

ABOLISH RED TAPE, ROOSEVELT INSISTS

Washington Bureaus, He Says,
Are as Hampered as in
Spanish War.

TIME TO TELL THE TRUTH

Tells Defense Society the American
People Are the Only Ones Who
Do Not Know the Facts.

Colonel Theodore Roosevelt yesterday expressed the opinion that the bureaus in Washington were just as enmeshed in red tape, and that affairs in general were in the same confusion as hampered the war activities of the American Government twenty years ago. The Colonel, who has just accepted the honorary Presidency of the American Defense Society, was speaking at the luncheon of the Trustees of the society at the Union League Club.

"It is imperatively necessary that we shall put every particle of our strength back of the Government in everything it does to win this war," he said. "It is therefore imperatively necessary that we shall fearlessly remedy whatever is done that is wrong. It is not friendship for the United States—it is, perhaps, unconsciously, hostility to the United States—to decline to point out the defects and shortcomings in waging the war. Always remember that the chief assailant of the men who now strive to remedy our defects and shortcomings in waging the war is Mr. Hearst. He seems to regard it as unpatriotic to point out that broomstick rifles and logwood cannon are not efficient implements of war against Germany.

"Shortly after the Spanish-American war I became Governor of New York. I had been part of Mr. McKinley's Administration, and the next year I was to run as Vice President on the ticket with him. But then, as now, I held it to be

my prime duty to tell the truth when it was in the interest of the nation that the truth should be told. In November, 1899, I wrote as follows about the Santiago campaign, in which I had taken part: 'The bureaus in Washington were absolutely enmeshed in red tape and were held for the most part by elderly men no longer fit to break through routine and show the necessary initiative and willingness to accept responsibility.'

"Don't you think that applies pretty well today? Remember that I was speaking about my own party, the Administration of my own party, and of the war in which I had taken part. I continued: 'The Santiago campaign was a welter of confusion, with an utter lack of organization and that skilled leadership which can come only through practice. The army was more than once uncomfortably near disaster, from which it was saved only by the incompetence of its foes.'

"I believe that during the past year we have suffered most from failure to tell the truth. It is our grave misfortune that there was not a sufficiently aroused public opinion a year ago, eleven months ago, to say, 'Now, we have not prepared, we are at present utterly incompetent to do our duty, but we will absolutely forgive this and forgive those responsible for it in the past, if with the entire energy of the nation behind them, all our Governmental officials, without regard to politics, will now try to do their duty in the present.' If we had so acted, I believe we would now have had half a million men on the firing line in France, and half a million more close behind them.

"People say, 'Don't let our foes know about our faults.' Do you think that von Hindenburg and von Tirpitz don't know about them? They know everything about them. They have their spies here by the tens of thousands. There is only one set of people that don't know, and that is the American people."

Henry C. Quinby, Chairman of the Board of Trustees in his address urged the importance of taking up an active propaganda in this country to defeat a powerful one inspired from Berlin.

"Italy, France, and even England," he said, "are honeycombed with workers for an immediate peace, which would leave Germany a menace to the peace of the world. In the public schools of New York and in every American city the pro-German is distilling his poison into the minds of those least able to withstand it. The camps and cantonments have been flooded with literature tending to show that this is a capitalists' war—a munition makers' war—and that its object is the material benefit of individuals, instead of the welfare and safety of all mankind."

Lindley M. Garrison, formerly Secretary of War, is now a trustee of the Defense Society. In addition to Colonel Roosevelt and Mr. Garrison, there were present Emerson McMillan, Robert C. Morris, William H. Childs, Lee De Forest, Nicholas Biddle, Ogden Mills Reid, Casper Whitney, Dr. Lewis Rutherford Morris, Thomas W. Slocum, William Guggenheim, Lawrence L. Gillespie, and Rear Admiral Bradley A. Fiske. A resolution was adopted expressing the society's sorrow at the death of ex-Congressman Gardner of Massachusetts.

District Attorney Swann announced yesterday that as a result of an investigation he had made of the finances of the American Defense Society it appeared that its affairs are conducted in a regular and efficient manner. Assistant District Attorney E. P. Kilroe, who conducted the inquiry, said:

"Since Jan. 1, 1917, no money has been raised on a commission basis. The auditors' reports show that since the founding of the society until Jan. 1, 1918, approximately \$175,000 has been raised. This has been entirely disbursed, with the exception of some \$3,000, which the society now has in the bank. The society appears to be engaged in a laudable and commendable enterprise, strongly combating sedition and German influence in this country by the dissemination of literature and pro-American propaganda."

Preceding the investigation Mr. Kilroe went to Oyster Bay and consulted with Colonel Roosevelt concerning his knowledge of the affairs of the society. Colonel Roosevelt then wrote to Richard Hurd, President of the American Defense Society, as follows:

"I told Mr. Kilroe the American Defense Society filled a place entirely distinct from that filled by the National Security League, and explained with all possible emphasis that in my judgment the society had done an invaluable work for Americanism and patriotism, and that it would be a very real misfortune to have anything done that would cause distrust of it in the public mind. I told Mr. Kilroe that your books were at certain stated intervals inspected by a firm of professional accountants, of whom I had heard well."

The American Defense Society was organized in April, 1915, and is now incorporated under the laws of the State. It has 10,000 members, whose dues range from \$1 to \$100.