



# Outline Map of Countries of Europe Engaged in Terrible Conflict



## FRANCE MUST KEEP ON FIGHTING ON DEFENSIVE

Military Expert in Chicago Tribune

The situation at Liege demonstrates the availability of the new rifles and machine guns for defence purposes and the absolute necessity of making slow and cautious advances against the enemy in all cases.

It also demonstrates that in the present conflict the armies which are on the defensive, if properly handled, will have a great advantage over those on the offensive.

The Germans invaded Belgium confident that their name would cause the Belgians to run in fear before them. No general who has any regard for his men would send them into battle in automobiles, as Gen. Von Emmich is reported to have done. Automobiles are the best targets in the world for the modern artillery and machine guns. At two miles' distance it is doubtful if a single person in an automobile could survive a withering fire from the modern implements of war.

From the reports it also appeared that the Germans went into the battle in close columns. This accounts for the tremendous loss of life, for with the trajectory of the present day rifles at 500 yards a company of infantry on the defensive can almost annihilate a regiment on the offensive, if the regiment does not scatter. Firing fire

possible to do, a handful of defenders could dispose of a regiment in solid formation in short order.

The reverse at Liege, such as it was, although late reports indicate that it was not so severe as was at first supposed, was a blow for the Germans, who believed their advance through the small kingdom of Belgium would be an easy matter. As yet it is not believed here that the Germans are planning an immediate invasion of France, but rather that they are attempting to straighten out their lines so as to be in better position not only to defend themselves from French invasion but also to attack France later on when the Kaiser orders the attack.

A penetration of the frontier between France and Germany is practically impossible for either army. France, regarding the neutrality of Belgium, has not fortified its Belgian frontier so strongly as it has its German frontier. Consequently, if the Germans had gone through Belgium easily, they could have had a straight line of defence from the Swiss mountains to the English channel, with a strategic command of the border between France and Belgium. Their previous skirmishes along the French border indicated they were planning such a line.

It would be the height of folly for Germany to attempt an invasion of France at the present time. Its army would be wrecked if it did. The French have the best artillery in the world. The French troops are kept keyed up to a fighting pitch. They have confidence in their generals. But above everything else, the whole French strategy for the past decade has been to plan an effective defence against a German invasion.

At Liege the Germans had a taste of what is coming to any army which adopts the offensive without a carefully laid plan of campaign. Germany has not enough soldiers in its entire army and reserve corps to force the French back to Paris for months to come. Its best fighting troops would be riddled in the first few days' fighting if forced to take the offensive against the strongly entrenched French troops.

The Belgian army showed that it must be reckoned with as the war progresses. Though small in numbers, its effectiveness must be granted. The German reverses before Liege are apt to work strongly against the German strategy in the near future.

Before many days can elapse the French will have a strong force in Belgium aiding King Albert and his troops. If reports from England be correct that the English army will be carried across the channel to aid in the defence of Belgium further defeats for the German arms may be expected.

Germany is not likely to retire from the field as a result of its early re-

verses. Instead it is likely to change its whole plan of campaign just to avenge the reverse. In this case the zone of the war may change materially.

Germany, however, will make a mistake if it does this. The combined French, English and Belgian forces are superior to the German forces which can be thrown against them in an offensive campaign. If Germany withdraws any of its northern troops it will leave the way open for Russia to strike the Kaiser's empire and strike hard. If it withdraws any of the troops from the French border to concentrate them against the allies in Belgium the main French army may sweep through the gap and flank Germany.

Its best course undoubtedly is to straighten its lines as best it can on the south and then maintain a defensive campaign against the French, Belgians and English while it proceeds with the business at hand in Russia.

The German army can well defend its southern border for months to come if it adopts this plan of campaign. At the same time it will have the assistance in the north of the Austrian army in the invasion of Russia.

By concentrating its attention on Russia, leaving only a strong defending force in the south, Germany stands a better chance to win than if it attempts an invasion of France. It will prevent Russia from co-operating with its allies in any way at all. The Russian Baltic fleet already is either destroyed or penned up.

The minute, however, that Germany gives Russia the chance to assume the

offensive against it, in co-operation with Great Britain, Belgium and France, Germany must settle down to a long defensive war in its own territory.

That is exactly what Germany cannot afford to do. It must have the greater portion of its army in the enemy's country, feeding on the enemy's land. But it must concentrate that army in the country of one enemy to be successfully isolating that enemy from its allies. And it must keep sufficient force at home to prevent the allies from invading on the other side.

The early victories of the French may prove boomerangs for them. They may cause them to abandon their strategy of defence for a campaign of offence. This would be exceedingly unfortunate for the French army at the present time. Six months from now France may be able to take the offensive and still carry out its plans for a defensive campaign, if necessary. For the present, however, it cannot take chances.

Of the minor countries in the conflict there is not much to say. Italy's vacillating course towards the German and Austrian alliances is probably due in part to the relationship of the queen to the king of Montenegro. Queen Helena is the daughter of this petty sovereign, whose cards have been thrown with the triple entente against the triple alliance.

Servia's reported threat to invade Austria is but another indication that the bulk of the Austrian army has been thrown to the north for a co-operative campaign with the German army against Russia.

### FOOD IN THE WAR

Rutledge Rutherford, an American economist and writer, who recently toured Europe studying food conditions, declares in New York that the Armageddon will be a war of foods.

This recalls the statement of A. J. Balfour in his address against the adoption of the Declaration of London: "Starvation, not invasion, is the danger of England." Obviously Britain's most serious problem is the maintenance of her food supply. London and her environs have a population of over seven millions, who produce no food at all. Five million loaves of bread, four thousand tons of potatoes, 250,000 gallons of milk, one million cabbages, 200,000 pecks of peas and beans, in season, are a few figures representing London's daily food consumption.

Britain's main source of supply in this war must be Russia. Not without the highest exhibition of statesmanship was the Anglo-Russian alliance entered into. The great route to Russia can be kept open by the British navy. With a mighty fleet and the friendship of Russia, Britain without counting on the colonies has played a deep diplomatic game. The czar's empire with her vast areas of nearly nine million square miles, comprising one-sixth the land surface of the globe, can produce enough food to feed the world—with some left over. It is strictly an agrarian country. Most of her people have been born and reared on farms. Four-fifths of her population reside in

rural districts. Her food exports are in endless variety and abundance. Russia to-day produces more wheat than the United States, where the crop this year is 900,000,000 bushels!

What of Germany, the great antagonist? Within a comparatively small area Germany has seventy million mouths to feed. Germany has only 1.5 acres of land for every inhabitant. Yet by the most modern and scientific methods of farming every foot contributes towards the nation's subsistence. All possible sources of waste are avoided. Owners of vacant lots are compelled to lease them to tenants at regular prices for garden purposes. The trees along many of the highways and country lanes are food bearing trees and the fruits cannot be plucked except by licensed individuals. Even wild nuts and berries are governed by such restrictions, the violation of which is an offence punishable by arrest and fine.

Can Germany's conservation hold out against the natural fertility and supply of the great neighbor on the northeast in the event of a prolonged war? It is scarcely likely. But if Germany can control the seas she can starve out Britain long before Russia can starve out Germany. From the economic viewpoint the great struggle is a food conflict. Canada, it would seem, can best help by keeping Britain provisioned. But again, if Britain does not keep the trade routes open Canada cannot help in this way. And if she can maintain command of the seas Russia can supply the British Isles with case. The great conflict is a conflict for land, and the land, by a peculiar irony, will decide the issue more effectively than arms.—Ottawa Citizen.





