

AIR TORPEDOES DEADLY AT 500 MILES, IS CLAIM

Invention So Simple Endorsers Fear the Huns Will Stumble on It

RED TAPE RESPONSIBLE

Head of Pennsylvania Aero Club Says Device Will Do All Expected of It

Philadelphia, March 14.—Berlin and many other German cities can be leveled to the earth and the war won in thirty days by an aerial torpedo which he has invented, according to Lester P. Barlow, who has an office in the Land Title Building, in this city.

Unsealing the lips yesterday of two of the half dozen men who know the secret so that they could corroborate his assertion, Mr. Barlow, who is the inventor of an aerial bomb and an anti-submarine depth bomb, which already have proved successful, added that his new aerial torpedo is the most terribly destructive engine of warfare that the world has ever seen.

One of his corroborators is Representative John Q. Tilson, of Connecticut, expert on explosives and a member of the military affairs committee of the House. The other is Joseph Steinmetz, president of the Aero Club of Pennsylvania, an airplane engineer and a well-known Philadelphia manufacturer.

Men Who Know Secrets Other men who have been told the secret and who have acknowledged the terrific possibilities of the invention, according to Barlow, are Brigadier General Squier, of the signal corps, who now is in France; Glenn L. Martin, of Detroit, the aeronautical expert, and Louis Stoddard, of New York, a banker.

It is because Mr. Barlow is perturbed at the delay which he said has been experienced in arranging for the manufacture of the new torpedo that he made his announcement last night. He gave the names of the men mentioned as corroborators of his assertions. Mr. Steinmetz, in a personal interview here, and Mr. Tilson, in an interview in Washington, corroborated the inventor's assertions.

According to Mr. Barlow, it would be possible to send the torpedoes to Berlin from behind the Allied lines in France and blow the German capital to pieces. Likewise, with the Germans in command of the secret, it would be easy for them to destroy London and Paris.

Victory Within 30 Days Mr. Barlow says that if the torpedoes are turned out in sufficient quantities the powers using them could bring the enemies to their knees within thirty days.

So simple, however, is the principle on which the deadly device is operated, he said, that the men who already have been let into the secret are living in daily terror lest the Teutonic mind grasp and utilize it before the United States has put itself into a position to send it against the Hun.

"I am afraid every day," said Mr. Steinmetz yesterday, "that the thought of this fearful device will occur to the German war staff. It is possible, you know, for such things to happen. This is a well-known fact. Inventors know that when a group of men think toward the same object and have the same basic idea at their command, they will arrive at the same result.

"There is danger that it will strike the German inventor's mind, and I live in constant fear that Germany may grasp the principle of this deadly torpedo before we can use it." "Six weeks ago," said Mr. Barlow last night, "General Squier was shown the plans of the torpedo. It carries more than half a ton of the highest explosive which can be manufactured. It has a range of 400 to 500 miles and is positive in going to its target.

"Two weeks ago one of the foremost aeronautical engineers and myself were told to go ahead on the first one of the full sized torpedoes and not wait for a contract. We were told this by the president of the Aero Club. Yesterday I was in Washington and found that the contract had not been let and not a penny had been advanced for its purchase.

Offers to Give U. S. Torpedo "I offered the torpedo as a gift to the government.

"The authorities at Washington admitted when they were shown the plans that Berlin could be blown off the map and the German nation could be whipped in thirty days.

"They also admitted that thousands of these devices should be on hand before their use was commenced, because so simple is the principle on which they are operated that the German inventors more than likely would discover it after a few thousands of them had leveled some of their cities.

"There is but one way that Germany can be whipped and that is by the air route.

"If the Germans ever think of the principle of my aerial torpedo we can expect Germany to destroy both London and Paris by air raids of such torpedoes carrying the half-ton charges of high explosives. High officials in Washington have admitted in my presence that if Germany knew what we were talking about she would undoubtedly make use of the device at the earliest possible date.

"All this occurred several weeks ago—yet here we sit spinning our thumbs and altogether we give three cheers for the Red Tape and the Board of War Delay.

"If any one thinks that the aerial torpedo, capable of inflicting such damage on the enemies of our country, is a dream or a fairy tale, he would have him communicate with General Squier, who now is in France; Secretary of War Baker, Glenn L. Martin, one of America's foremost aeronautical engineers; Mr. Steinmetz or Congressman Tilson.

"These gentlemen with the exception of the Secretary of War, know most of the details of the device, as does Howard Coffin, Mr. Coffin, however, cannot be held in any way responsible for the delay, as he learned of the details for the first time only yesterday.

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