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228 Extract from Confidential circular for Canadian
editors from Ernest J. Chambers, Chief Press
Censor for Canada

Ottawa, 18 January, 1918

Circular No. C.P.C. No. 57.

CONFIDENTIAL CIRCULAR FOR CANADIAN EDITORS

(Not for Publication.)

(1) It is considered no longer necessary to ask Canadian editors to refrain from publishing information regarding the construction of mercantile shipbuilding in Canada; but vigilance in restricting publicity as to shipbuilding on naval account is still asked. As to naval construction it might be common knowledge among the inhabitants of shipbuilding districts that naval vessels are being constructed in their midst without great danger resulting; but when publicity is given to such information in the press a dangerous condition is created. It is almost invariably the case that when miscreants are caught attempting to destroy Government property or plants producing war material they are not local people but "cranks" or enemy agents from more or less remote points who have had the destructive ideas on which they were acting suggested by paragraphs in newspapers. In some cases the actual newspapers have been found upon prisoners when they were arrested.

(2) Editors of Canadian papers are asked to abstain as far as possible from references to old Oriental troubles on the Pacific coast of Canada, particularly to what is commonly known as the *Komagata Maru* incident. There has been in certain quarters a disposition to resurrect the stories relating to old troubles of the character indicated, this in connection with reports of the trials at San Francisco of those suspected of being connected with the enemy-Hindustani conspiracies on this continent. Among various reasons urged by those best qualified to judge why the soft-pedal should be applied to these stories is the necessity of protecting those engaged in the delicate and dangerous task of investigating and frustrating the efforts of wily and desperate enemy agents to foment trouble among Orientals living on the Pacific coast of this continent with the object of using them as mere instruments to further enemy designs in Asia. Republication of facts relating to bygone cases, and indiscriminate publicity as regards recent developments tends to jeopardize the lives of those engaged in this important work, and the peculiar talent required in this duty is not easily obtainable.

(3) As illustrating the great importance of a strict observance of the Press Censorship rules regarding the movements of ocean shipping—rules which Canadian editors are loyally co-operating to observe—the following extract from a confidential report on the interrogations of a German naval submarine prisoner is quoted strictly for the personal information of members of the press:—

"The prisoner stated that Lieut. Com— before proceeding on a cruise carefully studies the Intelligence reports, enemy and neutral press, especially shipping publications, and works out his prospective cruise in every detail. He is looked upon as the most efficient and successful submarine officer in Flanders."

[ERNEST J. CHAMBERS,]

Chief Press Censor for Canada.

Office of the Chief Press Censor for Canada,
Department of the Secretary of State,
Ottawa, January 18, 1918.

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