"Are you 100% American?"
German Americans as Targets of Government Propaganda

While the term propaganda sounds very negative today, it is a fact that any government, state, or political party must communicate with the people if it wants to win their support. This is especially true in democratic societies, but it also applies to "closed societies," be they absolute monarchies or dictatorships. Whether it is dubbed public relations, spin, agitation, or propaganda, at its core the effort to engage the public for a certain cause is an integral part of both the political process and the process of governing. The various methods of enlisting public support vary widely. Propaganda, to settle on a single word for a diverse array of very different approaches to communication, can be subtle or overt, misleading or frank, coercive or persuasive. Interestingly, the historical record, especially in the twentieth century, indicates that propaganda is most effective when it is based on truth. Yet propaganda which is grounded in fact need not be presented in an entirely objective fashion. By highlighting certain aspects of an issue and downplaying others, propagandists can claim to fight for broadly accepted goals such as "freedom," "justice," or "peace" yet further their own, less obvious personal or political agenda. Of course, there are always times when propagandists resort to outright lies, but the germ of truth in an exaggerated claim can provide a ring of sincerity which broadens the appeal of the message.[1]

Until recently, scholarship on the propaganda employed by the United States during World War I has largely reaffirmed the notion that government-sponsored American propaganda united the nation in support of the war.[2] Yet, as Frank Trommler has recently shown, the idea has little basis in fact. Some groups of society, the largest of which were German-Americans, were clearly ostracized. Trommler notes that a "discussion of this exclusion did not materialize where it belonged: within the national discourse about the achievements and blunders of America's mobilization in World War I".[3] The vilification of certain groups as the "enemy within" was, of course, not new to the United States and continued later with the Red Scare of the 1920s and 1940s as well as with attacks both physical and psychological

against American Muslims after September, 11, 2001.

The discussion which follows here seeks to augment the discourse on the use of propaganda by the United States during the First World War by analyzing the specific methods used by American propaganda agencies like the Committee on Public Information towards German-Americans, especially with visual media such as posters, leaflets, and advertisement. Interestingly, the campaign against German-Americans proceeded on two diametrically opposed fronts. On the one hand, German-Americans were portrayed as the henchmen of the German Imperial government, enemies to all "true" Americans. On the other hand, the propaganda effort sought to persuade German-Americans to prove their allegiance to the second part of their "hyphenated" identity by buying war bonds, thus proving themselves good citizens of the United States rather than lackeys of the "Kaiser."

THE BACKGROUND

When war broke out in Europe in 1914, the United States remained neutral. Concerned about its image in the international community, Germany began using propaganda early in the war to influence worldwide public opinion, particularly in neutral countries with an anti-British history, such as Ireland and the United States. It injected positive stories about Germany into the press through strawmen, sent out brochures, and subsidized movie screenings through its German Information Service.

In the United States, German-Americans were the largest immigrant group. As immigrants often do, Germans had maintained their traditions after taking up residence in the United States. Moreover, unlike the wave of immigration from German-speaking territories after 1848, which brought a large number of disillusioned political refugees and failed revolutionaries to North America, later immigrants were not only much more numerous but generally much more positively inclined toward the political system they had left behind. In fact, the German unification of 1871 caused a surge in patriotic feelings, not only among Germans but also among German-Americans.

By the eve of the First World War, German-Americans constituted a sizable proportion of the population in the United States.

They were well assimilated, usually materially successful if not affluent, and frequently outspoken in their feelings that the United States should be supportive of the German Empire or, at the least, remain neutral in the war in Europe. Some saw themselves as a counterweight to the Anglo-Saxon influence on the United States' position in the war. Publications such as George Sylvester Viereck's *The Fatherland*, founded in August 1914, proudly defended German *Kultur* and proponents of the German side. The two examples shown below depict the two emperors, Wilhelm II (January 27, 1915) and Franz Joseph (February 17, 1915) on the cover (image 1).

Although the American government was officially neutral, public opinion was biased against recent immigrants, including German-Americans. As Mary-Beth Mathews points out, the establishment in the United States (Anglo-Saxon, Puritan, East Coast, White) was suspicious of immigrants from eastern Europe and Italy who, they suspected, did not measure up to their high standards of work ethic and restrained alcohol consumption.[4] A cartoon from an 1899 Puck illustrates this most vividly: Uncle Sam sees "hyphenated voters" and asks, "Why should I let these freaks cast whole ballots when they are only half Americans?" (image 2, page 14) Clearly the question of immigrant identities was already an issue before World War I.

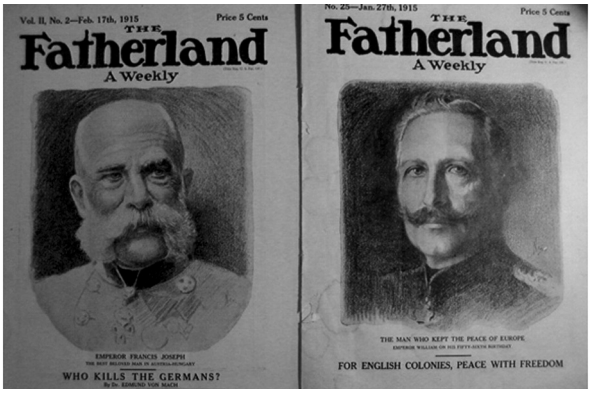

IMAGE 1

IMAGE 2

The entry of the United States into the war was finally neither quick nor surprising. When a German U-Boot torpedoed the British ocean liner Lusitania on May 7, 1915, and 1198 people, including approximately 118 Americans, died, the world was shocked. American views of the war began to shift. The destruction of the Black Tom ship terminal in New York harbor in July 1916 and of the Canadian Car and Foundry Company in Kingsland, N.J. in January 1917 by German saboteurs fueled the anti-German sentient even further. With the change of public opinion, the United States government started a concerted effort to prepare its people for a change of position from neutrality to being an ally on the side of Britain, France, and other nations. However, President Wilson and his advisors were concerned that the American people might not be willing to accept the high financial cost of waging war even if they could be convinced to support a war in Europe ideologically. His famous words, "It's not an army we must shape and train for war, it is a nation"[5] illustrate his concern.

On April 2, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson went before a joint session of Congress to request a declaration of war against Germany. Wilson cited Germany's violation of its pledge to suspend unrestricted submarine warfare in the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean and its attempts to entice Mexico into an alliance against the United States as his reasons for declaring war. Two days later the U.S. Senate voted in support of the measure to declare war on Germany. The House concurred on April 6, 1917. Several months later, on December 7, 1917, the United States declared war on Austria-Hungary as well.

ORGANIZING THE PROPAGANDA EFFORT

Almost immediately President Wilson signed Executive Order 2594 which established the Committee on Public Information. The Committee on Public Information, also known as the CPI or the Creel Committee, was an agency of the government of the

United States charged with coordinating all propaganda efforts by the different government agencies. Its mission was to influence U.S. public opinion regarding American participation in World War I. Over just twenty-eight months, from April 13, 1917, to August 21, 1919, CPI used every medium of communication available to create enthusiasm for the war effort and to enlist public support against foreign attempts to undercut America's war aims. Leading graphic artists participated as well as the press, radio stations, banks, department stores, the American Advertising Council, the Boy Scouts, and a large number of other groups and organizations. George Theofiles suggests that "perhaps 2,500 different poster, window and bus cards were produced. ...[poster] print runs under 100,00 were unknown."[6]

Americans have always been suspicious of any initiative which might increase their collective tax burden, but going to war would require major financial adjustment. It would be necessary both to raise funds quickly and to redirect the money which American consumers had but would not be able to spend because of the lack of consumer goods which inevitably arises in wartime. The United States would have to issue bonds to support the war. However, the government had to explain the concept of such a financial tool first, since most people were unfamiliar with it.[7] The effort to issue and to sell bonds to finance a war had to proceed on three fronts: military; economic; and ideological. So, as President Wilson prepared to ask Congress to approve a declaration of war, Secretary of the Treasury McAdoo had the leading advertising agencies design posters and pamphlets which described war bonds as loans, an investment which was both patriotic and financially sound.

Image three below (page 16) is an example of such an easy-to-understand explanation: an anonymous middle-class citizen is faced with the "payment of war debts" and has to decide what "door" to take in doing so. While the door on the right is labeled "compulsory tax, no return," the left door promises "victory loan, money returned plus interest." The image makes clear that the war bonds were not a tax and that, therefore, the political support of and consequent investment in them is a smart business decision.

Moreover, war bond advertisements were more than an important means for raising money to cover the unprecedented costs of the first total war in history. They were instruments of patriotic propaganda which mirrored the ideology of the majority of society.

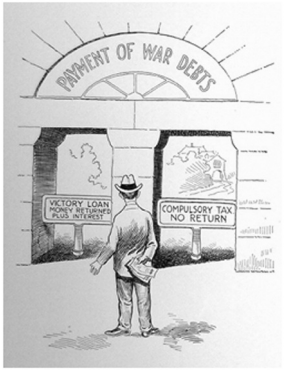

IMAGE 3

TARGETING THE APPEAL

The approach of the United States and its allies to propaganda supporting the war effort differed significantly from that of Germany, Austria, and other "closed societies".[8] The democratic nature of the British and American societies made it necessary to mobilize public support for the war by all means possible. The design and deployment of posters in "open societies" like Great Britain and the United States were dictated by political, economic, and ideological factors. The leaders of democratic countries had to convince the populace rather than simply informing it. The United States and Great Britain quickly became adept at tapping into the public's passions and deep-seated feelings. American propaganda in particular sought to reach its audience in three ways: calls to do one's patriotic duty; appeals to sympathy; and emotional blackmail.

IMAGE 4

PATRIOTIC DUTY

The appeal to patriotic duty was based on the premise that buying war bonds was as much a duty for a good citizen as fighting in the armed forces or working in the war industry (image 4). Typically, a soldier and a male civilian of the

same height are shown in parallel poses holding a tool for fighting the enemy: a weapon or a bond certificate respectively as in image four.

The purchase of war bonds was presented as a collective patriotic act and encouraged for its beneficial effect on the people as a whole rather than for its economic, and therefore largely personal, benefits. Seldom was the appeal to the economic interests of the purchaser, in part certainly because the propagandists could not find an adequate symbolic representation which incorporated both patriotic and financial benefits provided by war bonds. As the picture of the citizen before the two doors illustrated, the choice is between supporting the war effort for personal and communal gain or not. The bond's rate of return is largely immaterial.

References to war bonds as vicarious service and shared duty were closely linked to the government's attempt to appeal to the desire of many to literarily participate in the war. The parallelism between the military and home fronts alone did not close the psychological distance between the two fronts. Creel's designers at the Center for Public Information pushed the analogy to the point of suggesting a virtual participation of citizens on the battlefield. The purchase of war bonds was thereby represented as satisfying a patriotic duty as well as allowing a civilian to be part of the fighting force. Civilians, it was suggested, could participate in revenging the soldiers killed or wounded on the battlefield as well as the civilians victimized by air raids, unrestricted submarine warfare, and shortages of food and supplies. In posters like "Lend the way they Fight" (image 5, page 18), design elements such as intersecting diagonals or vivid colors made the appearance dramatic, just as wavering clouds and torn-up soil from explosives stirred up the emotions of the viewer. Representing the enemy as having a numerical advantage over American troops was further calculated to grip the emotions of the public.

Parallels between civilians and soldiers were extended finally to parallels between the current war and other important wars in American history. In a sophisticated appeal, posters like "Spirit 1776" (image 6, page 19) equated World War I with the War for Independence. The purchase of

war bonds in the United States thus became a defense of the very foundation of the nation, evoking the notion of a justified war for independence from a European power while glossing over the fact that the United States was now fighting with Great Britain against the Central Powers.

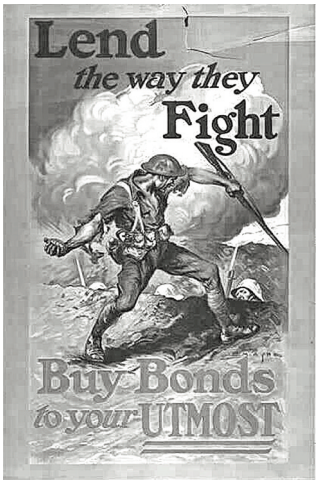

IMAGE 5

APPEALS TO SYMPATHY

An approach that targeted a different set of emotions was the use of stylized sympathy figures, such as soldiers, women, and children, as well as of famous contemporary and historical figures. The portrayal of soldiers was intended to evoke admiration and compassion. They also included scenes of soldiers on the battlefield in dirty and ripped clothes and were not averse to pictures of the actual act of killing the enemy in one-to-one combat. Courage and heroism linked to a stylized realism were more convincing than an idealized, sanitized picture of the troops (image 7).

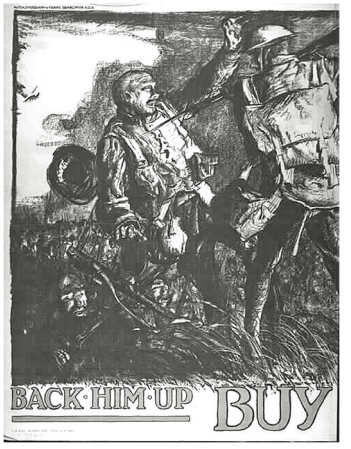

IMAGE 7

Men were obviously the target group for posters of patriotic pinup girls whose sexual appeal was scarcely masked despite the fact that they were dressed to represent allegorical figures as Liberty or Freedom (image 8 opposite). For the 1910s, such posters were surprisingly liberal. It seems that almost any method was justified in the effort to unite the nation and win its support for a war overseas.

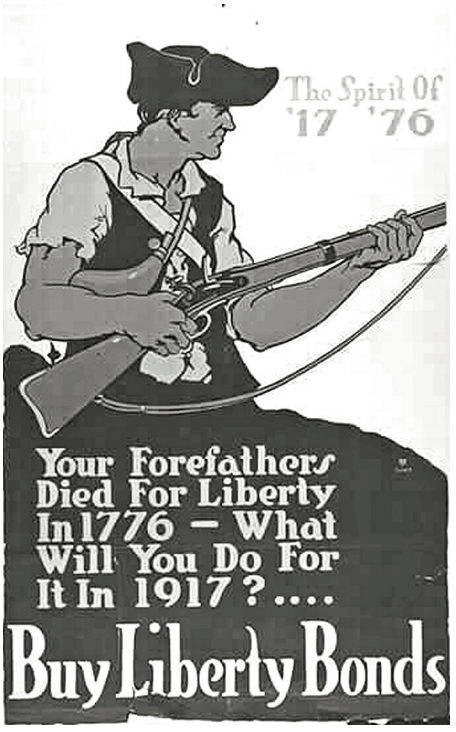

IMAGE 6

IMAGE 8

Finally, children were not only integrated into the totality of the war effort by recognizing their value as buyers of War Savings Stamps, but were also part of a more indirect approach to appeal to the parents. While image nine uses the style of children's book illustrations to speak to a young audience, image ten clearly targets adults with its subtle humor and its saccharine "cuteness". Both posters "courted" the respective recipients in different ways to encourage the purchase of war bonds.

Emotional Blackmail

Emotional blackmail was a method unique to the American propaganda effort. Posters employing this technique sought to shame people with feelings of guilt if they did not support the war effort. Examples include the threat of public shame, the feeling of being excluded from the patriotic community if one did not wear an "honor button" which was given out to war bond subscribers (image 11). A contemporary flier reads: "If you don't loan your money to your country, then you lose your country and your money is no good in the first place."[9] Secretary of Finance, William G. McAdoo, went even further: "A man who can't lend his government $1.25 per week at a rate of 4% interest is not entitled to be an American citizen."[10]

As part of their emotional blackmail, CPI's propagandists often used one of the oldest propaganda tools, false dichotomies. They simplified the war effort into two mutually exclusive extremes: Prussianism or Liberty; Freedom or Serfdom, or in case of the German-Americans, German or American. Taken together, these approaches were extremely effective in influencing public opinion both in favor of the war and in its financial support. Failure to buy war bonds was finally aiding and abetting the enemy.

The Campaign against German-Americans

The war propaganda which the United States disseminated was unique as well because it the only propaganda at the time to target specific groups. In addition to women, children, boy scouts, and workers in the war industry, recent immigrants were a distinct target group. Obviously, propaganda aimed at specific groups is particularly relevant in a consideration of the effect of American propaganda on the German-American community. On a linguistic level,

posters and brochures in the languages of recent immigrant groups tried to cross the language barrier. Others showed immigrant families at the moment of arrival with a ship in the background and slogans which read "Remember! The Flag of Liberty[.] Support It!" or "Remember Your First Thrill of American Liberty" (image 12).

The underlying message was typically that immigrants had to prove that they were "true" U.S. citizens. Of special concern in the United States were the eight million German immigrants who were suspected of siding with their old fatherland. Even during the so-called preparedness campaign of 1915 and 1916, Wilson had attacked what he referred to as the "hyphen-mentality," whereby German-Americans, Irish-Americans, etc. were viewed as splitting their loyalties between two countries. Theodore Roosevelt even spoke of "moral treason" if someone took pride in two national identities.[11]

Given a suspicion of immigrants even at the highest levels, it is not surprising that propaganda posters hinted at the question of patriotism. The underlying presumption that recent immigrants might be less patriotic was subtle yet present. The implication of such campaigns was that recent immigrants could not be trusted despite the fact that upon entry into the country they had signed a vow to renounce all foreign powers and especially, in the case of Germans, Kaiser Wilhelm II. The propaganda directed toward all recent immigrants tried to instill a sense of allegiance to the United States. It is interesting to note in this context that foreign-born citizens were regularly the first to subscribe to war bonds, sometimes even purchasing them prior to their public release to demonstrate their loyalty to their new homeland.[12]

Like all U.S. residents, German-Americans were exposed to the propaganda rallying them to support the war in Europe. Additionally, propaganda also targeted them as a group, especially if they were recent immigrants. In both cases, the CIP propagandists wanted to convince German-Americans and, indeed, all hyphenated Americans to do their duty as Americans. However, as a group German-Americans (and to a much lesser extent Austrian-Americans), were subject to heightened suspicion, anti-German propaganda, and acts of vio-

IMAGE 9

IMAGE 10

IMAGE 11

lence. Frank Trommler calls it a "cultural ethnic cleansing of German Americans."[13]

Germany as the leader of the Central Powers was, naturally, the focus of propaganda depicting the enemy. The invasion of neutral Belgium and the unrestricted submarine war, including the sinking of the Lusitania, provided ample material for allied propaganda. The Brooklyn clergyman and associate of Theodore Roosevelt, Newell Dwight Hillis, who received constant inquiries during the war loan campaign in the spring of 1917 about the truthfulness of German atrocities, stated later "American war loan and recruitment posters confirm that 'German atrocities' of 1914 were vital in painting the dehumanized visage of the enemy."[13] The stylized picture of the bloodthirsty German soldier, almost always coupled with the word "Hun," or scenes of sinking ships destroyed by German submarines, were popular motifs that activated a preexisting anti-German stereotype.

Image thirteen is a typical example, again using a dichotomy "Hun or Home." The drawing evokes the scene as if it were drawn on the battlefield. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle reminded readers of the Times, "Hate has its uses in war. … It steels the mind and sets the resolution as no other emotion can do. The bestiality of the German nation has given us driving power. … We have to win and we can only win by keeping up the spirit and resolution of our own people."[15]

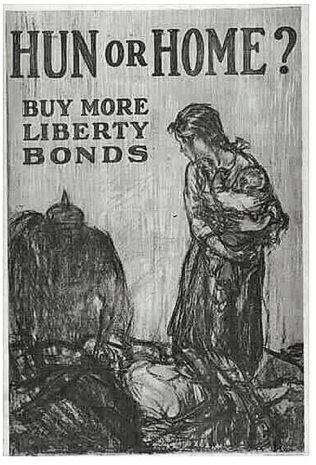

IMAGE 13

Among all immigrant groups, German-Americans had, of course, a special position. Not only were they the largest group, but also because their relatives were often on the other side of the trenches. Two or three generations after immigration, most German Americans had adopted mainstream American customs and switched their language to Eng-

lish. By 1914 the older members of a German-American family were likely attending German-language church services while the younger members were attending English services in Lutheran, Evangelical or Catholic churches. In German parochial schools, the children spoke English among themselves, though some of their classes were in German. The outbreak of war triggered a brief spike in German instruction in the schools. However, after the United States entered the war on the side of the British, nearly all German language instruction ended as did most German-language church services. It is highly ironic, therefore, that there were ads like one in 1917 (image 14) which proclaimed: "Our government is not at war with the German language, only with the German government. Therefore, everyone should buy one or more bonds in order to end the war quickly."

While the sentiment might have been sincere, the facts seem to contradict it: In 1918, Iowa made speaking foreign languages in public illegal. Nebraska banned instruction in any language except English, but the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the ban illegal in 1923 (Meyer v. Nebraska). German-named streets were renamed. In Indianapolis, a street named Germania Avenue was renamed Pershing Avenue—for a World War I general (of German descent). Anti-German sentiment during World War I caused the Public Library of Cincinnati to withdraw all German books from its shelves. German words, long current in American English were "Americanized." Sauerkraut was renamed "Victory Cabbage." Some Germans "Americanized" their names (e.g. Schmidt to Smith, Müller to Miller) and limited their use of German in public places even where it was legal.

Unſere Regierung iſt nicht im Krieg mit der deutſchen Sprache, blos gegen die deutſche Regierung. Jedermann ſollte darum einen oder mehrere Bonds kaufen zur ſchnellen Beendigung des Krieges.

Achtungsvoll

The Herbrand Co.

IMAGE 14

More than the language the propaganda disseminated by the Committee of Public Information targeted German-American culture, a culture which had become a refuge for anyone who wanted to avoid politics yet nonetheless desired to uphold his or her indi-

vidual cultural identity. To be clear, the U.S. government did not directly target German-Americans in its propaganda as enemies. Yet building on a foundation of existing suspicions towards immigrants, the CPI and other official agencies constantly exposed the public to graphic depictions of real and alleged war crimes in text and image. Theodore Roosevelt's demand for a pledge of "One Hundred Percent Americanism" created an atmosphere in which the definitions of German and German-American started to blur. Newspapers printed the names of German-Americans, including their addresses, under the headline "German Enemy Aliens." Like socialists and pacifists, they were considered "the enemy within."

On Columbus Day 1915, former President Theodore Roosevelt speaking to the largely Irish Catholic Knights of Columbus at Carnegie Hall fueled anti-German sentiments. He asserted that:

> There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism. …a hyphenated American is not an American at all. ... The one absolutely certain way of bringing this nation to ruin, of preventing all possibility of its continuing to be a nation at all, would be to permit it to become a tangle of squabbling nationalities, an intricate knot of German-Americans, Irish-Americans, English-Americans, French-Americans, Scandinavian-Americans or Italian-Americans, each preserving its separate nationality, each at heart feeling more sympathy with Europeans of that nationality, than with the other citizens of the American Republic. ... There is no such thing as a hyphenated American who is a good American. The only man who is a good American is the man who is an American and nothing else.[16]

Moreover, sitting President Woodrow Wilson regarded "hyphenated Americans" with suspicion, proclaiming that "[a]ny man who carries a hyphen about with him carries a dagger that he is ready to plunge into the vitals of this Republic whenever he gets ready."[17] While there is little remaining evidence of the texts of the short, four-minute speeches which the 75,000 volunteers of CPI's Four Minute Men speaker corps delivered to eleven million people,[18] it seems likely that they mirrored Roosevelt's and Wilson's sentiments.

The imprisonment of enemy aliens by the United States Government during World War I is a little known facet of the war effort. Several thousand enemy aliens, people who been born abroad but had not yet finished the naturalization process as well as vocal opponents of the war, were imprisoned. Baltimore's famous writer Henry Louis Mencken, who had written that he found the German democratic system superior to American democracy, was one of them. The day after Congress declared war on Germany, President Woodrow Wilson issued a proclamation which established twelve regulations for the conduct of "alien enemies" in the United States. Violation of these restrictions resulted in arrest and possible imprisonment. Of most importance to aliens was regulation twelve, which stated in part that "an alien enemy whom there may be reasonable cause to believe to be abiding or about to aid the enemy...or violates any regulation promulgated by the President...will be subject to summary arrest...and to confinement in such penitentiary, prison, jail, or military camp."[19] A number of government agencies, including the Department of Justice, the Department of the Treasury, and the Department of Labor, carried out the actual arrests of enemy aliens. The prisoners were then transferred to the War Department.

Although the United States government actually began arresting German aliens in the spring of 1917, scrutiny of aliens commenced as early as August 1914. At the outbreak of the war, the Wilson Administration instituted a calculated program of propaganda which alerted the American people to be aware of German espionage. For three years the Justice Department prepared lists of aliens considered dangerous and attempted to register all German aliens. The number of registered aliens of German origin was approximately 480,000 at the beginning of World War I. By the end of the war, more than 4000 of them had been arrested. While very little concrete evidence existed to justify allegations of espionage or the ensuing apprehension of aliens, the furor created by raising the specter of subversive foreigners helped the president gain the public support he needed for his 1917 declaration of war.

The hysteria surrounding the surveillance and detainment of enemy aliens led in a number of

cases to physical violence against German-Americans. A statement made by John Deml of Outagamie County, Wisconsin, at Madison, Wisconsin on October 22, 1918, illustrates what could happen to those who did not comply with requests to prove their patriotism by buying war bonds:

> About half-past twelve (continuing for more than an hour) Sunday morning October 20th, my wife awaked me, saying, that there were a large number of men on the front porch, pounding and rapping on the door, besides talking in a loud tone of voice. I was upstairs; then I came downstairs and went to the front door, where they were, and I asked them, who was there! Several answered at once, "The Council of Defense." I then asked them, "What do you want?" and they replied, "We want you to sign up." I replied, "I have done my share."… To make it plain, on the 28th of September, at the opening of the fourth drive, I was notified by letter that my bond assessment would be $800. When Henry Baumann came to see me, I told him I could not possibly take $500 now but would take some, meaning a substantial amount, that is all I could afford; and he replied, "My orders are you must take $500 or nothing."
>
> … And then I turned around to return to the house when they all at one time closed in on me like a vise; some grabbing my fingers or wrist, others my legs, and several of them were shouting, holding a paper before me, "Sign up." I said, "I will not sign up at this time of night." Then a man shouted, "Get the rope!" The first I knew was when the rope was about my neck and around my body under my arms. Someone then gave a sharp jerk at the rope and forced me to my knees and hands; at the same time some of them jumped on my back, and while bent over someone struck me in the face, making me bleed; then a man (whom I recognized) said, "Boys, you are going too far"; and then, as they got me away from them a little, I heard a man say, "You can't scare him." I answered, "I am not afraid of the entire city of Appleton." Then a man (whom I knew) got me to one side, and he said, "Let's go into the house and talk between ourselves." Then two men (whom I knew) went with

> me into the house, and we sat or stood around the table, and they still demanded that I sign up. I said, "I will not sign up for any man after being abused like this." Then a man (whom I knew) told me I would have to go with them, or, if I didn't go with them, would have to come to town that Sunday morning at 10 o'clock to see Mr. Keller. I told them that I would be there; they left; as they left, I noticed, and so did my family and neighbors, that they rode away in seven automobiles. I did not go to see Mr. Keller. Signed, JOHN DEML.[20]

Others were not as lucky. The National Archives preserve the files of John Meints,[21] a Danish man who, due to his German-sounding name, was considered suspect. He was tarred and feathered, but he did not give in. He sued his tormentors after the war and won. German-born Robert Prager in Colinsville, Illinois, was hanged by a mob in April 1918 because he appeared to be of German descent. The killers were found innocent of the crime, and a jury called the hanging an act of patriotism. As far as is known, Prager is the only German-American killed for his ethnicity.

The government as well as many self-appointed patriotic watchdog groups and throughout the war individuals continued to campaign against foreign-born citizens, especially German-Americans. Ads appeared in German-speaking newspapers and periodicals. Professors published their correspondence with German colleagues on the war. For German-Americans, the end of the war only gradually brought an end to suspicion. Many groups, churches, and families suffered from eighteen months of torment and never really recuperated from it. Nevertheless, the following years led to greater integration. During World War II, German-Americans were serving side-by-side with other "hyphenated Americans" in the Armed Forces as they had in World War I. By 1942, the earlier hysteria against German-Americans had weakened. The propaganda of World War II had a more sober and rational tone, appealing less to the irrational fears and emotions of the people. Although to a lesser extent than earlier, German-Americans would be, once again, arrested.

— Marcel Rotter
The University of Mary
Washington

Image 12

Image Credits:
Images 5, 7, 8, 10, and 13 are reproduced with permission of the Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin. All remaining images are courtesy the National Archives and Records Administration.

IMAGE 15

Notes

1 For an in-depth discussion of methods of war propaganda in World War I, see Arthur Ponsonby, *Falsehood in War-Time: Propaganda Lies of the First World War* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1928) and, for a generalized approach, Anne Morelli, *Die Prinzipien der Kriegspropaganda* (Springe am Deister, Lower Saxony: Zu Klampen, 2004).

2 It seems likely that the chief American propagandist, George Creel, appointed by President Wilson as the head of the United States Committee on Public Information during World War I, was himself the person who sought most consistently to paint the Committee's work as solely positive. See George Creel, *How We Advertised America* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920).

3 Frank Trommler. "The Lusitania Effect: America's Mobilization against Germany in World War I," *German Quarterly* 32:2 (2009), 254. Trommler points to different victim groups of WWI propaganda, such as German-Americans, socialists, and pacifists.

4 Mary Beth Mathews. *Rethinking Zion: How the Print Media Placed Fundamen-talism in the South* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2006), 59. In addition, the economic crisis of 1914 added to a fear of a continued stream of foreign workers into the United States. For an in-depth analysis, see Henry May's *The End of American Innocence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).

5 John Whiteclay Chambers II. *The Tyranny of Change in the Progressive Era 1890–1920*, 2nd ed. (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 244 [quoted after Trommler, 249].

6 George Theofiles. *American Posters of World War I: A Price and Collector's Guide* (New York: Dafran House [1979], 5 and 9.

7 Although war bonds had been issued during the Civil War as well as the Spanish-American War, the concept was mostly known to the upper classes of society. The totality of World War I required a much wider focus which included all classes and income levels. Therefore, bonds could be paid for in installments and were also available in smaller denominations, such as the War Savings Stamp (worth fifty cents).

8 For a fuller treatment of the differences between propaganda efforts in the United States and elsewhere, see Marcel Rotter, "When Money Goes to War: Functions of War Bond Posters during World War I," *Mid-Atlantic Almanack: The Journal of the Mid-Atlantic Popular/American Culture Association*, 16 (2007), 69–109.

9 Porter Emerson Browne. *A Liberty Loan Primer* (Liberty Loan Committee, Second Reserve District 1918), no page.

10 Quoted in Walton Rawls, *Wake Up, America! World War I and the American Poster* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1988), 202.

11 See John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925* (New York, Atheneum, 1970), 198.

12 So reports "The Bond Bulletin," a propaganda brochure which advertised the Fourth Liberty Loan: "Although the opening of the Fourth Liberty Loan is still two weeks off, several hundred thousand dollars in subscriptions already have been pledged to the loan by foreign language organizations in different parts of the country, according to reports to Hans Rieg, director of Loan organizations among foreign born citizens."

13 Trommler, 249.

14 Quoted in John N. Horne and Alan Kramer, *German Atrocities, 1914: A History of Denial* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), 323.

15 Quoted in Rawls, 12.

16 *New York Times*, October 13, 1915, 1 and 5. The term "hyphenated American" was an epithet in common use from 1890 to 1920 to disparage Americans who were of foreign birth or origin and who displayed an allegiance to a foreign country. The term "hyphenated" was in use as early as 1893 and was common as a derogatory term by 1904.

17 John B. Duff. "German-Americans and the Peace, 1918–1920," *American Jewish His-torical Quarterly* 59:4 (1970), 424–459.

18 Cedric Larson and James R. Mock. "The Lost Files of the Creel Committee," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 3:1. (January 1939), 2–5.

19 "President's Proclamation of a State of War, and Regulations Governing Alien Enemies," *New York Times*, April 7, 1917, p. 1.

20 Statement from farmer John Deml of Outagamie County, Wisconsin, at Madi-son, Wisconsin, Tuesday, October 22, 1918, in "Prussianizing Wisconsin," *Atlantic Monthly* 123 (January 1919), 99–105. Quotation is on pages 101 and 102.

21 National Archives online: http://narademo.miacs.umd.edu/cgi-bin/isadg/viewobject.l?object=33488 (accessed 12/12/2010)