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NO. 1554

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL,

Berlin, Germany, August 30, 1933.

E. W. E. H. S.

SUBJECT: With further reference to the unfair competition of National-Socialist newspapers with those not directly controlled by the Party.

THE HONORABLE

CONFIDENTIAL.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

I have the honor to refer to my confidential despatch No. 1488 of August 8 with reference to unfair competition of National-Socialist newspapers with those not directly controlled by the Party. In this despatch it was pointed out that in various ways the National-Socialist newspapers in every community were trying slowly to starve out and eliminate those newspapers not directly controlled by the Party. Reference was also made in this despatch to the declarations by the Minister of Commerce and others, to the effect that this unfair competition must stop.

That this unfair competition continues in a very definite way, is shown by an article which appeared in the "Berliner Tageblatt" of August 22, in which reference is made to a meeting of the press division of the National-Socialist Party for Berlin. At this meeting, among others Dr. Jaenicke spoke about the relations between the National-Socialist and the non-National-Socialist press. He

emphasized

emphasized that hidden or half-concealed opposition to the present Government must under no circumstances be tolerated, but that the press must not fall into the mistake of too great uniformity. The press on the other hand, has the task of expressing to its readers the National-Socialist idea in all its aspects. He also stated that the local Party organizations which are endeavoring to aid the National-Socialist press through unfair means, must stop this procedure. He said that it had been noticed recently that with respect to advertising as well as to new subscriptions, political pressure was being used to gain the ends of certain newspapers. He said that this was not in accord with National-Socialist policy and that this method of competition would be stopped both by the Party and by the Government.

It is not believed that such an expression by Dr. Jaenicke has much significance. When he states that the press must not fall into the mistake of too great uniformity, he can hardly mean what he says, for by the steps which the Ministry of Propaganda has taken and which it is strictly carrying out, only most absolute uniformity in the press is possible. It is reasonable to assume that he is not more sincere in his statement that the discriminatory measures taken by the National-Socialist press against other papers will be stopped.

In an article which appeared in the "Berliner Tageblatt" of August 26, the press division of the Ministry of Propaganda for middle Germany is said to have made the following announcement:

"From

"From all kinds of papers there have recently been received complaints by this office concerning the improper competition of certain newspapers. I find myself compelled, therefore, to call the attention of the press to the fact that such unfair competition is not worthy of the responsible German press. It is contrary to the National-Socialist spirit that threats and such other unpermitted means shall be used to increase business. I can under no circumstances permit that for business reasons unrest should be instilled among the population, and wish to express definitely that the opinion of this office is that the best competition which the press can make is through rendering good service. I hope that this is the last as well as the first of my warnings of this kind."

I am informed that well-known German newspapers which are not owned either by the Party or its members, are having increasing difficulty to continue to exist and that it is only a question of time before these newspapers will be forced to discontinue through lack of advertising and subscriptions. The public declarations referred to in my previous despatch under reference and in this, do not seem to have much significance and are quite in line with the Party action in other respects.

Respectfully yours,

George S. Messersmith,
American Consul General.

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A true copy of
the signed original.
GSM