

The German-American Vigil.

By former Congressman Gustav Küstermann of Green Bay, Wisconsin
(November 1916)

We Germans in America
Have never stood so unified
As now when they call us – oh, what disgrace and shame! –
Disloyal to our country!
 He whose heart is German is not cowardly.
 German blood stands up for justice and duty!

In the War of Independence,
The Germans were ready to fight;
Von Steuben, Herkimer, Kalb,
And Mühlenberg, too, took some English scalps.
 The Germans' work was not bad,
 Steady and tough in the struggle for justice.

When Lincoln made up his mind
That the Union could not dissolve,
The Germans came quickly streaming forth
To fight against slavery;
 Carrying the star-spangled banner into battle,
 They went happily and boldly into war and victory.

Wherever one looks,
The German has contributed;
In farming, trade, and industry
He shows knowledge and energy;
 He has also taught *Gemütlichkeit*
 And all the joys of the heart.

Precisely because he is filled with German blood,
He is loyal and good to our country,
And yet he loves, and justifiably so,
His homeland – or else he'd be a louse!
 He desires Germany's victory with all his heart;
 It wages war for honor and justice!

As good citizens we desire
That our country remain strictly neutral,
That it does not take sides,
Or give preference to any other country.
 But this has occurred, and hence the protest;
 All who are neutral, unite in solidarity!

Why should we care that they mock us?
We have gotten used to our hyphen;
We fight for neutrality
And against those who sow discord!
 Beloved country, be at ease,
 German blood defends you in unison!

Translated by James Doing