

LOYALTY AND GERMAN AMERICANS

I know that it is hard for Americans to realize the magnitude of the war in which we are involved. We have problems in this war no other nation has. Particularly, the great majority of American citizens of German descent have, in the great crisis of our history, shown themselves a splendidly loyal to our country.

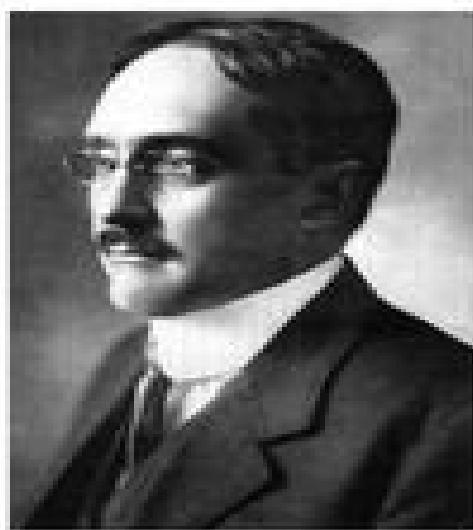
Everyone had a right to sympathize with any warring nation. But now that we are in the war there are only two sides, and the time has come when every citizen must declare himself American - or traitor.

We must oppose the Germans who have always believed that the German-Americans here would take their property, their children's names, and their own souls, and hand up these to the Kaiser. The Foreign Minister of Germany once said to me "your country does not do anything against Germany, because we have in your country 300,000 German men who will die in arms against your government if you dare to make a move against Germany."

Well, I think this then might be so, but then we had 300,000 immigrants to this country, and that was when the immigrants would be bringing the day after they tried to rise. And of these are very German-Americans here who are so ignorant that all the benefits they have received that they are still for the Kaiser, there is only one thing to do with them. And that is to bring them, give them back the medals above and the rings they handed in, and ship them back to the Fatherland.

I have travelled this year over all the United States. Through the Alleghenies, the White Mountains, and the Cascades, the Rockies and the Sierras; through the Dakotas, the Coast Range, and the Far West. And in all these associations, there is no system that hires and fires and expels and tortures, that would be equalled and which equal to a lot German-Americans, if you commenced to tie them up and told them that he was on his way back to the Kaiser.

- Ambassador to Germany James W. Gerard in speech from 1917



ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

- I. What "problem" does Ambassador Gerard see the US face that others don't?
 - a. Loyalty
 - b. A depression
 - c. Ethnic diversity
 - d. Poor leadership

- II. Do you agree that there are only 3 main outcomes one chooses during WWI? Explain.