FUTURE OF GERMANY STAKE OF PRESENT HELLISH DRIVE

Hun Must Win Before Americans Can Strike

War Weary People Have Been Promised That This Gigantic Stroke Will Break Allies and Secure Indemnities That Stand Between Them and Ruin.

By FRANK H. SIMONDS

AS WE approach the end of the third week of the German offensive in Picardy, when this article is written, there is no mistaking the fact that the second Battle of the Somme is rapidly taking on the color and character of another and more gigantic Verdun with all that Verdun means to German and Allied publics.

It is well to recall once more the exact circumstances under which the present German campaign was undertaken. The Germans did not attack Picardy in 1918, as the French did in Champagne in 1915, to relieve an ally and with only a subordinate hope of breaking through. They did not attack as did the British and the French at the Somme, to save an imperiled sector of the Western front, as Verdun had to be saved in July, 1916. They had a far more ambitious objective than had the ill-starred Nivelle one year ago at the Aisne. His maximum purpose was to turn the Germans out of France, and Haig's hope in the Ypres campaign of last summer and fall did not go beyond the freeing of the Belgian coast.

Now the Germans in their venture have returned to their own precedents of the Marne and Verdun campaigns. Their offensive was a deliberate attempt to win the war by one gigantic thrust, and it was so advertised by the German press which in such instances always speaks by the book, and at the dictation of the German army. The German set out to impose a German peace upon the world by one more victorious campaign. He struck the British in 1918 as he struck the French in 1916. Before Verdun he advertised his offensive as designed to "break the heart of France." Before his last attack he promised to "break the spirit and will of Britain."

There was no permanent profit for the German at this time in the war in a gain of territory without a rupture of the allied front. Least of all was there any profit in the re-conquest of that desert he had created between the Scheldt, the Somme, the Scarpe and the Oise in his great retreat of the previous year. A similar advance anywhere else on the front would have been incalculably more disastrous to his foes, because it would have devastated a new region of France and thus added one more to the burdens the war has brought upon the French nation.

He struck where he did because it was the one place in the western front where he could hope, given a complete success at the outset, to produce a situation out of which he might win a supreme triumph and end the war. I dwell upon this detail, if it be a detail, because it is essential now, and in the next few weeks, to keep in mind the German purpose. It is essential because otherwise there may be an unnecessary pessimism which will have a bad effect. The German is bound to make new gains, he is almost certain to advance his line at points, just as he did at Verdun, but as at Verdun, the main consideration is not local gain, but the extent to which he realized his main purpose.

Verdun was a failure for the German after he was checked on the Douaumont plateau on February 26, 1916. He had aimed, in that campaign, to take Verdun with his first thrust, interpose between the French armies of the central and of the eastern groups, separate them and compel a general French retirement with the abandonment of several thousand square miles of French territory and an eventual resumption of the march on Paris. By March 1 there was not the smallest chance of a separation of French armies, Verdun become merely a local issue, French strategy became purely a problem of holding on until the British should be ready for their Somme attack.

Germany Now Staking All

French strategy realized its larger purpose and, by the smallest of margins also saved Verdun. When the British attacked at the Somme on July 1, Verdun was in extreme danger, and it would almost certainly have fallen in the next few months, had there been no diversion of German reserves and artillery to the Somme battleground. But even the taking of Verdun in the summer of 1916 would not have been a commensurate return for German casualties amounting to between 300,000 and 400,000. Even had Verdun fallen, French strategy was to hold the mass of the German armies in play until Britain could be fully ready.

Now, bearing in mind the Verdun parallel, we can see the German offensive in its true light in the present instance. The German had to face certain political conditions at home and abroad. His own people were terribly tired of war and were suffering greatly from hardships incident to war. They wanted peace, but the victories in the east and the collapse of Russia had temporarily raised their spirits and they were willing to believe their military leaders, who told them that one more great effort in the west would bring a German peace, and what was even more important, would enable Germany to make her enemies pay the costs of the war, for every German of ordinary intelligence realizes that Germany is ruined if she can obtain no indemnities and does not break down the hostility of her present foes, which will cripple her economic future.

Finally, the German realized that the United States was beginning to be a military factor. The flow of American troops to the continent, which several months ago had amounted, on the statement of the French high commissioner, to nearly a quarter of a million was continuing and increasing. Granted that Germany might have a slight preponderance of numbers available for the offensives in March and in April, the margin was so small that to postpone action for two or three months would wipe it out as a result of the increase of American troops in France. Time ran against the German as it did at the time of Verdun, when he sought a decision before the British could get ready.

Now allied strategy had certain equally plain facts to wrestle with. Conceivably the Germans were slightly superior both in numbers and in gunpower. An allied offensive would thus have relatively small chance of great success, because previous allied offensives had failed when guns and men were both available in superior numbers. But there was arriving and would continue to arrive a stream of men and munitions from America, which would, by 1919, give the allies a final advantage in both, and provide them with a reserve which, all things considered, might be regarded as practically inexhaustible. The supreme purpose of the allies, then, was to endure with as little loss of ground and men as possible, until America was ready. Anything but a major disaster was a price they must and did consent to pay for time, and by a major disaster they understood German victory that would insure a German peace.

Given these conditions on both sides, let us see how the game worked out in the first three weeks of the German offensive. The German planned a Napoleonic blow. He undertook to break through the British on a front of 50 miles, drive a wedge between the French and the British, roll the British back upon Calais and Boulogue, that is north of the Somme, contain the whole British force on the now restricted front with a relatively small fraction of his troops, who would dig in, and then concentrate all his resources and not improbably a material fraction of the resources of his allies upon a final blow against the French.

In his original conception, Hindenburg expected to break through the allied line, throw the French back behind the Seine and the Oise, contain the routed British behind the Somme or even the Canche and then, with his hands free for the moment, deal the death blow to the French. And it is essential to recognize that if the British had been thrown back behind the Somme or the Canche and penned up in the narrow area, thus circumscribed, the peril to France would have been tremendous. It was the old Napoleonic conception of the Waterloo campaign, to divide the British and the Prussians, drive the Prussians east towards Liege and contain them with Grouchy and then smash Wellington. The failure was the failure of Grouchy to contain the Prussians, who got back into effective touch with the British and routed the French.

Gough's Army Badly Beaten

Now let us follow the working out of the strategy as far as it had gone on April 9, which is just short of three weeks. First of all, there was an immediate rupture of the allied line. Gough's Fifth army was beaten as no great British army has ever been beaten. Not only was it beaten, but in its retreat it was so badly handled that the Germans were able to intervene between it and the main British armies to the north and similarly between it and the French armies to the south. The Fifth army was the link in the allied chain of armies from Switzerland to the sea and this link was effectually broken by Friday, March 22. Thus in two days Hindenburg had accomplished what Falkenhayn had failed to achieve at Verdun, he had broken a hole between the allied armies.

The ultimate German victory, after the immediate and enormous local success west of St. Quentin was prevented by the French, they saved the British even more unmistakably than Bluecher saved Wellington at Waterloo. Had the French not been able to intervene, the Germans would have realized in the first week the main purpose of their strategy; they would have driven the British in something approaching a complete rout, so far as the Fifth army was concerned, north of the Somme and out of touch with the French.

The French saved the British and the situation by the rapidity with which they moved their reserves northward. They had two things to do. The collapse of the Fifth British army had not only opened a gap between the British and French fronts, it had also uncovered the main roads to Paris. Thus the French had to rush troops north to cover Paris, they had also to rush troops up to get in front of the German push westward, which was rapidly getting to the point where all restoration of contact between the allies would be impossible.

The threat to Paris was stopped short and never became grave at any time during the critical period. But it was not until March 26 that French troops had gotten around the corner and in front of the extreme point of the wedge, and by this time this extreme point had passed Montdidier and had begun to climb the narrow plateau between the Avre and the Noye valleys. And in the Noye valley runs the main railroad from Paris to the north. It was a breathless finish to one of the most exciting races in all military history.

Rain Plays Important Part

The Germans did not immediately accept the fact of defeat. For several days they continued to assail this necessarily thin line which was the lifeline of the allied armies, since it bound the British and the French together. But the French soldier of blood and bravery held. By April 1 the German was forced to abandon his immediate efforts to break the new connection. He had temporarily come to the end of his strength on this front, where he was 35 miles from his starting-point, and the hopeless roads behind him were rendered even more hopeless by the rain storm that now intervened. Perhaps if it had not rained he might have gotten through, just as Victor Hugo and other French writers insist that Napoleon would have won at Waterloo if it had not rained the night before and delayed the French attack the next morning.

But the German was not through. To the north, in front of Arras, his advance had been slight and he was still in touch with his old good communications. Accordingly he launched a new thrust at Arras. The purpose was simple. He had broken the gate between the French and British hinges at La Fere and Arras at the La Fere hinge; it had swung back, but the French had come up and stopped the swing. He might now wrench it off the northern hinge; if he did, his purpose would still be accomplished, because he would open a new gap between the allies and there were no more French reserves available.

Unfortunately for him, however, the Third British army succeeded where the Fifth had failed. It retired a little, but in perfect order and upon stronger positions, which it held, exacting so terrible a price from the Germans that they stopped short in the attack upon the northern hinge, and they have not resumed their attack up to the present moment. The rush was over by March 27. By April 1 there was a general lull all over the front and the Germans were digging in on their flanks and getting up their heavy guns, while the allies were also digging in and getting up reserves and artillery.

Allied Situation Is Still Awkward

Still the allied situation was exceedingly awkward, and remains so, in one important respect. As at Verdun, the first German rush had carried the assailant over most of the good gun positions and naturally defensive lines on which the French could make a stand if the most important local objectives were to be saved. Verdun city was the local objective in the earlier campaign; Amiens occupies a similar role in the later offensive. When the rush stopped, the Germans were within a dozen miles of the old capital of Picardy, an important industrial town; but, above all, the neck of the bottle through which pass all the main north-and-south railroads of this region, the railroads which connect Paris with Calais and the British and French front, and, what is more important, the railroads from Rouen and Havre, which connect the British in Picardy, Artois and Flanders with their main bases on the sea.

It is no longer certain that the Germans, even if they got Ameins, could separate the British and the French, for not until it passes Abbeville, 20 miles west, does the Somme become an impassable barrier between the north and the south, and the British might hang on astride the Somme all the way back to the neighborhood of Abbeville; but if Amiens went, their connections with Great Britain would at once be threatened. Yet, if the line held within 10 miles west of Amiens, new communications could in time be improvised.

Had Amiens fallen in the first rush, then the British would have been swept north of the Somme and there could have been no further hope of restoration of contact between French and British; but, once the contact was restored a dozen miles in front of Amiens, there was real hope that it might be maintained west of Amiens, even if this town should fall. I say that because the fall of Amiens, which remains possible, should not be accepted as having the importance that it might have had two weeks or more ago. The fall of Verdun in August would have been a sad blow to allied morale, but it would not have been the evidence of immediate disaster it would have been in February, or even in the first days of March, 1916, and the same is now true of Amiens.

After the first week of effort there was a natural and inevitable lull in the Amiens sector. The German did not actually stop, but his operations, save at Arras, were inconsiderable for nearly a week. Then he began on exactly the old Verdun lines—that is, by attacks on either side of the wedge he had driven in toward his immediate local objective. In Lorraine he began his new operations by attacks upon Dead Man's hill and Fort du Vaux, on the flanks of his wedge. He did this to abolish the evil effect of the artillery fire concentrated upon his wedge from both sides. Before Ameins he sought to widen his wedge.

Allies Can Wait, Hindenburg Cannot

Fact That Teutonic Strategy Has Failed Its Mark Is Reason for Confidence That the Final Outcome Will Be in Our Favor.

Sought to Widen Wedge

Hindenburg's problem was a magnified reproduction of the Verdun problem. Any further advance at the point of the wedge toward Amiens would be smothered by concentrated allied artillery fire. He must therefore widen the wedge, and he sought to do this by attacking the French on the plateau between the Avre and the Noye, south of Amiens, and the British west of the Ancre and Somme. Could he advance on both flanks, he would begin to throw a loop around Amiens, isolating the town both from the north and from the south. But, although he gained ground, his gain was inconsiderable and the price paid exorbitant. The price was increased by the fact that German heavy artillery was not yet up, and French and British guns of all calibers were in position. By the third Sunday of the battle the German effort on both flanks had slowed down, with no real gain on the north and no decisive gain on the south, although the Amiens-Calais railroad was no longer usable and barely two miles distant from the German front.

In sum, then, toward the end of the third week the German was still far from his major end, the separation of the British and French armies. He had won a great battle and administered to one strong British army perhaps the heaviest defeat in British military history. He had advanced beyond any expectation of the allies. He was approaching Amiens, although at a very slow pace. But he had paid 300,000 casualties for a local success; and there was not the smallest promise that he could bring home a new Sedan or Waterloo discoverable in the face of the situation. Rather, there was the growing likelihood of a second Verdun.

And the German must have not a local victory, but a decisive victory, a military solution of the problem of war. He has confessed that he must have it at once, by the terms under which he challenged his foes and enlisted his own people. If he is before Amiens a month from now, he will have lost the campaign, provided he continues the battle in this field or does not win a major triumph in some other. If he gets beyond Amiens without separating his two foes, he will have failed, if they are still able to stand firmly united before him. He needs another local success as great as his recent triumph to win what he sought to win, and nothing else will greatly help him now.

Allied Prospects Are Improving

Allied prospects have greatly improved since there was an eleventh-hour agreement upon a single command. It ought to have been agreed upon last winter, but it was blocked by British military influence, despite the urgings of Lloyd George. America, France, and even Italy, favored it, but British influences postponed it until the present reverse intervened. After the defeat there could be no more argument by British military authorities, since it was the failure of the British which brought a defeat which was nearly a disaster. Foch was preeminently the man for the place; no other French general and no British or Italian general, and least of all an American general, could challenge the achievement of the man who saved Nancy, won the Marne and blocked the German drive to the channel with the aid of the British and Belgians.

It is possible to regret the lateness of the decision, since the task of the new generalissimo has been greatly increased thereby; but all this in the past and in his own public utterances he has given us the best assurance that he did not come too late.

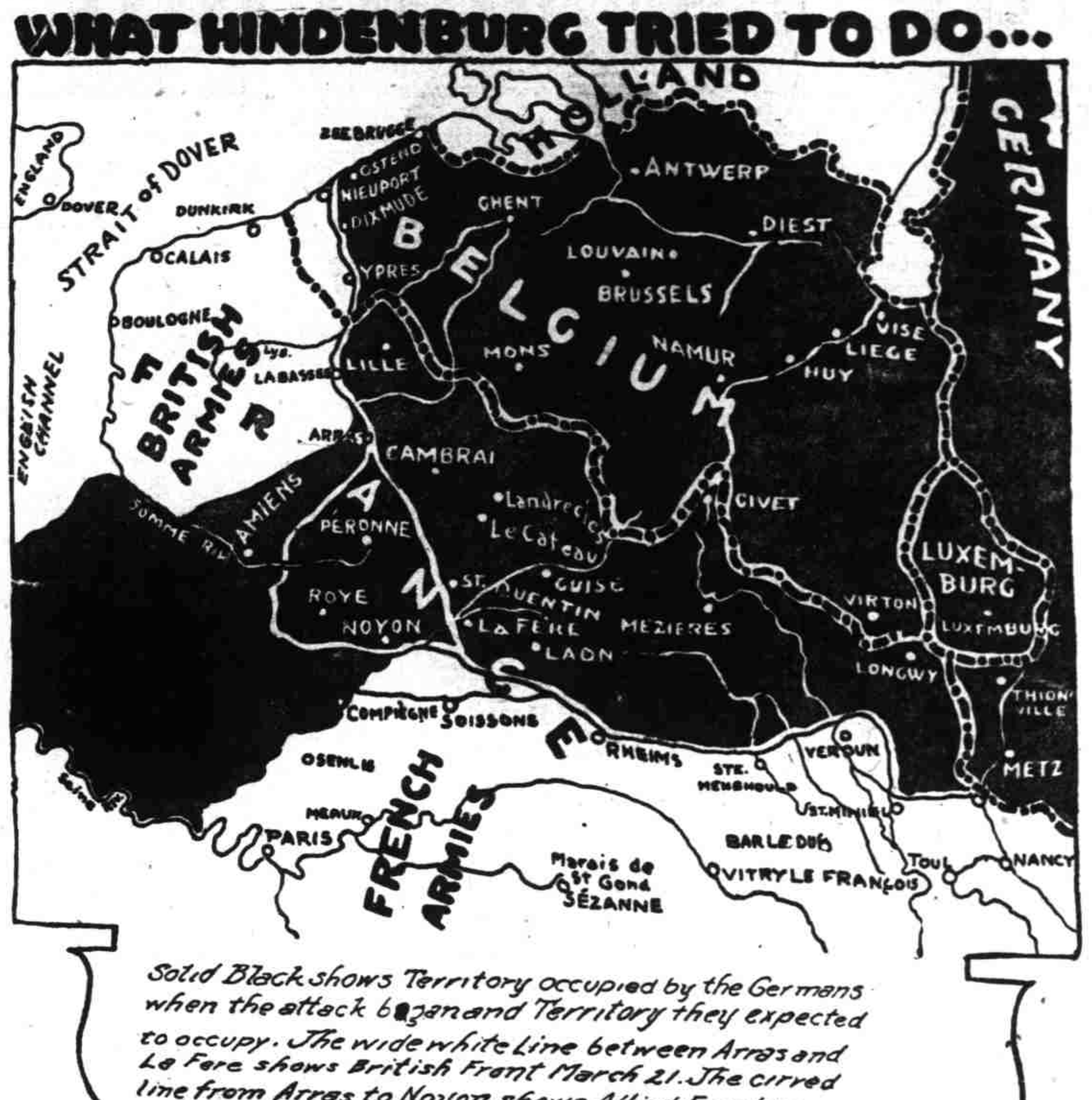
One word as to American participation. Accepting M. Tardieu's figures of some time ago, we must now have at least 300,000 men in France. Of these, we are told, 100,000 have started for the Somme front, and other divisions are relieving French troops in four sectors, at the smallest reckoning. Presumably, then, we are putting around 200,000 men at the service of the allies. This is a small number, as this war goes, but it is equal to a class of French recruits, it is half as large as the annual increment of the German army, and, since the men are picked, it is unquestionably better in its human material than either a French or German class.

Again, if the allies have lost 200,000 in the opening phase of the second battle of the Somme, the gap has been promptly filled by American troops. The German, on the other hand, having lost between 250,000 and 300,000 in the same operation, must find the troops to replace wastage out of his own reserves. He can do it. He probably had upward of 1,000,000 reserves to replace wastage when the campaign began, but the rate of exhaustion for him is thus far faster than for his chief opponents, and, henceforth, under the wise plan to put our troops in more promptly, brigaded with French and British troops, we shall aid regularly to replace allied wastage, while the German must still rely exclusively upon his own manpower.

We are only beginning, but our start is at a critical moment and our aid is by no means negligible. On the contrary, it may enable the British and the French to reconstitute an army of maneuver if, as seems possible, a large part of the original force was drawn in to fill the gaps created by the defeat of the Fifth British army. As to the moral effect, no one can mistake the admirable impression made by American entrance. At a critical moment the German had failed, first to separate the armies of his principal enemies, and secondly to separate the peoples of his other enemies. The alliance against Germany is stronger today than at any moment since Russia fell, and we are in some small way beginning to replace Russia.

Set this against the battle lost and the disaster narrowly escaped by the allies and it has a real value. Couple with it the failure to date of the German strategy to realize its main objective and the reason for confidence is clear. France lost Charleroi and won the Marne, Britain has lost the second battle of the Somme; but Britain, France and America are all in line once more and the German advance has at least slowed down on what is for us all the right side of his objective. We have not produced his downfall, but he hasn't yet come at his world-power. We can wait, as allied strategy contemplates. We can wait, as Petain waited at Verdun, until the British were ready. Hindenburg cannot delay, as his strategy has indicated; much less can he afford another Verdun, toward which his offensive is rapidly drifting. Hence the new convulsions of the third week.

On the other hand, unless his present check is interrupted, the German will soon attempt to persuade us that he never sought a real decisive victory and parade his local gains just as he did in the Verdun time. When he does try this game, we must keep in mind what he is going to do. This is the real test. Now, as at Verdun, this is the test he must face, and we should not help him to avoid it even for a moment.



"CENSOR BAITERS" SOONER OR LATER ALWAYS HIT SAWDUST "TRAIL"

Reporter Is Measured By Tact He Displays

BY WILLIAM G. SHEPHERD
Celebrated War Correspondent

I STARTED my war reporting as a censor-fighter. Improper censorship distorts the news, and any inexperienced war reporter considers himself justified in censor-baiting. He starts out in his career of war reporting as a "bad man," belligerent for truth, feeling that there is a certain holiness in his attitude.

But there is a "sawdust trail" that, after a time, he will hit. Like sin (which a certain evangelist, named after a certain legal holiday, declares "you can't beat") the censor's big blue pencil will, in time, bring every war reporter to repentance. If he doesn't, then his career as a war reporter is irrevocably ended and he'll probably go back home.

You can't be a war reporter in these days and not be "good."

My first experience with war was with little Francisco Madero in Mexico in 1910; and the first censor that ever put blue pencil to my copy was Madero's agent in Mexico City.

During the past four years I have been continuously under censorship, even as to my personal correspondence, and when I returned to the United States recently I greatly missed having some one to whom I could show the letters I would write to my mother and friends before dropping them in the mail box. I felt inclined to ask the nearest policeman or hall boy — somebody in uniform—to put his O. K. on them.

I started out, as I have said, a censor fighter, and it's on the books that I've had my share of luck at the game. But 15 censorships through which I have passed (and I have written copy that has been censored by three European nations at a time) have taught me a better way, of which I shall write later.

After a short experience of a few rather newsless weeks on the ally side early in the war I went to Germany, and there my first experience confirmed my belief that censors were my enemies, and put me on the defensive against them. The experience was this:

In the city of Munich I wrote a harmless but colorful story about war conditions in the town and took it to the office of the censor. He was an elderly German colonel, highly decorated, who spoke English excellently. He greeted me effusively as I laid the copy on the high desk where he stood at work.

"An American!" he exclaimed. "I'm very glad to meet you. America today is the conscience of the world; all the rest of us have gone mad. It will please me greatly to help you get the truth back to your country. The truth is all that we Germans ask."

He read over my story, folded it up, without changing a word, and handed it to me with the envelope.

Did Not Change Single Word

"You may mail it yourself," he said. "I'm sure I can trust you."

I opened the folded manuscript and started to write the word "Censored" on it.

In a flash his kindness fell away. "Please do not say that your article has been censored," he said. "Let it go as it is."

I was forced, of course, to yield to his demand. But there was a lie in that piece of manuscript; the absence of the word "censored" was a lie that warped the news value of my story. The object of omitting that one word was to carry to the outside word the impression that Germany was not hindering newspaper men in their expression of opinion.

Censorship, as I understood it at the time, was intended to cover military and political contingencies; here it was covering a lie which I was being forced to send to a then neutral country.

After that experience the entire German system of censorship challenged me. Its great policies of military and political safety I could understand; its petty policy of trying to mold public opinion in small matters only spurred me on to beat it if possible.

There was a rule of the German censorship which was provoking. I was not allowed to know what had been cut from my dispatches. Indeed, the whole attitude of the censor was one of distrust and challenge.

There came suddenly one day the retreat from Przemysl, when we were put on trains and bundled off toward Budapest. We were informed that any stories which pictured our departure from Przemysl as a hasty retreat would be held up; and there was no way of getting anything out without submitting it to the censor. Here was a story to beat a censor with. In a hotel at Budapest I sat me down to a typewriter and drew forth all my stock of slang. I tried to think of the fastest thing that runs, and my mind settled on Kolehmainen, the great Finnish marathoner. I began my story thus: "Beating it from Przemysl was one grand Kolehmaingn." I wrote 30 paragraphs of the sheerest slang, covering the retreat like a baseball writer covering a world's series game.

Wanted More Of Same Kind

Our language-loving censor, who was inordinately proud of his ability to speak seven tongues, never batted an eye over that copy; the chances were that he did not understand one third of it, but no man with a head shaped like his ever admitted that there was anything in the world he didn't know. The story went.

I had fully expected that the United Press would decode, or deslang the story; but it didn't. Out over the wires went the story of that grewsome retreat, written in baseball slang, and several editors wrote to the New York office suggesting that I turn out "some more of that snappy stuff like the Przemysl retreat.

It did not require many weeks' experience in Europe to indicate to me that a reporter is measured by the tact which he displays in the presentation of his stories to the censor. I discovered that censor-fighting was the least productive pastime in which a war reporter could engage.

A strict watch was kept on the newspapers here in the United States by all the belligerent governments before America entered the war. Germany kept especially sharp eyes on the work of American corespondents in Berlin.

An American corespondent was once haled before an outraged German censor who showed him a clipping of one of his stories, taken from an American country newspaper. The headline of the story—which had been stolen by the country newspaper from a metropolitan daily—was highly pro-enemy, and the country editor, in sarcastic vein, had black typed certain sentences in such a way as to make it appear that he considered them preposterous and unworthy of belief. The corespondent had to explain, at great length, that he had not sent the story to the little country newspaper, and that he was not responsible for the headlines and the blackened type. Fully six weeks passed before this correspondent was finally assured that the German war office did not hold him responsible for the story, six weeks being the time required for an agent in the United States to look up the little newspaper in question and verify the correspondent's explanation.

All War News Carefully Weighed

Every word of war news which comes from Europe to the eyes of the American public has been weighed by censors as carefully as precious stones are weighed by diamond merchants. One tiny word, or arrangement of words may send to the bottom of the sea a great ship or may cost the lives of thousands of men in the field. It's all up to the censor.

"Father is dead," ran a cablegram from Sweden to New York which passed through the British censorship.

For some inexplicable reason the censor didn't like the word "dead." He changed it to "deceased."

Within a short time this question, sent from New York to Sweden, passed through the hands of the same censor: "Is father dead or deceased?"

What did that word "dead" mean? It might have covered a whole volume of enemy words; it might have provoked disaster on land or sea. And yet the censor had no better reason for cutting it out than a certain "hunch" which came over him that the word ought to be changed.

The more I see of the censor's job the more I sympathize with the censor, and the more I prefer to be the man who writes the stuff rather than the one who censors it. The mistakes of a writing man in war time can hardly be fatal, but the error of a censor may flame out in a catastrophe at any time. With unlimited power, he has the right to give himself the benefit of the doubt every time a doubt arises. And personally I don't blame him for doing it.

An excellent illustration of how the censors are always on the alert comes to my mind in connection with an interview that I had with Winston Churchill when he was first lord of the British admiralty in the early war days.

At last the interview was finished and written exactly as it was to go. Mr. Churchill, one evening at 5 o'clock, put his signature to it, called his secretary and said: "Please take Mr. Shepherd to the censor's office and introduce him. Tell the censor that the interview with me is all right."

I was led through a maze of gloomy hallways, lighted in part by gas, to a doorway which bore the legend. "Naval Censor."

"This is Sir So-and-So, the naval censor," said the secretary, presenting me to a strong-featured, iron-gray haired man. "This is Mr. Shepherd, an American journalist, who is sending an interview with the first lord to America tonight."

"Very well," said the man of title, "we'll take care of it." The secretary departed.

"I want to write just a few words to lead the story," I said. I explained that my manuscript contained only the interview, and that it would be necessary to write a short introduction.

Would Stand for No "Flub-Dub"

When he had finished he looked up into my face and said: "You want to write an introduction to this, huh?"

"Yes," I answered. "It starts out too abruptly for an American newspaper story."

He hesitated a minute. Then he said: "All right. write it here. But listen! No flubdub." He looked me squarely in the eye.

I knew what he meant by that phrase, "no flubdub." He meant, "These fellows around here may trust you, but I don't. I'm the censor and you're a newspaper man. Every reporter's a wrong un to me until he proves he's right. I know you've got an interview with the first lord of the British admiralty. I know it's what you call a big newspaper stunt and that by tomorrow morning you think it will be read by millions and millions of human beings in many languages, and that it will be telling England's side of the war to the world. But none of that impresses me. I'm not going to give you the benefit of any doubt. If you are a wrong un, look out!"

"Write an introduction yourself," I suggested.

"Go ahead with yours," he said, grimly.

I wrote with a lead pencil at the head of the article these words: "Winston Churchill, first lord of the British admiralty, granted me an interview today," and pushed the copy over to him.

"Is that all?" he said, more gently.

"I can't think of any more to say," I answered.

"Very good," he said, smiling, as I rose to go. "I was afraid you were going to write something intricate."

He telephoned to the cable office, ordered that the interview be given right of way, and within 45 minutes the story was in New York.

He had been protecting England and himself. As a censor he was a 100 per center. But he was not a friend of newspaper men. A good censor and a good war reporter can never be close friends—unless the war reporter is working with his own army and is moved by pariotism.

Considering the censor's responsibility, it is always a source of wonder to me that he ever lets anything go through. In my extensive dealings with the censors I have been more surprised at what they have permitted me to send than at what they have cut out. Whatever success any of the American correspondents have had in getting "tough" war stories past the censor has grown out of the fact that they have sympathized with him and tried to get his viewpoint.

Rarely Touch Stuff Now

In the office of a great news association, before we entered the war, the editor showed me a pile of typewritten copy which had been sent by mail from a certain capital in Europe. The signature of a censor was at the bottom of each page but not one word of the several thousand had been touched with a blue pencil.

"The censors hardly ever touch our stuff now," explained the editor. "Early in the war it used to be all chopped up, but it comes pretty clean these days."

This editor did not mean to say that the censorship of the European armies had become lax. He knew as well as I did that the reason for the untouched pages was that the correspondents in Europe had learned to take the European censor's viewpoint and to see the war through the censor's eyes. Neutral correspondents in any of the European countries these days know very well that it does not pay to try to beat the censor. This is the one big fact that stands out just now in the war correspondent's life.

Not many months ago an American correspondent left New York for London, carrying a code for the use of his London office. By means of this code the New York office hoped to receive more complete news of the sinking of ships than the censor had permitted to go out. At the risk of a severe penalty, the New York reporter had got the code past the port authorities and he slammed it down triumphantly on the desk of the London manager.

"There's a code that'll beat 'em all," said the New Yorker.

The experienced London manager, with an expression of long suffering patience on his face (for his New York office had been clamoring persistently for "more news"), took the precious papers, solwly tore them into bits and tossed them into the glowing fireplace.

"Nothing like that around here," he said. "If our papers print more news about the sinking of ships than the other papers do our crime'll stand out like a sore thumb. The better a code is the more dangerous it is."

In a little chateau at Goritzia, on the Austro-Italian front, before America entered the war, the Austrian staff officers gave an after dinner concert

Official Critics More Powerful Than "75s"

officer who acted as censor was not a music lover and he departed from the gathering before the program was ended. The finale was an "Ave Maria," exquisitely played by piano, cello and several violins, and the effect was highly sentimental. The next day one of the correspondents, writing of the concert, for a few correspondents. The staff told how thoughts of home and loved ones had come over the war-bound officers as they had listened to the strains of the beautiful old air. He wrote that "chins dropped to chests and heads were bowed in contemplation and reverie, while the cannon boomed out above the sad music."

Ban Is Placed On Sadness

"No 'chins dropped to chests' in that crowd," said the non-music loving censor, as he read the story. "I don't want the world to think that Austrian officers ever feel sad." And his blue pencil cut out every reference to the sweet spell which the music, amid the sound of guns, had thrown over the Austrian leaders.

Cub censors will invariably thrust forward their personal opinion in their work.

"Go to Vienna and discover why the Austrians will not permit Emmy Destinn to come to the United States," was an assignment which an American correspondent in Berlin received from his New York office. The correspondent compiled and secured a highly interesting story. The Austrians, he explained, felt that Destinn had not shown as much loyalty to the Austrian cause as might have been expected of her, and so the permission that had been granted her to come to the United States had been revoked. The reporter put the story through the Austrian censor and telegraphed it to Berlin, to be forwarded from there by wireless. When he returned to Berlin two days later he found that the story was being held up in the office of the German censor.

"What's the matter with that story?" he demanded of the censor who had held it. "The Austrian censors passed it all right."

"Well, they were wrong in doing it," said the censor. "You're painting this woman as a martyr."

"Give me the copy," said the reporter. He took it to the office of Count George Wedel, the chief censor, a patron of music in Germany, and related his troubles.

"Why, the——fool," said Count Wedel. "Every person in the United States ought to know why Destinn isn't singing to them this year." And he permitted the story to pass.

Later investigation disclosed that the man who had stopped the story was acting as a temporary censor and had been on the job only two days.

The censorship which the twentieth century war correspondent faces today is a new, twentieth century sort.

In all the warring countries correspondents now have an opportunity to appeal against the censor's blue pencil.

The allies also have the same rule. The correspondents in London and Paris may go to the censor's office at any time and learn what changes, if any, have been made in their dispatches.

It ought to be a matter of pride to American army officers that the censorship rules of the American army are followed faithfully in Germany and Austria and, to some extent, in England and France.

I don't exactly sympathize with the censor. But I have seen enough of war to know that the side which dropped censorship would be immediately defeated on land and sea.

I don't sympathize with the censor, but with other American correspondents in Europe, I have got his viewpoint. We agree with him that his blue pencil is mightier than the 42-centimeter gun and just as important.

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