

Propaganda to German People by Balloon Routes

Scientist's Novel Idea of Using Air Currents to Flood the Enemy's Land with Educational Messages on Innumerable Small Carriers

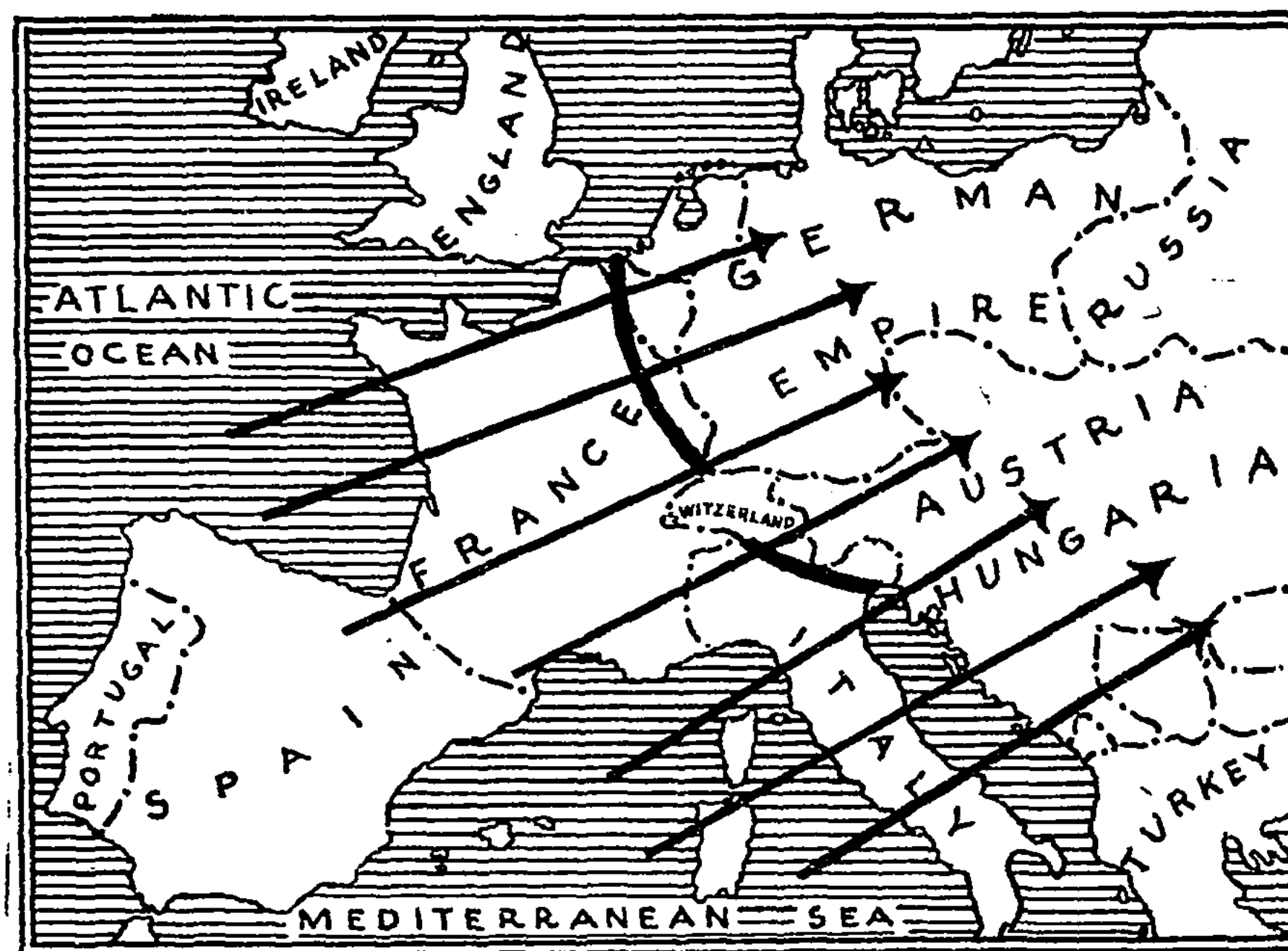
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IRONCLAD ignorance and skillfully applied misinformation are the two hypnotizing agents by which the military masters of Germany's restless and suffering millions keep them loyal and obedient. Widespread misery and discontent, growing distrust of their military leaders, and the example of Russia have made German and Austrian public opinion less docile and more explosive than since 1848. In this state of affairs if we could shell the German people behind the lines with facts and ideas, these missiles would not only have a more destructive effect on militant Germany than our bombshells on the western front, but would act as permanently reconstructive forces in building a non-militant Germany for the future.

If the masses of the German people could read for themselves the messages of President Wilson and the other allied statesmen, could receive the arguments and appeals of reformers in every land, could learn the facts concerning the war and the state of public opinion throughout the world, their blind loyalty, cemented by ignorance and falsehood, would be fatally and permanently disintegrated.

The following method would accomplish this result rapidly, inexpensively, and thoroughly in spite of frontier guards and police supervision, and also without violating morals or international law, imperiling its agents, or interfering with present military operations. The solution in brief is:

The whole curving battle line from Flanders to Trieste, and on to the Strait of Otranto, is in the region of the North Temperate airdrift from the southwest, blowing with comparative steadiness directly across the line over Germany and Austria-Hungary, and becoming swifter



AIR CURRENTS BLOWING OVER TEUTON LANDS.

Arrows Indicate the Dominant Drafts Which Would Carry Propaganda Balloons to the People of Germany and Austria.

and less interrupted by local disturbances as the higher air strata are reached; this airdrift to be utilized to carry over the whole empire innumerable small balloons carrying the desired messages, each carrier timed to float a certain period before descending with its message to the earth. The accompanying map shows the relation of this dominant airdrift to the battle line and reveals the effectiveness of this providential ally.

The carriers should be made of rubber, oiled paper, &c., and of various kinds and sizes, but all small. The timing of the carriers could be effected by various easily applied devices. The thickness and permeability of the envelope, the nature and pressure of the gas employed, the use of evaporation or slow chemical reactions, the insertion

through the envelope of capillary tubes or porous plugs, their release at different heights—these and other similar devices could control the period of flotation and hence determine the place of landing. In the case of hot-air carriers this could be accomplished by varying the size and combustion period of the heat-producing candle or other agent beneath.

From larger balloons, floating clear across Germany, messages could be released at constant intervals by clockwork, progressive chemical action, or other similar devices.

Launching the balloons with their messages could be easily and safely effected behind our lines.

Ground stations, especially on hills and mountains, equipped for rapid inflation, could launch millions, each rising to a

predetermined height and drifting a predetermined time. Anchored "sausages," similarly equipped and working at different heights, could emit streams of carriers, descending at different distances clear across Germany. Airplanes or dirigibles could strew them along different air lanes and at different heights. Automobiles could set them adrift along lines of frontier, and ships and submarines release them, to be drifted over enemy shores and descend in the interior. Various means of attracting attention are easily available. The carriers could be made of bright colors, or of phosphorescent materials. The fire balloons would be especially conspicuous, and any of the larger sizes could carry lights or emit smoke.

All messages should preferably be suspended by a six-foot thread to their balloons. Descending with extreme slowness, the suspended message would finally touch ground and the balloon thus anchored would remain conspicuously floating for a long time. In the forests and parks and on all cross-country wires the balloons and their suspended messages would catch and be hung up in plain sight. Thus in a thickly settled country like Germany relatively few would be entirely ineffective.

The special advantages of this method of propaganda are evident.

The whole vast scheme can be operated in safety behind our own lines and no nets, anti-aircraft guns, frontier guards, spies, or imaginable protective devices could block or even impede such a nationwide propaganda from the skies. All efforts to do so would awaken additional curiosity and increase the effectiveness of the campaign.

The carriers could be manufactured by millions, without elaborate special machinery or a long period of preparation. They are light, durable, and cheap. When deflated a single box car could carry hundreds of thousands.