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Contents

	Persecution in St. Paul — The Germans in World War I	
Volume 13	By Sister John Christine Wolkerstorfer	Page 3
Number 1	Kate Donnelly and the 'Cult of True Womanhood'	
	By Gretchen Kreuter	Page 14

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ON THE COVER: This cartoon, depicting the farmer as a rooster about to be eaten by the Non-Partisan League as the big bad wolf, was published about 1915.

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Persecution in St. Paul — The Germans in World War I

By Sister John Christine Wolkerstorfer

Oppression is a stranger to no country. Fear, mistrust, and prejudice are human failings that, if given rein, can bring down the best of men and destroy the strongest of governments. This country is no more immune than any other. Indeed, a pluralistic society, such as America is, is especially vulnerable to these sins, and our history is pockmarked with the consequences of such lapses.

The Irish, the Italians, the American Indian, the Jew, the black American, among others, all have felt at some time the heavy hand of discrimination and arbitrary law. For some, the struggle has forged a stronger ethnic unity and a heightened cultural awareness. For others, it has served to weaken the cultural fabric and to loosen the community bonds. In no case has democracy been better for it.

World War I, for many American Germans who lived through it, was a time of bitterness and resentment. The German language, press, and folk-customs were under constant attack; not only nationally, but here in Minnesota. Personal attacks, criticism, just and unjust accusations of disloyalty to America brought against them prompted an identity crisis for the German-Americans in St. Paul (as it did throughout the nation). The crisis was severe enough that it altered the cultural patterns nurtured by early German immigrants and fostered by their American descendants.

It should be remembered that between 1855 and 1915, Germans in America lived not in an American culture, but rather in a

German-America. In many instances entire villages were transplanted, each with its own customs intact. The desire to preserve these customs was only natural. Writing in 1891, the historian Lemke postulated that the effort to preserve this culture — this "Deutschtum" — was carried on in three major forms: the German language, the German press, and the German music and folkways¹. From the Germans' point of view, "Deutschtum" was his way of contributing to American culture. But to the 100 percent American, it stood for disloyalty to the constitution and the traditions of the United States.

WERE THERE REAL evidences of pro-Germanism in St. Paul at the time of World War I? Many St. Paulites had relatives, friends, and former business associates living in Germany. Among some of the wealthier businessmen, travel to Germany for business and pleasure was fairly common. For others less fortunate, letter-writing kept alive the "love of the Fatherland."

Before the war — and even after it began in Europe in 1914 — press treatment of local German-American activities and people was no different from that of any of the area's other major ethnic groups. Coverage of the war itself carried little hint of bias. In fact, both the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* and the *St. Paul Dispatch* tended, if anything, to play up the early victories and superior strength of Germany over the Entente.

But all this changed quickly as it became increasingly apparent that the United States would be drawn into the war. With the sinking of the *Lusitania* in 1915, press and community attitudes took a decided and vehement anti-German turn. By 1916, attacks and counterattacks were much in evidence in the *Pioneer Press*, and by 1917, anti-German attacks abounded.² The use of German in educational offices, loyalty of German teachers, German church services, German clergy, proponents of "Kultur" (an

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Members of the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety, from left: A. C. Weiss, T. E. Cashman, H. W. Libby, J. A. A. Burnquist, Clifford L. Hilton, Ambrose Tighe, C. H. March, and J. F. McGee.

organization promoting cultural ties between America and Germany), the German-American Alliance, all were under attack in newspapers. Press attacks against the Lutheran clergy were strong. As a result, on July 17, 1917, 27 pastors and the heads of nine branches of the Lutheran Church of American officially "purged" the church of disloyalty charges and drew up resolutions affirming its loyalty.³

OF ALL THE FACTORS contributing to anti-German sentiment in St. Paul and throughout much of Minnesota, none ranks so high as the work of the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety. Approved by the legislature on April 16, 1917, the Commission was given near dictatorial authority for defense and for support of the war effort. It was empowered to do anything not in conflict with the state and federal constitutions which was "necessary or proper for the public safety and for the protection of life and public property or private property . . ."⁴

The Commission was composed of Governor J. A. A. Burnquist, who acted as chairman; Attorney General Lyndon A. Smith, and five others appointed by the governor. Independent of any state department, the group quickly became a seven-man extra-legal government. Three months after its creation, the courts ruled that Commission orders, while not law, should be considered administrative directives. The Commission promptly began administering its orders as resolutions to which no

procedural due process could apply.⁵

The act which formed the Commission followed the format of public health legislation, employed the language of the health statute, and created a commission similar to a board of health with emergency powers which became operative in the event of a state of war. The law stated that, "If a state of war exists, the Commission shall do and perform all acts and things which are necessary and proper for the protection of life and property and that the military and industrial resources of the state may be most efficiently applied to the state's and nation's defense, and the successful prosecution of the war."⁶

The advantage of the Commission over martial law was that, while martial law could not be invoked until disaster occurred, the Safety Commission was anticipatory — it did not have to wait for disloyalty to occur. The War Committee of the Ramsey County Bar Association said that some of these powers might be open to questioning in times other than those of public danger. It recommended that lawyers advise their clients to submit quietly to Commission orders and to discourage disputes.⁷ One day a Commission order might be adverse for a client; the next day a new order might be that client's protection.

THE COMMISSION flooded the state with bulletins designed to root out any vestige of German sympathy in Minnesota. It also authorized a Home Guard to replace the National Guard which had been called into federal service. Some 600 peace officers were commissioned and clothed with powers of constables. Their purpose was to prevent personal crimes and property destruction. The commission barred strikes and lock-outs, forbade moves to extend the organization of labor, required the registration of all aliens, checked the liquor traffic, and issued a "work-or-fight" order. It tackled the tough question of German in the schools and took action against all minorities suspected of pro-Germanism.⁸

But probably the most graphic documentation of the Commission's activities comes from the organization's own enumeration of cases it investigated. In its brief life of less than two years, the Commission handled 1,739 complaints for violations of orders and laws. Categorized, they appear as follows:

Interference with Liberty Loans ...	118
Teaching German in schools	174
Violations of the work-or-fight order	208
Complaints against dance halls	226
Violations of liquor laws	331
Sedition cases	682

The figures also speak for the compliance of the citizenry of Minnesota who bought the Commission's demand for conformity to its standards of loyalty.

The first five men appointed to the Commission were Charles W. Ames of St. Paul, John Lind of Minneapolis, Charles H. March of Litchfield, John McGee of Minneapolis, and Anton C. Weiss of Duluth. Ames was entrusted with establishing a secret service to investigate certain districts throughout the state, notably St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Winona.⁹ The service was set up on a county-to-county basis, each operation headed by a director and involving trusted citizens and commission field agents. Within two months of the signing of the Safety Commission Act, there were commissions in every Minnesota county.

A CIRCULAR sent out by the Safety Commission early in 1917, reflects the pattern under which the county organizations operated. It read, in part:

"It is said by a writer that one out of

every twenty persons in the nation today is disloyal and about one out of every one hundred is so openly seditious that he should face a firing squad if he were to receive the sort of punishment that is meted out by any autocratic government. Anyone who talks and acts against the government in time of war, regardless of the 'Constitutional right of free speech' which has been so sadly abused, is a traitor and deserves the most drastic punishment."¹⁰

With its cause spelled out, the Safety Commission brought its full investigatory powers to bear on the state's 500,000 Germans.¹¹ It devoted session after session to suspected disloyalty, alleged pro-Germanism, and possible draft evasion. The hundreds of references in Commission minutes to Germans under suspicion indicate how a virtual spy system took over in the state.

Because there was such an avalanche of letters reporting highly suspicious persons in St. Paul and other communities, the Commission designated February 25-27, 1918, as Alien Registration Days. The program was set up so that state and county action could supplement each other. The county was to determine the property each alien held and whether he really lived on his real estate (or more specifically, whether he worked the land in compliance with the work-or-fight order and whether he hid draft dodgers); identify corporations having alien stockholders, and compile legal descriptions of all real estate listed. In addition, the state auditor was to get a list of all aliens living within the state and secure copies of all alien enemy registrants (as German residents without citizenship were called) under the selective draft in existence at the time.¹²

LEST THEY themselves be considered disloyal, many Germans in St. Paul joined the spy campaign. A German priest from Assumption parish reported eight Oblate Fathers who had recently arrived in the archdiocese. The priest petitioned the Commission to ask the archbishop to depose them from the archdiocese. The case was dropped because of lack of specific charges against the priests, but it shows how suspicious people had become.¹³ The Commission also set up a state-wide registration system for all unemployed persons who had been in Minnesota for more than two weeks. Unemployed transients who remained in the state for five or

more days also had to register, and all such persons had to show registration cards upon request by the police.¹⁴

The responsibility for uncovering violations of the federal espionage and conscription acts devolved upon the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The St. Paul office was in charge of Thomas E. Campbell. Unable to cope with the hundreds of complaints and accusations of alleged disloyalty (each necessitating a separate investigation and prosecution when the evidence warranted it), the St. Paul office relied more and more on Home Guard and a civilian organization known as the American Protective League.¹⁵ The Home Guard was made up of civilian troops organized along the lines of the National Guard and subject to the governor. It was set up by the Commission on April 28, 1917, "for the period of the war and until peace shall be concluded."¹⁶ Open to able-bodied men over 26 years of age, Home Guard service was rendered without pay except in cases of more than five days of continuous duty. Before the war ended, 23 battalions, with a total strength of more than 8,000 officers and men, had been organized. Three were in St. Paul, two in Minneapolis, and 18 scattered in the bigger towns throughout the state.¹⁷

THE SECTIONS OF ST. PAUL investigated by the Home Guard to check registration cards were those already designated as German parishes. A city map with specified block sections marked for patrol assignments is in the Hiram D. Frankel Papers, along with instructions to Home Guard units. They were to pay special attention to pool halls, dance halls, saloons, rooming houses, and cheap hotels. Guards were placed at exits until everyone had been examined. All men under 21 and over 32, and those with registration cards were to be released. Anyone who could not produce his card was sent to the Armory. The Home Guard was to accept no excuse for failure to produce proper registration cards.¹⁸

The American Protective League was similar to the Home Guard. In fact, the two organizations often acted in conjunction with one another. Founded in March, 1917, in Chicago, the League by the end of the war had grown to more than a quarter of a million detectives. Nationalized by the

United States attorney general, the League was soon established in New York, St. Louis, and Milwaukee. A few months following the declaration of war, nearly every major city in the country had a League.

The A.P.L. was established in Minneapolis in November, 1917, under the leadership of Charles G. Davis, a contractor; there were more than 400 members, all of whom served without pay. Work of the League was also carried on in St. Paul and Duluth, although these divisions were not as highly organized as in Minneapolis.

Serving under the direct supervision of Justice Department agents, the A.P.L. conducted some three million investigations across the nation, covering "every aspect of the government's surveillance over the population."¹⁹ These included: observation of aliens, of transients in hotels and lodging houses, of persons affiliated with certain radical politics and industrial societies; inquiry into thousands of cases of alleged disloyalty, seditious teaching, dissemination of enemy propaganda and other expressions of pro-Germanism; apprehension of draft evaders, deserters, impersonators of military officers, and government officials; persons guilty of selling liquor and narcotics to military personnel; interrogation of alleged Red Cross and Liberty Bond "slackers" and hoarders of food and fuel; and the investigation of any other activities reputed to hinder the American war-time efforts.²⁰

THE A.P.L. DIVISION in Minneapolis alone handled more than 15,000 cases, of which almost half related to the draft. In fact, the Minneapolis division was said to have conducted the nation's first large-scale draft evader search-and-seize operations, and to have furnished the inspiration for similar raids in other cities. On March 26, 1918, 100 operatives swept through a section of Minneapolis — an area of cheap hotels and lodging houses — and took into custody 100 suspects. Twenty-one were jailed; the rest produced evidence of good standing with their draft boards and were released. Ten days later, a more extensive raid by 250 operatives escorted by 700 National Guardsmen netted more than 1,000 suspects. All but 27 were able to prove themselves innocent of draft evasion.

The first raid in St. Paul occurred in July, 1918, and rounded up more than 500 men who were unable to produce registration cards. No more than six were guilty of any-



Home Guards on duty during the strike of Twin City Rapid Transit Company employees in December of 1917.

thing more serious than neglecting to carry them. The search for evaders, deserters, and delinquents continued throughout the remaining months of the war. Raids in the three largest cities of the state and a number of smaller communities resulted in "thousands who were willfully or unintentionally disobeying the selective service law."²¹

In its investigation of alleged disloyalty alone, the Minneapolis A.P.L. handled some 1,700 cases, in addition to some 7,000 other cases involving violations of the selective service law. Many were found to have been unjustly reported as disloyal, and the League was forced to advise a number of people that "the circulation of ill-advised gossip or the lodging of false accusations was as un-American as the blatant shouting of plain pro-German sentiments."²²

Nevertheless, it is historian Emerson Hough's contention that the League operated under the conviction that all too many German-Americans lived under the injunction never to forget the fatherland. To the League, these German-Americans never really loved any other country but Germany, and they proved this by clinging to their old language and their old customs, caring nothing for the culture of America.

Besides this, the League regarded the German-Americans as clannish beyond all other ethnic groups coming to America and believed that even those who were American publicly, secretly were completely German.²³

THIS ATTITUDE reveals the insensitivity of many of the patriotic organizations to the German-American situation. Particularly vulnerable to such heavy-handedness were the poorer Germans. There were many cases of Safety Commission "convictions" as enemy aliens of the poorer, unlettered German immigrants who merely had failed to realize the importance of taking out naturalization papers. Such "convictions" generally meant that one's name was put on a list which was circulated among various agencies and patriotic organizations. Often the guilty were required to buy Liberty Bonds.

In an attempt to win over all people of German descent, the Commission authorized the distribution of a vast amount of anti-German literature written in the German language. Purporting to be informational pieces on the war and its great issues, the materials distributed were *The*



John Lind

Prisoners of an Illusion by Julius A. Coller, *The Poison Growth of Prussianism* by Otto N. Kahn, and two pamphlets — *Facts about the War* and *Perils of Prussianism*. The first book took the position that sentiment had kept the German-American “the man without a country.”²⁴ The general message of all, however, was: “If it’s German, it’s bad.”

IN THE EARLY DAYS of the Safety Commission’s hunt for pro-Germans, the taking of a loyalty oath was a re-admission of that person into the family of Americans. Yet, as more people were compelled to take the oath, its power to allay suspicion diminished. At the same time German organizations looked on the voluntary taking of the oath as a marked sign of the patriot. Giving patriotic addresses and participating in Liberty Bond campaigns were all musts for any true American. The *St. Paul Pioneer Press* was filled with descriptions of such protestations of loyalty. A typical account read, “Representatives of 4,000 citizens of German extraction, members of the Sons of Herman, held a special meeting in West St. Paul to pledge to the nation the loyalty of the Germans of Minnesota.”²⁵

Disloyalty charges against groups as well as against individuals appeared in the *Pioneer Press* “Mail Bag.” In these letters to the editor, the Lutheran clergy in St. Paul

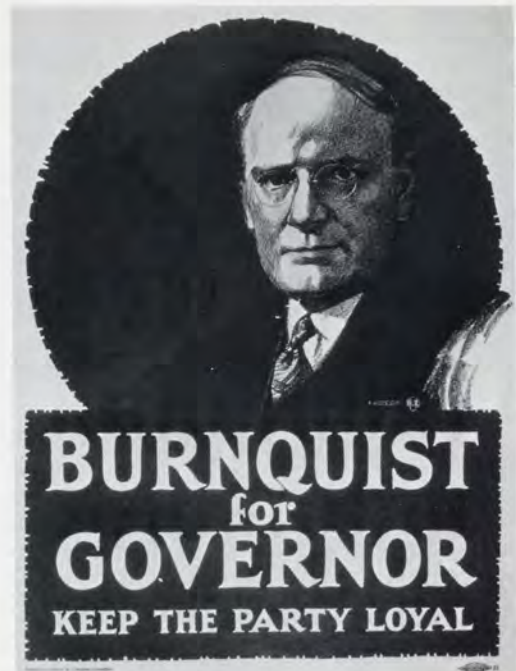
were much criticized. A “Loyal Lutheran” defended the city’s Lutheran pastors, particularly the Rev. A. Hasse of Trinity Lutheran Church and the Rev. J. Plocher of St. John’s Lutheran Church. These were St. Paul’s two largest Lutheran churches and their pastors served as an index of the other German Lutheran communities.²⁶

While the Liberty Loan campaigns began as a call to all loyal Americans to support Uncle Sam, the campaigns also degenerated into an index of pro-German or a 100-percent American status. Inability to show proof of purchase of Liberty Bonds was seen as a sure indication that one was an enemy alien and disloyal to the United States. On the other hand, proof of purchase was supposed to mark one as a loyal American.

In one St. Paul department store, Liberty Bond “slackers” were ferreted out by a detail of United States marines. All persons not wearing a Liberty Loan button were stopped and forced to explain why they had not purchased a bond. Failure on the part of a St. Paul citizen to subscribe his allotment might bring him this letter:

“It has been reported to Liberty Loan Headquarters that you refused to buy any Liberty Bonds. The report coming from authentic sources leads us to believe that you are apparently able to do so. Before reporting this to Washington, the

Burnquist Campaign Poster



HE WON'T MAKE ANY POLITICAL SPEECHES



Committee desires to be fair with you and if you have any statements to make, you may do so by calling Liberty Loan Headquarters."²⁷

TO MAKE MATTERS touchier, these ever-hotter patriotic fires were heated even more with the emergence of the controversial Non-Partisan League.

The League, a North Dakota-based organization of militant farmers seeking agrarian economic reform, had chosen the spring of 1917 to open its Minnesota campaign. Espousing a brand of modified socialism and the elimination of the middle-

The caption under this political cartoon published by the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* reads, in part: "Flag in hand and wires to his political dummies in the rear the Hon. J. A. A. Burnquist is touring the state delivering 'patriotic addresses'." His listeners, the newspaper said, "can't discover the 'loyalty' it is so badly mixed with 'vote-for-me-ism.' They have seen so much flag-waving and so much wire-pulling that they recognize both."

man in farm profits, the League blitzed the state, putting up candidates in both political parties. The incumbent Minnesota Republican administration, not especially popular with farmers, felt particularly threatened. It was well aware of the fact that the League had, in only one year, won

GOV. BURNQUIST REPLIES TO NON-PARTISAN LEADERS

SHARP REBUKE ADMINISTERED TO BREEDERS OF CLASS HATRED AND DISCONTENT DURING THE NATIONAL CRISIS

control of the executive departments and the House of Representatives in North Dakota.

With the United States' entrance into the war in April, 1917, however, Burnquist's Republican forces were handed the ideal issue on which to base their campaign: loyalty, or more bluntly, the disloyalty of those who would raise economic issues at a time of national crisis. The bludgeon with which this issue was applied was the only too eager Commission of Public Safety.²⁸

On September 20, 1917, Wisconsin Senator Robert M. LaFollette, speaking on the emotion-charged war issue before the Non-Partisan League's convention in St. Paul, was misquoted by the Associated Press as saying the United States had no cause to join the war. That was all the Commission needed to begin its Non-Partisan League offensive. LaFollette was accused of having given a seditious address. As a result, the Commission petitioned the United States Senate to expel LaFollette as a teacher of disloyalty who was giving support to the enemies of the United States and hindering the war effort.

LEAGUE FOUNDER, Arthur C. Townley, and former Congressman James Mannaham of the League's Minnesota branch, were forced to appear before the Commission and testify to their action in sponsoring LaFollette.²⁹ Fearful that the LaFollette incident would be regarded as pro-German activity on the part of St. Paul people, loyalty groups in the city staged a loyalty demonstration at the St. Paul auditorium with Theodore Roosevelt as speaker. On September 28, 1917, 11,000 people jammed the auditorium and yelled themselves hoarse at Roosevelt's burning denunciation of LaFollette and his followers.³⁰

Newspaper headlines recorded Governor Burnquist's running battle with the Non-Partisan League. This is from a 1917 newspaper.

Although LaFollette denied the charges (and eight months later forced the Associated Press to admit its error in court), the damage was done. The Commission, at least one of whose members believed the League to be "about the most dangerous organization in America," was in the fray to stay.³¹

In the ensuing campaign, the patriotic cacaphony reached frenzied proportions. The League was charged with pro-Germanism, hostility to the war effort and socialism. Many public safety commissions across the state (with tacit approval of Governor Burnquist and the state Commission of Public Safety) forcibly suppressed League speakers and activities.

DESPITE A LEAGUE resolution supporting the war effort, League speakers, members, and sympathizers were subjected to unusual abuse. Speakers often were beaten or tarred and feathered and even shot at. Houses and businesses of League sympathizers were smeared with yellow paint. League meetings and parades were broken up by Home Guard contingents called out by the public safety commissions. Local sheriffs forbade Leaguers from entering their towns or counties.

Between October, 1917, and February, 1918, 21 Minnesota counties banned League gatherings. In 14 of those counties, the decrees were issued by the local public safety commission. In 27 counties League organizers reported some form of physical coercion, either from the local public safety commission, the sheriff or a mob.³²

There was no mitigation of violence, even

when the League endorsed the highly respected Charles C. Lindbergh as its man to run against Burnquist in the primary. Even Lindbergh was roughed up, shot at, and subjected to newspaper slander and scorn. Headlines such as "Imagine Huns Rejoicing: Anti-Lindbergh Disturbances Must Be Pleasing to Kaiserites"³³ appeared in the St. Paul dailies. The Commission finally had Townley arrested. Although Lindbergh polled a surprising 150,000 votes in the primary, he lost the election by a wide margin.³⁴

In this rarefied, superpatriotic atmosphere, very few people were immune from disloyalty charges. The minutes of the Commission of Public Safety for December 11, 1917, record several petitions recommending the removal of Oscar E. Keller, St. Paul Councilman, for seditious utterances. These petitions were turned over for investigation. Also under attack was George Ries, Ramsey County auditor. Ries had used the names of prominent St. Paul men to prove he was a good American citizen. Even John Lind, a highly respected former governor and a Commission member, found himself the target of abuse. Lind resigned in disgust after fellow commissioner John F. McGee vilified him before both the Commission and the governor for attempting to restrain Commission activities.³⁵

IT WAS, HOWEVER, the attack on the German language that was so devastating to

the "kultur" so treasured by German-Americans. It also demonstrated the absurd lengths to which the patriotic frenzy had gone. Loyalty of teachers and the use of German in teaching and in textbooks were called early to the attention of the Safety Commission. On November 6, 1917, C. G. Schulz, superintendent of education, presented the report of a special committee appointed to examine German textbooks. The same committee drew up a "black list" of German books to be eliminated from the public schools, and a "white list" of those books which were considered non-objectionable. On November 20, alluding to complaints against parochial schools, the Safety Commission resolved that school boards, principals, and teachers require the use of English as the exclusive medium of instruction in Minnesota schools. The use of all foreign languages was prohibited in the schools except as a medium for the study of those languages themselves, or as a medium for religious instruction.³⁶ All of this was to be accomplished as a patriotic duty.

The teaching of German was dropped by all five of the Catholic parochial schools in the city. Consequently there was considerable agitation to drop even the teaching of German in other schools, both public and private. For example, the curriculum bulletins for St. Joseph's Academy show a drop

A Pine county farmer living near Hinckley was tarred and feathered by a mob May 2, 1918. According to this newspaper account, he had offended "some village 'patriots' by discussing economic reform with farmers."



in enrollment in German classes from 1915 to 1918 and no German offered in 1919.³⁷ Where German was still taught, the "black list" of unsuitable books had to be followed. This list contained 270 books, 30 of which the committee considered sufficiently objectionable to justify banning them from the schools. *Hoher Als Die Kirche* by von Hillem, well-known to any serious student of German, was banned completely. The objection was that the background, concerned with the Alsace-Lorraine question, favored the German side and presented only the good side of the Kaiser.³⁸

IN THE CRAZE to obliterate the German language from America, absurdities arose. Sauerkraut became "liberty cabbage" and the spoof, "The Katzenjammer Kids" became the "The Shenanegan Kids." Some Germans felt compelled to change their distinctive German names. Robert Auerback from the West Seventh area of St. Paul changed his name to Robert Rice. He said: "For the sake of my children, I would save them from the odium attached to a German name, and the fact that they will have to live it down in every new community to which they may go."³⁹

The attempt to root out German thinking and expression probably took its most absurd turn when it reached into the realm of music. The most obvious attacks were those against the Schubert Club's selections. Although the Schubert Club was not a German organization, it was closely connected with German culture in the St. Paul area. Compositions by Wagner, Schubert, and Schumann began to disappear from the programs and to be replaced by selections by French and English composers. The St. Paul Grand Opera also changed its programs, as did the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

Concern over the use of German quickly centered around the German-American press. Newspapers written in German were viewed with great suspicion, nationally and locally. The editors of the *Atlantic Monthly* spoke of German papers as "enemy" papers. For these papers to be printed in the enemy's language, protected by our laws, and admitted to the privileges of the mails was indeed coddling sedition with a vengeance, the editors believed, and pointed to German thinking as the chief offender.⁴⁰

In Minnesota, the Public Safety Commission employed translators to keep a close eye on every edition of every German news-

LEAGUE BANNER TORN FROM AUTO; OWNER "LICKED"

ATTORNEY ALLEN
SAYS LINDBERGH
SHALL NOT SPEAK

— — —
Informs Austin Audience That
Nonpartisan Meeting Set for
Saturday Near Monterey
Will Not Be Held.
— — —

Welcome Editor Downs Harry
Hartung, Son of Convicted
Disloyalist Who Flees From
Village to Escape Yellow
Paint—Public Presents Yost
With Cigars.

Editor E. H. Yost of Welcome to-
day licked the stuffin' out of a man
alleged to be off color on loyalty.
It is a long story and a hot one.
Harry Hartung, living north of
Welcome, came to town today with
a Lindbergh for governor banner on
his auto.
Editor Yost's eagle eye spotted the

Headlines also recorded treatment of Non-
Partisan League members.

paper in the state. In addition, it used such groups as the American Legion and the Daughters of the American Revolution and even other newspapers, to act as press watchdogs — to notify the Commission of any questionable material that might appear. (Indeed, there were reports of some newspapers using the system to boost circulation by turning in the competition.)

EXTRACTS OF *Der Wanderer* were submitted to the Commission for scrutiny. Other German newspapers in the state were also investigated. On August 1, 1917, Joseph Matt of *Der Wanderer* and F. Bergmeir of the *Volkzeitung* appeared at the request of the Commission. The state of mind of the German publisher was discussed and the editors promised to cooperate with the Commission. On August 10, 1917, however F. Bergmeir was interned for disobeying a Commission order that all German newspapers cease printing in German or suspend publication. Bergmeir was interned for disloyalty to the United States.⁴¹ In all of this upheaval and the apparent resulting conformity to American ways, can one say that World War I totally dissolved the hyphen for the German-Americans and Americanized them? I think one can say the war helped dissolve the hyphen by curtailing the use of the German language, but this seems to have been happening already. One need only compare the use of the German language among first generation Germans with that of the second generation. However, with the German language removed from its sacred pedestal, the spread

of German culture, as the German-Americans intended it, was impossible.

On the other hand, what the Public Safety Commission regarded as a successful winning over of the German-Americans was not total victory of American over German culture, as was supposed.

The conformity that results from fear of expulsion from the society one hopes to build up through giving of one's peculiar gifts and talents is not real sign of assimilation into that society. The way in which something is accomplished does matter. *Der Wanderer* hung onto its use of the German language until the 1930's, but by that time the emphasis on transplanting

German culture was minimal. So many of the old customs — the celebration of St. Boniface Day, the songfests, the marriage customs — had disappeared. Family Christmas customs, birth and funeral customs, and harvest customs wax and wane with the natural splits that take place within the family unit. The proximity of married sons and daughters had much to do with this tradition. Perhaps it is best to say that for a time after World War I, there was little German influence in St. Paul, as what had been anti-German sentiment became anti-alien sentiment. And the war issue was replaced by prohibition and the women's suffrage agitation.

Footnotes

1. John A. Hawgood, *Tragedy of German-America* (New York, 1940), p. 58.
2. *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, July 18, 1917; July 20, 1917; July 23, 1917; August 11, 1917; Sept. 23, 1917.
3. *Ibid.*, July 18, 1917, p. 6.
4. Carol Jensen, "Loyalty as a Political Weapon: The 1918 Campaign in Minnesota," p. 44, *Minnesota History*, Summer 1972.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
6. *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, July 24, 1917, p. 6.
7. *Minnesota Laws 1917*, Chapter 261.
8. Theodore Blegen, *Minnesota A History of the State*, (Minneapolis, 1963), p. 471.
9. Minutes of the Commission of Public Safety, May 30, 1917, *John Lind Papers*.
10. Circular of the Minnesota Commission of Public Safety, State Archives.
11. Folwell, III, p. 558, citing the 1910 census.
12. Minutes of Commission of Public Safety, Jan. 15, 1918, *Lind Papers*.
13. Letter of the Rev. Alois J. Kastigar, Nov. 29, 1918, *Commission of Public Safety*, State Archives.
14. *Commission of Public Safety*, State Archives.
15. Franklin Holbrook and Livia Appel, *Minnesota in the War with Germany 1-II* (St. Paul, 1928), p. 28.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
17. *Ibid.*, II, p. 31.
18. *Ibid.*, II, pp. 35-36.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
21. Emerson Hough, *The Web*, and American Protective League Summary and Report, p. 36.
22. Holbrook and Appel, p. 38.
23. Emerson Hough, *The Web* (Chicago, 1919), p. 24.
24. Letter to Brill, April 6, 1917, *Brill Papers*.
25. *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Oct. 24, 1917, p. 1.
26. *Ibid.*, August 12, 1918, p. 4.
27. Holbrook and Appel, p. 210.
28. Jensen, p. 43-57.
29. Minutes of Commission of Public Safety, Sept. 25, 1917, *John Lind Papers*.
30. *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, Sept. 29, 1917, p. 1.
31. Jensen, p. 47.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
33. *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, June 17, 1918, p. 4.
34. Theodore Blegen, *Minnesota A History of the State* (Minneapolis, 1963), p. 477.
35. Jensen, p. 46.
36. Minutes of Commission of Public Safety, Nov. 20, 1917, *John Lind Papers*.
37. *Catalogues for St. Joseph's Academy* (1910-1926), Academy Archives, St. Paul, Minnesota.
38. Report of Committee on German Books, pp. 15-16, *Commission of Public Safety*, State Archives.
39. *Commission of Public Safety*, State Archives.
40. Frank P. Olds, "Disloyalty of the German-American Press," *Atlantic Monthly* CXX (July, 1917), p. 140.
41. Letter of Preus to Burnquist, August 15, 1917, *Commission of Public Safety*, State Archives.



THE GIBBS HOUSE

at 2097 West Larpenteur Avenue, Falcon Heights, is owned and maintained by the Ramsey County Historical Society as a restored farm home of the mid-nineteenth century period.

THE Ramsey County Historical Society was founded in 1949. During the following years the Society, believing that a sense of history is of great importance in giving a new, mobile generation a knowledge of its roots in the past, acquired the 100-year-old farm home which had belonged to Heman R. Gibbs. The Society restored the Gibbs House and in 1954 opened it to the public as a museum which would depict the way of life of an early Minnesota settler.

In 1958, the Society erected a barn behind the farm house which is maintained as an agricultural museum to display the tools and other implements used by the men who broke up the prairie soil and farmed with horse and oxen. In 1966, the Society moved to its museum property a one-room rural schoolhouse, dating from the 1870's. The white frame school came from near Milan, Minnesota. Now restored to the period of the late 1890's, the school actually is used for classes and meetings.

Headquarters of the Ramsey County Historical Society will be located in the Old Federal Courts Building in downtown St. Paul, an historic building of neo-Romanesque architecture which the Society, with other groups, fought to save from demolition. The Society presently has its offices at the Gibbs Farm. The Society is active in identification of historic sites in the city and county, and conducts an educational program which includes the teaching and demonstration of old arts and crafts. It is one of the few county historical societies in the country to engage in an extensive publishing program in local history.