

340

NO. 1748

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL,
Berlin, Germany, November 17, 1933.

W. H. L.

SUBJECT: Special consideration to be shown to veterans
under proposed decrees to be issued in Germany.

CONFIDENTIAL.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
WASHINGTON.

SIR:

I have the honor to inform the Department that in the "Berliner Tageblatt" of November 16 there appeared an article which is transmitted herewith, entitled: "For the Victims of the War - Privileges for all former soldiers at the front". According to this article it is being proposed in National Socialist circles concerned with the care of the victims of the last war, that special privileges are to be given to soldiers who served at the front. The proposed privileges are as follows.

The former soldiers at the front are to be required by law to wear a special insignia.

The recognized insignia is to be protected by law against improper use.

The wearer of this insignia shall on all public occasions be given a place of honor.

In all public establishments and offices the

wearers

wearer of this insignia shall be given preferential attention; the particular official involved is required to show special consideration.

All transportation means are required to furnish all wearers of this insignia decided reductions in rates.

In all theatres, concerts and cinemas, the wearer of this insignia, besides being freed from the communal tax on tickets, is to be given a special price reduction and assured of a special place of honor.

In all schools there is to be periodically reference to the services of the German veterans and to the relatives of the victims of the war; the children are to be taught the proper respect to be shown to the victims of the war and to war veterans.

In all public offices which are concerned directly with the care of war victims, only such officials and physicians are to have direct contact with the war victims who themselves were soldiers at the front or who are disabled veterans.

For all public honorary positions, veterans and disabled veterans shall be appointed in as large a number as possible.

For the widows of fallen comrades and for the orphans of veterans, a large portion of all public openings for work is to be held free.

For the appointment in the public service, veterans and disabled soldiers are to be given preference.

To

To those left behind by the comrades who have fallen in the struggle for Germany's regeneration, the same honorary privileges are to be accorded as are above set forth for veterans of the war or for those left behind by victims of the war.

Should the above twelve theses which the head of the National Socialist organization for the care of veterans, Herr Oberlindober who is also a member of the Reichstag has proposed be put into the form of a decree and have the effect of law, legal status will be given to a special privileged class composed of soldiers who served at the front, of disabled veterans, of those left behind by the victims of the last war and of the families of National Socialists who during the past twelve or fourteen years have died in the "struggle for the new Germany". In previous despatches to the Department from this Consulate General and from the other consular establishments in Germany, the military sports and exercises now so common throughout the country have been reported. A privileged military class which would on all public occasions be given special honor, would be created if the above-mentioned recommendations are carried through. It is doubtful whether even in the highly artificial and exalted atmosphere which prevails in Germany at present, such an extraordinary measure as the one proposed can be carried through. I am transmitting this information to the Department only as

interesting

interesting for background purposes and showing one aspect of the extraordinary mentality which exists in the country. A country in which the play of the school children is so largely directed into the form of military exercises and where veterans of the last war are to be made into such a privileged class, is not and cannot be one in which the leaders have a sincere desire and will for peace.

Respectfully yours,

George S. Messersmith,
American Consul General.

Enclosure:
Clipping.

800

GSM:P

