

In view of the remarkable activity of German spies in England, the British authorities have been compelled to take drastic action. Recent events have proven the alarming extent of the German spy system; agents of the Kaiser have betrayed the trust of a hospitable country to the extent of building gun-foundations in London and in Edinburgh. The activities of these spies have been possible only because of the large liberty accorded them by the Government.

The safety of the nation now demands that the Kaiser's treacherous agents shall be deprived of their power to inflict injury upon a too trusting people. Hundreds of Germans and Austrians are being arrested and will be interned during the war. The conduct of many Germans has made it possible for the Government to continue its policy of rash generosity towards a people whose doctrine is that all is fair in war.

Events in Britain and occurrences nearer home are making it clear that a closer supervision of these aliens is necessary in Canada. In view of the despicable tactics of many Germans, it is not the part of prudence to err on the side of generosity in favor of their more innocent compatriots. Every German subject about whose attitude there is the slightest shadow of doubt should be locked up. All others should be kept under the closest surveillance. And, above all, the naturalization of Germans and Austrians should not be continued during the present grave situation.

In Great Britain people with German names are not permitted to change them. In Canada a German is even allowed to change his nationality and acquire the rights of citizenship. All that is necessary is to take the oath of allegiance, and the whole course of the war has made it clear that the keeping of its word is not a prominent virtue of military Germany. Whoever reads the speech of Chancellor Von Bethmann-Hollweg justifying on grounds of expediency the breaking of a solemn contract with Belgium, will doubt whether much reliance can be put on an oath of allegiance taken, not from love of the British cause, but from the sole motive of expediency.

It is not possible to read into every Teuton heart. If the Kaiser's subjects in Canada are regarded with distrust, it is only the logical result of the treacherous actions of his own agents here and in Britain.

The German spy does not wear a uniform; he worms his way into the confidence of a friendly people, and then betrays their trust. To stamp out the widespread system of espionage and at the same time not interfere with any innocent individuals would be beyond the power of the most astute police force in the world.

In the cause of national security Great Britain has taken drastic action, and has inaugurated a policy of wholesale arrests of all possible enemies. It may or may not be necessary for Canada to follow suit. But the policy of bestowing the rights of full citizenship upon subjects of an enemy country is fraught with great danger.

The opportunity to take the oath of allegiance to King George and thus have greater freedom of plot against him has already been with too great liberality. Germans who had no use for Canadian citizenship before the war should not have it bestowed upon them now as a possible cloak for nefarious schemes. Until the war is over, the naturalization of one more German should be prohibited for the sake of national safety.