

# If Germany Doesn't Sign--Starvation: Allies Are Ready to Enforce a ...

Signal Corps Photo.

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## If Germany Doesn't Sign—Starvation

Allies Are Ready to Enforce a Blockade More Rigorous Than Ever Before, Should Enemy Balk at Peace Terms—Suggestion of Marching to Berlin Overruled

SOME have contended from the first that the armistice was a mistake—that the only hope of the regeneration of Germany was to experience the chastening humiliation of utter defeat. Dr. Vernon L. Kellogg, who was sent into Germany by the American Relief Administration to make a report on food and trade conditions and who is considered one of the competent observers to enter Germany since the fighting stopped, gives this as his testimony:

"It is clear to every foreign observer in Germany that the armistice was a mistake, that any armistice would necessarily be a mistake, that only a surrender could give that correct background to events on which alone the future of the German people in the direction of peace externally and reconstruction internally could be founded."

As events are now shaping, this sense of utter defeat of all the immoral purposes behind their assault on the world may yet be brought home to the Germans. If their leaders, prominent among whom are representatives of the arrogance and obstinacy of the Hohenzollerns, carry out the threat repeatedly made that they will not sign the peace terms unless amended in important respects, then the war will be resumed and the whole nation placed under a siege more stringent than ever known before.

If the Germans refuse to sign, the armistice ends, but the warfare which follows will not be by powder and bullet but, unless unforeseen disturbances in Germany take place, the weapons will be economic, and these are expected to show in a new way how absolute these instruments can be made in the punishment of a guilty nation. The military forces of the Allies and the United States will co-operate with the economic forces, but unless German resistance brings about a clash the main arm, it is understood, will be a blockade, as tight as strategic planning by a board of ex-

perts and the use of all the economic resources of the nations interested can make it.

As the possibility of bringing the war to a definite finish by a blockade looms, interest centres around two chief questions:

In what ways can this blockade be made more effective than that in force preceding and after the armistice?

How long, if it be made necessary to enforce it, are the Germans likely to hold out?

First question: Before the armistice, through control of the sea and the export machinery of War Trade Boards in dealing with neutral countries bordering Germany, a close blockade was thrown around the enemy. All these countries were put under a rationing system by the Allies, and guarantees were required of them that they would not re-export into Germany. But there were several weak spots in the chain. One was inability to control the North Sea and the Baltic. Germany consumes 570,000 tons of fish a year, and much of this was taken from the Baltic. On the east food was taken in from Russia and from Southeast Europe. After the armistice the allied blockade was thrown into the Baltic, and Germany's fishing there stopped, and the erection of new nations east of Germany disorganized these inlets of food, but with the main peace terms engaging the attention of the Allies at Paris there was no concentration on stopping every possible gap in the blockade. On the contrary, the War Trade Boards of the Allies soon began to relax restrictions in exports to neutrals bordering on Germany, and then in early March came the Brussels agreement by which Germany was to receive from the Allies 370,000 tons of food a month until September. Permission was also granted to resume fishing in the Baltic, and for unrestricted importation of vegetables from neutral countries.

Switzerland also agreed not to send milk, edible fats or poultry into Germany. Sweden's trade with Germany was held down to cranberries. Denmark, altogether dependent on Germany for coal, reduced her shipments of butter, bacon, cheese, and eggs to a fraction of what they formerly were, following the agreement with our War Trade Board. Each of these countries was then dependent on Germany for some essential and was also under the menace of her then flourishing military power.

The military power is gone; essentials can now be taken care of by the Allies, for the time being at least. One of the first steps in re-enacting the blockade will be to reinstate in full effect and with added restrictions the former rationing agreements with the neutrals bordering Germany. No doubt preparations have already been made to do this.

Switzerland, according to a cablegram from Geneva, has decided to reply negatively to the allied note concerning the blockade of Germany if Germany refuses to sign the peace treaty. If this proves true then Switzerland will be cut off from all the supplies she is now receiving from the Allies and the United States, according to information obtained in Washington. This would not be of much benefit to Germany as a whole, but it would be a heavy blow to Switzer-

land to be shut off from allied supplies. The same would be true of Norway, also reported to have refused to join the blockade. The system on which the War Trade Boards worked was one of bargaining as to whether or not Germany could make the neutrals the better offer, and the Allies now hold a much stronger hand than during the war. In the first place, they have won the war. In the second place, and what is immediately more controlling, the nations opposed to Germany control the world's food supply. Here the United States is the great factor. In any neutral country bordering Germany food supplies can be shut down at their source, as well as other supplies needed. But the great demand—the one also that cannot be postponed—is for food. Every country in Europe needs food. Food therefore is a more dominant weapon in enforcing a blockade than it was during the war.

There is a more direct way to blockade Germany, and some in Washington who have given the subject consideration hold that, with certain developments, this method will be adopted. This would be to advance allied troops in Germany along the frontier adjoining the neutral countries and thus make the blockade tight as a drum. At Paris, according to reports reaching Washington, the French, from the first, have been in favor of an advance into Germany, if the Germans refuse to sign the treaty, but the British and American delegations opposed this plan as one that would run the risk of inflaming the populace. They have stood, reports say, for giving precedence to economic pressure.

	1917.	1918.
Oatmeal .....	187,391	.....
Flour .....	63,933	.....
Dried fruits .....	127,866	.....
Leather shoes .....	396,828	.....
Cotton cloth .....	1,183,870	68,342

The threat made the other day by Lloyd George, however, that, if the Germans did not sign at Versailles they would be compelled to do so at Berlin, shows that the continued belligerent attitude of the German leaders may result in military intervention at the same time economic pressure is brought to bear.

Second question: How long will Germany be able to hold out under a tight blockade?

Without help from the Allies it was estimated by American investigators in Germany that large sections of the people there would fail to get bread on the ration basis not later than May 1; 2,000,000 tons of grain for bread would be required to carry Germany through on the existing ration of 300 grams per worker daily until Sept. 1, or when the new crop came in. Germany was also badly off for fats. All these questions were considered by the Interallied Council in fixing the terms of the Brussels

agreement. The details of this agreement have not been made public, but it is learned that the 370,000 tons of food a month allotted to the Germans, beginning in March, was divided into 300,000 tons of breadstuffs or their equivalents and 70,000 tons of fats, including pork products, vegetable oils, and condensed milk, on the condition that this would be distributed to no persons who were by their own fault unemployed.

This allotment was less than the Germans asked for as necessary for their subsistence until the new crops were harvested. Their minimum demands were 320,000 tons of flour a month, 100,000 tons of mixed pork products and

10,000 tons of vegetable oils. The amount of food allotted to the Germans, in return for the use of their ships and payment by export of surplus supplies of their own, such as potash, was thus less by 100,000 tons a month than they called for, and which some of the allied investigators say they needed.

In any event the total of food allotted to the Germans has not enabled them to accumulate a surplus. It has only been sufficient, with what they had, to care for their daily needs on a low rationing basis. It has been a hand-to-mouth existence. With the allied supplies suddenly shut off, the pressure on Germany would begin to be felt almost at once. In six

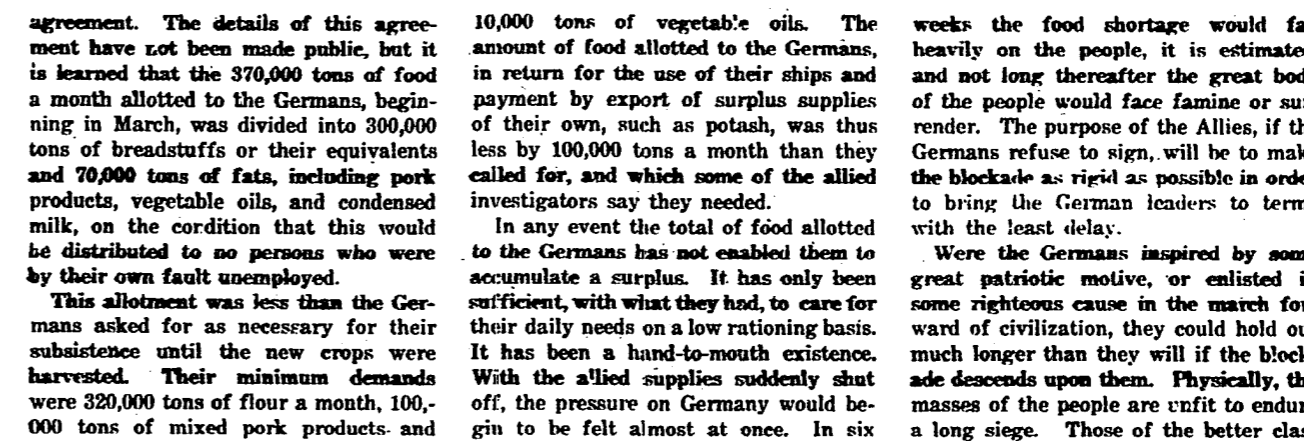
weeks the food shortage would fall heavily on the people, it is estimated, and not long thereafter the great body of the people would face famine or surrender. The purpose of the Allies, if the Germans refuse to sign, will be to make the blockade as rigid as possible in order to bring the German leaders to terms with the least delay.

Were the Germans inspired by some great patriotic motive, or enlisted in some righteous cause in the march forward of civilization, they could hold out much longer than they will if the blockade descends upon them. Physically, the masses of the people are unfit to endure a long siege. Those of the better class

who have been able to obtain food by illicit dealing are in flourishing condition, but they constitute comparatively a small number. The greatest deprivation has fallen on the laboring class. American investigators have estimated that the rations of the working class do not provide more than 1,400 calories a day a person, while the normal intake is 2,800 calories. This has been going on for a long time, and depletion of strength is the result. The German peace delegation, in a counterclaim on the Allies for \$3,000,000,000 damages, assert that the food blockade prevented 1,000,000 births because of the reduced vitality of the women.

Men who have not been led into the devious ways of thinking practiced by the leaders of Germany would not run the risk of facing an awakened Germany—which in better days gave the world Martin Luther—when walled in by a blockade among the people they have misled, but so many wrong ways have been taken by these leaders, in their pride and stubbornness, that it is recognized they may elect to play their last card by refusing to sign.

Some folk among the Allies will deplore the weapon of the blockade if it comes to that. They will see the women and children stricken with hunger and the death rate rising; it is deplorable to think of, all admit, but the answer is, better far this method of bringing an obdurate and erring people to terms than to march against them and to shoot them down. It is the more humane way. Others in this country and among the Allies will be stirred because the Allies, if forced to it, will throw their blockade machinery either through or around the border neutral countries, making them a part of the siege of the German Nation, whether it is their will or not, but the answer is that, in the German onslaught on the world, these small countries were themselves saved by the arms of the allied powers from domination by Germany.



More German Children—A Picture Taken After Their Milk Ration Had Been Served.



Group of Children, Practically All of Whom, Germans Assert, Are Undernourished.