

Let Us Look Facts In The Face

Weigh Probabilities With Care and Prepare For The Perils.

From the N. Y. American.

At the beginning of this war, the English wholly underestimated Germany's strength and endurance and resources. They also overrated their own capacity.

"The big Spring drive will end it," they said in the Fall of 1915. "We will muddle through till Kitchener's new army is ready. Then it will soon be over."

You know what happened. And all the world knows that if France had not sacrificed herself so magnificently and Russia had not squandered millions of lives, England would have been whipped to a finish by Germany before the war was six months old.

Now, we ought, above all things, to avoid these two errors that England made.

We must not overrate our capacity and we must not underrate the German war machine.

The sensible, patriotic thing to do is to look at facts as they are, to weigh all the probabilities and to prepare for the future situation as it may be and not as we think it ought to be.

The man who goes about boasting that we can whip the universe off-hand and crying that Germany is exhausted and ready to fall on her knees is not only a fool, but he is a nuisance and a menace to his own country's interests.

It ought to be thoroughly understood at once that if we go to war with Germany we play right into the hands of the German military caste and make the allies' defeat as nearly certain as anything can be that is yet in the future.

Mark you, we do not say our defeat, but the allies' defeat.

Let us look at this matter sensibly and dispassionately, for it is a matter of vital importance to us to thoroughly understand what problems war has in store for us, if we go to war.

In the first place, Germany will either whip the allies this year or not at all. If she is strong enough to whip the allies, the only way we could save them would be to bring an overbalancing financial, military and moral pressure to bear on Germany within the next eight months.

Can we do that?

Undoubtedly we can finance the allies with billions, if we are fools enough to waste our wealth on those bankrupts. But the time has gone when finances would have any decisive weight in this conflict, but the finances HAVE ALREADY been found and used in the preparation of all the means that will be used in this final decisive campaign.

If we gave our whole accumulation of cash to England and France and Russia to-morrow, that gigantic wealth would not alter the naval and military preparation of the combatants for the coming struggle by so much as a gun battery.

For the whole available man power and factory power of all these nations has been and now is engaged in the work of preparation; and money, whose power is to outstay an adversary in long warfare, is no longer a factor that can alter the result of the frightful struggle that is approaching.

Mr. George's assertion that the last \$500,000,000 would win the war had truth in it two years ago. Now it is a mere catch phrase.

Remember that we are speaking solely of the European situation, because, so far as WE are concerned, if we are unfortunate enough to get entangled in this war, our sole and our strongest hope is indeed in our vast wealth, by which we can outlast nations already greatly exhausted and financially bankrupt.

But that we can at this time affect Germany's powerfully prepared onslaught on the allies on land and on sea by bolstering up England's treasury with our cash is a fool's dream.

There remains to be considered, then, what military and naval assistance we can give the allies during the next eight months. Five words will answer that question:

WE CAN GIVE THEM NONE.

We ought never, under any circumstances, send a single American soldier to be slaughtered in Europe. But even if such folly should be decided on, we CANNOT POSSIBLY send an American army anywhere this year. Because it is going to take all this year and another year besides to recruit and to equip the very smallest army that is needed FOR OUR OWN DEFENSE against probable attack.

So far as our navy is concerned, it is now a highly efficient weapon of defense, but it is not equipped for offensive action at a distance from home. Its strength consists almost wholly in dreadnaughts.

But the British and French navies now outnumber the German navy three to one in battleship and battle cruiser strength and yet can do nothing to destroy the German high seas fleet, safe behind the defenses of Heligoland.

And if we were willing to leave our own coasts undefended, which the nation would not endure, and to send all our battleships and cruisers to European waters, the German fleet would still be as safe as it is to-day behind those impregnable defenses.

We have no fast scout cruisers, no submarines that can go to sea, no aircraft, no anything to add to the offensive strength of the British and French fleets.

As a means of defense of our own coasts our navy is admirable. As an offensive weapon against a safely hidden high-seas fleet in German waters it is of about as much practical value as a popgun. And every officer of our splendid ships knows this.

The German nation has no merchant marine afloat, so that the full damage we could do in that line is to seize the interned ships—a loss which would not have the slightest military or economic effect upon Germany while the war lasts, as these ships have been lost to her anyway, so far as any use is concerned.

It is very clear that we can give the allies no naval or military aid that will have any decisive effect upon the war this year or next year.

In the meantime, if we are in a state of war, we shall certainly require and demand the full output of our munitions factories, our aeroplane factories, our submarine factories, our uniform and harness factories, our automobile factories, our chemical factories, our meat and provision packing plants, our steel works and the rest of the industries that have kept the allies going and made it possible for them to prolong the war.

England, France and Italy would be as effectually cut off from American sources of supply by the pressing needs of American preparation as by the submarine warfare of Germany.

In the meantime, the submarine warfare of Germany will almost certainly deprive England of sufficient food and France and Italy of the coal without which their war factories and their all-important railroads cannot be operated.

For the moment the German submarine commanders are released from all fear of sinking ships at sight, on account of danger to Americans, that moment no part of the high seas will be safe for any merchant ship, and the Atlantic and Mediterranean seas will be vast death traps, over which it will be impossible to induce sailors to voyage.

Hampered by American restrictions, the German submarines have nevertheless succeeded in destroying an average of 20,000 tonnage per day for many weeks past.

The German naval staff insists that it can sink 1,000,000 tons of shipping a month WITHIN THE BLOCKADE LINES, if the submarines torpedo without warning. And if they calculate confidently upon that bag within the blockade

lines, what will they do when all regard for neutral safety is destroyed by America's participation in the war, and the submarines are at liberty to prowl the seas and torpedo anything afloat anywhere in the ocean?

The reasonable supposition is that they can and would sweep the seas of commerce, partly by destroying it and partly by frightening neutral ship-owners into declining the risks of voyaging.

The figures that are commonly used to show the available seagoing tonnage that could have to be destroyed to affect England's supplies of necessities are gross exaggerations.

So far from having 50,000,000, 30,000,000, or even 20,000,000 gross tonnage of seagoing ships available, the total quantity of British, French, Italian and neutral seagoing tonnage possibly available for carrying supplies to England, France and Italy is not above 10,000,000.

The amount of tonnage entering British ports during 1916 was something in excess of 11,000,000, and, of course, much of this was a repetition of the same actual tonnage, as the same ships registered time after time.

In normal years, Great Britain imports about 12,000,000 tons of food supplies. At that there is never as much as six weeks' supplies on hand.

The food supply of London is exhausted every four days.

In addition to the importation of food from abroad, Britain must ship food for her huge armies in France, for her armies in Egypt in Mesopotamia, in Greece, and for her navy; and she must find ships for the far greater task of keeping her navy and her armies supplied with recruits, with weapons, with ammunition, with all the bulky supplies of the camp and field; and she imperatively must keep France supplied with coal, since the French coal mines are in German hands.

Now, figures are very apt to err unless one allows wide margins. There lies before us on the table at this moment the World Almanac for 1915-1916, containing a "History of the War," in which the learned writer proves by the most painstaking calculations of man power that the Central Empires would collapse from exhaustion of reserves by May 1, 1916. The rather ridiculous aspect this mathematical prophecy wears in February, 1917, is a warning not to trust figures too far.

But if we assume that the German submarine fleet can destroy no more shipping bound to England than it has been destroying for some weeks, under hampering conditions laid down by us, then in ten months the shipping available for carrying supplies to England cannot possibly coal France, supply England's overseas armies and feed England. It is impossible that the destruction of 5,000,000 tons of shipping can have any other result than to put England under the stress of starvation.

And if the German submarines can destroy shipping at that rate, while operating under restrictions demanded by us, it is very reasonable to suppose that they will take a much higher toll when they no longer care whether or not they sink ships carrying Americans or flying the American flag.

If they can double their present daily bag, they will reduce England to starvation before we can fire a shot in effective warfare and before the Summer offensives on the Somme and other points can even become threatening to Germany's defense.

Purely from a military standpoint, our participation in the war will prove a far greater help, for many months, to Germany than to the allies. It will be another case of Rumania's supposed aid on a far greater scale.

And we believe that it will prove fatal to the allies if Germany is any way near as well equipped to deal destruction at sea as she is thought to be.

The argument that England and France can build merchant ships as fast as they are destroyed will have no weight with well-informed men. Under the stress of great need, the British yards turned out less than 600,000 tons of shipping last year. And the reason is that neither the yards nor the labor can be spared from the far more urgent need of turning out war material.

No thinking person disputes the ability and foresight of the

German military and naval staffs.

No thinking person believes that the German Government, after yielding so long to American demands, would deliberately throw away American friendship and risk war with America unless they had weighed all the results and had the reasonable prospect of crushing their adversaries before our assistance could become powerful enough to save Germany's enemies.

The German calculation is to bring down England by a deadlier blockade and a far more crushing starvation, than England has been able to exert upon Germany, BEFORE the United States can possibly rescue England.

After that, Germany probably calculates that she can make peace with us when the cause of war between her and us, if we do make war, is automatically removed by European peace.

These calculations may fail. But it is foolish to underrate their menace or to believe that they cannot possibly succeed. The Germans are past masters of the art of war and when they risk their all on the success of a campaign for which they have prepared for two years, no man of sense will weigh lightly the power and menace of such a campaign or say foolishly that it cannot win victory.

As for ourselves, if we do determine to go to war over Germany's submarine blockade of England, we should begin and ceaselessly carry on the tremendous preparation necessary to defend ourselves in case Germany wins victory over the allies with that very blockade.

For if Germany emerges from the mighty battles that are about to open on land and on sea a victor, we must, if we are wise and prudent, expect that she will not hesitate to turn her mighty armaments against us, if we have made war upon her.

The Germans will argue that we waited to attack them until the world had been led to believe falsely that they were almost overpowered by the great odds they have fought against for over two years and there will be bitterness in their hearts.

There will be, too, another incentive. We shall be the only nation on earth still possessing vast wealth, and from whom a European combination might hope to extort the cost of its own huge warfare if it could beat us in war.

New York City alone could be put to a ransom great enough to put the finances of the Central Empires in shape again if the Central Empires could beat our fleets and force a landing of their vast and victorious veteran armies on our soil.

Now, believe us, there is a great deal more true patriotism in putting these facts and these possibilities plainly before you than there is in bragging, ranting, reviling and making an ass of one's self in the holy and beautiful name of patriotism.

War is a business proposition, citizens, in these days. It is a question of efficiency—just exactly as factory or store competition is.

We will win or lose any war upon which we venture precisely as we leave rant and tirades to cheap notoriety hunters and broken-down political fakery and get down to brass tacks and common sense, business-like preparation.

Cannon and rifles and bayonets and ships and aircrafts and submarines and equipment and drilled officers and men win wars—not loud mouths.

If we are going to fight a first-class Power, we ought to drop every other national industry and consideration and turn the whole country into a war factory.

Otherwise we will be beaten and ruined, just as some of these cocksure and bull-headed European combatants are going to be beaten and ruined, because their rulers and their press have lied to them, bragged to them, belittled their enemies to them and led them straight to the abyss of defeat with their eyes shut.

Countrymen, let us not imitate this monstrous folly. The instant war begins, if we do go to war, a period of hysteria will begin and for a time the loudest braggart and the most impudent dunce will be popular heroes.

But let us who deeply and sincerely love our most dear country, and who are neither

braggarts nor dunces, but intelligent and sensible men and women—let us keep our ears open to reasonable discussion and to the truth at all times.

Let us face situations as they are.

Let us insist upon knowing the facts.

There must be a censorship of military and naval movements, of course.

But we ought not to permit any such censorship as that which has constantly deceived the peoples of Europe, which has left them in ignorance of the sentiments of other countries, which has labored to inflame hatred and every other ugly passion by monstrous inventions and tales of enemy savagery, lest without that stimulus they might cry for peace with their former neighbors and end the designs of the governing castes.

Let us insist that we are not children to be put in leading strings, nor serfs to submit to the crack of the whip, but brave, upstanding, free and intelligent men and women, who are not to be cowed by unhappy news of temporary defeat and who have the right to know and are determined to know what is being said and done at home and abroad, in our own country and in the enemy country.

Let us insist upon free speech and free discussion. We can make war without wearing muzzles.

Let us insist that our fleets and our armies be used to fight only for America!

We want no allies. We will have use for every American dollar and every American ship and every American soldier in defending America.

We have no strength and no wealth to squander in this European quarrel. Let those who made that insane war fight it out at their own cost and their own peril.

And, above every other consideration, let us begin now to prepare the means of waging gigantic war in our own defense, whether we actually go to war now or happily escape that catastrophe at this time.

For war we are sure to have, sooner or later.

The calculations and agreements and preparations of Russia and of Japan embrace the intimidation or the defeat of the United States as a preliminary to dividing Asia and establishing dominion over the Pacific just as surely as they embrace the spoliation of poor China.

We must be ready for ultimate attack in the West as well as for attack in the East, if we engage in war with Germany, and to be ready to meet that gigantic peril, countrymen, we cannot spend too much of our wealth or set to work too much of our skill and labor.

Prepare!

In that one word is our whole duty and our only safety.

Mr. Hearst's Impressive Editorial.

We quote from Mr. Hearst's Editorial, which has made such impression in Congress, as mentioned in yesterday's dispatch of our Special Representative in Washington, the following essential parts:

The country has taken the President's decision with a gratifying absence of hysteria.

There was, of course, the perennial rush of Colonel Roosevelt to offer the lives of himself and his four sons—five in all; and Governor Sidney Catts of Florida formulated by telegraph a remarkable naval programme, which was to lead the fleet to attack instantly and so either end the war in twenty-four hours or leave Mrs. Catts a widow.

But for the most part Americans kept their heads and talked modestly and sensibly.

That augurs well for the future, because in war, as in any other business, he makes fewest mistakes and wins most points who calmly and soberly sizes up the task ahead and uses his brains instead of his emotions in planning his conduct.

As matters now stand, we go to war with Germany if Germany carries out the programme of blockade announced by the Imperial Government.

Above everything else, we should absolutely resolve upon keeping out of any alliance with England or Russia or any other European country during this war.

The financial interests which have loaded themselves with British and other foreign war obligations are beside themselves with delight over the prospect that the American people can now be induced to assume a great part of the debt of these European bankrupts.

had no hand in starting and in which we have no possible chance of gaining anything, without being asked to endorse the promissory notes of these lunatics who have been destroying Europe.

The people of the United States are willing to finance the Government of the United States with billions upon billions of cash and credit. But we shall strenuously resist paying England's debts or Russia's overwhelming obligations for their war operations.

Having won France, Russia and Italy to do her fighting, we think it entirely too much for England to want us to pay her bills.

There is another thing that needs an expression of public opinion—and we shall not hesitate to speak our mind upon it.

We shall strenuously oppose sending American troops abroad to be placed at the service of England or any other foreign country.

We have all seen what has happened to auxiliary troops—how they have been placed in every desperate position and slaughtered by the tens of thousands, while the "home guards" were held in reserve. And that is exactly what would be done with our boys, if we were fools enough to send them over the seas to be cannon-fodder.

We have 5,000 miles of coast to garrison and defend, and with plenty of evidence to show that Japan is only waiting for a favorable moment to desert the allies and to strike at us while we are involved in this European broil, we should be madmen to strip our country of a single soldier for foreign service.

If we are wise and capable, we will not underrate the difficulties that will confront us as soon as war is declared, if it should be declared. The British Government has made the bad mistake of deceiving its people from the outset of the war, of making them believe that their enemies were weakening and soon would be begging for mercy.

That is why England is face to face to-day with the most threatening situation she has ever confronted. Because any man who thinks that this German submarine warfare is not a deadly dangerous blow at England is feeble-minded indeed.

It is only because the German military and naval staffs have convinced the German Government that they can crush England and France and Italy with this weapon that the German Government has decided to use that weapon, even at the risk of breaking with us.

And we ought not to make the mistake of underrating the foresight, calculation and power of the German organization. It is a very wonderful organization, and was never so powerful and so dangerous as it is to-day.

UNWARRANTED FEARS.

The Chicago Tribune has found followers for its statements, made shortly before the breaking off of diplomatic relations, viz, that the interests and the safety of the United States required that England remain unvanquished. That viewpoint has so frequently been repeated since in press dispatches from Washington, that it really appears to contain the key to all mysteries, and to point at last the right way through all the deceitful statements and virtuous misrepresentations, such as duties of neutrality, humanity, civilization, and international law. The opinion seems to have really prevailed in Washington that England alone stood between us and sure aggression from a victorious Germany, and that therefore the Central powers should by all possible means be prevented from winning. Even the severance of diplomatic relations appears to have been conceived in the hope that it might keep Germany from making the blockade really effective and tight.

That plan has miscarried. And if American experts are right in their estimate, the Allies and especially England, will have to give in after two months, if they cannot raise the blockade.

It goes beyond understanding that experts in strategy and world politics could go the length of that fallacy about Germany's further aims. Any such conflict of Germany's making would have to be fought by her fleet in the Atlantic. The aggressor must come, otherwise there can be aggressive words only, which remain ineffective. Forthwith the British would see their chance to retrieve their misfortunes. That fleet would be without base in the Atlantic. It would have before it the American battle fleet, sandwiched between two lines of British battle fleet, and besides that its lines of communications would be just as much endangered, as are now the lanes of the German merchant marine to and from the Atlantic. And just that Germany under the greatest sacrifices has tried to prevent in this war—in which, if we had entered, we would have had to break into her lines, through her submarine cordon and minefields—she would bring about to the benefit of her present enemies, by going to war herself with us afterwards. Only under far worse strategic circumstances for herself. By going to war with America, America and England would at once become allied in war on Germany. Can any sober thought contemplate Germany—harboring such insane designs, out of pure desire for vengeance, and executing them—after victory in a war like this one. Still, our actions up to now seem to have been dictated to a degree by such an estimate of Germany's intelligence.

It is certainly interesting to see from the press dispatches that American experts give England only two months time for her ability to exist under an fully effective blockade, and believe her unable to break it with her over "water" craft. If the English fleet cannot do it, no other can. And that bespeaks the probability, that there will be no war as a consequence of the break-

ing off of diplomatic relations, but that on the contrary, peace will result, as soon as England sees there must be peace. At the same time it proves that America can keep any enemy from her shores by submarines just as well as Germany keeps ships of supply away from England and France. It is a happy thought, that peace may be really near. A peace which will show how unfounded and idle that fear of German aims has been, and how unnecessary the prolongation of this war and its sufferings, as a result of a mistaken issue. Since at last the true inward motives for American actions unfold themselves we see more and more what thoughts, what misconceptions, what mistakes have been covered by high sounding phrases, and that too will be a very interesting lesson to many.

Emigration and Immigration.

Great numbers will return to their old home.

War creates opportunities.

We quote from "Issues and Events". Very likely the fears of those over-cautious people, both in Congress and out of it, won't come true when they predict that after the war we shall see an enormous immigration from the present belligerent countries. Rather the reverse is going to happen from all accounts. There are certain facts and indications pointing that way.

Here, for instance, is one: A local magazine has made inquiry at the offices of the various steamship companies. The result may be briefly stated to the effect that one million two hundred thousand return passages from America to Europe are already contracted for, those to begin to go into effect at once after the cessation of hostilities. That means thrice the average annual number of repatriation cases. The great bulk of those returning from this country to their native land, there to end their days in comparative comfort on the accumulated savings of their many years' residence 'ear, are Italians, proverbially frugal; Austrians and Hungarian Slavs, also Serbians, Greeks, Bulgarians and Montenegrians, as well as a sprinkling of German or English-speaking persons. The war has held many here who otherwise would have carried out their long-time intention of starting 'jack again for home." That explains what otherwise would look like a phenomenon.

Among those who will also return is quite a big percentage of "hyphens," i. e., foreign-born American citizens—men and women of German speech, also Austrians and Hungarians.

Count S. Tisza, the Hungarian Premier, told the present writer over a twelvemonth ago that his government was making organized and systematic effort to induce Hungarian farmers, miners, railroad and field laborers who had settled here before 1914 to return and take up Hungarian government lands, most of it located in Slavonia, Croatia and the lower southern Danube and Save districts, for homestead purposes.

Then again the war over in Europe has thinned the ranks of workers. There will be many openings of the humbler kind awaiting the returning emigrant. This applies to all the belligerent countries, more or less. Altogether, instead of increased immigration, there will be, in all probability, a not inconsiderable emigration. Many of those, too, who fled from Canada to this country in 1914, and after, to escape detention camps, will go back there.

All of which will mean a loss to this country in valuable human material.

KEEPING THE NEWS STRAIGHT.

We quote from the Washington Times:

The present crisis demands that newspapers as well as individuals keep their heads cool and their news straight. The United States has not gone to war yet, though it may do so at any minute; but in the meantime it behooves loyal citizens and especially the citizens who work for newspapers and press associations not to kindle a conflagration by foolish and unfounded rumors.

On Saturday we had the "news" that the Housatonic was sunk and everybody on board was lost. It now develops that warning was given, and provision made for the safety of the crew, in full compliance with international law.

Yesterday it was reported that the American liner Philadelphia had been torpedoed with a loss of 200 lives. The Philadelphia today is safe at Liverpool.

Yesterday morning papers announced that two interned German cruisers at Philadelphia had been seized by the Navy Department, and their crews locked up in isolation barracks. The Navy Department denies this, pointing out that there is yet no reason for such action.

Such wild and unsubstantiated tales only serve to inflame popular feeling and cause unnecessary concern among the relatives and friends of those said to be affected. It is poor patriotism for any newspaper or any press association to spread such misinformation without confirmation.