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To the farmer in the Mississippi Valley, busy about his harvest and outbuildings, the question of a merchant marine seems very far away.  
"Why," he occasionally asks himself, "should I be interested in steamships, sailing from ports a thousand miles away? I have never been to the Atlantic seaboard. Ships, whether sailing under the United States flag or the Union Jack, concern me not at all."

In this, however, a reason, and a good reason, why the farmer should be interested in this government's efforts to put thousands of steel and wooden ships afloat as quickly as possible.

The American farmer today is growing wheat, corn, oats and other produce that must be transported abroad to supply our own armies and those of our allies in France. When the war is over the wheat, corn and oats will continue to flow toward war-stricken Europe. With thousands of ships to carry this produce, the freight rates will be correspondingly cheaper than they would be with only a few hundred bottoms available instead of thousands.

The fact that freight rates are cheaper will not, however, abate the hunger of the millions in Europe clamoring for the wheat, corn and oats. The market there will remain the same and the present list prices will be little changed. If it costs the grain dealer less to ship abroad, he will be able to pay higher prices to the farmer. The farmer is just as much interested in cheap freight rates as he always has been interested in cheaper freight rates on land. His market lies not to Chicago and Minneapolis and Duluth, where a box car hauls his grain, but to the thousands of miles across the ocean where ships are carrying his produce. The farmer must help build ships and cut his freight rates to Europe.

Someone sagely remarked (and many wise men since have repeated the proverb): "In times of peace prepare for war."  
Germany has improved on the proverb, or twisted it, and over in the Kaiser's realm it now reads: "In times of war prepare for peace." Germany is not so intent on winning this war that she has forgotten about the peace to come. The German Reichstag has agreed, as a tentative policy, on a grant of \$200,000,000 to facilitate the building of merchant ships. The bill provides that the vessels shall be available within four years after peace is declared.

In other words, the German government is determined, not only to win this war, but to win commercial war to follow, by providing bottoms to carry, not only its own goods, but also the commerce of other nations whose ships it is sinking every day.  
The United States government has wisely set about to frustrate this Hohenzollern move, as much a military project as the hurling of new German divisions against the French and British lines in France and Flanders. This government has instituted a shipbuilding program that will supply us with steel and wooden freighters to carry men, food, munitions and machinery to Europe in the course of the war and after peace is declared. It needs money for this great shipbuilding plan. It is

## U. S. NOT WAITING TO BE DESTROYED

Command of German Agents to Put Hands Down Falls to Get Approval.

### IN THE CONFLICT TO WIN

America Has Never Resorted to War Except to Avenge Injuries and to Protect Herself Against Maudraiders.

By ELLIS PARKER BUTLER.  
(From the Committee on Public Information, Washington, D. C.)

Clean, unadorned nonsense can always get a laugh from me. I love it and so do most Americans. I remember one bit of Weber and Fields seriously acted nonsense that always left me gasping for breath. It was the silliest, most inconsequential bit of acting that genius ever dared to put in a show that cost the spectator \$2 a seat. It was a prize fight between Weber and Fields, and one of those matches comedians showed the other how to do it. They put up their money and put on the gloves, and immediately the rank amateur began to batter the wise one over the head, but that was not the way to do it. The wise one explained that that was not at all the proper way to do it. He explained that he would show the poor amateur the right way. He stood the poor amateur just where he wanted him, turned his face to the proper angle and then arranged his hands. He stepped off and considered the poor amateur but he did not feel just satisfied. He arranged the hands again, placing them down at the sides of the poor amateur's legs. Then he told him to keep them there. Then he stepped up quickly and hit the poor amateur a whole lot of blows in the face and knocked him clear across the stage and into the wings. It was awfully funny; everyone in the house screamed with joy. The poor amateur was such a fine example of simple-minded, confiding stupidity.

I have to laugh in the same uncontrolled way when I see the confiding manner in which some Americans are letting the wily but treacherous German peace propagandists convince them that we ought to let our hands hang at our sides, turn our faces at the right angle, and stand in idiotic poses until we get the blow in the face that will knock us into the wings. For pure, unadorned nonsense the act being staged by the wise German agents and the simple-minded peace lovers is enough to make anyone sick with laughing.

Of the one hand is a German in arms, with millions of veteran soldiers and an armament such as no nation dreamed of 10 years ago, and on the other hand, our simple-minded peace lovers would have us pose as the poor amateur. "Stand here, turn your head this way, put your hands down at your sides," say the German agents, and the purchased or infatuated peace propagandists echo, "Stand here, turn your head this way, put your hands down at your sides." (In fact, the great American none if he did it!

Germany Wants Control.  
If America keeps her hands down, she will be knocked not only into the wings but off the stage, and off the earth. With America out of the war, the best that can be hoped for is a drawn battle, ending with a "hands off" peace, and leaving Germany, as the saying is, "all dressed up and nowhere to go." Germany's "all dressed up" is the navy she has built up, the hardened, veteran armies, in trained commanders, in the finest possible military equipment, and with an untouched navy, vast air force, and no one knows just what she is capable of. The "where to go" will mean Africa and Asia, where Germany wanted to gain dominations. But there will be one place where Germany, "all dressed up," can come to America. She can come to South America first, or to Mexico and that is where she will come and where she has planned to come.

What happens when German agents are given permission to convince a good number of persons that the right way is to turn the cheek and hold the hands down can be seen in Russia. Russia is not a well-trained actor. She would get a job playing a Weber-Fields burlesque in a \$2 theater. She will not keep her hands down when the German agents tell her to put them down, but she has lowered them once or twice. Russia is far, far from happy.

I cannot believe that any sane person not in German pay can wish the United States to become as Russia is today, but that is exactly what will happen if we listen to the German agents and put our hands down. Let me put it most simply. The great body of Americans believe today, as they should, that our continued existence depends on our own military preparation. A small, noisy body of German agents and purling peace lovers are trying to get our hands down. Put our hands down! Suppose I listen to the cry and begin crying the same words. I am added to their number. I cry, "Put our hands down! Put our hands down!" Ten listen to me and are added to the number. You echo the cry. (Suppose the majority of Americans come to that same way of thinking. The majority rules and we do put our hands down

We stand with our arms hanging, our faces exposed, and wait. For what? No doubt the German agents will be satisfied and pick their trunks and go home to Germany. Merry thought, hardly.

We have seen what the German agents will do; they did it before we entered the war and they would do it if we backed out of the war. They would foment strikes, race riots, class prejudice, and stir up national resentments. Having gotten us out of the war against Germany they would try to get us into a war with France, Italy, or England. They would no longer be peace propagandists but war propagandists, because we would be unarmed, and easy victims. They would use German money to throw us into the state poor Russia finds herself in today. Then Germany would strike defenseless South America.

America Loves Peace.  
It is my honest belief that Germany has had for many years an alternative plan for conquest. From Berlin she has drawn two lines, one to the southeast through Saloniki and to the Orient, the other to the southwest through Spain to South America. She hoped England would do the Weber-Fields act and keep her hands down while German armies slipped France, and then she would leap on the Orient and grab a vast dominion there. England did not keep her hands down. She is not entirely a fool. That plan failed. It seems hopeless now.

The other plan Germany will try is a peaceful people. We have vast territory. The most fruitful and productive in the world; and warlike peoples have always been those living in barren lands or who have been cramped into scant quarters. It is never necessary to preach the doctrine of peace to America, because the natural state of America is peace. America does not and never has gone to war except to avenge injustices that have become unbearable or to protect herself against marauders. When the great, wise, peace-loving American people declare war there is a reason for it, and a reason that affects the honor and the safety of the nation.

Germany has insulted and injured us in a manner no decent people can stand. She has flouted our rights and she continues to do so. She has made us to our existence before the war began and she has become a greater menace with each day her troops have been in the field. Her aim is practically instant: her people shall rule. For half a century she has been the one warlike nation of the earth. What will Germany do if we keep our hands down when she asks our aid? What would you do if you were a warlike nation, careless of rights of others (see Belgium), and craving territory? You would give a slip in the face to the foe with both hands down, and you would leap on South America and wrest from it the cost of the great European war.

Germany is not our worst enemy. With our fists up we can take care of Germany. Our worst enemy is here. He is the man who asks us to put our hands down and stand like a silly sheep until Germany is ready to strike.

Post Invented Stereoscope.  
How many of us really know that the stereoscope—largely used for magnifying photographs of distant places—was the invention of Oliver Wendell Holmes, the American poet and philosopher. There had been, in use a crude form of stereoscope, consisting of a box with a hinged lid on the upper side which was opened to show the photograph. Doctor Holmes dispensed with the box, substituting the eye shades still used and cut slits in the projecting board in order that the photograph might be correctly focused. Then he stuck an eye in the bottom, for a handle, and the stereoscope was complete. Doctor Holmes found the invention such an improvement that he offered his invention free to several firms. All refused it, however, except Joseph Bates of Philadelphia, who he decided to make a dozen or two and see if they would sell. The preliminary lot was soon multiplied by thousands. An employee of this firm originated the movable slide in which the pictures are now placed, thus improving upon the series of slides devised by Doctor Holmes. When the stereoscope became a great success, it was suggested to Doctor Holmes that if he had patented and sold his invention he might have made more out of it than from literature. He replied: "If I did not care to be known as the patentee of a pill or a peeping contrivance."—People's Home Journal.

Fallen African Metropolis.  
What are now known as the Zimbabue ruins; was the center of trade and worship for a South African city. The fortress guarding the city in its thickest inaccessible position was once encircled by a wall of stone over 12 feet thick resting on a rocky cliff foundation. From lookout towers on the wall the guards could scan the country for miles around and had bastions and other weapons down upon any hostile force. Beyond the wrecked fortress stands the shell of the temple, sacred to the worship of Bani, whence came the great and powerful of guidance for the people. Between the remains of fortress and temple life what is known today as the Valley of Ruins; a mass of walls in all stages of dilapidation.

Only birds and makes inhabit this fallen metropolis, but out beyond the old city the mines from which the nation derived its wealth are being worked by the most modern methods.

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