

WORLD WAR I GERMAN-AMERICAN SENTIMENT
AT SAINT MEINRAD ABBEY, INDIANA

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PREFACE

The domestic experiences of the American people in the First World War have received comparatively little attention. One particular group, the German-speaking immigrants, suffered considerably from native-born citizens who looked with suspicion on these foreigners, although many were second and third generation descendants.

In this thesis the predominantly German-speaking and German-cultured Benedictine monastery of Saint Meinrad, located in Spencer County, Indiana, will be studied. This group of monks had to reorientate itself to face the stress, anxiety, and potential bigotry directed against German-speaking descendants and immigrants by well-meaning, though sometimes misdirected patriots. To understand better the position of St. Meinrad Abbey during the wartime era, attention will also focus on the general situation of American Catholicism in the United States from after the Civil War until the second decade of the twentieth century.

Three sources have been consulted in attempting to present an adequate picture of the atmosphere and reactions of the St. Meinrad monks: 1) private interviews, correspondence, and a questionnaire; 2) records and documents located in the Abbey archives; and 3) standard texts, monographs, and reference works.

There are six surviving members of the community who lived at the abbey during the troublesome period: Fathers Anselm Schaaf, Peter Behrman, Placidus Kempf, Maurus

Ohligslager and Abbots Ignatius Esser and Columban Thuis. These men, in addition to Brother Wolfgang Mieslinger (who emigrated from Germany after the war and who fought for the German Army), were most helpful in gathering information and personal reflections about the period considered. One other member of the community, Father Stephen Thuis, was unavailable for interviews. I have tried to put into perspective their various accounts, keeping in mind some advice I received from Father Cyprian Davis, OSB:

. . . you will be forced to evaluate their opinions from their validity as historical witnesses. In dealing with people's reminiscences as an oral witness to historical facts, one must be aware that one remembers what one wishes and in the way one wishes. And also that subsequent events always color the original events or actions. This has nothing to do with the honesty or objectivity of the one interrogated. This would be true of us all. For this reason the good historian places a high value on the memories of an individual as a primary source but a source that must always be used with circumspection and a certain critical attitude.¹

Several questions were asked of the above mentioned monks. These included: (1) What was the political atmosphere here during the early part of the war? (2) Were the predominately German-born monks enthusiastically supporting the Germans, or were they indifferent? (3) How did the monks of other than German descent feel about the war? (4) Was there ever any friction? (5) Did the political climate change when the Germans starting pursuing

¹Cyprian Davis, Personal Letter (Abbaye du Mont Cesar, Leuven Belgium, July 10, 1969).

unlimited submarine warfare? (6) Were most of the monks in favor of American neutrality? Did they support Wilson's stand during the election for continued neutrality? (7) Did anyone regret or oppose American entry into the war on the Allied side? (8) At any time were there explicit or implicit attacks on the abbey or on any members of the abbey for being of German descent? (9) Do you recall what newspapers and magazines were read frequently by the monks in those days?

The abbey archives provided additional illumination. There were six large boxes filled with Abbot Athanasius Schmitt's official correspondence during World War I. In these boxes many pieces of propaganda literature were also found. Basically, however, most of the material dealt with official business--letters received and copies of letters sent. All references to this source will be cited as WWI Letters. Father Luke Gruwe, Editor of Paradieses-Früchte, a German-language periodical published by the monks of St. Meinrad, and also the Prior, the Abbot's first assistant, kept a diary for many years. From this diary or chronicle, as it is often called, he would provide a list of happenings or events for the readers of the magazine. This source will be cited as Chronicle henceforth. Not only did Father Luke provide facts, dates, and events, but he also would give some commentary and occasionally a little prayer. Since this is written in German, it has been translated into English by Father Placidus Kempf, to whom this

writer is indeed grateful. A third archival source is the Chronicle of the Clerical Novitiate (Fraterstock), a daily listing of events as seen by the youngest and newest members of the monastery, the novices and clerics, whose proper title was Frater. These men were engaged in studies for the priesthood. All citations of this source will be Fraterstock.

An attempt was made to go through whatever personal letters that had been saved. Unfortunately, no pertinent material could be found. Since the archives are still in a process of being catalogued, some valuable letters might have been neglected.

Several persons have been most helpful in gathering necessary information and in giving technical assistance: William Carpe, History Department, St. Meinrad School of Theology; David H. Smith, Department of Religion, Indiana University; Placidus Kempf, OSB, Librarian and Archivist of St. Meinrad Archabbey, who was extremely patient and helpful with difficult German passages; and Simeon Daly, OSB, Head Librarian, St. Meinrad Archabbey. To these men I am especially grateful for help and encouragement.

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CHAPTER I

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH HISTORY 1860-1914

The close-knit unity of Roman Catholicism in American enabled it to survive the turbulent and divisive influence of the Civil War while other denominations sometimes split over political differences. The largely immigrant Catholic population possessed bonds of hierarchical authority, common acceptance of Catholic teachings, and reception of the same Roman sacraments.¹ These unifying factors had been carried over from Europe with each successive wave of immigration. From a mere handful during the American Revolution, the Roman Catholics had rapidly increased to some six million in 1880.² Twenty years later this number had doubled.

In the 1860's and 1870's immigration was encouraged rather than restricted for two principle reasons. First, the ethnic unity produced by the Civil War gave the appearance of social stability, thus precluding the tendency to think of immigrants as a threat to the status quo. Secondly, Americans believed that immigrants had economic value. Yet,

¹Thomas McAvoy, The Great Crisis in American Catholic History: 1885-1900 (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1957), p. 8.

²Ibid., p. 4, citing Bryce, American Commonwealth, 2 Vols. (London, 1888), II, p. 575.

as Jones notes: "Dislike and distrust of the immigrants persisted, but remained in most places beneath the surface."³

ANTI-CATHOLIC FEELINGS

The immediate cause of anti-Catholic feelings was the growing strength and influence of the Catholic Church. The Third Plenary Council of 1884, meeting in Baltimore, gave impetus and assent to institutional development.⁴ The centennial celebrations of the American hierarchy in 1889, and the Chicago World's Fair four years later showed Protestants how well the new immigrant Church had been developing. Moreover, the renaissant controversy over sharing public school funds and resistance to efforts at placing parochial schools under state supervision were interpreted by many citizens "as a foreign attack upon a basic American institution, namely, 'the little red schoolhouse.'"⁵

Fear of the emerging Irish-Catholic politicians and subsequent papal encroachment on American rights led to the formation of secret anti-Catholic societies. The most influential and numerically strong nativist organization was the American Protective Association, founded at Clinton,

³Maldwyn Allen Jones, American Immigration (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), p. 248.

⁴Ibid., p. 255. Within the following decade twenty new dioceses were established and by 1890, some 600,000 students were said to populate Catholic schools.

⁵Ibid.

Iowa, in 1887 by a lawyer named Henry F. Bowers. The economic depression of 1893 produced an atmosphere of fear and hysteria. Membership increased to half a million, but better times and factional quarrels quickly disintegrated these nativists.

Although organizational bigotry subsided during the first decades of the twentieth century, Catholics continued to feel a certain mistrust from their non-Catholic neighbors who rarely understood the essence of Catholicism.

TURMOIL WITHIN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Sometimes it is difficult to judge whether anti-Catholics or Catholics themselves caused more anguish and controversy. During the last two decades of the nineteenth century there existed great diversity in opinion among Irish and German elements. The former, closely akin to English culture and language, adapted rapidly to American ways and values. A bitter and heated controversy occurred when these 'americanized' Catholics, through the hierarchy, tried to impose this trend on American Catholics of other national origins.

In particular, the German-Americans consistently held opposing views. Many of these men had fled from the Prussian Kulturkampf of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck in the 1870's and 1880's. Vivid memories of religious and political persecution lingered on. Bismarck, trying to unite his disparate subjects, wanted to suppress all religious differences.

The emigrants, once settled in America, were determined to stress the spiritual life as well as the material and to continue their distinct way of life as Roman Catholics. Of prime concern was the quick erection of a church and a school whenever a new community was formed. Oftentimes a zealous and educated German priest or missionary would guide and direct the fortunes of the German-speaking area. Isolated because of language difficulties and the desire for country-living, they were often misunderstood by both Irish Catholics who by and large lived in the urban areas of the East and ^{b3} American Protestants. The Germans clung to the old ways; they still loved German culture and the Vaterland. They firmly believed that "there is no better or higher culture than German, and the practice of religion by a German must be the best of the world."⁶ Moreover,

German priests understood this, and knew that many of the German emigrants felt that if they could not practice their faith in the German way when they came to America, then they would not practice their faith at all. This was why the mother tongue was stressed, the vereins ^{customs} encouraged, and the traditions fostered. All were kept together by the mother tongue. Furthermore, the German was accustomed to authority, and when he came to a strange land the only authority for him naturally was German authority. 7

⁶Colman J. Barry, The Catholic Church and German Americans (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1953), p. 9, n. 10 quoting Albert Hammenstede, OSB, former prior of Maria Laach Abbey. Henceforth this work is cited, Barry, "Catholic Church."

⁷Ibid. Willibald Mathäser, OSB, archivist of the Ludwig Missionsverein in Munich, confirmed these statements.

German spiritual leaders in the United States had witnessed many immigrants turning to non-Catholic, though German-speaking, churches. Thus special provisions had to be made for preserving the Catholic faith, namely, Catholic schools, more German-speaking priests, and isolation from the corrupting culture of American and Protestant values. Catholic friends in German-speaking areas--Austria, Bavaria, Germany--formed mission societies like the Leopoldinene Stiftung in 1829, the Ludwig Missionsverein in 1838 and the St. Raphaelsverein in 1871 to encourage and promote Catholicism by means of literature and monies. Several religious orders of men and women also volunteered personnel and economic support. Boniface Wimmer, a Benedictine priest of the Abbey of Metten in Bavaria, settled near Latrobe, Pennsylvania in 1846 and founded a flourishing monastery which soon expanded to form new houses throughout the United States. The Redemptorists and Friars Minor Capuchin sent many able missionaries. Most of these German-cultured men wished a high degree of independence from neighboring bishops, especially if they were non-German.⁸

Peter Paul Cahensly, a merchant of Limburg an der Lahn, seeing the lack of spiritual care provided the newly arrived German emigrant of the '60's, sought to protect their welfare by founding the St. Raphaelsverein. Later he became the focus of controversy over 'americanization' policies

⁸Ibid., pp. 3-43 passim.

within the American Catholic Church. Briefly, "Cahensly-ism" tried to maintain German solidarity and independence from 'americanizing' trends: no public school education for German catholics, separate parishes for each nationality whenever possible, ~~separate~~ schools for each nationality with education both in the mother tongue and in the language of the adopted country, more bishops of national origins other than Irish. In April, 1891, fifty-one Catholics representing seven nations presented to the Vatican and Leo XIII the Lucerne Memorial, whose major requests are enumerated above.⁹

There was an immediate reaction from the "so-called" liberals or americanizers led by James Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore and John Ireland, Archbishop of St. Paul. These men felt that any foreign nationalism, whatever its guise, was ultimately detrimental to the advancement of the Church in America. Americans would not tolerate such a state of affairs.¹⁰ The conservative faction included not only the German bishops but also some prominent Irishmen, like Bernard McQuaid, Bishop of Rochester, and Michael Corrigan, Archbishop of New York, who preferred a careful application of tried and universal methods of advancing the Church.¹¹

⁹Ibid., passim. Barry's whole book covers and develops in a lucid and balanced manner the whole complex and frequently misunderstood controversy. On pp. 313-315 Barry includes an English translation of the Lucerne Memorial.

¹⁰Robert D. Cross, The Emergence of Liberal Catholicism in America (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 53.

¹¹Barry, Catholic Church, pp. 183-184.

When a careless French translation of Walter Elliott's Life of Father Hecker appeared in 1897, a controversy known as "Americanism" ensued. Father Isaac Hecker founded the Catholic World magazine in April, 1865, seven years after he had withdrawn from the Redemptorist Congregation with five other priests. They formed the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle (Paulists) in hopes of attracting native-born Americans and of presenting the Church as a universal body which had characteristics consonant with American democratic ideals. Hecker wanted to adapt as far as possible the external life of the Church to supposed modern cultural ideals. Roman authorities became suspicious of these American trends, mistaking them for similar, but distinct, values prevalent especially in France and usually termed Gallicanism or Modernism. A concerned Pope Leo XIII issued Testem benevolentiae on January 22, 1899 to Cardinal Gibbons. Certain false doctrines imputed, but never conclusively shown, to some members of the American Church were condemned: stress on 'active' virtues (e.g. humanitarianism, eugenic reform, democracy, charity) with deprecation of traditional and 'passive' attitudes such as humility and subjection to authority; adaptation to modern values; reducing the ancient rigor toward convert requirements; minimizing points of difference between Christians.¹²

¹² 'Testem Benevolentiae' in Acta Leonis XIII, vii (1906), pp. 223-233.

The conservative prelates thanked the pontiff for saving the American Church from this danger of heresy. But the opposition liberals were also in agreement with the pope. Just who was guilty of 'Americanism'? Later scholars, removed from the controversy by time, have concluded that this was a phantom heresy, more akin to European problems than American.¹³

The total effect of this papal pronouncement brought a soberness to American catholics, forcing the more liberal catholics to re-examine their position. The issue was silenced, but not dead. Neither side changed its stand significantly. Not until the outbreak of World War I did the two sides come together. America's entry into the war forced the immigrant minority groups, especially the German, to cast aside their old country ties and to become "100 percent Americans" or perish.

Commenting on the last decades of the nineteenth century, Andrew Greeley says that a naive faith in progress characterized both the country as a whole and the liberal segment of the Catholic hierarchy. Yet their "brilliant and imaginative campaign to finally Americanize the Catholic Church in the United States at best could be

¹³Fear of Americanism has prevailed until only recent times. The Catholic Encyclopedia, begun in 1907, cautiously decided to describe 'Americanism' under the topic 'Testem Benevolentiae' in volume 14, a volume not published until 1912. Rome had warned American prelates as early as the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore in 1866 that they were Catholic as well as American.

called openly a partial success . . . ¹⁴

HISTORY OF ST. MEINRAD ABBEY: 1850-1914

Southern Indiana experienced an expanding missionary situation in the 1850's as numerous German immigrants with Roman Catholic backgrounds found their way down the Ohio River and settled inland a short distance where they could farm. A recent Croatian volunteer to the American Catholic missions, Father Joseph Kundek, had a difficult time ministering to his growing number of German immigrants in the Jasper-Dubois County area. Both he and the Bishop of Vincennes, Maurice de Saint Palais, sought assistance from Europe.¹⁵ In 1851 Father Kundek travelled abroad contacting potential patrons and assistants. The following year he found the Abbot of Einsiedeln, Switzerland, Henry IV, willing to make a small foundation to care for souls, insofar as this would be compatible with a religious community life, and eventually to found a seminary for candidates to the priesthood. He wanted to provide the mission country

¹⁴Andrew Greeley, The Catholic Experience: An Interpretation of the History of American Catholicism. (New York: Doubleday, 1967), pp. 150-151.

¹⁵Unless otherwise noted this section is based on material found in H. Alerding, Diocese of Vincennes (Indianapolis: Carlon & Hollenbeck, 1883) and Albert Kleber, History of St. Meinrad Archabbey: 1854-1954 (St. Meinrad: A Grail Publication, 1954), henceforth cited as Kleber, St. Meinrad. Maurice de St. Palais was the fourth bishop of Vincennes: born in La Salvetat, France in 1811; consecrated bishop January 14, 1849; died June 28, 1877. Father Kundek was born in Johannich, Croatia on August 24, 1810; came to Jasper in 1838; died December 4, 1857.

with a trained native clergy.¹⁶

Father Kundek had visions of German colonies stretching from Jasper to Troy and Cannelton, at that time thriving Ohio River ports. Many of his visions came true as immigrants congregated in numerous small enclaves between the above mentioned towns.

Moreover, in 1854 a handful of Swiss monks, having purchased some farm lands near the Anderson River, began building their monastery. Three years later the doors of the seminary opened for the first time. Within a few years St. Meinrad could boast of educating divinity students from high school through college and into four years of theological studies. In 1889 they opened a commerical college in Jasper (Jasper Academy).

In the late 1870's Bishop de St. Palais instructed his seminarians who matriculated at St. Meinrad to learn English, if they only knew German, and to learn German, if they only spoke English. The diocese was then largely bilingual.¹⁷ To foreign-born seminarians Father Isidor Hobi, Rector of the seminary, gave this practical pastoral advice: "You must first of all learn English; you must learn to eat tomatoes; and you must learn to mind your own business. That's American!"¹⁸ English seemed to be an important part

¹⁶Einsiedeln Abbey began in the tenth century. In the 1850's it faced severe governmental restriction. Abbot Henry possibly foresaw moving to American should the situation deteriorate.

¹⁷Kleber, St. Meinrad, p. 228.

¹⁸Ibid.

of one's education.

LIFE AT THE ABBEY ^{Before} [PRIOR TO] THE WAR

To appreciate how St. Meinrad reacted to the World War ^{one} ~~once~~ must keep in mind its special goals and values. Monks of St. Benedict base their lives on his Holy Rule, written around the sixth century.¹⁹ This spiritual document presents both general norms and specific requirements. Most importantly the monk is to live under an Abbot in obedience and humility, to seek God through work and prayer in a quiet, meditative atmosphere of withdrawal from the world and all its cares.

During the reign of Abbot Athanasius Schmitt (March 16, 1898-July 12, 1932), monastic observance, especially that of divine office in choir, was encouraged and made more solemn through increased training in singing and required attendance.²⁰ The office of Abbot is most important. Not only in the Holy Rule, but also in the Constitutions of ^{the} Swiss-American Congregation we find that he is a 'Spiritual Father' and 'Shepherd', whose duty is "with a most watchful eye and heart to guide the community . . . regulating and directing all things in the house of God."²¹

¹⁹ The Holy Rule of Saint Benedict, edited by the Monks of St. Meinrad (St. Meinrad: Grail Publications, 1956). Cf. the Prologue and Chapter 48 especially.

²⁰ Kleber, St. Meinrad, pp. 426-429.

²¹ Constitutions and Declarations of the Holy Rule, published in English circa 1909, but based on a 1897 edition.

The Abbot appoints certain community members to serve as his assistants: a prior, subprior and a procurator or business manager to handle buying and money. Under the Abbot and ranked according to date of entry are the priests, the clerics, called fraters, who are studying for the priesthood, and lay-brothers, called fratres conversi, who in effect were until recent times domestic servants.

This latter group never went on to study for the priesthood. Rather, they handled nearly all the manual labor. Most of the brothers at St. Meinrad had migrated in late adolescence or early adulthood from Switzerland and Germany directly to St. Meinrad. They kept to themselves for the most part, were content with their jobs, and cared little for events of the outside world. Their vision was in general quite narrow.²²

The fraters likewise kept busy with their daily choir duties and studies. Little opportunity was provided to either travel in or read about the outside world.²³

Although travel for the priests was strictly regulated, they managed to keep abreast of the latest happenings through contact with parishioners and other priests in the various parishes served by the monastery. Both periodicals and newspapers were read and studied. Among the German language newspapers, the St. Louis Amerika was popular.

²²Wolfgang Mieslinger, Interview, January 11, 1970.

²³Placidus Kempf, Questionnaire, July 7, 1969.

The monastery also received the Louisville Courier-Journal and some local newspapers.²⁴

Most of the 104 monks associated with St. Meinrad lived at the abbey. Several, however, served the Church either as pastors in the diocese (17) or as missionaries in the Dakotas, bringing Christian instruction to the Indians (5).²⁵

These monks were predominately German oriented. Those born in Germany numbered 37; those of German-American descent 42. The 9 monks born in Switzerland and the 4 in Luxemburg came from German-speaking sections. Only 12 monks claimed no German ancestry. Because of this strong German flavor, the reading customarily found in Benedictine monasteries during all meals was performed in German during the evening supper. The noon dinner, however, had table reading done in English.²⁶

²⁴Anselm Schaaf, Interview, July 9, 1969.

²⁵See Appendix I.

²⁶Ignatius Esser, Correspondence, July 14, 1969.

CHAPTER II

THE APPROACHING WAR

The Western world was shaken on June 28, 1914 when Francis Ferdinand, Archduke and heir to the Austrian throne, fell to an assassin's bullet. Near instant mobilization occurred, showing how precarious was the balance of European power at that time. By August 5, all the major European powers had declared war on each other.

German-language newspapers in this country portrayed the struggle as one between Slavic barbarism and German civilization (Kultur). Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany appeared as the "visible symbol of German unity."²⁷ To the average citizen of Indiana, however, he was the symbol of all that was un-American.²⁸ Regardless of non-German opinion, many German-Americans were drawn closer together because of the war, further accentuating them as "a community within a community." Before the war was a month old, anti-hyphenate sentiments appeared, boldly suggesting that "If they (the Germans) don't like it here, why don't they go back to Germany."²⁹

²⁷Cedric C. Cummins, Indiana Public Opinion and the World War: 1914-1917. (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1945), pp. 47-49 passim. Cf. Carl Wittke, German-Americans and the World War (Columbus: Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society, 1936) whose documentation is largely limited to German-language newspapers.

²⁸Ibid., p. 49.

²⁹Ibid., p. 53 citing Louisville Courier-Journal, Sept. 1, 1914, p. 4 and Marion Chronicle, Aug. 22, 1914, p. 4.

The summer of 1914 initiated a period of emotional crises, conflicts of loyalties, misunderstandings, persecutions and tragedy for most German-Americans. The press was decidedly pro-British since the European cable had been cut by the British to keep German propaganda from reaching the American public. On the other hand, the Germans were roundly denounced as "Huns" and "barbarians." "Hyphen-hunting became a popular pastime among American super-patriots . . . "30 Adherents of both sides found plenty of opportunity for exhibition and uninformed debate. But "most of American attention remained upon home themes."31

Prejudice toward the German-Americans represented a spectacular reversal of judgment. Formerly, public opinion had come to accept them as one of the most assimilable and reputable of immigrant groups, praised as law-abiding, speedily assimilated, and strongly patriotic.32

³⁰Wittke, German-Americans and the World War, p. 3. One interesting piece of German propaganda was the book German Culture, Catholicism and the World War, edited by George Pfeilschifter (St. Paul: Wanderer Printing Co., 1916). It attempted to refute "French accusations" and to ascertain "the true nature of German Kultur," while not excusing "existing evils in their country." Some of the articles were entitled "The Justice and Necessity of the World War," "Is the War a War of Religion?" and "The psychology of Atrocity Reports."

³¹Frederic L. Paxson, Pre-War Years: 1913-1917, Vol. I of American Democracy and the World War, 3 Vols. (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, Inc., 1966), p. 123. It will henceforth be cited Paxson, "American Democracy."

³²John Higham, Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925 (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1955), p. 196.

When the European holocaust fixed their sympathies with the Vaterland, they loudly tried to advance the German cause with a massive campaign for an embargo on the export of war supplies. Many Americans viewed this activity more as agitation for Germany than as true neutrality.³³

The German-born monks of St. Meinrad were "in private quite outspoken in favor of the Germans. Even the non-German-born were certainly not indifferent."³⁴ Brother Martin Deck, born in Moersch, Germany, predicted a German victory.³⁵ The Prior, Luke Gruwe, born in Liesborn, Westphalia, entered a prayerful note into the Chronicle on January 31, 1914:

The year 1914 belongs to the past, a year the like of which the history of the world had never before witnessed. May with it the calamity of war have reached its zenith. May the nations of the globe be mindful of their Creator and their human dignity. May the Ten Commandments again rule the world instead of the commands of misguided politics and the artifices of an insidious diplomacy, then we shall need not bemoan the shattered culture of the twentieth century; then with confident courage we can look into the dark, ominous future.

Cruel year 1914 . . . adieu! God bless 1915.³⁶

The 1916 presidential elections provided candidates and their supporters ample opportunity to discuss and debate

³³Ibid., pp. 196-197.

³⁴Peter Behrman, Questionnaire, July 7, 1969.

³⁵Anselm Schaaf, Interview, July 9, 1969.

³⁶Chronicle, Vol. 8, p. 325; January 31, 1914.

the merits of neutrality or entry into the war. The German-American element split between the Republican Charles Evans Hughes and the incumbent Democrat Woodrow Wilson. The former was favored by many only because Wilson was felt to be more pro-British than pro-neutrality. To complicate matters, another Republican, Theodore Roosevelt, loudly announced his pro-British sentiments on the public forum. German-Americans felt a dilemma, but could do nothing about it.³⁷

The monks at St. Meinrad favored both the Democrats and neutrality, according to Ignatius Esser, who was a cleric at the time: "To the best of my recollection most of the monks favored neutrality. . . . My guess is that most of them supported Wilson's stand. Throughout my time . . . the monastic membership was heavily in favor of the Democrats."³⁸ Father Anselm Schaaf, however, supported Hughes that year, although he too favored neutrality. He felt that Wilson sympathized too much with the British.³⁹ Peter Behrman, another cleric, noted that none of the monks wanted the United States to enter the war.⁴⁰

Poor German diplomacy and tactical blunders gradually incited American public opinion against both Germany and

³⁷Wittke, German-Americans and the World War, p. 106.

³⁸Ignatius Esser, Correspondence, July 14, 1969.

³⁹Anselm Schaaf, Interview, July 9, 1969.

⁴⁰Peter Behrman, Questionnaire, July 7, 1969.

the often belligerent haughtiness of German-Americans. Since May 7, 1915 when the Lusitania was sunk with American lives lost, German Untersee boats had been wreaking damage to both passenger ships and military cargo vessels. This unlimited submarine warfare rapidly changed sentiment at St. Meinrad. "Sympathy for Germany lessened more and more with their phenomenal success in this phase of the war."⁴¹ At the same time "the German-born monks became less outspoken; those of non-German descent realized that there was now no reason to favor the Germans."⁴² Perhaps, the climate changed to "anti-German," as Father Placidus suggests.⁴³

In November 1916 Abbot Athanasius called a meeting of all the solemnly professed monks (i.e. those priest-monks who made final vows to the St. Meinrad community) to give them some recently acquired news concerning German sentiment in the neighborhood. From various quarters he had received friendly warnings that the monastery was being closely watched by spies. Two reasons were given. First, the monastery was supposedly "pro-German." Second, as a Catholic institution it ^{had} [has] many enemies. Extreme caution and reserve was ordered by the Abbot, especially when speaking with strangers. Furthermore, a vigilance committee,

⁴¹ Ignatius Esser, Correspondence, July 14, 1969.

⁴² Peter Behrman, Questionnaire, July 7, 1969.

⁴³ Placidus Kempf, Questionnaire, July 7, 1969.

working underground, which labeled itself the "Anti-German Committee," was sending anonymous letters to priests and laity who were reported to it. Father Simon Barber, the Benedictine pastor in Huntingburg, Indiana and a native of Louisville of French descent, received such a threatening letter from this group. The Abbot also was sent an anonymous letter demanding that the above mentioned Father be ordered to exercise extreme caution. Prior Luke then commented on these events:

The confusion of the condition of the times favors the generation of all manner of vermin, that shuns the light and burrows in the dark, and that pits peaceful citizens against each other. Unfortunately, this riff-raff is abetted by the indifferent and hysterical masses. Prayer for God's protection is above all necessary. Bad times are ahead and no one knows what the next day will bring. ⁴⁴

The whole problem of war was seen by at least three of the monks from the perspective of a believer firmly committed to following a God whose divine providence and ways eluded them. These three men, Fathers Luke Gruwe and Gregory Bechtold, Rector of the Major Seminary, and frater Hilary de Jean, saw man himself at the root of the problem and not nations or nationalities.⁴⁵

Father Gregory delivered the occasional homily on the feast of St. Benedict, March 21, 1915, in English, taking the Prologue of the Holy Rule as his text: "Through the

⁴⁴Chronicle, Vol. 10, p. 466, November 23, 1916.

⁴⁵Father Gregory's work is found in the Chronicle, Vol. 9, p. 334, March 21, 1915. Frater Hilary's position is found in Paradieses-Fruechte, Vol. XXIX, Eng. Suppl., p. 76.

labor of obedience we must return to him, from whom we have departed by the sloth of disobedience."

. . . The war is a punishment for the disobedience of the world to God and his Son, Jesus Christ. Peace will not return until the nations return in obedience to him and to whom he has sent. God will force the nations to acknowledge Jesus Christ, who lives in his Holy Church, and her visible head, the Pope, as Lord and Master. When that takes place, peace and prosperity will return to mankind; if not, if the nations and governments remain opposed to Christ, then the final hour has struck and the last day with its judgment has arrived. As once, after the fall of the Roman Empire, the world's order^(is) out of joint, and men believed that the end of the world was drawing near, it was St. Benedict who brought men back again to obedience and with that to the enjoyment of peace. Let us pray that the spirit of St. Benedict may again revive and the nations may again through it be led to peace. On the chair of Peter sits another Holy Father Benedict. May it be his privilege to preserve it for many centuries to come for the benefit of erring humanity.

(Chronicle--March 21, 1915)

Prior Luke, noting the ominous shadows of war over our own country, prayed on December 31, 1916: "God give us peace in the new year!" (Chronicle, Vol. 10, p. 466). But peace was not to be found.

Only one other document survives which contains material on this subject: "War and Divine Providence", written by Frater Hilary de Jean sometime prior to October 1917. It appeared in an English Supplement to Paradieses-Fruechte. With Scholastic logic and Manual Theology he attempts to put the vicissitudes of war in proper perspective.

. . . Certainly an awful spectacle is before us. Men, whom God created the rational representatives of the universe in rendering Him

glory; men descended of a common parent, brothers hence in this one great family, have risen in their entirety to a savage strife. There is no country where the demon of war has not entered and roused the inhabitants to do battle against their fellowmen. Those who are not actually fighting are assisting others to prosecute the fray. The most beautiful countries of Europe are laid waste by fire and shot, whilst millions of men are swaying in the vortex of a hellish struggle, whence unnumbered hecatombs daily go to pay fearful toll on the altar of War. Such is the picture the world presents today. We are made pensive by such sights and our thoughts go back to that awful picture drawn for us by the rich imagery of Father Faber of the condition of the world had there been no Redeemer promised after Adam's sin. It would have been indeed a universe of hopeless hate and hell. Then comes the thought to those whose faith is not so firm: What of God, Who we are told has the world ever within the hollow of His hand? Has he perhaps ceased from His providential care? Indeed did He ever have a care for us? Nay, is there perhaps no God at all and have we been ere now deceived?

.....
 But whether poor misguided men deny God's existence, or His Providence or His power; and even those whom we thought to be better informed, see no light amid the haze of doubt cast upon their afflicted souls,--it all results from one fountain-head, whence the Evil One draws abundant supply for temptation: men fail to look upon war in correct relation to the absolute will of God.

.....
 It is certain that He does not cause a single one of the sins; they proceed solely from the malice and perversity of the heart of man. Look not to God, but to man for the source of sin.

Frater Hilary goes on to ask rhetorically why God permits evil in the world. This question he casually dismisses by quotes from scripture: "It is not yours to know." He is somewhat unique in his perspectives. When invectives and

spiteful propaganda were commonplace, Hilary refuses to blame any single individual or nation. Rather he refers to man's primordial condition of sinfulness which somehow plays a role in God's salvific will. To abstain from passionate and emotion-laden speech was a bold step in days when the one who refused to be misled by super-patriotic words and action was suspected of harboring alien proclivities.

Patriotic fervor was intense by the time Hilary wrote his short essay. Much of this anti-German hatred had been enflamed by a stupid diplomatic blunder. In early 1917 Dr. Alfred Zimmermann, the German secretary of the Foreign Office, in a note to the Mexican Government, tried to tempt the latter into an alliance with Japan against the United States, if the United States should enter the war against Germany. Germany promised, in return, to help Mexico regain the "lost provinces" of New Mexico and Texas. Public acknowledgment of this communique by the German Foreign Office after the British had intercepted and decoded the message crippled the German agitation and sentiment in this country. The American people, alarmed over the Zimmermann Note, began to see Germany as a treacherous aggressor and war as inevitable. 'Armed neutrality' began on February 3 when the United States broke off diplomatic relations with Germany and lasted until April 2 when President Wilson asked the Congress to declare war on Germany. During this period plans to build an army and to finance a war were

drawn up by the military and treasury. Civil leaders discussed and debated over our involvement in the European conflict. Then on April 4 the Senate voted 86-6 to recognize the fact that Germany was now waging war against the United States. Two days later by a vote of 373-50 the House concurred with both the President and the Senate. The United States had entered the world conflict.

CHAPTER III

AMERICA ENTERS THE WAR

"Our people, as ever, will rise as one man to serve the nation" said the American bishops of the Roman Catholic Church at their annual meeting on April 18, 1917, twelve days after Congress had declared war.⁴⁶

The leading Catholic prelate, James Cardinal Gibbons, publically declared his personal views on April 5, 1917:

The primary duty of a citizen is loyalty to country. This loyalty is manifested more by acts than by words; by solemn service rather than by empty declaration. It is exhibited by an absolute and unreserved obedience to his country's call The members of both Houses of Congress are the instruments of God in guiding us in our civic duties. . . .⁴⁷

In October Gibbons wrote President Wilson: "We are working to the end that our countrymen may see the folly and grave disobedience of unjust and ill-tempered criticism of national policies."⁴⁸ He also noted that "Church

⁴⁶Cited in Dorothy Dohen, Nationalism and American Catholicism (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967), p. 147. Henceforth this is cited as Dohen, "Nationalism."

⁴⁷John Tracy Ellis, The Life of James Cardinal Gibbons, 2 Vols. (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1952), II p. 239. Miss Dohen comments: "It is apparent that in his active patriotism during the World War he was very much aware that the Catholic Church still had to prove her Americanism to some of the Nation's citizens"(p. 148). Gibbons wrote Ireland on Dec. 31, 1917: "I am trying to do all that I can that the Church may be of full service to the country during these trying days, and that no ground will be left after the ordeal is over upon which the enemies of the Church might endeavor to raise up unfair charges against her." P. 249.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 247, citing LC, Wilson Papers, Oct. 6, 1917.

and state amicably move in parallel lines, helping one another in their respective fields of labor."⁴⁹

American Catholics, mindful of the numerous nativist revivals, accused of harboring foreign allegiances, and cognizant of ^{their} the minority position, reacted by a vocal and solid commitment to the American national goals. Whatever remained of the nationality movements within the Church ^{was} quickly abrogated in favor of the American unity. The insecure and largely immigrant Church had to prove its loyalty.

In another sense, however, the Catholic Church in America reacted positively to the crisis. Ten years previously the American Church had been removed from its status as a missionary church (November 3, 1908). This prestige, plus the rising nationalism of Americans in general after the Spanish-American War, increased the self-esteem of American Catholic citizens, making most of them think of themselves as Americans first, and not merely as members of this or that national group.⁵⁰

American nationalism, reaction to nativist hostility, and the strong, unequivocal stand of the American hierarchy contributed greatly to unify Catholic opinion and action during the early months of the war. The hierarchy saw the immediate necessity of central organization. Under the

⁴⁹Dohen, "Nationalism," pp. 176-177.

⁵⁰Cf. Theodore Roemer, The Catholic Church in the United States (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1954), p. 322.

chairmanship of Father John J. Burke, CSP, a national meeting was held on August 11-12, 1917, at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. Here the National Catholic War Council (NCWC) was established to coordinate every phase of Catholic war work from helping Chaplains to promoting war-loan drives. Several committees were founded to provide specific services. Four prominent bishops were invited to serve on the executive or administrative committee: Peter J. Muldoon of Rockford, Joseph Schrembs of Toledo, William T. Russell of Charleston, and Patrick J. Hayes, Auxiliary Bishop of New York. On January 12, 1918 Gibbons advised them that their task "will be to direct and control with the aid of the ordinaries (bishops and local superiors of religious orders), all Catholic activities in the war."⁵¹

REACTION AT ST. MEINRAD

How to reconcile American loyalty and concern for the old country and relatives still living there bothered some of the monks. Maurus Ohligslager, a frater at the time, had the impression that "the priests and brothers were true Americans; they were loyal and supported the war effort." Yet, "a few of the old fathers and brothers whose sentiment was with the Germans were prudent and didn't proselytize; they kept opinions to themselves."⁵² These older

⁵¹Ellis, Gibbons, II, pp. 242-243.

⁵²Maurus Ohligslager, Interview, January 30, 1970.

monks had been away from the mainstream of American life, "so they were still very German in custom and outlook. Their motives for emigrating were religious; they came to be monks, to serve God in missionary work."⁵³ This holds the key to understanding much of what follows. The majority of the monks were very spiritual men whose one driving force was the advancement of religion in themselves and in others. The older priests had come into this country to help minister to the spiritual needs of the German communities. At least one member of the community, Abbot Athanasius, had entered this country both as a candidate for the priesthood and as a political refugee from Bavaria. He had left his native land in order to escape compulsory military service. His peasant father could not afford to provide the necessary expenses for one year of voluntary service. The alternative was to spend three years in the army and risk losing his vocation. In 1883 he secretly left Germany for the United States, receiving citizenship papers in 1888.⁵⁴

The war produced "a strained situation" with sympathy directed toward the Germans and loyalty toward America. But throughout the turmoil "a fine level-headedness" prevailed.⁵⁵ Several factors were responsible for this state of affairs.

⁵³Ibid.,

⁵⁴Kleber, St. Meinrad, p. 419.

⁵⁵Ignatius Esser, Correspondence, July 14, 1969.

The Abbot wisely heeded the friendly warnings of 1916 and the community followed suit. Moreover, he appointed two capable monks to represent him and the monastery whenever federal agents needed either information or assistance. Both Fathers Columban Thuis and Dominic Barthel served well in this capacity.⁵⁶

Other American Benedictine abbeys faced close scrutiny because of their German origins and oftentimes predominantly German-speaking culture and customs. At Conception Abbey in Missouri local citizens had reported to the Secret Service that eye witnesses had seen trucks backing up to the Abbey where weapons were being stored for future use against the United States. Government officials investigated the reports and found nothing.⁵⁷ Abbot Athanasius feared similar measures at St. Meinrad. However, Father Columban assured the Abbot that American public officials were most considerate and should be dealt with openly on all problems.⁵⁸

⁵⁶Columban Thuis, Interview, October 7, 1969.

⁵⁷Ibid. Other abbeys faced similar situations: cf. what Abbot Oswald Baran of St. Martin's Abbey in Lacey, Washington wrote to Abbot Peter Engel of St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minn. on May 21, 1917: "I have heard lately that three or four of the Benedictines of Mt. Angel (near Portland, Ore.) have been too outspoken in their sentiments of the war. Some detectives are supposed to have overheard their statements in public and private and now there is strong sentiment against them, so much so, that threats have been made by the A.P.A. to blow up the institution. Perhaps the statement is exaggerated and there may be little to it." See also Peter Beckman, Kansas Monks (Atchison: Abbey Student Press, 1957), pp. 238-239.

⁵⁸Ibid.

Rumors shortly began to circulate that a wireless station at the Abbey was being used by six monks to relay messages to Germany, messages harmful to the United States. In fact, a small receiving set, quite novel for the time, could hardly relay messages across the Atlantic, even if it could transmit. Nevertheless, a delegation was formed at the County Seat, Rockport, to investigate. A local lawyer, Mr. Savage, who was both influential and friendly to St. Meinrad told them quite frankly how foolishly they were acting. The abbey had no sending station and the most powerful transmitter, located in Arlington, Virginia, could not even reach Europe. With this statement the citizens were satisfied, though probably somewhat disappointed that they had not found some actual espionage.⁵⁹

St. Meinrad was particularly fortunate in that it was located in the midst of several German-American communities. These acted as a buffer zone. With restricted travel, poor roads, and wartime activity, outsiders were infrequent and somewhat suspect.

The younger members of the community, the fraters, seemed very enthusiastic about various wartime, patriotic celebrations. In the Fraterstock there are several casual comments. "In addition to our Red Cross Flag which hangs on the bulletin board as a sign that the fraters are members of that military arm, we now have a little badge to be worn

⁵⁹Ibid.

by the senior (the oldest in time of service)"--Jan. 13, 1918. April 6, 1918, the anniversary of the Declaration of War, was announced by five minutes of whistles and bells. This day also opened the Third Liberty Loan Campaign. On April 23, 1918 flag raising exercises were held on the Abbey grounds. After the Abbot blessed the flag, Mr. Kreuzberger, a lawyer from Evansville, gave a patriotic speech emphasizing that a Catholic can also be a good patriot. Citizens from the town of St. Meinrad, as well as other neighboring towns, attended, but "some of those, not being accustomed to such a Catholic atmosphere, would not await the end of Mr. Kreuzberger's speech." An unknown backwoods band, consisting of a tin flute, two drums, and one bass drum, gave a recital afterwards. Three days later the President ordered a half-day holiday in honor of the Third Liberty Loan. Father Columban brought out the band and Father Augustine shot a small cannon according to the music. On September 7 Frater Matthew Preske of Evansville was visited by four of his eight brothers, who had been called to the colors. "Each one," stated the Fraterstock, "is more robust than the other. Surely we shall win the war."

Various members of the community performed patriotic duties befitting their particular capacities. The following chapters document and describe their activities.

CHAPTER IV

ST. MEINRAD AND WAR ACTIVITIES

Since St. Meinrad was known chiefly to the outside world as a school rather than as a seminary or monastery, frequent appeals arrived asking for involvement in this or that program.

SELECTIVE SERVICE

When America entered the era of armed neutrality, she had only a small volunteer standing army. Immediately, there began preparations for an army of at least 500,000. Bitter debates in Congress occurred when President Wilson presented a proposal of "universal liability to service" as the basis for this force. Conscription was odious among Americans, there being "precious little difference between a conscript and a convict" according to Speaker Clark of Missouri.⁶⁰ Despite such rhetoric the Selective Service Act (H. R. 3545) was signed on May 18, 1917. Local boards took care of registration and paper-work to avoid overcrowding the Capitol and to continue the American ideal of de-centralization.⁶¹

Section 4 of the Selective Service Act specifically exempted "regular or duly ordained ministers of religion,

⁶⁰Paxson, American Democracy, II, p. 4.

⁶¹Ibid., II, pp. 4-9, 99. On page 100 he notes that there were 4557 local boards which registered some 9,586,508 men between the ages of 21-30 on the fifth day of June.

students who at the time of approval of this Act are preparing for the ministry in recognized theological or divinity schools." Both students and faculty at St. Meinrad could rejoice and relax.

To ensure efficient compliance with all laws, the Co-adjutor Bishop of Indianapolis, Joseph Chartrand, sent instructions and warnings to Abbot Athanasius on May 31, 1917:

As the laws concerning registration are very strict, all must register on the day appointed --all from 21-30 included. The students must register down there. They sign their names, and after them, either minister of religion or student preparing for the ministry in St. Meinrad's Theological Seminary. All priests and students, everyone from 21-30 included must register. 62.

During the following summer each divinity student received instructions from the government to file two affidavits with the local draft board. One the student signed before a notary public; the other the president or dean signed. Father Gregory Bechtold, Rector of the Major Seminary, diligently performed this duty.⁶³ Oftentimes,

⁶²WWI Letters, Chartrand to Athanasius, May 31, 1917. Although Bishop Francis Silas Chatard was still alive at this time, most administrative duties were assumed by Chartrand because of the former's illness. He died on Sept. 7, 1918. Chartrand had been Co-adjutor Bishop for eight years. He died in 1933. The diocese of Vincennes had been transferred to Indianapolis in 1898.

⁶³As rector, Father Gregory held a post equivalent to a president. At this time the seminary had a six-six system of education. The first six years (Minor Seminary) included four years of high school and two years of college. The second six years (Major Seminary) included the last two years of college and four years of theology.

frantic notices were sent by students who did not understand the requirements or whose mail had been delayed. Only ten days were allowed to produce affidavits supporting clerical exemption. The clerk of the Spencer Circuit Court, Lewis Woolfolk, sent a note of thanks to Abbot Athanasius for his help in facilitating administration of the draft, thus saving the board extra work. He further mentioned that St. Meinrad students would be given ample time to appear before the local board.⁶⁴ A similar extension was given to students who were returning from Christmas vacation and were required to register and file questionnaires.⁶⁵

To classify divinity students or ministers was a simple matter. But to properly categorize a 'lay brother' proved a perplexing matter for Abbot Athanasius. He wrote Bishop Chartrand, who, in turn, suggested that he get "some information from the monasteries."⁶⁶ A day later words more encouraging were sent: "If you write to the Brothers of Mercy, you can get all the information."⁶⁷ This had been suggested to the bishop of Indianapolis by the Provincial of the Sacred Heart Brothers who also mentioned that several Brother-Provinceals were presently discussing the problem in Washington.

⁶⁴WWI Letters, Aug. 13, 1917, Woolford to Athanasius. Occasionally there were complications, e.g., Frater Maurus had been recuperating in a hospital during the summer and was tardy returning necessary forms, causing some tension.

⁶⁵Ibid., Dec. 20, 1917.

⁶⁶Ibid., Dec. 19, 1917, Chartrand to Athanasius.

⁶⁷Ibid., Dec. 20, 1917, Chartrand to Athanasius.

On the first day of the new year the Abbot telegraphed Father Lewis J. O'Hern of the Catholic Army and Navy Bureau in Washington and asked: "Are professed brothers of monasteries as ministers of religion exempt from Draft?"⁶⁸ O'Hern thought that they were, but sought official confirmation. An undated, unsigned mimeographed document, seemingly official, stated:

According to recent decisions of the War Department, Brothers in Religious Orders and Congregations are classed as Ministers of Religion, and as such are entitled to exemption from military service under the provisions of the Selective Service Regulations (Draft Law). ⁶⁹

The notice continued, giving specific information and answers often of a technical nature. After this the problem was solved and there was no further consternation.

DRAFT LEGISLATION

The executive committee of the NCWC tried to keep the Catholic hierarchy informed about various developments in Washington politics. In late January this news item appeared in their bulletin:

Senator Chamberlain, Chairman of the Military Affairs Committee, assured us that so far as he knew there was no intention of removing divinity students from the exempted class. The bill is to be drafted by the War Department. Our judgment is that the present exemption will remain in force. The matter will be closely watched, as the

⁶⁸Ibid., Jan. 1, 1918, Athanasius to O'Hern; reply sent Jan. 5.

⁶⁹Ibid., ?, ?. This ruling had been secured from the War Department by Br. Clementius, a Christian Brother.

removal of the exemption would work such great injury to church and country. 70

In order to have ready and accurate facts the NCWC requested information concerning the number and ages of students enrolled in Catholic seminaries.⁷¹ Opposition to exemptions for divinity students increased when it became known that more man-power was needed to fight the war. Two alternatives presented themselves: 1) enlarge the age-group; 2) induct those deferred and exempted. Sentimental reasons had kept boys under twenty-one who could not vote from being called into the service.⁷² During the debate over the issue of exempting divinity students forceful arguments were presented in favor of continuing former legislation and the case was won. The Secretary of the NCWC, Walter Hooke, remarked with a sigh:

It was a blessing we had such a hard fight. We were strongest when apparently defeated and the fact that there was so much opposition enabled us to present our arguments in favor of exemption more forcibly. 73

Joint Resolution 124, approved by the President on May 20, 1918 became known as the "Twenty-one-year-old Bill." It directed divinity students who were twenty-one to register on June 5 and their claims for exemption would be considered.⁷⁴

⁷⁰Ibid., Jan. 22, 1918, NCWC to Athanasius.

⁷¹Ibid., Hooke to St. Meinrad Seminary.

⁷²Paxson, American Democracy, II, pp. 355-356.

⁷³WWI Letters, May 23, 1918, Hooke to Athanasius. Cf. p. 49 for further mention of why there was severe opposition.

⁷⁴Paxson, American Democracy, II, p. 249.

The matter was not yet completely settled. Manpower needs for 1919 demanded more Class I eligibles in the draft lottery. The June 5, 1918 registration yielded only 744,865 new names. By August 24 another 159,161 names had been added to the list. This was insufficient for projected needs. Thus another bill was passed (The 18-45 Draft Bill) on August 31, increasing by 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ million the Class I effectives.⁷⁵

The committee on National Catholic Interests of the NCWC planned to have the bill amended to provide specifically for exemption of theological students, but this proved to be impossible. Military necessities of the Nation would permit no further delay in passing this measure. John J. Burke, representative of the NCWC, communicated with the Secretary of War, Baker, who finally ruled (Sept. 13) that exemptions would be honored. He asked only "good faith on the part of the registrant that he intended to study for the priesthood."⁷⁶ This communique, however, was to remain "strictly confidential" and "should not under any circumstances receive publicity of any kind." Burke himself cautioned that if any board refused to grant exemption, the registrant should appeal immediately and the Washington office would be at his disposal. Secrecy would hopefully curtail outbursts by opponents to clerical exemption.

⁷⁵Ibid., II, pp. 355-358.

⁷⁶WWI Letters, Sept. 17, 1918, Burke to Luke Gruwe. Burke was chairman of the Special War Activities Committee.

This documentation shows how concerned both religious and civil leaders were over the draft situation. More men were always needed, but where would they come from? Fortunately for both the Church in general and St. Meinrad in particular a satisfactory solution was privately accepted by the NCWC and the War Department. Both sides felt pressure from various points. In the final analysis, however, external influences yielded to practicality: in order to keep necessary church support the government would have to recognize certain ecclesiastical privileges, like exemption from the draft. An amicable union resulted.

GOVERNMENT REQUESTS

During the short twenty months of active fighting, the government spent much time and energy centralizing bureaus and departments in order to provide efficiency and structure, not to mentioned snarled red tape. To the distant Washington offices St. Meinrad was one of many small, independent colleges. Therefore, it received occasional requests from the War Department to provide such information as might be valuable to military ordnance, e.g. drawings, professors or research projects.⁷⁷ Needless to say, little assistance along these lines was forthcoming from St. Meinrad.

Other requests had immediate import, however. In late April 1918 the Department of Labor asked officials to appoint

⁷⁷Ibid., Feb. 3, 1918; Sept. 4, 1918.

an Enrollment Officer to handle student summer employment. The idea was to place these students on farms during the summer months when extra hands were needed to help with planting and harvesting.⁷⁸

With pastoral diligence and concern, Abbot Athanasius replied that most of their students already lived on farms or worked on relative's farms until they reached major orders. At this point they devoted their energies to teaching Christian doctrine and ministering to the faithful. Although the Abbot could see no reason to appoint an Enrollment Officer, he nevertheless closed his letter to the Director of the Indiana Department of Labor with some patriotic words: "We will encourage them (the students) to double their zeal and energy in saving and producing food material in this crisis and we know that everyone will do his share to win the war."⁷⁹

MILITARY TRAINING FOR COLLEGE MEN

During the summer of 1918 most American colleges participated in military training programs. These sixty-day sessions were devoted both to physical conditioning and to military science.⁸⁰ Since St. Meinrad educated only "students

⁷⁸Ibid., April 11, 20, 29, 30; May 2.

⁷⁹Ibid., May 6, 1918, Athanasius to N.E. Squibb.

⁸⁰Ibid., Aug. 3, 1918, Richard C. MacLaurin, War Dept. (Committee on Education and Special Training) to Athanasius. This report was "strictly confidential." The program, titled SATC (Student's Army Training Corps), was authorized under sections 1,2,8,9 of the Selective Act of May 18, 1917.

preparing for the sacred ministry exclusively," they had neither ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) nor any desire to participate in the summer SATC (Student's Army Training Corps) program at Fort Sheridan near Chicago. This, however, did not deter various government functionaries from repeatedly sending hasty memos demanding information on the extent of St. Meinrad involvement in military training.⁸¹

One St. Meinrad student, Glenn Fintan Walker of Indianapolis, somehow learned of this summer SATC program in Chicago. He asked:

Does this invitation (to participate) include the Seminary and if so I would like to be among those selected to represent the Seminary. I believe the short training would benefit my health⁸²

After explaining that participation in this program would constitute enlistment and subsequent cancellation of an exempt status, Abbot Athanasius suggested:

In studying over your case, it would perhaps be a good idea to discontinue your theological studies and join the army. It might be best for your physical welfare. Leave all to God and He will take care of you.⁸³

Apparently this student had been ill during this term of study at St. Meinrad. It is difficult to understand why army life with its own particular rigors and dangers, not the least of which would be the trenches of Europe, would

⁸¹Ibid., July 2, 3, 9, 13, 15, 16, 30; Aug. 3, 20, 29, 30; Sept. 7, 10, 11, 19, 24, 25, 1918.

⁸²Ibid., July 11, 1918, Walker to Athanasius.

⁸³Ibid., July 15, 1918, Athanasius to Walker.

benefit his health. Perhaps there were other reasons why the Abbot readily suggested entrance into the army. These, however, he did not elaborate upon.

FOOD RATIONING

Providing the Allies and American forces in Europe with sufficient food stuffs, especially meat and wheat, became one of the most important phases of the war effort. Every American was encouraged to ration and save as much as possible for the fighting men. Both the monks living at St. Meinrad and those seventeen or so Benedictines serving in various parishes in Indiana did their share in promoting and encouraging cooperation with the government directives.

The priests living in parishes frequently received letters and memos from various organizations asking their services in communicating regulations and suggestions. In February of 1918 they received a lengthy memorandum from the chairman of the Committee on Morals (State Council of Defense), Albert B. Storms, who asked the "Ministers and Churches of Indiana" "to bring to (their) people a sense of the patriotic obligations to cooperate with the government in this critical hour."⁸⁴

He offered three suggestions whereby this might be accomplished: 1) increase agricultural goods; 2) conserve essential foods that can be sent abroad; and 3) be thrifty by purchasing bonds and stamps. He then added:

⁸⁴Ibid., Feb. 19, 1918, Storms to Ministers and Churches of Indiana.

We must appreciate the psychological effect of emphasizing repeatedly our dependence upon Divine Providence. We dare not claim God as our partner in this terrific struggle and we must rather denounce as insolent and blasphemous such claim on the part of the German Kaiser; but we must be deeply concerned to know that we are on God's side and that we are not governed by provincial prejudice or national selfishness but are yielding, rather, to the imperious demands of ethical ideals that will stand the test before the bar of History, which is, in the last analysis, the judgment of God.

The U. S. Food Administrator also requested the clergy to enlighten their congregations on policies essential to full production of sufficient food stuffs for both ourselves and our allies.⁸⁵ In the autumn H. E. Barnard, the U. S. Food Administrator for Indiana, wrote to the Churches wishing them to publically read Herbert Hoover's food message to the American people.⁸⁶

During this world conflict there was de facto little separation of Church and State, that is, both groups served each other insofar as this was necessary to ensure effective prosecution of the war. Just as the government exempted the clergy and divinity students from the draft, the churches provided education, admonitions, and encouragement for the laity to save food and to buy bonds and stamps. The national emergency produced unusual rapport and cooperation.

There is no reason to doubt that the priests of St.

⁸⁵Ibid., Mar. 23, 1918, US Food Administrator to the Clergy.

⁸⁶Ibid., Nov. 14, 1918, Barnard to Ministers in Indiana. Hoover was US Food Administrator during the war.

Meinrad who were serving on parish assignments did their patriotic duty in the pulpit. Surely, fear of retaliation and suspicion, or even threatening letters, would encourage full execution of government requests.

The school and monastery also entered into the spirit of national austerity and sacrifice. The Abbot, concerned over federal food regulations, once sent Fathers Peter Sander and Dominic Barthel to Indianapolis to confer with Mr. Barnard of the Indiana Food Administration about the meaning of meatless and wheatless days and per capita consumption for such an institution as St. Meinrad.⁸⁷

A few weeks prior to this visit, St. Meinrad had received a notice to file a report card for the month of March from George W. June, Chairman of Hotel and Restaurant Division of the Food Administration.⁸⁸ This first official instruction caused much anxiety at the time. Not only were representatives sent to Indianapolis, but also a lengthy letter was sent to the Federal Food Administration giving both the desired report and prudently asking for all current legislation and regulations:

. . . we kindly ask you, in view of our acting in bona fide in this matter, to overlook any inaccuracy on our part to comply with what seems to be the requirements as indicated by your card questionnaire (sic).

⁸⁷Ibid., Apr., 1918, penciled instructions.

⁸⁸Ibid., Mar. 29, 1917, June to St. Meinrad.

. . . we desire to cooperate in any way possible with the government in these days of severe trials, as the sense of duty demands.

. . . we have voluntarily observed in our community dining hall (73 persons) during the month of March, 18 meatless days and in addition to these 18 meatless meals, a total of 72 meatless meals out of 93 meals; and in the dining halls of the student body and working men (202 persons) we have observed in March, 8 meatless days and besides these 18 meatless meals, a total of 42 meatless meals out of 93. Thus we have saved approximately 2200 lbs. of meat and used 1800 lbs. of meat in March.

. . . the flour consumed by us is flour milled from wheat raised on our own farm and was milled several months ago. By using cornbread in March we have saved approximately 950 lbs. and used 3050 lbs. of flour. 89

This represents quite a little sacrifice on the part of both monks and students. Only twenty-one meals during the whole month of March were served with meat to the monks. This, however, can more readily be understood if we recall that this was the lenten season. Traditionally, a time of penance and especially of abstinence from meat, it was not at all uncommon to abstain from meat twice each week and to eat meat only at the main meal, thus preserving the fast regulations of both the Church and the Congregation to which St. Meinrad belonged. Although this significant saving of meat was not done primarily for patriotic reasons, it nevertheless provided more nourishment for the armed forces.

— Since he had received no authoritative replies from Washington, the Abbot wrote John Cavanaugh, President of

⁸⁹ Ibid., Apr. 11, 1918, St. Meinrad to Food Administrator.

Notre-Dame University, hoping that he could find the proper requirements. This he quickly did. The brothers in the bakery complied and began following the federal regulations which required twenty-five percent flour substitute in all breads. [The new ^{omit} Kriegsbrot, as they called it, also had more generic names: Brot aus Weizen-und Maismehl and Brot aus Weizen-und Reismehl.⁹⁰]

In September Father Celestine wrote Mr. Barnard and thanked him for the courteous treatment he had given them in recent months. In closing, he said, "We have been very cooperative in war activities in every respect and will continue to do all we can to win the war."⁹¹

BONDS AND WAR SAVINGS LOANS

During the early days of the conflict treasury officials were hard pressed to find an acceptable way to finance immediate loans. They had no assurance that the citizens would support such an undertaking. Initial anxiety was rapidly replaced with currency when all Americans saw the absolute need for their cooperation.

In addition to contributing to liberty bond drives, St. Meinrad also provided speakers who would exhort citizens to buy bonds. Only those who were good speakers were chosen to do this service.⁹² Fathers Columban Thuis and Dominic

⁹⁰Ibid., Apr. 15, 1918, Athanasius to Cavanaugh; reply Apr. 19. Recipes found on penciled sheets in archives.

⁹¹Ibid., Sept. 17, 1918, Peter to Barnard.

⁹²Ibid., Anselm Schaaf, Interview, Jan. 16, 1970.

Barthel volunteered and spoke at various bond raising rallies throughout the district. Father Columban on occasion was a featured speaker. At various times one or other members of the community would make 'official' appearances as representatives of St. Meinrad.⁹³ The Benedictines on parish were also faithful, "preaching that patriotism is a duty of religion."⁹⁴ During Liberty Loan campaigns celebrations were sometimes held on the seminary grounds, complete with orchestra and cannon. On April 6, 1918, the first anniversary of the Declaration of War, the Abbey whistles and bells gave a five-minute salute announcing the opening of the Third Liberty Loan campaign.⁹⁵

Throughout the war many appeals were sent to St. Meinrad seeking cooperation for future bond rallies. The president of the Church Federation of Indiana, Morton C. Pearson, who had been on the State Advisory Committee for the Second Liberty Loan, asked each minister to "enthusiastically use every public occasion in his Church to encourage the people to respond to this call of the government."⁹⁶ Walter S. Greenough, Director of Publicity for the Treasury Department followed Mr. Pearson's lead in addressing all the "Indiana Pastors" to be inspirational leaders "until

⁹³Fraterstock, Sept. 29, 1918; July 4, 1918; also Columban Thuis, Interview, Oct. 7, 1969.

⁹⁴Columban Thuis, Interview, Oct. 7, 1969.

⁹⁵Fraterstock, April 6, 1918.

⁹⁶WWI Letters, Sept. 10, 1918, Pearson to Ministers.

the loan is completed."⁹⁷ Likewise, the Chairman of the Committee on Public Morals (State Council of Defense), Allen B. Philputt wrote to the ministers: ". . . begin next Sunday, September 15, to put your people in a frame of mind to do their very best. . . . In this great patriotic duty the ministers and the churches must not fail. The government depends greatly upon us."⁹⁸ Nearly every possible means was used to encourage, if not subtly coerce, churchmen to effectively use their persuasive rhetoric and patriotism to raise needed monies.

⁹⁷Ibid., Sept. 11, 1918, Greenough to Indiana Pastors.

⁹⁸Ibid., Sept. 11, 1918, Philputt to Ministers and Churches of Indiana.

CHAPTER V

CHAPLAINCY QUESTION

During Wilson's preparedness campaign in the spring of 1917 the American hierarchy became aware of the acute shortage of Catholic chaplains for the military. Lewis J. O'Hern, who had earlier been appointed to take charge of matters concerning the Armed Forces, submitted this pessimistic report and further explained how difficult it was to find qualified chaplains. In response, the gathered prelates passed a motion agreeing to help increase the Catholic commitments.⁹⁹

O'Hern officially communicated with St. Meinrad in November. He wanted chaplain recruits to fill the newly created positions in the services. He prescribed four conditions in order to qualify: 1) under forty and physically sound; 2) American citizen by birth or full naturalization; 3) if naturalized, his birthplace be in no enemy territory; and 4) a recommendation from his Ordinary, i.e. superior or bishop.¹⁰⁰

No immediate response was forthcoming. St. Meinrad at this time had only twenty-four men under forty; fifteen of these were professors, not easily replaced, at St. Meinrad

⁹⁹Ellis, Gibbons, II, p. 234.

¹⁰⁰WWI Letters, Nov. 26, 1917, O'Hern to Athanasius.

or at Jasper Academy. The nine remaining men were situated in various parishes and missions.¹⁰¹

In January the Executive Committee of the NCWC published a pamphlet describing crucial issues facing the Catholic Church on account of wartime pressures. Supplying the military with sufficient chaplains to minister to the spiritual needs of the soldiers had priority:

. . . many of our brave men, according to present prospects, will have to face death without the help of a priest to prepare for the ordeal. This is not fair to those who are defending us and the honor of our country. In this crisis, our soldiers and sailors are entitled to the preference; and it is not too much to ask our dioceses to undergo some real privation, if necessary, in order to spare priests to minister to men who will soon encounter the perils of war. ¹⁰²

The statistics were not encouraging, especially if Senate Bill 2917 passed. This Act would put the ratio of chaplains to soldiers at 1-1200, thus burdening the prelates of the Catholic Church to produce another 450 chaplains, possibly more if the ratio of Catholics continued to increase as it had been. At the January meeting, however, only an additional 40 were immediately needed.

Patrick Hayes, Auxiliary Bishop of New York and Military Ordinary, sent a special memo to religious houses of men admonishing those who were not "represented in the

¹⁰¹Ordo Divini Officii, 1918, pp. 100-101--the official directory of Swiss-American Benedictines.

¹⁰²WWI Letters, Jan. 22, 1918, NCWC to Hierarchy of the United States.

Chaplains' Corps in proportion to the number of priests in their respective bodies."¹⁰³ He continues, "At the very least, the Religious should provide nearly one hundred chaplains more, for present needs." Finally, he warns

It also should be born in mind that a sentiment is now in the forming and is spreading all too generally in favor of universal military training and service. Members of Congress are asking why the clergy seek exemption from military duty, and why do not the American priests follow the example of their brothers in Europe bearing arms as common soldiers. Only a quick and ready offering of chaplains to the Government will be able to offset this movement, and furnish a strong argument to save our seminarians and novices from the approaching draft.

May I then ask you to send me without delay the name of one (1) of your priests who might serve as chaplain during the period of war.

Despite the urgency of this appeal, so melodramatic in content, there is no documented evidence that the Abbot ever acknowledged the Ordinary's demand for a 'peace-offering' in the form of a chaplain-recruit. This is somewhat surprising since nearly every other important request had immediate response. Perhaps, the Abbot chose to ignore the demand, hoping it would go away. Perhaps other houses for religious, not so deeply committed to apostolates, could furnish the needed chaplains.

Four months later another urgent appeal calling for an additional 320 priests was sent by Bishop Hayes. He tried to exhort compliance with his wishes by noting that in one

¹⁰³Ibid., Feb. 11, 1918, Hayes to Athanasius.

day alone the Protestant denominations had turned in 600 applications. Unless there were more Catholic volunteers, their places would be filled with Protestants. Necessity required all bishops and religious orders to "double the number they were allotted in the first draft." Moreover, these names had to be sent as soon as possible.¹⁰⁴ Bishop Hayes was somewhat disadvantaged by the fact that he could not force other bishops to meet his demands. He had to rely on their good will and patriotism. Of course, outside influences, like reputation, and suspicion of disloyalty, had their subtle effects and encouraged compliance in some places.

Less than two weeks later, on July 5, Bishop Chartrand related to Abbot Athanasius how grave the situation had become. He himself planned to send two men immediately. He felt that St. Meinrad should at least send one man "for the reputation of the place."¹⁰⁵ Another anxious letter followed:

Since I last wrote you, the Apostolic Delegate has telegraphed all Bishops about the seriousness of the Chaplain question. You must send at least one, and it must be done at once. If you select Fr. Aloysius, I cannot object. That will hamper me, but if he is your choice, then leave him go, but immediately. The matter is most grave.¹⁰⁶

Father Aloysius Fischer, a native of Ferdinand, Indiana, was presently serving a parish in Indianapolis. For one reason or another he was not sent. However, a month later in

¹⁰⁴Ibid., June 24, 1918, Waring to Athanasius.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., July 5, 1918, Chartrand to Athanasius.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., July 16, 1918, Chartrand to Athanasius.

August Father Leander Schneider, a professor at the academy in Jasper, volunteered:

I herewith wish to most sincerely offer my services to the government and the good of our catholic soldiers who have been called to the colors. This was my sincere desire for quite a length of time. . . . At any rate feeling the urgent need of chaplains for our soldiers at this time when things are getting rather serious, I could not forgive myself later on for not at least offering to render my services. 107

Poor health had earlier held him back from volunteering. He felt that after a small operation he could otherwise pass the physical examination.¹⁰⁸ He was still young, only thirty-four, and a native-born American of Swiss parentage. He grew up in Tell City, not far from the Abbey on the Ohio River.

The Abbot quickly ^{sent} [lent] his approval on the 21st of August. To this, Father Leander replied somewhat romantically, "I gladly accept the appointment for which I volunteered cheerfully. Equally gladly will I bring the great sacrifice involved in that position."¹⁰⁹

On October 11 Abbot Athanasius sent "To whom it may concern" an affidavit stating both Father Leander's competence and background:

This is to certify that Rev. Leander Schneider, O.S.B., who has volunteered to serve as chaplain in the United States Army, has

¹⁰⁷Ibid., Aug. 17, 1918, Leander to Athanasius.

¹⁰⁸Ibid.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., Aug. 30, 1918, Leander to Athanasius.

pursued classical and theological studies for ten (10) years (1902-1912) at St. Meinrad's Seminary, as preparation to the priesthood, graduating with high honors. During this time he has proven to be of excellent character, fine manners and of a 100% conduct. His scientific standing was of a high degree--94%. We wish him all success and God's choicest blessings.

110

Within a short time Father Leander mildly complained about all the "red tape," but generally he kept enthusiastic and confident.¹¹¹ The Army sent him to Indianapolis for a medical examination, which he believed would be favorable. In the same letter, however, he remarked with some chagrin, "I am afraid that there will be very few priests with me. In the present class there are only fifteen priests and two-hundred preachers."¹¹²

By November 18 no word had yet been received regarding his appointment as chaplain. Father Leander then wrote directly to the Military Ordinary, Bishop Hayes, saying, ". . . should I not hear from them (the Army) by the 27th, I would have to take up my old occupation again as teacher."¹¹³

On the 27th a disappointed Father Leander wrote to the Abbot:

Your letter received. I myself expected something like that. If chaplains were needed so badly, I could not see why I

¹¹⁰Ibid., Oct. 11, 1918, Athanasius to 'Whom it may concern.'

¹¹¹Ibid., Oct. 14, 15, 1918, Leander to Athanasius.

¹¹²Ibid., Oct. 27, 1918. ¹¹³Ibid., Nov. 27, 1918.

had to wait so long after having passed and all. Since peace had been declared, I really did not care anymore whether or not I could get to go. The work would be so much harder now. 114

Father Leander's remark, "I myself expected something like that," is cryptic. His long delays will remain unexplained. The war ended on the 11th of November and perhaps that helps to explain why he was no longer needed. The long silences from Cardinal Hayes, however, are strange. Regardless of the reasons, Father Leander returned from Fort Benjamin Harrison where he had been training and resumed his former occupation as teacher at the Jasper Academy.

The seminary itself had to readjust to face the critical chaplaincy shortage. Theology courses were accelerated in order to complete the necessary requirements within three years, instead of the normal four. The bishop of Indianapolis had encouraged this. Only by ordaining his men earlier than normally expected could he hope to fulfill his quota of seven volunteer chaplains. The war ended before any of these men reached ordination (June 10, 1919).¹¹⁵

Undoubtedly, St. Meinrad hesitated as long as possible before sending a candidate for military chaplaincy because of its strongly missionary character. Its numerous apostolates--education, Indiana missions, parishes--made any sacrifice of manpower difficult, if not impossible. Neither

¹¹⁴Ibid., Nov. 27, 1918.

¹¹⁵Ibid., ? , Chartrand to Athanasius; Ignatius Esser, Correspondence, July 14, 1969.

teachers nor pastors were easily replaced. Moreover, the whole atmosphere around St. Meinrad was clearly influenced by spiritual realities more than by the ^{needs} [vagaries] of the nation as a whole. The monks were uncommonly moderate throughout the whole period. Their actions and what remains of personal notes and reminiscences suggest a certain aloofness from the hard realities of life. Rather, they emphasized time and again a decidedly pastoral dimension and concern for man's inner needs.

Perhaps, also, the German background of many community members unconsciously precluded a determined stand for [patent] action, so characteristic of many clergymen during the war, especially of Protestants. I suspect, however, that the lack of vital concern over the chaplaincy question was more determined by their involvement in 'saving souls' in present enterprises than by tacit disagreement with American policy. This is based upon the fact that in general St. Meinrad cooperated whenever possible with the authorities in regard to the draft, rationing, and bond drives.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶Cf. Ray H. Abrams, Preachers Present Arms (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1969). This book, originally published in 1933, documents the rather eccentric pattern of clerical prophecy and rhetoric both before, during and after the European holocaust.

CHAPTER VI

NATURALIZATION

Nearly fifty percent of the monks (50 of 105) were foreign-born; of these 37 had emigrated from Germany. When the war commenced some of the lay brothers were found without full naturalization papers. Indiana passed a law requiring 'second papers', i.e. full citizenship and voting privileges, for all immigrants. Some of the brothers possessed only 'first papers' which had until this time sufficed for some voting privileges, but not full citizenship. At the Abbot's request, Father Columban gave these men a full course in civics and brought them before a judge in Rockport to be examined by Federal agents.¹¹⁷

Nearly all the brothers passed the first test, but a few had to learn more civics before receiving second papers. These interrogations produced a few light moments and some genuine irony. Brother Philip Ketterer, both well-informed and intelligent, a chef in the monastic kitchen, was routinely asked, "Where does the Governor of the State reside?" "Ordinarily in Indianapolis, the State Capital," he replied, "but at the present time he is residing in the Federal penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia." The examiner, smiling, turned to the man on his right and remarked, "Pretty good, eh?" The fact was the governor had been found guilty of

¹¹⁷Columban Thuis, Interview, October 7, 1969.

embezzlement of state funds and had been sentenced to prison as punishment.¹¹⁸

To the question "What is the function of the judge?" one brother somewhat befuddled by the correct answer (to interpret the law) because of poor English, replied to the amusement of all assembled, "The judge is supposed to know the law." The examining U. S. agent turned to the judge with a smile, "Your Honor, is the answer correct?" The judge, likewise grinning, said, "He is supposed to, but I don't know if he does."¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸Ignatius Esser, Correspondence, July 14, 1969. Columban Thuis, Interview, October 7, 1969, relates the anecdote a bit differently. After asking the question and listening to Brother Philip's reply, the court experienced a "dead silence." And the examiner passed him in a hurry and summoned another.

¹¹⁹Columban Thuis, Interview, October 7, 1969.

CHAPTER VII

ARMISTICE

The news of the signing of the pact for the cessation of hostilities on the part of the warring powers spread joy and rejoicing in the hearts of young and old. At a quarter to twelve this message reached St. Meinrad, as once the message of the angels at Bethlehem: "Peace to men on earth." This announcement released boundless jubilation. Cannons were brought forth from their place of hiding and burst forth peace. All the bells (6) in the Abbey Church towers were rung vigorously in three intervals. Wherever there was a steam whistle it was sounded. Even the old, rusty whistle on the power plant lent its voice according to its fashion. Flags were displayed and patriotic songs were sung. In short, each tried to outdo his neighbor in the expression of his joy that the terrible slaughter of men was now over.

Deo Gratias! 120

So speaks Father Luke. The ^{Fraters' Chronicle} Fraterstock records the same incident, but instead of merely rejoicing and praising God, it goes further ". . . a mighty empire is fallen. The Kulturkampf receives its due. 'Do not touch my anointed.'" ¹²¹ Note the difference in tone. The former, written by a German-born emigrant, bemoans the "terrible slaughter of men" while the latter, written by one of the native-born American 'youngsters', clearly rejoices over the defeat of the German nation. Although there are no documents to substantiate it, I would suspect that at times there must have been some anguish on the part of the

¹²⁰ Chronicle, Vol. 11, p. 516, November 11, 1918.

¹²¹ Fraterstock, November 11, 1918.

older, foreign-born Fathers over occasionally insensitive remarks about German militarism and the German nation as a whole. No doubt the younger Fathers and the fraters, native-born and committed both to American culture and goals, and the spread of Catholicism, were anxious to hear of American and Allied victories. Such, however, is conjectural. But I make these remarks because of the remarks found in the ^{Frater's Chronicle} Fraterstock, in which there is a definite relish of patriotism.¹²² With no immediate roots in Europe and having little knowledge of relatives still living there, they could afford to be "100 percent" pure Americans. The older Fathers were more reserved, as we have seen throughout this paper. They readily cooperated, but they staunchly refused to mete out criticism either of Germany, because of close familial connections, or of the United States, because of fear of reprisals. I do not suggest that the fraters were by any means super-patriots, however. The article written by Frater Hilary de Jean clearly shows that he too grasped a spiritualistic, albeit Scholastic-Aristotelian, view of war and sin.¹²³

The monastery survived the war with little real difficulty, save the incipient incident over the wireless and the anonymous letters warning against outspoken pro-German sentiment.

The monks, like nearly every other American citizen

¹²²Cf. pp. 29-30.

¹²³Cf. pp. 20-22.

and patriot, observed food rationing, submitted to the draft registration, bought and sold bonds and stamps, and did whatever little things they could to help the war effort. Like all Americans, they too worried about the fate and suffering of relatives, both combatants and non-combatants unfortunate enough to be living in the war zones.

Full support of American policy hinged on incipient American nationalism and societal pressures to conform, at least externally, to what was expected of a true, "100 percent" American.

In the final analysis it seems that the old feud over Cabenslyism and Americanism, or rather over adaptation to American values and goals, found resolution through the necessities of the World War. Nothing less than a nationalist stance, formal commitment to America, would suffice. The old ways of isolation gradually gave way to a new synthesis: full integration of the immigrant into mainstream American life, though this by no means ended bigotry or misunderstandings.¹²⁴

END

¹²⁴Waldwyn Allen Jones, American Immigration (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965). Fear of Bolshevism and recollection of pre-war disunity led to a curtailment of immigrants into America. After the war, such organizations as the Klu Klux Klan were established to preserve what they considered to be pure American ways and life. Cf. pp. 270-277.

APPENDIX I

MEMBERS OF ST MEINRAD ABBEY IN 1918

PRIESTS

<u>NAME & OCCUPATION</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	<u>DESCENT</u>
Athanasius Schmitt Abbot	Oberweissenbrunn, Germany	German
Luke Gruwe Prior	Liesborn, Westphalia	German
Peter Celestine Sander Subprior	Celestine, Indiana	German
Benno Gerber Retired	Ferdinand, Indiana	German
Bede Maler Pastor	Aeaschad, Bavaria	German
Jerome Hunt Missionary	Buehl, Germany	German
Pius Boehm Missionary	Fulda, Indiana	German
Joseph Villinger Pastor	Gipf, Switzerland	Swiss
Alexander Burkart Pastor	Ebringen, Germany	German
Basil Heusler Pastor	Wahlen, Switzerland	Swiss
Simon Barber Pastor	Louisville, Kentucky	French
Leo Schwab Pastor	Hofstetten, Germany	German
Sonaventure Goebel Missionary	New Albany, Indiana	German
Martin Hoppenjans Pastor	Ferdinand, Indiana	German
Fintan Wiederkehr Pastor	Dietikon, Switzerland	Swiss
Bernard Heichelbach Pastor	Mariah Hill, Indiana	German

<u>NAME & OCCUPATION</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	<u>DESCENT</u>
Vincent Wagner Pastor	Ferdinand, Indiana	German
Dominic Barthel Teacher	Louisville, Kentucky	German
Anthony Michel Pastor	St. Henry, Indiana	German
Ambrose Mattingly Missionary	Eureka, Indiana	Eng/Irish
Robert Glasmeyer Teacher	Clifton, Ohio	German
Clement Klingel Pastor	Jasper, Indiana	German
Othmar Schneeberger Pastor	Dietfurt, Bavaria	German
John Schorno Pastor	Steinen, Switzerland	Swiss
Francis Schoeppner Pastor	Oberweissenbrunn, Germany	German
Eugene Spiess Owensboro	Brooklyn, New York	German
Andrew Bauer Pastor	Weidhaus, Germany	German
Mark Meyer Pastor	Mariah Hill, Indiana	German
Odilo Witt Teacher	Diersburg, Germany	German
John Chrysostom Coons Teacher	Lexington, Kentucky	German
Louis Fuchs ?	Spitz, Germany	German
Philip Bauer Pastor	Weidhaus, Germany	German
Isidore Maenner Pastor	Ebrigen, Germany	German

<u>NAME & OCCUPATION</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	<u>DESCENT</u>
Aloysius Fischer Pastor	Ferdinand, Indiana	German
Albert Kleber Teacher	Eslarn, Germany	German
Roman Roeper Pastor	O'Fallon, Missouri	German
Alphonse Wendling Pastor	Vincennes, Indiana	German
Benedict Brown Teacher	Fryburg, Iowa	English
Richard Mattingly Teacher	Woodland, Kentucky	Irish
Eberhard Olinger Teacher	Ferdinand, Indiana	Lux.
Henry Brenner Teacher	Louisville, Kentucky	German
Paul Thoma Teacher	Irsee, Germany	German
Augustine Haberkorn ?	Neudorf, Germany	German
Boniface Benkert Teacher	Oberweissenbrunn, Germany	German
Anselm Schaaf Teacher	Schnellville, Indiana	German
Columban Thuis Teacher	Vincennes, Indiana	Lux.
Leander Schneider Teacher/Chaplain	Tell City, Indiana	Swiss
Aemilian Elpers Teacher	St. James, Indiana	German
Edward Berheide Editor of Paper	Richmond, Indiana	German
Thomas Schaefer Teacher	Muenster, Westphalia	German

<u>NAME & OCCUPATION</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	<u>DESCENT</u>
Charles Dudine Teacher	Celestine, Indiana	German
Laurence Riebenthaler Teacher	Evansville, Indiana	German
Cyril Gaul Teacher	Alton, Iowa	German
Sylvester Eisenman Missionary	New Albany, Indiana	German
Norbert Spitzmesser Pastor	Greensburg, Indiana	German
Justin Snyder Teacher	Dexter, Indiana	?

.

FRATERS

Ildephonse Kreidler	Rexingen, Germany	German
Ignatius Esser	Ridgway, Illinois	German
Lambert Enslinger	New Albany, Indiana	German
Maurus Ohligslager	Louisville, Kentucky	German
Placidus Kempf	Evansville, Indiana	German
Meinrad Hoffman	Vincennes, Indiana	German
Hilary DeJean	Vincennes, Indiana	German
Stephen Thuis	Vincennes, Indiana	Lux.
Matthew Preske	Evansville, Indiana	German
James Reed	Waynesburg, Pennsylvania	?
Peter Behrman	Lively Grove, Illinois	German

.

BROTHERS

Bernardine Olinger	Wallenstein, Luxemburg	Lux.
Aegidius Laugel	Vincennes, Indiana	German

<u>NAME</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	<u>DESCENT</u>
Aloysius Olinger	Wallenstein, Luxemburg	Lux.
January Huber	Ottenhofen, Germany	German
Philip Ketterer	Sasbach, Germany	German
Nereus Strosyk	Wersitz, Prussia-Poland	Ger/Pol
John Apke	Osterbach, Hannover	German
Clement Seichter	Henry, Illinois	German
Joseph Schaeuble	Herrischied, Germany	German
Michael Schnurr	Ottenhofen, Germany	German
Anthony Mannhart	Flums, Switzerland	Swiss
Blaise Meier	Ehrenstetten, Germany	German
Benedict Bigner	Fourmile, Kentucky	German
Ferdinand Laeng	Herrlicheim, Alsace	German
Oswald Wildhaber	Flums, Switzerland	Swiss
Odilo Stocker	Herdern, Germany	German
Willibald Vossmann	Garrel, Oldenburg	German
Alphonse Veith	Nauvoo, Illinois	German
Placidus Fuchs	Spitz, Germany	German
Mark Michel	St. Henry, Indiana	German
Maurus Villinger	Gipf, Switzerland	Swiss
Martin Deck	Moersch, Germany	German
George Bigner	Tockfort, Kentucky	German
Benedict Labre Piers	Navilleton, Indiana	French
Leo Hensle	Nordweil, Germany	German
Meinrad Rinderknecht	Entlebach, Switzerland	Swiss
Gallus Feil	New Baltimore, Pennsylvania	German
Felix Boehler	?	German

<u>NAME</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	<u>DESCENT</u>
Wendelinus Rust	Walchwil, Switzerland	Swiss
Raphael Nagel	Schifferstadt, Germany	German
Stanislaus Kemper	Ammelowe, Westphalia	German
Innocent Benkert	Oberweissenbrunn, Germany	German
Fidelis Benkert	Oberweissenbrunn, Germany	German
Paschal Zimmerman	Louisville, Kentucky	German
Ephrem Laurell	Bardstown, Kentucky	Irish
Camillus Hoepf	New Riegel, Ohio	German
Conrad Mueller	Stauffen, Germany	German
Philip Weis	Niederfeulen, Luxemburg	Lux.

.

SUMMARY

42 Native Americans of German ancestry
 37 German-born
 99 Swiss-born
 4 Luxemburg-born
 3 Unknown
 10 Native Americans of unknown ancestry

TOTAL--105 monks (Ordo of 1918)

LIST OF MONKS WHO DIED DURING THE WAR

Gregory Bechtold	d. Nov. 7, 1917
James Ziegenfuss	d. Aug. 11, 1917
Stephen Stenger	d. Dec. 31, 1915
Maurus Wagner	d. Jan. 29, 1916
Fridolin Hobi	d. Apr. 11, 1916
Nicholas de Flue Frey	d. April 20, 1916

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