

3. The Propaganda War

MANIFESTO OF THE NINETY-THREE GERMAN INTELLECTUALS TO THE CIVILIZED WORLD

1914

As representatives of German Science and Art, we hereby protest to the civilized world against the lies and calumnies with which our enemies are endeavoring to stain the honor of Germany in her hard struggle for existence – in a struggle that has been forced on her.

The iron mouth of events has proved the untruth of the fictitious German defeats; consequently misrepresentation and calumny are all the more eagerly at work. As heralds of truth we raise our voices against these.

It is not true that Germany is guilty of having caused this war. Neither the people, the Government, nor the “Kaiser” wanted war (...).

It is not true that we trespassed in neutral Belgium. It has been proved that France and England had resolved on such a trespass, and it has likewise been proved that Belgium had agreed to their doing so. It would have been suicide on our part not to have been beforehand (...).

It is not true that the life and property of a single Belgian citizen was injured by our soldiers without the bitterest defense having made it necessary (...).

It is not true that our troops treated Louvain brutally. Furious inhabitants having treacherously fallen upon them in their quarters, our troops with aching hearts were obliged to fire a part of the town, as punishment. The greatest part of Louvain has been preserved (...).

It is not true that our warfare pays no respects to international laws. It knows no undisciplined cruelty. But in the east, the earth is saturated with the blood of women and children unmercifully butchered by the wild Russian troops, and in the west, dum-dum bullets mutilate the breasts of our soldiers (...).

It is not true that the combat against our so-called militarism is not a combat against our civilization, as our enemies hypocritically pretend it is. Were it not for German militarism, German civilization would long since have been extirpated (...).

We cannot wrest the poisonous weapon – the lie – out of the hands of our enemies. All we can do is proclaim to all the world, that our enemies are giving false witness against us (...).

Have faith in us! Believe, that we shall carry on this war to the end as a civilized nation, to whom the legacy of a Goethe, a Beethoven, and a Kant, is just as sacred as its own hearths and homes.

EMIL VON BEHRING,
Professor of Medicine, Marburg
Prof. PAUL EHRLICH,
Frankfort on the Main
FRITZ HABR,
Professor of Chemistry, Berlin
ERNST HAECKL,
Professor of Zoology, Jena
Prof. ADOLF VON HARNACK,
General Director of the Royal
Library, Berlin

KARL LAMPRECHT,
Professor of History, Leipzig
MAX LIBERMANN, Berlin
MAX PLANCK, Professor of Physics,
Berlin
Prof. MAX REINHARDT,
Director of the German Theatre,
Berlin
WILHELM ROENTGEN,
Professor of Physics, Munich
GUSTAV VON SCHMOLLER,
Professor of National Economy,
Berlin (...).

THE HASSLIED

1914

The first stanzas.

French and Russian they matter not,
 A blow for a blow and a shot for a shot;
 We love them not, we hate them not,
 We hold the Weichsel and Vosges-gate,
 We have but one and only hate,
 We love as one, we hate as one,
 We have one foe and one alone.

He is known to you all, he is known to you all,
 He crouches behind the dark grey flood,
 Full of envy, of rage, of craft, of gall,
 Cut off by waves that are thicker than blood,
 Come, let us stand at the Judgment place,
 An oath to swear to, face to face,

An oath of bronze no wind can shake,
 An oath for our sons and their sons to take.
 Come, hear the word, repeat the word,
 Throughout the Fatherland make it heard.

We will never forego our hate,
 We have but one single hate,
 We love as one, we hate as one,
 We have one foe, and one alone --
 ENGLAND!

PROPAGANDA LEAFLETS

Following are examples of leaflets dropped over enemy lines from planes and balloons:

- I. Fliegerabwurf-Schriften
- II. Leaflet Air Post No. 12
- III. Secret Summary of Intelligence, A.E.F.
- IV. Fliegerabwurf-Schriften.

I

Fliegerabwurf-Schriften

Pass this along!
German War Comrades!
Think about this:

1. Only greedy rulers want war. The people want peace, and work, and bread.
2. Only the German Kaiser with his militarists, Junkers, and arms manufacturers wanted war, prepared for it and brought it on. No one wanted to fight Germany, no one opposed her desires for a “place in the sun.”
3. If a murderer shoots a revolver on the street, it is the duty of every peace-loving, dutiful citizen to hurry to the aid of the fallen. For that reason Italy, Rumania, and the United States went to war against Germany; to free Belgium, Serbia, and France from the clutches of the murderer. (...)
10. Stop fighting! Turn your cannons around! Come over to us. Shoot anyone who wants to hinder you from coming.

YOUR DEMOCRATIC COMRADES IN FRENCH PRISONS

(French Propaganda Leaflet – said to have come from German soldiers in French prison camps)

II

Leaflet Air Post No. 12

FOR WHAT ARE YOU FIGHTING, MICHEL?

They tell you that you are fighting for the Fatherland. Have you ever thought why you are fighting?

You are fighting to glorify Hindenburg, to enrich Krupp. You are struggling for the Kaiser, the Junkers, and the militarists (...)

They promise you victory and peace. You poor fools! It was promised your comrades for more than three years. They have indeed found peace, deep in the grave, but victory did not come! (...)

It is for the Fatherland... But what is your Fatherland? Is it the Crown Prince who offered up 600,000 men at Verdun? Is it Hindenburg, who with Ludendorff is many kilometers behind the front lines making more plans to give the English more cannon fodder? Is it Krupp for whom each year of war means millions of marks? Is it the Prussian Junkers who still cry over your dead bodies for more annexations?

No, none of these is the Fatherland. You are the Fatherland... The whole power of the Western world stands behind England and France and America! An army of ten million is being prepared; soon it will come into the battle. Have you thought of that, Michel?

(British leaflet dropped into German trenches by balloon)

III

Secret Summary of Intelligence, A.E.F.

The Provisional Government has fallen. The power is now in the hands of the Russian people, and the new government considers the immediate conclusion of peace as its foremost duty (...)

We charge you soldiers to stand by us in the fight for peace and socialism, for socialism alone can give the proletariat a lasting peace (...)

Brothers, if you support us, the cause of freedom is assured success (...)

Our soldiers have laid down their arms. It is now for you to follow this standard of peace.

May peace triumph! May the Socialistic and International Revolution live!

For the Council of People's Commissars.

Signed LENIN, TROTSKY
December 5, 1917

(Russian Proclamation to the German Soldiers)

IV

Fliegerabwurf-Schriften.

BROTHERS!

The world is in great need. You and you alone can end this need rapidly. We are American citizens of German descent. We know you and trust you. We beg you to trust us.

The great German nation is the barbarian and the breaker of trust in the eyes of the world. You can recover your good reputation only if you overthrow this government, which has made German intelligence and German industry a danger to the world. Take the determination of your destiny into your own hands (...).

If you will do this the world war will end. In the name of America we give you our word, that the new Germany will be taken up as an honorable member of the society of nations. Your intelligence and industry will once again be a blessing to humanity, instead of a curse.... Arise for a struggle for a free Germany!

In the name of Americans of German descent.

UNION OF FRIENDS OF GERMAN DEMOCRACY
New York, March, 1918

(American Leaflet from the Friends of German Democracy)
