a commission; that this country was not fighting to obtain foreign markets; that the struggle for foreign markets had been one of the predetermining causes of the conflict among the European nations, and it had been most difficult to make those nations believe that America was not secretly inspired by a similar greed for spheres of influence and "a place in the sun"; that America was not waging a commercial war or seeking any selfish advantage; and the Government would never appoint a commission that might, by its mere existence, misrepresent the motives of our people in their support of the nations fighting to defend the freedom of the world.

That pronouncement has been made, again and

again, in the President's public utterances. He has consistently acted upon it in his war policy. And the statement that the war is "a rich man's war" or "a business man's war" is as deliberate a lie as any that the enemy has invented in order to confuse our people and divide them in their allegiance.

Libels on the Red Cross

A campaign of mischievous rumors against the Red Cross is still under way in spite of the circumstantial disproof that has been given the falsehoods through the society's agents everywhere. New rumors, new slanders upon Red Cross work and Red Cross officials, are put out simultaneously in widely separated parts of the country in a way that proves preconcertment and direction. All these fabrications are designed to discourage loyal citizens from giving money or service to the work of the society. That is the purpose of the lies about Red Cross sweaters sold by department stores; about enormous salaries paid to Red Cross officials, who are really working without salary; about Red Cross sweaters being used at the front to "pack guns in"; about the contributed knitted goods being unraveled abroad by peasants who wanted the yarn, not the manufactured article, etc., endlessly. A list of such false reports, with their refutations, would require a pamphlet by themselves. The same is true of the libels upon the Food Administration that aim to arouse hostility to the Government's measures of food conservation. Both campaigns have been unsuccessful. The loyal support of the work of the Red Cross and of the Food Administration has been one of the most remarkable achievements of America at war in the eyes of our allies. German propaganda here has wholly failed, as it has failed against the Liberty loans.

Libels on the War Department

A similar drive against the work of the War Department has been more successful, probably because our unhappy experiences in the days of the Spanish-American War prepared the public mind. A great many people still believe the story that 200,000 coffins were sent to France when ship tonnage was needed for munitions, although no coffins were sent. The stories about "wooden guns" still circulate, although the Ordnance Bureau has armed our troops with the best rifle on the battle line, has provided 1,500,000 rifles of all sorts for training camps and field forces, and is now producing the new rifle at the rate of 50,000 a week. Alarming reports continue about the shortage of American machine guns and heavy ordnance among our men at the front, although they are abundantly supplied with French machine guns and heavy ordnance. Our Ordnance Bureau accepted the offer of the French Government to supply our troops with the French guns, because these were known to be the best on the battle line, because there was a sufficient production of them to equip our forces, and because the ship tonnage for transporting such equipment from this country was needed for other purposes. In the meantime our Ordnance Bureau perfected and brought to production better machine guns than the allies' best, and heavy guns are being manufactured here, against the time when we shall have more ships to transport them and more men trained in their use. By a plan of intelligent cooperation with the allies our forces in France have had an ample supply of machine guns and heavy ordnance. Our immediate need of aeroplane protection on the battle front has been similarly taken care of.

When we accepted the German aggressions as constituting a state of war, Great Britain and France asked from us troops, food, labor, and raw materials, and undertook to supplement our war equipment out of their surplus until we could establish the necessary new war industries, produce the needed machinery, and train manufacturers and workmen to direct and handle that machinery. If we had waited for our own heavy guns, our own boats, our own battle planes, we would have done what the Germans wanted. We have carried out a plan of cooperation that was arranged with foresight. The alarming rumors about a "breakdown" in equipping our troops in France is the result of a general failure to understand that plan.

Libels on the Medical Service

German rumors about appalling epidemics in our training camps led to a congressional investigation, which showed that the men had suffered chiefly from measles followed by pneumonia; that the death rate had been no higher than among men of the same age in civil life; and that no deaths had occurred from malaria, typhoid, or dysentery, which diseases killed more of our men in the Spanish-American War than were slain in battle. These rumors are now at rest. Others, equally untrue, are afoot, such as the shocking one that the men in training have been given bayonets so defective that they double when they are stuck into the practice dummies. Such a story is incredible enough. More incredible is the fact that loyal citizens believe and repeat it.

Similar falsehoods about the War Department have been given the authority of print. They were accepted apparently on hearsay, without investigation. Here are some specimens of them:

The editor of a national magazine complained, concerning the sinking of the *Tuscania*:

“After many days and nights nobody, least of all Mr. Baker’s department, knew which were saved and which were lost. In the first place, nobody knew who sailed on the *Tuscania*. Our soldiers are not permitted to tell their friends and relatives when they are sailing or on what ship or from what port. The War Department apparently made no record of the fact; indeed, the War Department publicly announced that it did not precisely know what units had sailed aboard the *Tuscania*, to say nothing of what individuals. The ship carried a roster of those aboard, but the roster sank with the ship,” etc.

Now, it is not true that “nobody knew who sailed on the *Tuscania*.” There was a complete passenger list on file in the War Department. That list gave the name and designation of everyone on board, soldier or civilian, excepting the crew, whose names were on file in the Cunard offices.

The War Department did not publicly announce that “it did not know precisely what units had sailed aboard the *Tuscania*.” The War Department knew, and told the press what units were aboard.

It is true that the ship carried a roster, and, so far as is known, the roster sank with the ship; but duplicates of this roster were on file in the War Department.

It is not true that “after many days and nights nobody, least of all Mr. Baker’s department, knew which were saved and which were lost.” The survivors were landed at many points on the coasts of Ireland and Scotland. As fast as they could be gathered together their names were cabled to the War Department. In giving their names to the

newspapers there was no more delay than was necessary to insure that the information should be accurate.

It is not true, as the editor wrote further: "Each man wore a metal tag on his wrist, but by a dispensation of Mr. Baker's humanitarianism the tag was blank." The regulations of the War Department require the captain of each company to see that his men wear metal identification disks on a cord around the neck—not on the wrist. If these disks were missing or blank it was by no "dispensation of Mr. Baker's humanitarianism." It was in contravention of his orders.

Similarly, the correspondent of a New York newspaper published an account of how the War Department had assigned 18 major generals to one ship sailing for France. A readjustment was made, he said, so that only 5 went on the boat. He continued: "'But,' said the man who told the story, 'that wasn't the funniest part of it. Code messages were sent to each of the major generals ordering him to be ready to start for over-seas service on a specified date, and 12 of the 18 replied over the open wire, in unadorned English, 'I will be ready to sail for France on ——,' and added the date mentioned in the code message.'"

This was not a very serious slander. It merely convicted the War Department of ridiculous inefficiency and made 12 major generals look like anonymous idiots. But the fact is that the War Department does not transport its forces overseas. That is done by the Navy. The War Department does not assign officers to the ships on which they sail. That is done by the commander of the port from which the ship leaves. The War Department merely notifies the officer to report for duty at the port; he may not sail for weeks after arriving there.

Consequently, the department would not wire him in code and he would not need to answer in code.

Libels on Mr. Garfield

The editor of another national magazine, in criticizing Fuel Administrator Garfield's closing order, repeated the discouraging report that "Mr. Garfield had no knowledge of coal mining or coal distribution, and no executive experience whatever."

This statement was widely circulated and generally believed. It is wholly untrue. In 1901 Mr. Garfield became manager of a Cleveland syndicate that developed the coal mines in the Piney Fork district of Ohio, built a railroad from those mines to a Lake Erie port, and finally sold the properties to the Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Co., at whose request Mr. Garfield remained a director and vice president of the mining company.

He was president of the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce in 1898, was a member of its executive committee for several years, and as chairman of its building committee conducted the construction of its present building.

He helped to organize the Cleveland Trust Co., which has been successful as one of the most ably managed financial institutions of Cleveland. He was one of its directors, its vice president, its counsel, and a member of its executive committee from the time of its organization until he retired from practice as a lawyer in November, 1903.

During his years of practice he had sole charge of an estate that had interests in Lake Michigan iron mines, in a shipbuilding firm, in real estate, and in various business companies.

He took part in the reorganization of the Conneaut Water Co., which he helped to save from financial shipwreck and to put in the way of its

present success. He assisted in forming the Citizens' Association of Cleveland, which freed the city from the control of an ancient gang of corruptionists. He was for 11 years chairman of the national committee for the reform of our Consular Service—a committee composed of representatives of various chambers of commerce and boards of trade.

After 16 years of practice as a lawyer he became a member of the faculty of Princeton University, in 1904. A few years later he was elected president of Williams College, where he was as successful in directing its business interests as in overseeing its educational activities.

Using Partisan Prejudice

It seems impossible that such falsehoods as these about the War Department and the Fuel Administration could have been invented for partisan purposes by men who were less eager to win the war than to win an election. It is much more probable that, like the story about the 200,000 coffins and the drunkenness and immorality among our troops, they are pro-German falsehoods invented for the purpose of weakening the confidence of the American people in the Government's war work. Nevertheless, their credulous acceptance by the press and the general public has been hailed with joy by the enemy, and German propagandists have reprinted and circulated them in South American countries with delight.

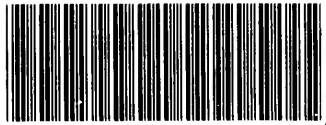
In that way the Kaiserite takes his profit from the quarrels of partisanship as he takes it from every other quarrel, racial, religious, or economic, which he can stir up among us. In a free country criticism must be free. No one in his senses will doubt the loyalty of many critics of the Government who have

This book is one of several issued by the Committee on Public Information for the purpose of acquainting Americans with the methods of enemies in their efforts to weaken the morale of our people.

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