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National Propaganda Weeks and World Abstinence Day.



Guiding Principles

submitted to the International Congress against alcoholism

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1. The alcohol question, in most of the civilized countries, is more and more brought to the foreground of public interest: treatment of the question by the government and representatives of the people, in meetings and in the Press, in churches and schools etc.

The most important motives of this satisfactory fact are:
the part which alcohol has played during the World War in a negative and positive sense;
the emergencies of political economy which, in the European countries at least, are urging for
thriftiness in dispensable luxuries of life;
the strengthening of the social sense of duty and responsibility;
the American law of prohibition:

2. Hereby the fact becomes evident that the alcohol question must be criticized and treated as a national as well as an international question of the greatest importance.

3. As science and experience teach us that alcoholism is threatening most severely the sanitary, the moral, and the political-economical forces of a people, everyone who is devoted to his fatherland and wants to keep it on its height or to lead it

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there again, must fight for the most practicable restriction of alcohol.

4. To increase the knowledge of this national idea among all classes of a people, to rouse the conscience, to gain the consent, that is the aim of the national propaganda weeks.

5. Such Propaganda Weeks have been arranged in Germany with the greatest success (special stress was laid on the rights of the parishes to prohibit alcohol, this being the chief aim of all German alcohol adversaries):

a) In May 1925: a recruiting week for the parish-prohibition-law (with thousands of meetings in all parts of Germany, in towns and in the country):

b) In November-December 1925, trial voting for the parish-prohibition-law, in about 80 parishes or (in large towns) town-districts.

c) From the middle of March to the end of May 1926 collecting of signatures of men and women entitled to vote for the parish-prohibition-law. (Result over 2½ million signatures).

6. On the strength of the experiences collected in Germany during these weeks, the following advice is to be recommended in order to prepare these Propapanda Weeks properly and to support them to the end:

a) All societies, associations and all persons who are interested in the alcohol question in some way or other, must be joined in co-operation: churches and schools, women's — and young people's associations, representatives of the science, of industry and trade, leagues of employers and of workmen, public safety — and hygienic associations and boards, the Red Cross etc.

b) The classes of society which are not against alcohol must be standing in the foreground. The alcohol adversaries, in wise self-restriction, must keep to the background as much as possible, doing at the same time all necessary detail work in the background: winning and inspiration of all neutral co-workers and fellow-combatants, keeping ready requisite speakers, written notices, publications etc., all adapted to the required knowledge and experience.

c) In order that this should become manifest before the public in a clear and distinct way, committees, as large as possible, are organized for these Propaganda Weeks; these committees are composed of representatives of under a) mentioned corporations, at the head of them an eminent personage is standing known to all. The practical work is carried out by a small working committee in which the organized alcohol adversaries are taking part as a matter of course.

With punctual observance of these leading principles the whole country is organized: local committees, district committees, a general national or an imperial committee.

d) The means of propaganda are essays which are published in local papers and magazines this week — lectures which are delivered in public meetings or in closer communities of adherents holding the same views (organizations of the Church, Public Safety organizations, Women's organizations, Political organizations etc.) — exhibitions which have been arranged by means of utilizing the existing objects of intuitive instruction — pamphlets which are distributed in all classes by associations and schools, in meetings etc. — placards with most effective pictures and text which has to be short, but most impressive — processions in which, first of all, the young people, the participators of athletic games and sports must be made to join.

e) It is to be recommended to put into the foreground any definite particular request: for instant a legal measure mature for judgment (as the parish-prohibition-law), or the request of educating the rising generation unfettered by alcohol, or the idea of hotels and inns exempt from alcohol, or the deliverance of the traffic from alcohol dangers etc.

This request must find its voice in a resolution which must be conceived in all meetings and afterwards presented to all institutions competent for this question.

f) In order that the Propaganda Week should be successful, it is absolutely necessary that for the purpose of predisposition, 3 months at least of concentrated work must have been preceding: foundation and intellectual equipment of the committees, keeping ready of essays, appeals to the public and pamphlets, winning of gentlemen-speakers and lady-speakers etc.

7. If the Propaganda Week will be prepared in such a way, the success will not fail to come.

a) The entire population is forced to take an interest in the alcohol question: imperial-, state-, and parish-departments, representatives of the people and of the parishes, churches and schools, the newspapers (which otherwise avoid a serious treatment of the alcohol question), the social associations, the scientific institutions and establishments etc.

b) Ignorance and indifference with regard to the alcohol question, both great dead weights — — the suggestion of the masses as to drinking-customs and opinions will be kept in check effectively by a contrary suggestion. —

