

PREMIER GETS AFTER THE HIDDEN HAND

Personally Takes Up the Alien Enemy Question.

MONTREAL, June 21.—A special London cable to the Gazette says: The announcement this morning that the Premier will investigate what has been called here the "Hidden hand" gives importance to several proceedings that otherwise in themselves might seem comparatively negligible. The Times said: "It is understood the Prime Minister is so seriously concerned with recent developments arising out of the treatment of both naturalized and unnaturalized aliens in this country, that he proposes to give his personal attention to the subject. He will make a thorough investigation of the measures taken by the Foreign Office and Home Office in their respective spheres of action with a view to tightening up the system which recently left so much to be desired as to create considerable misgiving in the public mind."

Prison Camp Scandal.

First came the court-martial of a lieutenant who rebuked a colonel for allowing Mrs. Leverton Harris to visit Baron Leopold von Plessen in a prisoners' camp in circumstances exceeding the regulations allowing prisoners and visitors. The colonel showed she had a written request for special treatment from an official of the Home Secretary's office. Mrs. Harris is an Irishwoman, and wife of the Parliamentary Secretary of the Minister of Blockade. She writes in the Times that Plessen's aunt is an American and lives in Washington. She knows the family, but visited Plessen only four times in four years. Other notable Germans are prisoners in the same camp. The outspoken lieutenant was acquitted and the case received detailed publicity as an additional incident, indicating in the public mind undue sympathy for alien enemies in high quarters, exactly the kind of thing which caused public approval of the acquittal of Billing recently.

The second incident is the arrest of Sir Joseph Jonas, formerly Lord Mayor of Sheffield, followed by evidence in the police court to the effect that he supplied details to friends in Berlin of gun secrets, new factory plans, etc., certainly before the war. He is accused of so doing during the war. His son is a partner in the steel business of Carl Hahn, who changed his name to Charles Vernon and helped him get the information requested to Berlin. Vernon has been recently employed in the Ministry of Munitions. Jonas is 73 years old. The case is still proceeding and the public is watching it intently.

Get At Banks.

Further acute public discussion has again been revived by the tardiness and apparent unwillingness to wind up big German banks. The public does not understand the laxity of the blockade of Germany from the beginning of the war, the lenient treatment of German prisoners and hesitancy in retaliation, especially in the direction of bombing German towns. Finally there is the "Hidden hand." This feeling has now grown so strong and public protests so persistent as to make an announcement of the Premier's concern not surprising. There is public determination to have the last remnants of German infiltration in influential British circles wiped out. The pressure of public opinion in this direction recently has been acutely manifest.