

How The War Came To America

(Issued by The Committee on Public Information—The Secretary of State, The Secretary of War, The Secretary of the Navy, George Creel Washington, D. C. June 25, 1917.)

In the meantime, although our neutral rights were not brought into question by Germany as early as by England, the German controversy was infinitely more serious.

For any dissensions that might arise, no arbitration treaty existed between the United States and the German Government. This was from no fault of ours. We had tried to establish with Germany the same treaty relations we had with Great Britain and 19 other nations. But these overtures had been rejected. And this action on the part of the Imperial German Government was only one example of its whole system of diplomacy. In both conferences at The Hague had been the German delegates who were the most active in blocking all projects for the pacific settlement of disputes between nations. They had preferred to limit international relations to the old modes of diplomacy and war. It was therefore obvious from the first that any controversy with the German Government would be exceedingly serious; for if it could not be solved by direct diplomatic conversations, there was no recourse except to war.

From such conversations there is small hope of satisfactory results unless the good faith of both sides is profound. If either side lacks good faith, or reveals in all its actions an insidious hostility, diplomacy is of no avail. And so it has proved in the present case.

In the first year of the war the Government of Germany stirred up among its people a feeling of resentment against the United States on account of our insistence upon our right as a neutral nation to trade in munitions with the belligerent powers. Our legal right in the matter was not seriously questioned by Germany. She could not have done so consistently, for as recently as the Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913 both Germany and Austria sold munitions to the belligerents. Their appeals to us in the present war were not to observe international law, but to revise it in their interest. And these appeals they tried to make on moral and humanitarian grounds. But upon "the moral issue" involved, the stand taken by the United States was consistent with its traditional policy and with obvious common sense. For if, with all other neutrals, we refused to sell munitions to belligerents, we could never in time of a war of our own obtain munitions from neutrals, and the nation which had accumulated the largest reserves of war supplies in time of peace would be assured of victory. The militarist state that invested its money in armaments would be at a fatal advantage over the free people who invested their wealth in schools. To write into international law that neutrals should not trade in munitions would be to hand over the world to the rule of the nation with the largest armament factories. Such a policy the United States of America could not accept.

But our principal controversy with the German Government, and the one which rendered the situation at once acute, rose out of their announcement of a sea zone where their submarines would operate in violation of all accepted principles of international law. Our indignation at such a threat was soon rendered passionate by the sinking of the Lusitania. This attack upon our rights was not only grossly illegal; it defied the fundamental concepts of humanity. Aggravating restraints on our trade were grievances which could be settled by litigation after the war, but the wanton murder of peaceable men and of innocent women and children, citizens of a nation with which Germany was at peace, was a crime against the civil-

ized world which could never be settled in any court.

Our Government, however, inspired still by a desire to preserve peace if possible, used every resource of diplomacy to force the German Government to abandon such attacks. This diplomatic correspondence, which has already been published, proves beyond doubt that our Government sought by every honorable means to preserve faith in that mutual sincerity between nations which is the only basis of sound diplomatic interchange.

But evidence of the bad faith of the Imperial German Government soon piled up on every hand. Honest efforts on our part to establish a firm basis of good neighborliness with the German people were met by their Government with quibbles, misrepresentations, and counter accusations against their enemies abroad. And meanwhile in this country official agents of the Central Powers—protected from criminal prosecution by diplomatic immunity—conspired against our internal peace, placed spies and agents provocateurs throughout the length and breadth of our land, and even in high positions of trust in departments of our Government.

While expressing a cordial friendship for the people of the United States, the Government of Germany had its agents at work both in Latin America and Japan. They bought or subsidized papers and supported speakers there to rouse feelings of bitterness and distrust against us in those friendly nations, in order to embroil us in war. They were inciting to insurrection in Cuba, in Haiti, and in Santo Domingo; their hostile hand was stretched out to take the Danish Islands; and everywhere in South America they were abroad sowing the seeds of dissension, trying to stir up one nation against the United States. In their sum these various operations amounted to direct assault upon the Monroe doctrine. And even if we had given up our right to travel on the sea, even if we had surrendered to German threats and abandoned our legitimate trade in munitions, the German offensive in the New World, in our own land and among our neighbors, was becoming too serious to be ignored.

So long as it was possible, the Government of the United States tried to believe that such activities, the evidence of which was already in a large measure at hand, were the work of irresponsible and misguided individuals. It was only reluctantly, in the face of overwhelming proof, that the recall of the Austro-Hungarian ambassador and of the German military and naval attaches was demanded. Proof of their criminal violations of our hospitality was presented to their Governments. But these Governments in reply offered no apologies nor did they issue reprimands. It became clear that such intrigue was their settled policy.

In the meantime the attacks of the German submarines upon the lives and property of American citizens had gone on; the protests of our Government were now sharp and ominous; and this Nation was rapidly being drawn into a state of war. As the President said in Topeka, on February 2, 1916:

"We are not going to invade any nation's right. But suppose, my fellow countrymen, some nation should invade our rights. What then? . . . I have come here to tell you that the difficulties of our foreign policy . . . daily increase in number and intricacy and in danger, and I would be derelict to my duty to you if I did not deal with you in these matters with the utmost candor, and tell you what it may be necessary to use the force of the United States to do." The next day

at St. Louis, he repeated his warning: "The danger is not from within, gentlemen, it is from without; and I am bound to tell you that that danger is constant and immediate, not because anything new has happened, not because there has been any change in our international relationships within recent weeks or months, but because the danger comes with every turn of events."

The break would have come sooner if our Government had not been restrained by the hope that saner counsels might still prevail in Germany. For it was well known to us that the German people had to a very large extent been kept in ignorance of many of the secret crimes of their Government against us. And the pressure of a faction of German public opinion less hostile to this country was shown when their Government acquiesced to some degree in our demands, at the time of the Sussex outrage, and for nearly a year maintained at least a pretense of observing the pledge they had made to us. The tension was abated.

While the war spirit was growing in some sections of our Nation, there was still no widespread desire to take part in the conflict abroad; for the tradition of noninterference in Europe's political affairs was too deeply rooted in our national life to be easily overturned. Moreover, two other considerations strengthened our Government in its efforts to remain neutral in this war. The first was our traditional sense of responsibility to-

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THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE—THE U. S. NAVY.
Some of the officers under Sec. Daniels.



Admiral Henry T. Mayo, Commanding Atlantic Fleet.



Commander Ridley McLean.



Captain William L. Rodgers.



Photo by American Press Association.
Rear Admiral Albert W. Grant, Commander Submarine Force, Atlantic Fleet.



Rear Admiral Walter McLean.



Rear Admiral R. S. Griffin, Chief of the Bureau of Steam Engineering.

FREAKS IN TRADE CAUSED BY WAR

Wool Now Comes From Iceland and Cotton From China.

GET LOBSTERS FROM AFRICA

The Canaries Send Onions to Uncle Sam—Manufacturers Are Searching Every Corner of the Globe For Different Kinds of Materials and Food-stuffs.

Wool from Iceland, cotton from China, beans from Brazil and lobsters from South Africa are among the eccentricities of commerce in these days of high prices and interruption of the usual trade currents. An analysis by the National City bank of New York of the commerce of the United States for the latest month for which detailed figures are available, February, showed the arrival of 4,300 pounds of clothing wool from Iceland and also of 3,000,000 pounds of cotton from China, this being imported into the country which prides itself on producing two-thirds of the cotton of the world.

The records of 1916 also show imports of lobsters from Japan and onions from the Canary Islands. Of the 5,000,000 bushels of onions imported into this country in the last five years the Canary Islands furnished 150,000

bushels and Australia, on the opposite side of the world, about an equal quantity. Of the \$5,000,000 worth of mushrooms and truffles imported in that same period more than \$250,000 worth came from China, Japan and adjacent territory. The bank's compilation showed that of the \$3,500,000 worth of eggs imported since the beginning of the war China alone sent nearly \$2,000,000 worth. Madagascar is now contributing vanilla beans and material for hat manufacture, while \$2,000,000 worth of peanuts have been sent from China and Japan since the start of the war.

Ransack All Corners.

"The manufacturers are ransacking every corner of the world for material for their factories," said the bank's statement. "They are bringing wool from Iceland, as above indicated, and they brought last year from South Africa 1,500,000 worth of ostrich feathers and considerable quantities from Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina, which now have their ostrich farms, as do South Africa and Australia. Bones were brought from India, China and the Philippine Islands and dried blood from Australia, Argentina and Uruguay.

"Nearly \$2,000,000 worth of bristles were brought from China into this country, which has one-third of the swine of the world. We sent to India for nearly \$2,000,000 worth of indigo, for which we paid over \$2 per pound against 35 cents a pound in the year before the war. We have since the beginning of the war brought from China \$250,000 worth of human hair. Asia sent us last year alone \$13,000,000 worth of goatskins and over \$2,000,000

worth of Buffalo hides, and from Australia we bought 1,000,000 pounds of kangaroo skins."

Other American purchases included \$250,000 worth of elephant tusks shipped from Egypt, together with vegetable ivory from Ecuador and Colombia. West Africa contributed 12,000,000 gallons of palm oil, China 5,000,000 gallons of nut oil and Japan 12,000,000 gallons of soy bean oil. African thrift was responsible for sending this country nearly 1,000,000 pounds of rags, South Africa contributed \$1,000,000 worth of hair of the angora goat, while 3,500,000 pounds of sugar beet seed came from Asiatic Russia.

In conclusion the bank's statement said:

Import Dairy Products.

"Curiously, this great agricultural country, with more cattle than any other country except India, found it advisable to import \$12,000,000 worth of dairy products, bringing condensed milk from Switzerland and Australia, cream from Canada and Japan, cheese from a score of countries, but especially from Switzerland and Italy, and butter from Denmark and New Zealand. The pearl divers of Ceylon and the Pacific sent us \$10,000,000 worth of their products, most of it, however, by way of the European countries. Cuba recognized our 'sweet tooth,' not only by sending us a larger quantity of sugar than ever before, but adding to it 68,000 pounds of honey. From the orient, chiefly China and Japan, we bought \$10,000 worth of joss sticks. Wild animals imported for educational purposes in the zoological gardens of the United States amount in value to approximately \$15,000 a year."

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