

## HOW GERMANY RECEIVED TIDINGS OF THE LUSITANIA CRIME

Submarine Commander Hissed as He Came On Shore--Looked Like Men About to Be Hanged As They Walked on Board Their Vessels.

The following statement has been received from a source from which reliable German information had previously been received.

There are some signs in it of an intention to placate foreign feeling regarding the Lusitania assassinations, which give cause for considering it to be inspired officially by Germany. We pass it on to readers of the Family Herald and Weekly Star, with a reminder of the bitter hatred of all things British uniformly expressed by German naval officers during the war.

On the third of May nine submarine commanders were closeted with the commandant of our Heligoland base. They were in conference more than three hours. No other naval officer was permitted to take part in the secret deliberations.

After the conference, the submarine commanders came out and marched straight to their vessels. I was stationed at the Point. I purposefully stationed myself near the submarine landing.

The stern, tragic, pale-faced officers marched without speaking a word to one another.

The sight of them was pathetic. One could envy those who were doomed to be their victims rather than these poor souls who had hearts but no individual courage. Yes, their hearts were just as tender as yours and mine, perhaps more tender than mine.

I do not think that eight men doomed to be hung would have looked more affected than these eight unfortunate commanders who were being sent out to murder thousands of innocent souls. I can hardly dwell upon the subject.

The commandant accompanied them to the landing, and, with a forced smile, offered his hand to one of the submarine commanders, who walked straight to his ship without even not-

icing the hand that was offered to bid him bon voyage. His example was followed by the rest of the submarine commanders. The commandant stood there motionless, like a black statue.

**Ashamed of Being German**  
I suddenly saw the future. I saw History sketching our Fatherland as dark as that black figure facing the turbulent waves of the North Sea. For the first time in all my life I felt that I should be ashamed of being a German.

Until the fatal day we all waited for news with nervous expectancy. You have still my word of honour as an Internationalist.

We did not receive the sad and tragic news with rejoicings. Far from it. We whispered it. We murmured it. We discredited it. We denied it. Had the Emperor himself appeared on that day, he would have been hissed. Many of us felt wild. I feared I would lose my head. We all felt invisible fingers pointing at us: men, women, children, babes, young men, old men, sailors and civilians, pointing at us and whispering, crying and shouting, "They are not soldiers, they are not sailors; they are murderers."

One of my brother officers walked back and forth in his room all night long, uttering bitterly, "After the war, after the war! How can I ever face men of other nations and say I am a German!"

The poor, haunted commander, on seeing that at least five officers were not so cruel as to further insult an already suffering soul, walked to the small group and seated himself abjectly. I know he was under the strain of tremendous mental agony.

**Discipline His Excess**  
He did not raise his head, and without encouragement, he murmured "I hated to do it but I felt that I must."

"Even discipline has its limitations," retorted one of his listeners.

Suddenly I heard whispers of taunts and hisses. These did not emanate from the common seamen. Had this been the fact, they would have been shot instantly. The taunts and hisses

## AT THE NICKEL

On Monday—Our Mutual Girl.

came forth from the high ranking officers.

**Still Human Beings!**  
We are still human beings, some of us Germans; we have hearts and souls which soon may cry out.

Later, when Lieutenant Hering visited the officers' quarters, one bold naval officer handed him a newspaper containing the account of the sinking of the Lusitania. Capt. Lieutenant Hering crumpled the sheets with fury, cast it on the floor and faced the insulter threateningly. The offender stood unmoved. The two officers faced each other for a second or so. Then the offending officer shook his head, and, in a low tone said, "No not with you."

I could readily understand and appreciate how Cain must have felt. I questioned myself "Would I have obeyed such an order?" Then I answered myself "No, a thousand times no!"

From that time on every man I met from the common seaman to the highest ranking officer, appeared in a gloomy mood.

Our Admiralty is not so sure of every submarine commander executing orders similar to this.

Still later, when Captain-Lieutenant Hering entered a room where I was seated with many other officers, all but five left the room.

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Lieutenant Hering seemed crushed. I truly pitied him from the bottom of my heart. And if you had been present there, you yourself, would have pitied him. He rose from his seat, walked slowly to the door, stood on the threshold for a moment or so, and then wheeled around and returned to the silent group.

I felt that at last he would deliver himself of his soul's burden. There were large tears standing in his eyes.

Although I did not write down as he spoke, yet I could not have missed one word of what he said, because every syllable of it sank into our very souls, and by this time there were more than thirty of us in the room. He said:

I am not a monster. Every glance of yours is like poisoned arrows thrust in my heart.

"From the moment I received the Admiralty orders to proceed to the English coast and sink the Lusitania, my soul became sad and gloomy.

"I wanted to shout loudly, 'No, but I could not. My speech failed me.

"I beg you to believe me. I sincerely hoped, and then I deceived myself to believe, that some accident would happen to my ship, and that I would be prevented from committing this dastardly act.

"During the cruise none of my fellow officers or men knew the nature of our mission. It was like a long nightmare. I hardly know what transpired. We cruised most of the time on the surface. My men must have taken notice of my strange behavior. I trembled as we proceeded. I envied my subordinates, who looked to me like innocent children. I despised myself. I hated myself so bitterly that I wished and tried to forget myself.

**Knew Enormity of Crime**  
"Several times I wished to tell my subordinates and crew all about our special black mission. I dimly wished one of my subordinates had more courage than I. I had an inexplicable wish that my crew would mutiny and kill me."

There was a tremor in the captain-lieutenant's voice. I had never before seen a grown-up man cry. Lieutenant Hering sobbed, and yet he mastered his emotion. Some one pushed a chair under him. He dropped into the chair, pale and sad. His bearers were politely silent, but none showed outside signs of change of heart. He had won their pity but not their sympathy. Then he resumed:

"The very recollection of it tortures me. At last we arrived at the Lusitania's route. We lay in wait for hours. I thought I could not stand this awful waiting much longer. I thought of turning from the steamer's route and missing her purposely. Then I discovered that another submarine was in the neighborhood.

"The doomed steamer was nearing its fate. I submerged once more. By this time our other submarine had taken a position on the opposite side. The doom of the steamer was absolute. She had not the slightest chance to escape.

**Cowardly Villain**  
"Once more I came to the surface. I saw people gathered on the deck. In another moment every inch of the doomed steamer seemed to be filled with humanity.

"No, I could not do it! I again submerged. Then I discharged. I do not know whether or not my colleagues also discharged.

"The ship was struck, our orders were carried out.

"I wanted to escape from the terrible scene. I speeded some distance from the torpedoed steamer. Then I came out to the surface.

"The water was covered with struggling people. I could hear their distant shrieks. It might have been one second, it might have been hours. I cannot tell, but I watched the struggling of the dying people dazed and motionless, and with a strange, insane fascination.

"My God, My God! I can still hear them."

Yet I do not wish you think that this very commander would refuse to commit another act like this if he is ordered to do it. Even his taunts would find it very difficult not to carry out the orders of the Empire. We are in a terrible whirlpool. We are mad, we have lost our senses. But at the end our hearts will win over our distorted senses. Our victory lies in our defeat.

Not many, let us add, will trust

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