A cartoon about American's attitude towards the war in Europe.
Baseball World Series cartoon parody of trench warfare.

*Dallas Morning News, August 1917*
The coded form of the Zimmermann Telegram

Zimmermann Telegram as Received by the German Ambassador to Mexico, 01/19/1917
Record Group 59: General Records of the Department of State, 1756 – 1979 National Archives and Records Administration
ARC Identifier 302025

University of North Texas Libraries
The Zimmermann Telegram decoded message

Zimmermann Telegram – Decoded Message,
Record Group 59: General Records of the Department of State, 1756-1979 National Archives and Records Administration. ARC Identifier 302022.
A copy of the telegram circulated through the United States Senate

STEP TAKEN ON JANUARY 19.

A copy of Zimmermann’s instructions to Von Eckhardt, sent through Von Bernstorff, is in possession of the United States Government. It is as follows:

BERLIN, JANUARY 19, 1917.

On the 1st of February we intend to begin submarine warfare unrestricted. In spite of this, it is our intention to endeavor to keep neutral the United States of America.

If this attempt is not successful, we propose an alliance on the following basis with Mexico: That we shall make war together and together make peace. We shall give general financial support, and it is understood that Mexico is to reconquer the lost territory in New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona. The details are left to you for settlement.

MEXICO TO BRING IN JAPAN.

You are instructed to inform the President of Mexico of the above in the greatest confidence as soon as it is certain that there will be an outbreak of war with the United States and suggest that the President of Mexico, on his own initiative, should communicate with Japan suggesting adherence at once to this plan; at the same time, offer to mediate between Germany and Japan.

Please call to the attention of the President of Mexico that the employment of ruthless submarine warfare now promises to compel England to make peace in a few months.

ZIMMERMANN.

U.S. Congressional Record, Senate Second Session of the 64th Congress vol. LIV, 1917. 4596
The Senate’s request for more information about the telegram

Mr. LODGE. I ask that it be read.
The message was read, as follows:

To the Senate:
In response to the resolution adopted by the Senate on March 1, 1917, requesting the President to furnish the Senate, if not incompatible with the public interest, whatever information he has concerning the note published in the press of this date purporting to have been sent January 19, 1917, by the German Secretary for Foreign Affairs to the German minister to Mexico, I transmit herewith a report by the Secretary of State, which has my approval.

Woodrow Wilson.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, March 1, 1917.

TO THE PRESIDENT:
The resolution adopted by the United States Senate on March 1, 1917, requesting that that body be furnished, if not incompatible with the public interest, whatever information you have concerning the note published in the press of this date purporting to have been sent January 19, 1917, by the German Secretary for Foreign Affairs to the German minister to Mexico, I have the honor to state that the Government is in possession of evidence which establishes the fact that the note referred to is authentic, and that it is in the possession of the Government of the United States, and that the evidence was procured by this Government during the present week, but that it is, in my opinion, incompatible with the public interest to send to the Senate at the present time any further information in the possession of the Government of the United States relative to the note mentioned in the resolution of the Senate.

Respectfully submitted.

Robert Lansing.

U.S. Congressional Record, Senate Second Session of the 64th Congress vol. LIV, 1917. 4618
Texan reaction to Zimmermann Telegram

Dallas Morning News 21 March 1917 Political Cartoon illustrating Texas reaction to the Zimmermann Telegram
The Dallas Morning News

GERMANY PLOTTING TO INVOLVE MEXICO AND JAPAN IN WAR WITH UNITED STATES; TEXAS, NEW MEXICO AND ARIZONA CARRANZA'S SHARE OF SPOILS FOR CAUSING JAPAN TO TURN TRAITOR TO ENTENTE

OFFICIAL LETTER FROM ZIMMERMANN TO GERMAN AMBASSADOR IN MEXICO CITY NOW IN HANDS OF ADMINISTRATION BERNSTOFF'S PART IN PLOT EXPOSED—CARRANZA'S RECENT PEACE NOTE EXPLAINED

WASHINGTON, Feb. 25.—The Associated Press is enabled to reveal that Germany, in planning unrestricted submarine warfare and counting its consequences, proposed an alliance with Mexico and Japan to make war on the United States if this country should not remain neutral.

Japan, through Mexican mediation, was to be urged to abandon her allies and join in the attack on the United States.

Mexico, for her reward, was to receive general financial support from Germany, reconquer Texas, New Mexico and Arizona—lost provinces—and share in the victorious peace terms Germany contemplated.

Details were left to German Minister von Eckhardt in Mexico City, who, by instructions signed by German Foreign Minister Zimmermann at Berlin, January 19, 1917, was directed to propose the alliance with Mexico to General Carranza and suggest that Mexico seek to bring Japan into the plot.

These instructions were transmitted to Von Eckhardt through Count von Bernstorff, former German Ambassador here, now on his way home to Germany under a safe conduct obtained from his enemies by the country against which he was plotting war.

Germany pictured to Mexico by broad intimation, England and the Entente allies defeated, Germany and her allies triumphant and in world dominion by the instrument of unrestricted submarine warfare.

A copy of Zimmermann’s instructions to Von Eckhardt, sent through Von Bernstorff, is in possession of the United States Government. It is as follows:

Zimmermann Telegram unveiled to Texas citizens

By the Associated Press.

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"You are instructed to inform the President of Mexico of the above in the greatest confidence as soon as it is certain that there will be an outbreak of war with the United States and suggest that the President of Mexico, on his own initiative, should communicate with Japan suggesting adherence at once to this plan, at the same time offer to mediate between Germany and Japan.

"Please call to the attention of the President of Mexico that the employment of ruthless submarine warfare now promises to compel England to make peace in a few months. (Signed) ZIMMERMANN."

This document has been in the hands of the Government since President Wilson broke off diplomatic relations with Germany. It has been kept secret, while the President has been urging Congress for full authority to deal with Germany, and while Congress has been hesitating. It was in the President’s hands while Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg was declaring that the United States had placed an interpretation on the submarine declaration “never intended by Germany,” and that Germany had promoted and honored friendly relations with the United States “as an heirloom from Frederick the Great.”

"Of itself, if there were no other, it is considered a sufficient answer to the German Chancellor’s plaint that the United States “brusquely” broke off relations without giving “authentic” reasons for its action.

Dallas Morning News 1 August 1917 Zimmermann Telegram

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Political cartoons about U.S. involvement in World War I

Propaganda posters condemning Germany and her U-boats

The British reaction to the Telegram

Dallas Morning News
2 August 1917

U.S. war poster, note depiction of German vs. American soldier

The Zimmermann Telegram

Mexico’s actions after the telegram and U.S. suspicion

Almost coincident with Zubaran’s return from Germany, Cabrera returned to Mexico City, open in his expressions of anti-Americanism. Zubaran, before being sent abroad, had represented General Carranza here while the Niagara mediation conferences were proceeding, and was no less avowedly anti-American than Cabrera.

Carranza’s peace proposal was openly pronounced as evidence of German influence in Mexico by officials here, who declared it was intended only to embarrass the United States. Then apparently some influences showed their effect on the course of the Mexican Government, and on Feb. 25 Cabrera, the Minister of Finance, issued a statement describing the “amazement” of the Mexican Government that the American newspapers should have interpreted General Carranza’s proposal to cut off exports of munitions as a suggestion that he might cut off shipments of British oil. They were, Cabrera declared, “entirely groundless.”

Meanwhile, Baron von Schoen, secretary of the German embassy here, was transferred to the legation in Mexico City. No explanation could be obtained of the reason for his transfer and such investigation as was possible failed to develop why a secretary from the United States should be sent to the German legation in Mexico. Baron von Schoen’s association with the moves, if any at all, does not appear. The only outward indication that he might have been connected with them is found in the fact that he recently had been detached from the German embassy in Tokio and was well acquainted with the Japanese Minister in Mexico City.

There was an intimation that Germany’s astounding proposal that Japan turn traitor to her allies had been answered by Tokio.

EMBASSY WAS HEADQUARTERS.

Count von Bernstorff’s connection with the plot, further than serving as a channel of communication, is intensified by the fact that the German embassy here was not merely, the medium of delivering a message in this instance, but was really a sort of headquarters for all the German missions in Central and South America.

Dallas Morning News, 1 August 1917
Japan’s reaction to the telegram

Dallas Morning News
3 August 1917

German Proposal to Abandon Allies Not Received by Japan

Tokio, March 2, 5:30 p.m.—Japan has received no proposition from either Mexico or Germany, directly or indirectly, to join in a possible war against the United States, Viscount Motono, Japanese Foreign Minister, informed the Associated Press today.

Viscount Motono said he considered such an idea ridiculous, it being based on the outrageous presumption that Japan would abandon her allies. If Mexico received the proposal, Viscount Motono added, that country showed intelligence in not transmitting it to Japan.
Dallas Morning News, 3 August 1917. Editorial cartoon on rush to war.

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Woodrow Wilson deserves the implicit confidence of that great majority of the people of the United States who earnestly desire peace. For two years, in the most trying circumstances, under great and repeated provocation, he showed an unwavering determination to keep the United States out of war if that could possibly be done without surrendering rights of such a fundamental nature that none but a contemptible Nation would surrender them.

Last April—a year after the sinking of the Lusitania—he stated the terms upon which this country would continue friendly relations with Germany. The country unquestionably approved that statement. The only notable objections came from those who resented its moderation. After careful consideration, Germany chose to reject those terms. The choice lay with her. When she chose to reject our terms the United States had no choice but to terminate friendly relations.

The situation was thrust upon the President after he had done the utmost to avoid it that national self-respect would permit. On his record all those who sincerely wish peace, but would not purchase it by surrender of vital rights, must give him their complete confidence. His course throughout demonstrated that he was a trustworthy guardian of their interests. Whatever could reasonably be done to avoid war, he would do.

All attempts to discredit and harass him in the crisis were unworthy and should have no countenance. The fatuous and transparent agitation for a referendum previous to a declaration of war was only, in effect, an attempt to get a vote of lack of confidence in the President and to tie his hands; so that, no matter what indignities or outrages might come, the Government of the United States must stand idle for weeks with its hands in its pockets—a spectacle for the laughter and scorn of the nations—while an electioneering diversion was carried out.

Give no countenance to any attempt to discredit and harass the President. He has deserved your confidence. Let him know he has it.—Saturday Evening Post.
A cartoon about Europe’s reaction to America’s entry into the war.
The British Empire’s financial dependence on the U.S.

Dallas Morning News
31 August 1917

For Liberty Civilization and Humanity. New York: Il Cittadino, n.d. (Poster, 24”x14.” “from the original cast by E. Cammilli.”)
The daily effect on life in Texas after America enters the war

Dallas Morning News
7 August 1917

Poster encouraging citizens to support troops.


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Primary Source
Adventures: Failed
Diplomacy: The Zimmermann Telegram


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