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Culture Primary Source

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**“Preparedness”**

This was a flier distributed by J.H. de-Hart, owner of The Mountain Rose Distillery, in Patrick County, Virginia in 1916. Entitled “Preparedness,” de-Hart encouraged Virginia natives to be prepared for the upcoming prohibition laws by stocking up on whiskey and other alcoholic products. De-Hart continued by subtly hinting at the violation of the rights of people to buy whiskey for medicinal purposes. De-Hart warned the locals of the upcoming higher prices of alcohol, and he suggested that locals go ahead and buy a ten year supply of alcohol solely for medicinal purposes. Furthermore, he encouraged local citizens to purchase an “ample supply” of alcohol for Christmas and other holiday festivities. De-Hart advised people to place their special orders early so they would be finished before prohibition began; he expected a very large and multiple orders because people would be stocking up since its availability would be limited during prohibition. De-Hart closed the flier by thanking all of his customers for their patronage throughout his business career.

Throughout the flier, de-Hart subtly detested the ban of alcoholic production and consumption, and he hinted that it was a right of the people to be able to purchase and consume alcoholic beverages. However, he probably avoided being too openly opposed to prohibition so he would not be suspected of illegal activity once prohibition started. De-Hart attempted to stress the importance of alcohol for medicinal and remedial purposes to take the focus off of negative activities associated with alcohol such as unemployment, abuse, and irresponsibility as preached by temperance organizations and other prohibition supporters. This flier serves as an example of the fear and uncertainty many people felt concerning prohibition and it proved that the moonshining industry was an important part of rural mountain life for many people.

