

# DEUTSCHE POST DEFENDS GERMAN RESIDENTS

BUT ADMITS GIVING PREFERENCE TO GERMAN NEWS.

In justice to the German-speaking portion of our population The Observer publishes this week the substance of an article which appeared last week in the Deutsche Post of Pembroke, in reply to the interview published in the Ottawa Journal from Mayor Morris, and further charges made against them through that paper. We might say here that Mayor Morris' letter giving his version of that interview is published on page three of this issue, as well as the report of a Council meeting at which the Mayor made a further statement, while on our editorial page this week the question is further dealt with.

The only part of the Post article to which The Observer is disposed to take objection is that in which it is admitted that the paper is giving more prominence to the German war news than to that of the allies. The statement that "we were of opinion that our readers would like to hear a little more of the other side" does not sound just right. It is useless to protest against imputations or suspicions on German loyalty if such statements as this are to go with them. The fact that the cause of the allies is fully taken care of in the English papers is not justification. How many German residents do not receive any English papers? And in this connection we might remark that a number of them have discontinued The Observer since the war broke out, some of whom said quite plainly that they could not continue to take the paper while we were printing such matter regarding their Teutonic friends. No paper published in Canada at this time should be giving preference to German news or news from enemy sources, for if there would be danger in publishing Bourassa's statements there must admittedly be greater danger of German-colored news in a German paper "falling on fertile soil."

With this comment we give below the substance of the Post's article:

The German Post in the outset of its article says that no reasonable man who has lived only a short time in Pembroke could with any degree of truthfulness make the statement that "the majority of this portion (German) of our population is absolutely out and out pro-German," and yet this statement is attributed to Mayor Morris by the Journal. The Post says it cannot believe the Mayor made the statement, and expressed the hope that it would prove to be a misrepresentation. The Journal is accused by the Post of endeavoring to stir up hatred against the German population. Everything was going on peacefully and quietly before the objectionable interview was published it says, and one section could not complain of the attitude of the other. The entire population was working for a continuance of the existing friendly relations and all were working together in the raising of funds for patriotic and charitable purposes; the German population particularly giving generously and cheerfully according to their means. Gradually the German citizens, the Post continues, regained "the confidence lost at the outbreak of hostilities and their English-speaking friends were again beginning to regard them as true and loyal citizens" when suddenly all their hopes and desires were shattered by the interview alleged to have been given by the Mayor. The statement that most of the German population is pro-German is denounced as "an infamous lie," while an unreserved disavowal of it is demanded from the Mayor. "We demand," the Post continues, "that Mr Morris make an apology to the German citizens of Pembroke and surrounding country for this slanderous statement."

The Post says it does not know whether or not a German system of espionage is in operation here, but thinks it very questionable, and says that if it has no better basis than the one which accuses all Germans of being disloyal it is unworthy of notice.

Regarding the Mayor's complaint that the German clergy had not attended the patriotic meetings, though specially invited, the Post says the Lutheran clergy have never participated in any municipal, political or other secular meetings, and even stayed away from local option meetings. Those having doubts as to the attitude of the German pastors toward the war are referred to an article in the same paper dealing with the matter.

The paper then deals with accusations made in subsequent issues of the Journal. Regarding the Germans employed in the Pink plant it quotes Mr Pink as saying that they are among his best and most reliable employes, doing their work well and not meddling with any other affairs. They have his full confidence, but are not working on munitions because, out of consideration for them, they have not been asked to do so. The Post says in regard to Mr Pink that if there were more men in Canada of his type it would

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not be difficult to fuse the many races within our boundaries into a great and noble Canadian people.

The paper then reverts to the defence of the German clergy, who, the editor claims, have committed no wrong and should be regarded as good and loyal citizens, without having to proclaim their loyalty through the press.

"Next," says the Post, "such persons as are accused of justifying and exulting in the murder of Nurse Cavell and the sinking of the Lusitania are asked to repudiate these charges." Surely no German has been guilty of this." There may, it continues, have been some remarks made which were misinterpreted on account of being a little different from the general feeling. This was no doubt a regrettable indiscretion but by no means an attempt to justify the outrages. "We condemn the sinking of passenger ships without warning and without the saving of

the passengers," says the Post, "and we condemn the unjust execution or murder of Cross nurses. We condemn modern modes of warfare, and war as a whole."

As to the demand that a denial be made of the statement that an espionage system is in operation here the paper says that, knowing nothing of it, how can a denial be made? Such a thing might exist without the knowledge of the editor, but he doubts it and says that the authorities should make thorough investigation, and if any are discovered and punished the German population will uphold the law. If such a system exists, it is claimed, the Germans if knowing it would be first to disclose it, in their own interests.

That Germans, because of uneasiness at the outbreak of hostilities, withdrew their savings from the banks is not denied, but after a letter had been published over the signature of Mr G. V. White, M.P., explaining the financial situation, and other appeals made, this feeling had been pretty well allayed and confidence restored. The charge that this money was being sent to the States for ultimate transmission to Germany the Post says is not worthy of defence.

Regarding contributions to the war loan, the editor says perhaps many Germans are like himself, with a bank account limited to two figures, and that on the wrong side of the decimal.

As to the Post telling its readers all about Teutonic victories, the paper says surely the English-speaking people do not expect the paper to abuse the German people. Since the war began the official statements of both sides have been published, the German side being given a little more prominence because the reports of the Allies were published fully in all the English papers. "We were of opinion that our readers would like to hear a little more of the other side," the Post says. This stand had been followed since the outbreak of war and the Canadian censors had never objected. Reading matter had been carefully chosen and some articles that had sensational value, such as Bourassa's statements published in English papers, had been omitted lest they should fall on fertile soil. The editor claims that the paper has maintained a proper attitude, and that all the mistakes he or any other Germans may have made are infinitesimally small compared with the statements of Mayor Morris.