

For David
Lloyd
George's eyes
only

From Colonel Michael Merritt.

CONFIDENTIAL

1st October 1916

How well are we doing?
How well are our allies doing?
How long is the war likely to last?
How might we achieve a swift victory?
Start off with an opening paragraph about what is actually happening

Prime minister,

I have written this as you asked to inform you of how well we are doing and our status in this war. Here is my professional view on it.

You did want a little background on the war so I have listed a few points that you might be interested in.

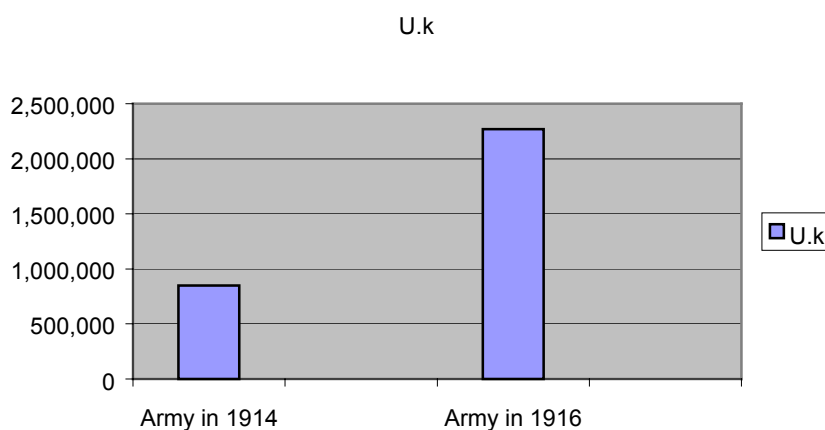
- We have been through a lot so far in this war, we have been joined by Japan who also have true beliefs in what the Alliance is doing is wrong.
- We did fail to get to Gallipoli to take pressure off Russia but they are still fighting to the death.
- We have made a breakthrough in weaponry and tanks and grenades seem very useful to our men.

Recently after our failing attempt of capturing the Somme and taking pressure off Verdun. We have come to a standstill and I as you are, am worried about this blasted war and our position in it. We were not as badly defeated as I have mentioned and we did defend our trenches but that has also led to our stalemate. I have researched into your queries to try and find out how we could break this stalemate and maybe win the war.

How well are we doing?

I chose to put many matters together to describe how well our country is doing. There are many ways in which we are excelling in this war but we are losing also in many major events such as arms races of all sorts. Our navy is still very strong and if we are ever under threat from our enemies we are sure to have a definite victory over the seas.

The increase of men in the first 2 years of the war



<We have progressed in many areas though and figures show how a small group of men has turned into a full-scale army. We have increased in numbers immensely. Our army has increased due to the recruitment plans and I urge you to keep these running.

Recent reports from our front line officials have commented on the high morale of the troops. I would suggest to start sending more variety of food and more sweetened items to give the troops something to look forward to in their dreadful conditions.

To conclude in this subject I would like to say how we have invested in new state of the art weaponry the TANK. This new armoured vehicle is tremendous for gaining ground and we have made much progress with it, but the tanks tend to breakdown so I have sent a sergeant to notify the manufacturers about the problem.

To answer your question I think we are doing a fine job and we are playing our cards right every move. I advice you to recruit more men and also have more rations sent to the front. I must say a spiffing job so far. Well done!

How well are our allies doing?

We have over the years made new allies and all have helped us in many ways i.e. the Japanese have recaptured some Islands for us, and many other countries have helped us. I assume that you would like to know how well the main powers are doing. I will inform you of how well the other countries of the Triple Entente are doing.

I decided to start with Russia and their status in the war. You probably know of their consideration of dropping out of the war, but we reassured the Russians to stay in the war and fight for what's right. They may have decided to keep on fighting but they are weak and I realise they haven't got much chance against the strong German forces. The Russians have lost a lot of ground and have many shortages in food and artillery. The way to help Russia would be to get through Gallipoli and give them reinforcements and food supplies we must carry on with this plan it's the only way. This might give the troops morale and they could have a chance of regaining ground, which would help us in the war. I will remind you that if Germany takes this battle to hand they will then leave the eastern-front and move over to the western-front where we are positioned. I know for a fact that we could not cope underneath this pressure and we would be made to surrender!

France is our other strong ally in the war and we are fighting with them on the western front. They are a very strong army and have many clever tactics. At this period of the war though you may succeed one day and lose another.

Their main battles are at Verdun and this is the gateway to Paris so they are very determined to keep it guarded.

I researched into the matter of Casualties in the battle of the Somme that the French had received and it came to a rounded up figure of :-195,000 troops died and many more injured. But they have recruited more men since this defeat and are keeping their ground. I must state the point that the Germans are growing by the day and Verdun won't hold out for much longer so something needs to be done.

This sums up how well our allies are doing. I would like to state that this information might have changed when this file reaches you. Sir Lloyd George we are still fighting well and that our allies are surviving the war.

How long is the war likely to last ?

This is an awkward question because wars can change very frequently but I had an estimated prediction and also looked at the charts to tell you the answer.

So far the war has lasted for two years and it could last for many more. My prediction says that it might last for another 2-3 years. I gave these numbers because I myself think soon one country or another will either run out of recourses or a breakthrough will be made and the stalemate will be broken.

There are other variables though, if America entered the war we are sure to have a quick victory due to their army, navy and resources.



<Feet have been affected by trench foot due to dirtiness in the trenches.

I also have reason to believe that many illnesses might be holding us back from a quicker victory. The moment we lose more men we need to recruit more thus repeating the cycle. I would advise you to research into cure for the trench illnesses and do something about it so we are left more men.

How might we achieve a swift victory ?

There are many ways to achieve a swift victory probably that no-one has ever thought of but my ideas are what I think could lead us to victory. I wish to ask that I am not at fault for any mistakes or losses if the plans default.

To put it on the line I think that if we urge America into the war we are sure to win. America have a massive army and their navy is also very dangerous. They are also increasingly getting involved in the war already i.e. Canadian troops are already positioned on the fronts. Also after the sinking of the Lusitania America feel very threatened and feel for the loss of the 100 U.S citizens on board. That is one point where we could achieve a victory.

The other point would be as shown on the map.

The plan that I devised would be to move all of the troops closer together to make a powerful force that could push through Verdun. We could also leave a light line of men on the rest of the front to hold out as we advanced.

If my plan went to hand most likely the Germans would retreat but with no where to go the Russians and persuaded Australians would keep them in the middle where we would surround them and disable them.



Prime Minister, I am most honoured that you chose to ask for my views on the war. I hope my work has helped you to understand more of what's been happening. If you do choose my plan's which do not work I am truly sorry for the inconvenience. Sir I must also add that statistics may have changed through the time it reaches you.

Michael Wright