

"The Tenderness for Enemy Aliens"

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The Tenderness for Enemy Aliens Attorney General Gregory's apology for the ultra-lenient enemy alien and enemy agent policy of his department is already under heavy fire. Naturally. It was, a defence which didn't defend. The Department of Justice got a wrong start. It made the mistake of not recognizing that the problem of dealing with civilian enemy subjects, with spies and with enemy agents of all sorts is essentially a military one. The military arm should supplant the civil arm. We owe the enemy alien a military protection which he can find only in an internment camp. We owe our own 8010 Pachas nothing but a court martial. In his recent letter to Representative Gilbert A. Currie Mr. Gregory enumerated various changes in the criminal statutes which he had asked Congress to make. But he failed to refer to the vitally important Chamberlain bill, which sends all espionage, sabotage and aid to the enemy cases before military tribunals.

One of the Assistant Attorneys General, Mr. Charles Warren, who has since resigned, submitted to the Senate Military Affairs Committee a brief in favor of such a transfer. United States District Judge John C. Rose, of the District of Maryland, also supports it. Why, in the twelve months in which we have been at war, hasn't so practical a method of cutting civilian court red tape suggested itself to the Attorney General?

It is the same thing with internment. Internment is a military act. Why hasn't it been performed with military thoroughness and promptitude? Internment is not intended to be merely a form of punishment for enemy aliens who have shown themselves to be dangerous. It is intended as a precaution against the possibility that even the apparently non dangerous enemy alien may become dangerous. It is, besides, an obligation which we owe to the enemy alien, without regard to whether he is dangerous or harmless. And why should the process of internment be shrouded in secrecy? The public, as the American Defence Society has pointed out, is entitled to know who among the enemy aliens are being treated as goats and who as sheep. Publicity in such a matter increases the public's protection. The best possible way to limit the power for mischief of enemy aliens and of enemy agents is to put every community on its guard against suspects.

Every city, town or village should know what representation it has in the internment camps, so that the associations of such representatives may be under general surveillance. The Department of Justice has only just begun to scratch the surface of a big enterprise. The enemy alien registration and barred zone orders have not been effectively enforced. The power of

internment has been used very stingily.

German subjects, sympathizers and agents go about unhampered and unafraid. Milwaukee is not the only bad spot in the country. Mr. Bloodgood, of the Milwaukee County Defence Committee, told the Senate Military Affairs Committee the other day that a jury couldn't be obtained in Milwaukee which would convict Victor Berger. "Yet," he added, "I believe that both New York and Chicago are worse than Milwaukee." Let us have a nation-wide clean-up. Let us fill our internment camps up with Germans and turn all Americans who are working for German victory over to the military courts.