

How Postal Agreements Develop:

The British-German Collaboration on Deutsche Lufthansa's Routes to South America 1933-1939

Gary Wayne Loew

West Africa Study Circle

September 30, 2023



Just to Tempt You...

BY AIR MAIL
PAR AVION

Via Germany.

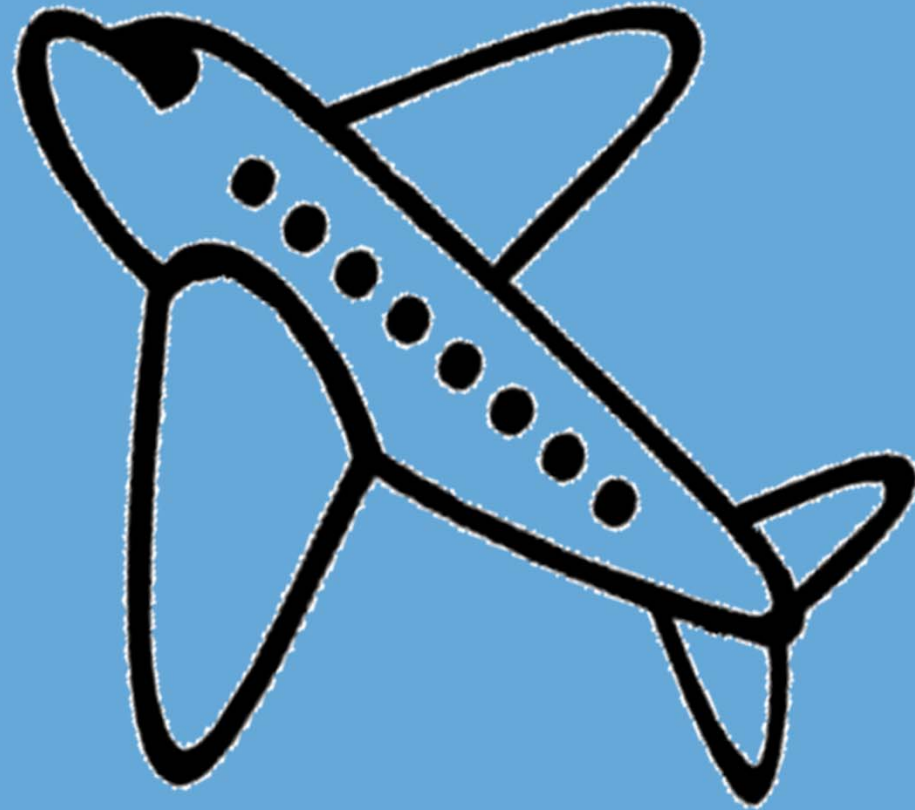
BANK OF LONDON & SOUTH AMERICA LIMITED.

Case 206
Sennambuco



Our Journey Today

- Objectives – How my objectives changed
- The British – Limited Transatlantic Efforts
- The French – Strategy Towards the British
- The Germans – Route Development
 - Contract Negotiations
 - The Mails In Action
 - The Dream Ends



The Bathurst Connection

Expected Objectives

- Convince you that Gambia was important to the Development of DLH's Routes to South America

Revised Objectives

- Demonstrate just how *difficult* it was to achieve agreements with Gambia and establish those Bathurst facilities

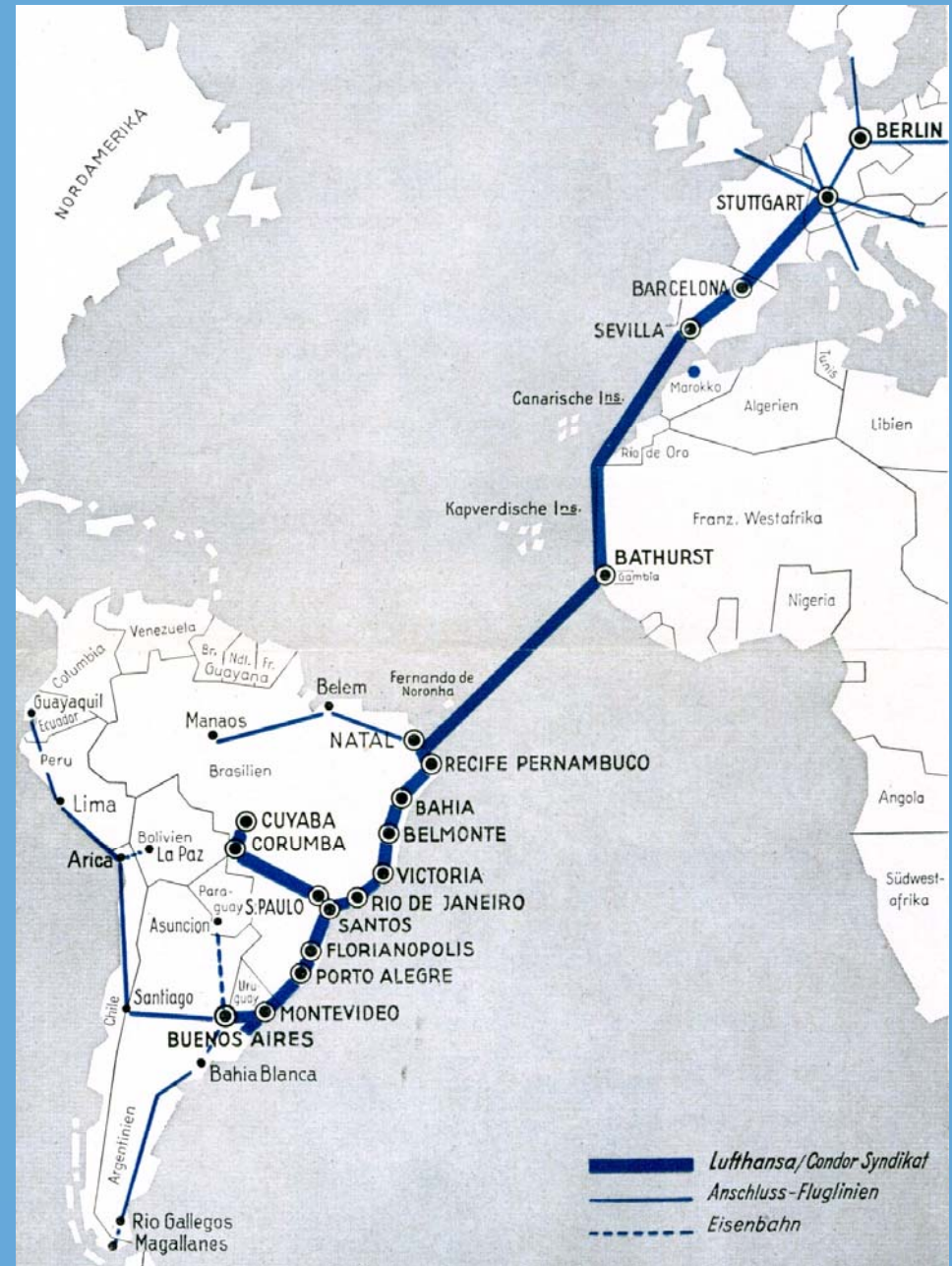
Overarching Theme:

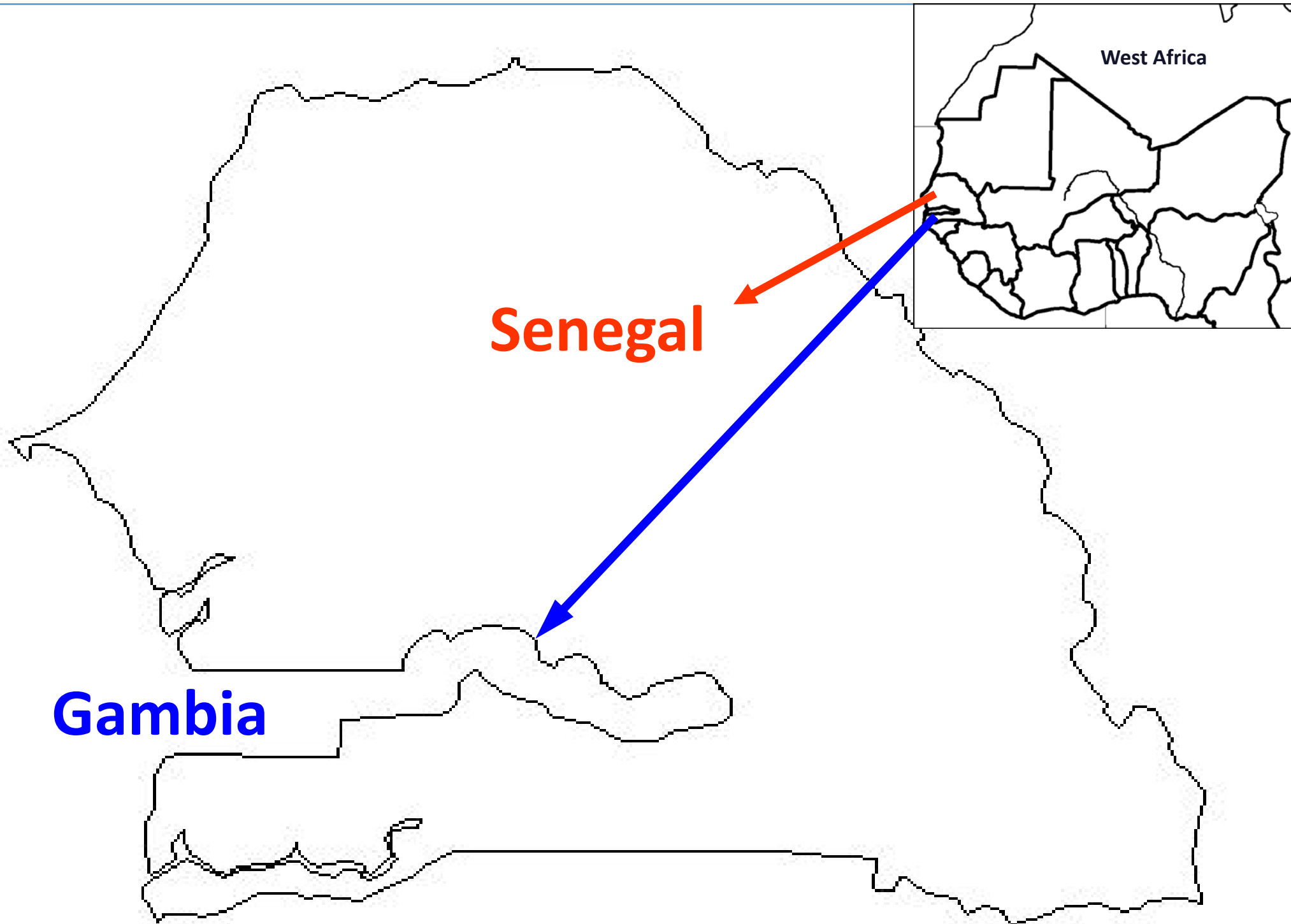
The Very High Time Value of Information
("Information" means *The Mails*)



Why the Route was Needed

- Economic Interests of the Germans & French
- Air and Rail Routes within South America
- Mail for both Commercial & Personal Communications
- Passenger Traffic
- Cargo

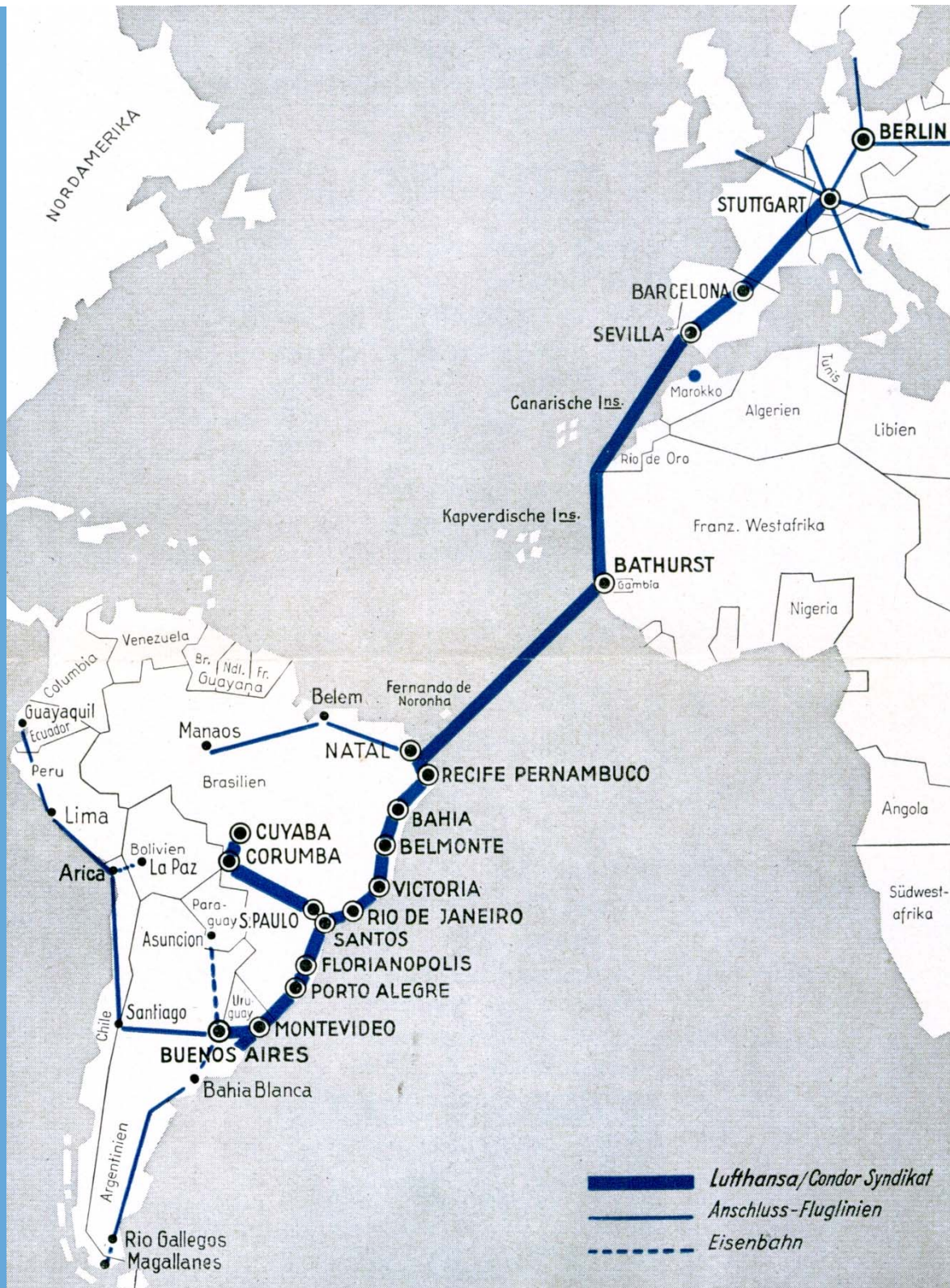


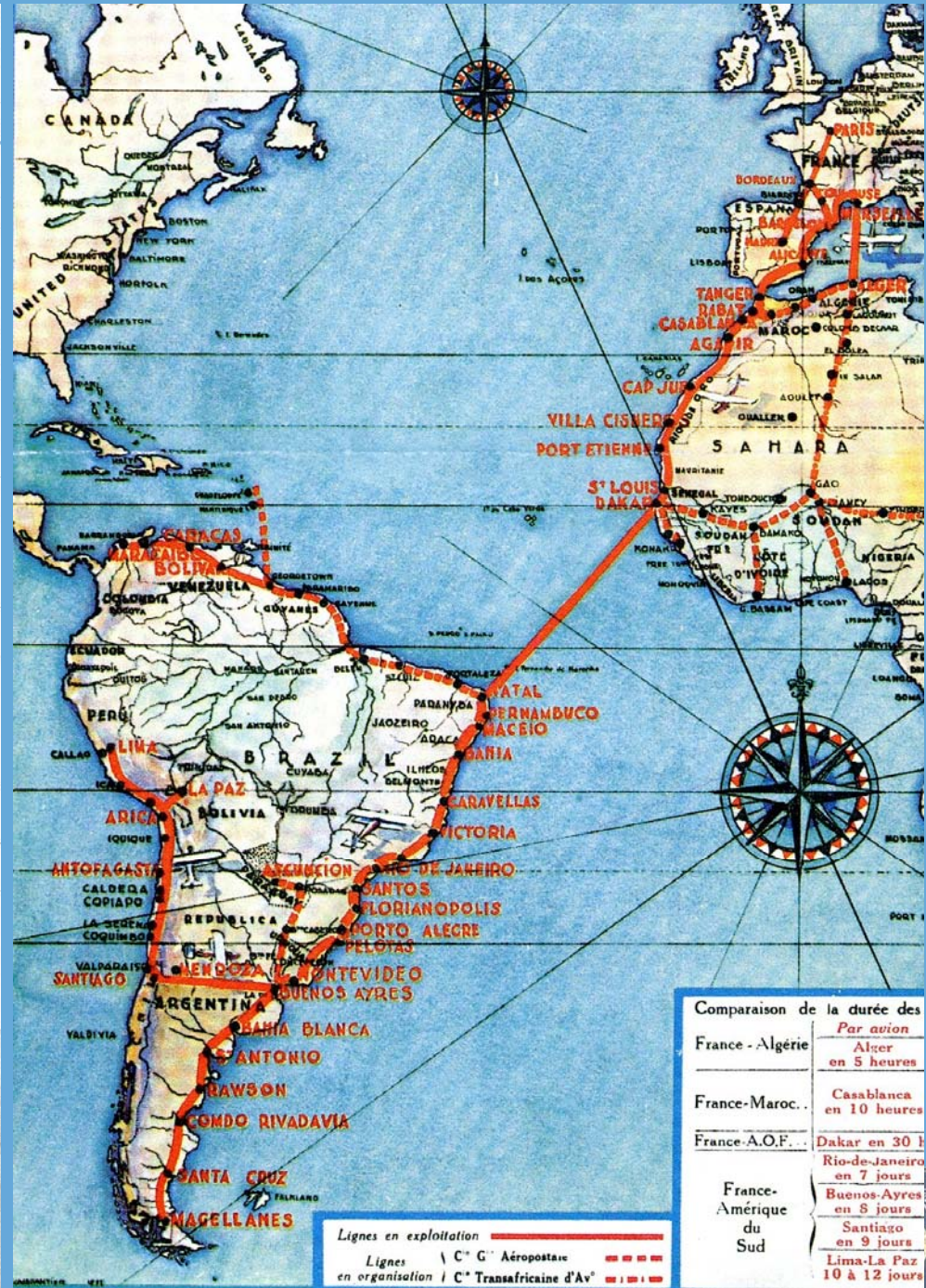
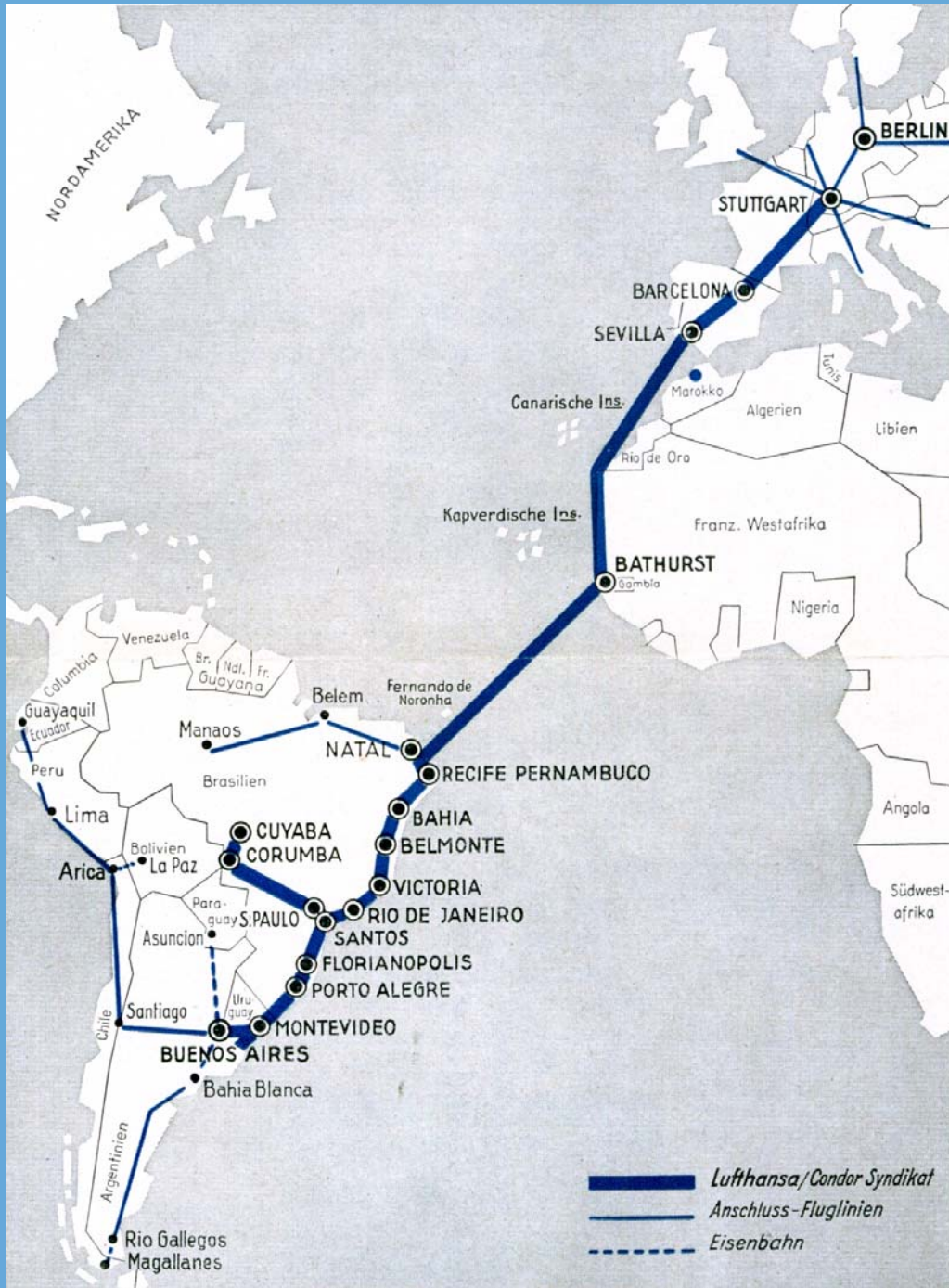


Senegal

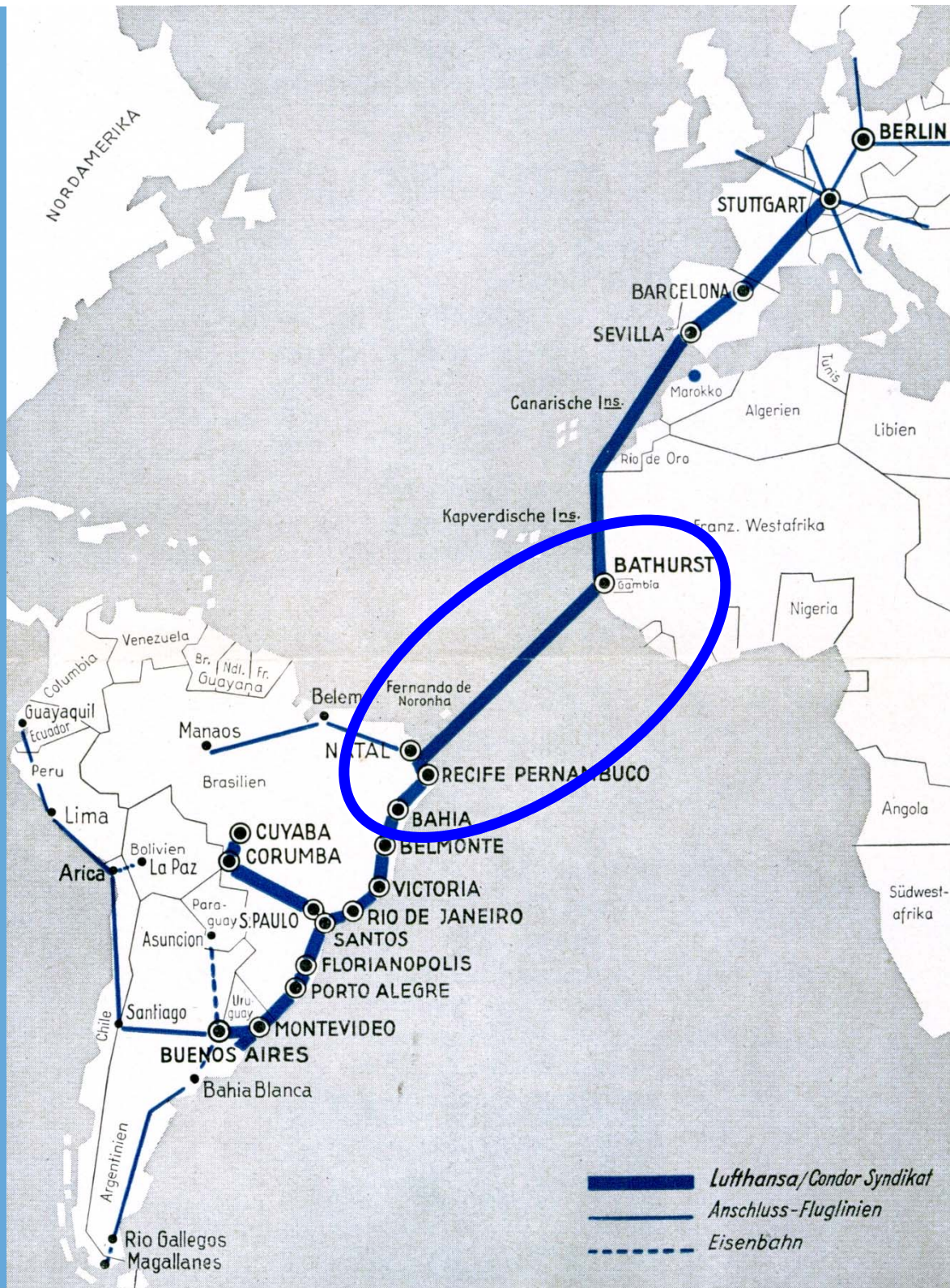
Gambia

West Africa

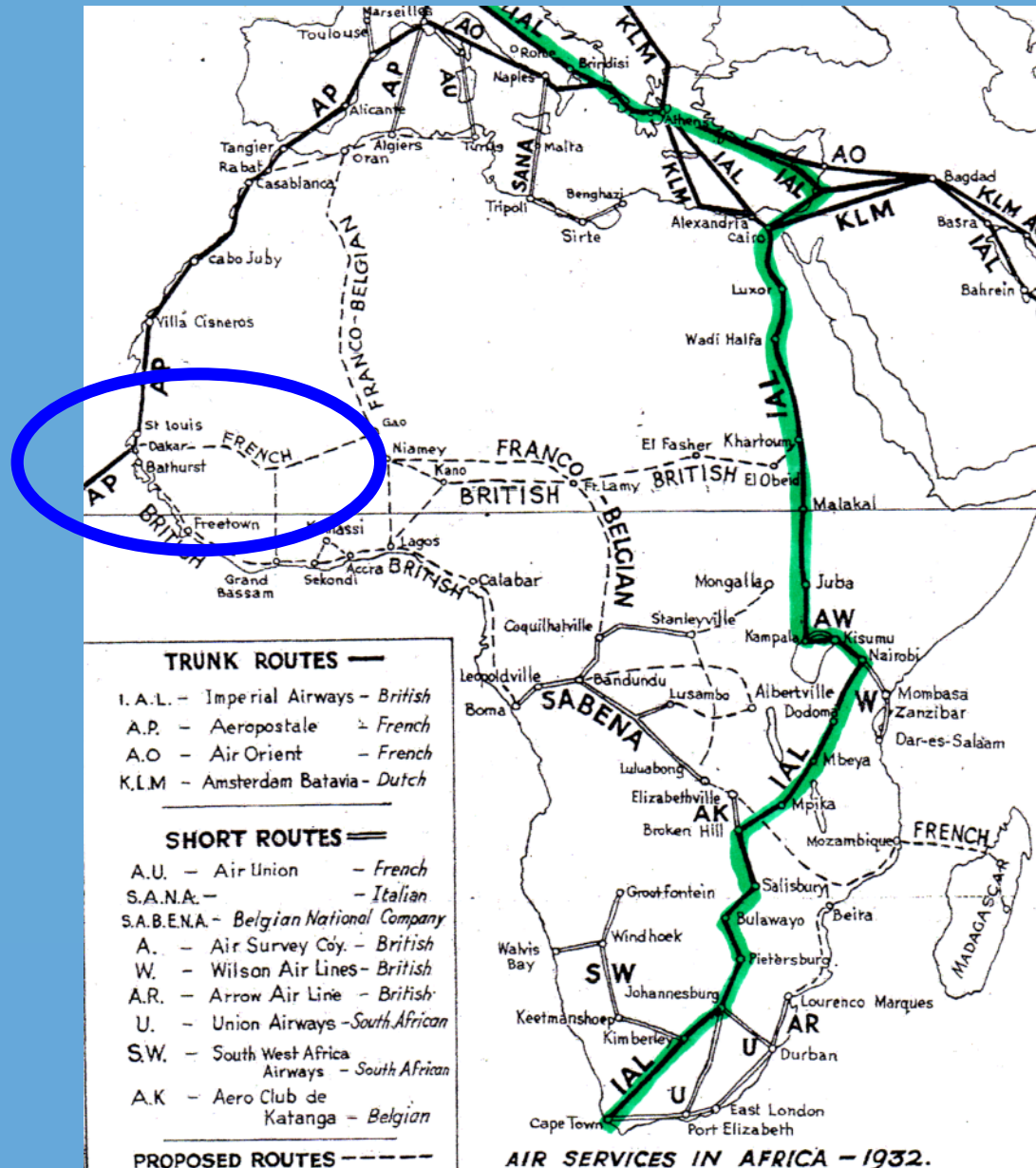




Comparaison de la durée des	
France - Algérie	Par avion Alger en 5 heures
France-Maroc..	Casablanca en 10 heures
France-A.O.F...	Dakar en 30 h Rio-de-Janeiro en 7 jours
France- Amérique du Sud	Buenos-Ayres en 8 jours Santiago en 9 jours Lima-La Paz 10 à 12 jours



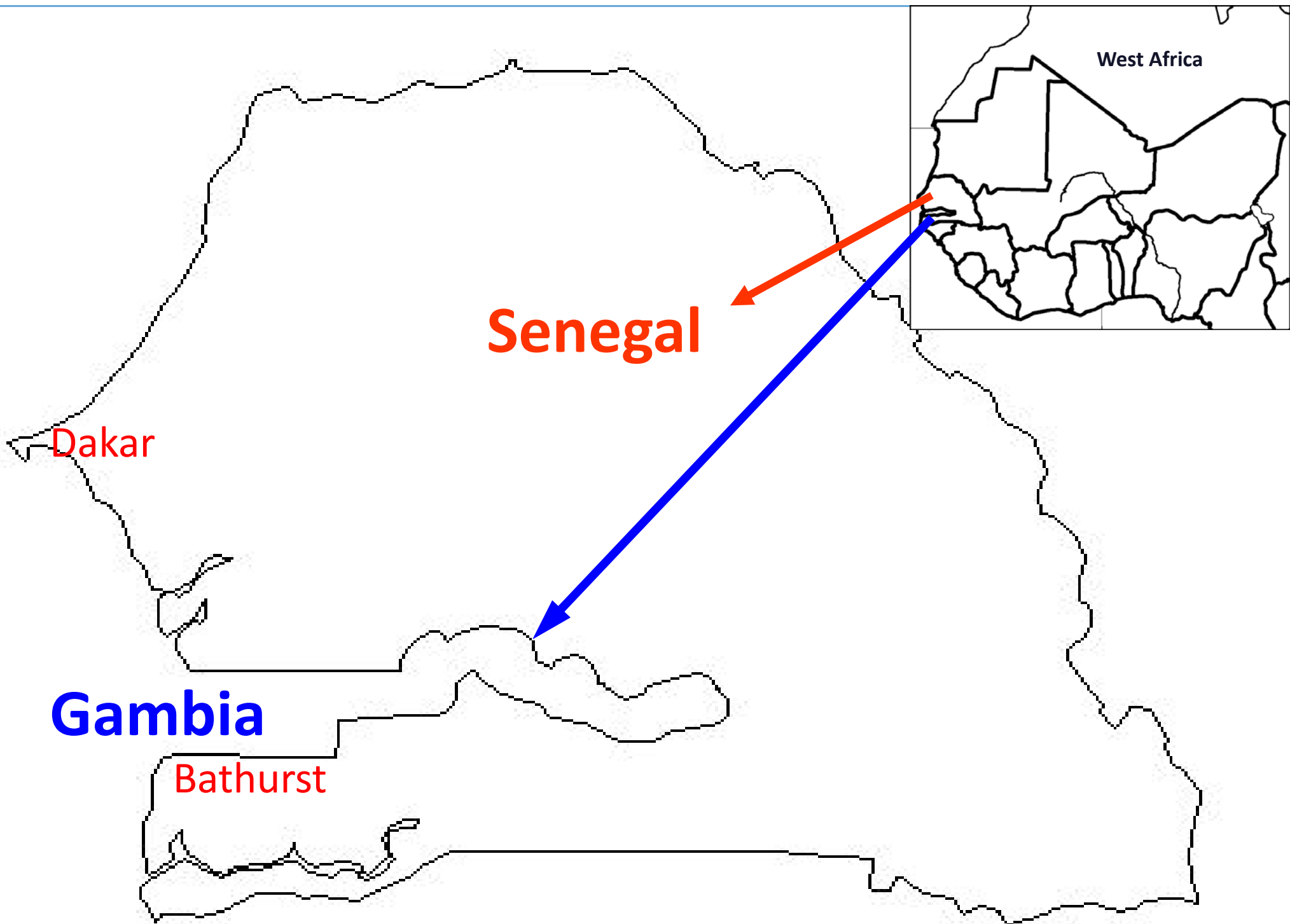
The British – Limited Transatlantic Efforts



The French – Strategy Towards Bathurst

- The French had Dakar in Senegal
- Las Palmas (in the Canary Islands) through Dakar to Natal Brazil
– 56 Miles Shorter
- Their Bathurst Strategy – Limit Dakar/Bathurst to ship mail





Senegal

Dakar

Gambia

Bathurst

West Africa

DLH Route Development

Why Bother?

- **Faster Service** – the time value of information (mail)
- **Reliable Service** – avoid weather & disasters
- **Cheaper Service** – not so important but nice



German Route Development

- Zeppelins in South America starting 1929
- DLH Operating Mixed Mode Service via land, sea & air starting 1930 (Failed Service)
 - Berlin /Stuttgart — by train
 - Stuttgart /Marseilles /Barcelona /Cadiz — by land plane
 - Cadiz /Las Palmas — by seaplane
 - Las Palmas /Fernando de Noronha — by steamer
 - Fernando de Noronha / Natal /Rio de Janeiro — by land plane



German Route Development

DLH Proposed Revised Mixed Mode Service via seaplane & catapult in 1931

- Berlin / Stuttgart / Marseilles / Barcelona / Cadiz — by airplane
- Cadiz /Las Palmas / Villa Cisneros (Rio de Oro) / **Bathurst** — by seaplane
- **Bathurst** / Fernando de Noronha – Natal — by catapult ship and seaplane



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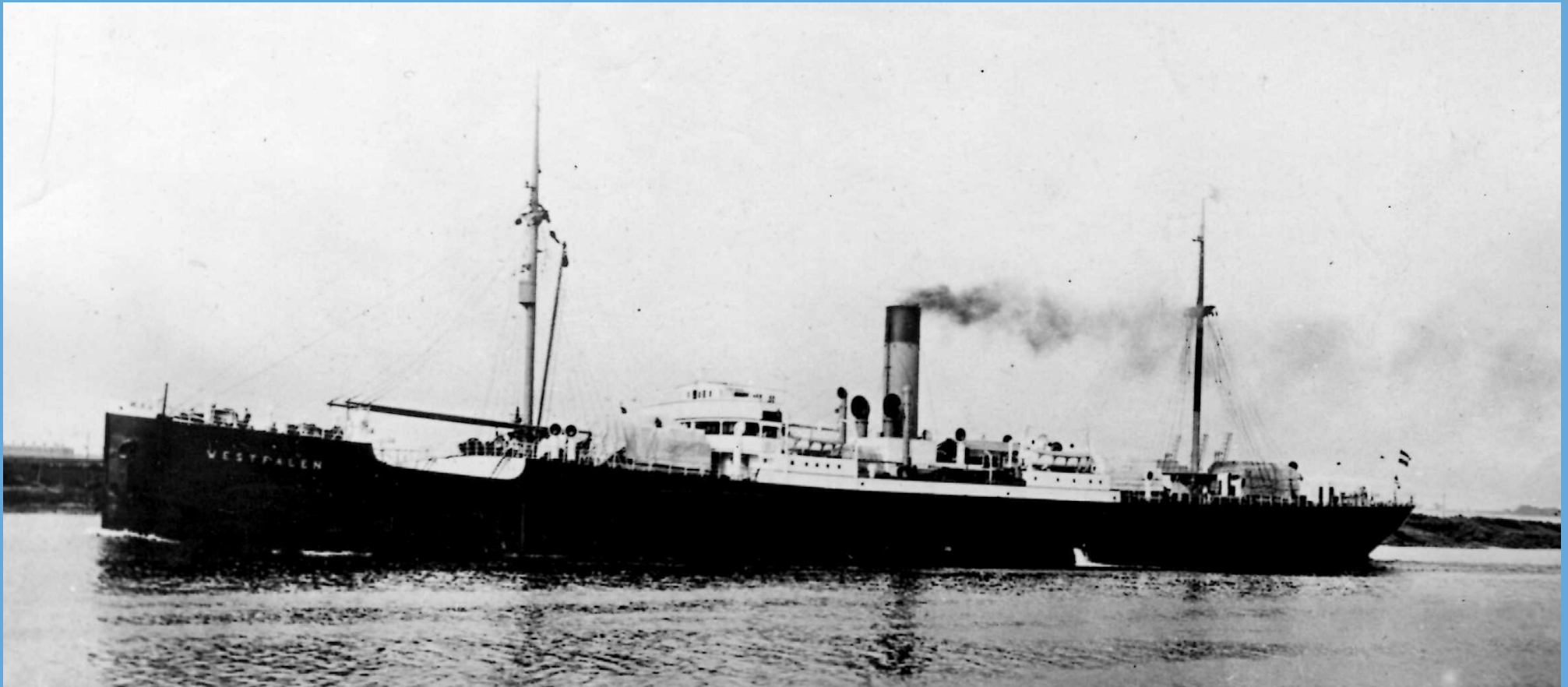


German Route Development

- This would save 3 days over the Zeppelin route
- And Replace DLH's failed route
- Distance is 3124 kilometers or 1941 miles (Bathurst to Natal)
- The Catapult Ship *Westfalen* stationed mid-ocean



Westfalen





Seaplane Monson in Catapult Aboard Westfalen



DLH Contract Negotiations

- **May 9th 1933** – DLH sends its first representative to Bathurst
- **May 19th** – Acting Governor issues permits for test flights with 2 Dornier Wals



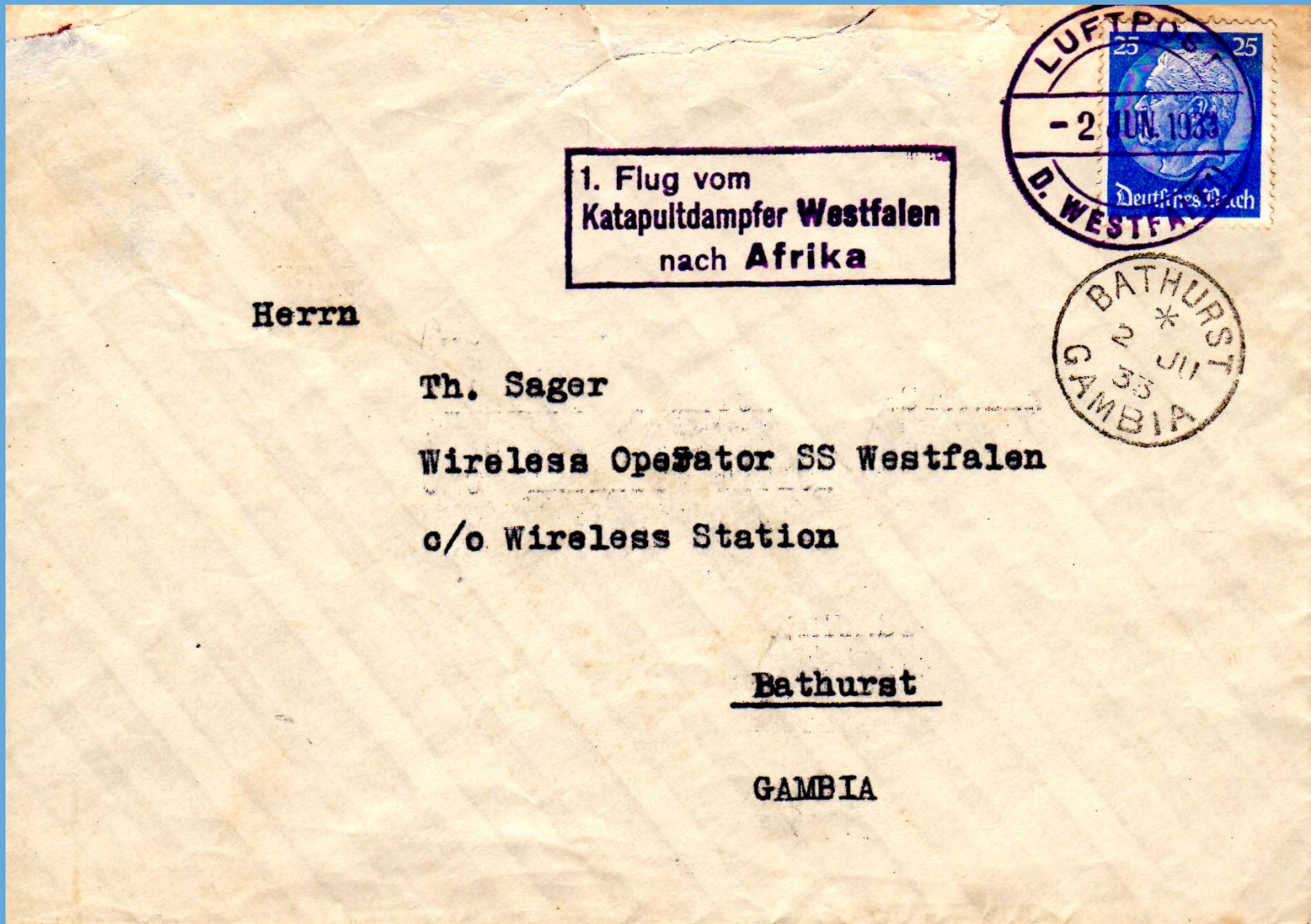
German Route Development

- **June 2/6/24** – 3 Successful test flights
- All three flights carried mail
- ... *unauthorized* mail
- Crew were reprimanded



1st Test Flight - 2-JUN-1933

Westfalen to Bathurst aboard *Monson*



2nd Test Flight - 6-JUN-1933 Bathurst to *Westfalen* to Natal



3rd Test Flight – 23-JUN-1933

Natal to Germany via *Westfalen* & Bathurst

(Note Jusqu'à marks)



DLH Contract Negotiations

- **August 11th** – DLH Requests Facilities
 - **Housing** accommodations for six persons
 - **Seaplane facilities** at Half Die (hanger for two planes, slipway, crane and service cutter)
 - **Wireless station** for communication with seaplanes (located aboard the cutter)
- **Sept-Oct** – Looking for facilities
- **Sept 29th** – Land based wireless station requested



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DLH Contract Negotiations

- **October 6th** – DLH cables a request for landing rights for more test flights
 - An additional Dornier-Wal
 - A Junkers Ju 52
 - The *Westfalen*
 - 21 Pilots, crew & ground support staff



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DLH Contract Negotiations

- **October 6th** – DLH also commits to the following schedule beginning “early” 1934

Day 1 – Stuttgart to Cadiz via Junkers Ju 52 Land or Heinkel He 70

Day 2 – Cadiz – Las Palmas – Bathurst via Junkers Ju 42 See and Dornier-Wal

Day 3 – Bathurst to Westfalen via Dornier-Wal

Day 4 – Westfalen to Natal via Dornier-Wal

Day 5 – Natal to Rio de Janeiro & Buenos Aires by transfer to the

Condor Syndicate service



DLH Contract Negotiations

- **“Early” Dec 1933** – Bathurst issues “Special and Temporary Authority” for Jan-March 1934 landings
- **Dec 11th** – DLH appoints United African Company as resident agent



DLH Contract Negotiations

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- **Dec 11th** – DLH appoints United African Company as resident agent (Today, \$62 Billion Unilever PLC)
- **Dec 28th** – Aerodrome & Wireless Stations approved



1934 First Official Flights

Trans-Gambian Mails Only - Southbound

- Stuttgart – Feb 3rd
- Bathurst – Feb 5th
- Natal – Feb 7th
- Carried 46 Kg of Mail (10-11,000 letters)



Stuttgart to
Porto Alegre

1934 First Official Flights

Trans-Gambian Mails Only - Northbound

- Natal – Feb 9th
- Bathurst – Feb 10th
- Stuttgart – Feb 12th
- Mail quantity not recorded



Porto Alegre to
Nurnberg

1934 First Official Flights

Trans-Gambian Mails Only - Northbound

- Natal – Feb 9th
- Bathurst – Feb 10th
- Stuttgart – Feb 12th
- Mail quantity not recorded



Sao Paulo to
London



Promoting the Service

FLUGDIENST DEUTSCHE LUFTHANSA – SYNDICATO-CONDOR

FLUGPLAN				
Mittwoch 23.35 Uhr	ab	Berlin	an	Montag
Donnerstag 5 Uhr	ab	Frankfurt (M.)	an	Montag
Donnerstag	ab	Marseille	an	Montag
Donnerstag	ab	Barcelona	an	—
Donnerstag	ab	Sevilla	an	Sonntag
Freitag	an	Las Palmas*)	ab	Sonntag
Freitag	an	Bathurst*)	ab	Sonnabend
Sonnabend	an	Natal	ob	Freitag
Sonntag	an	Rio de Janeiro	ab	Donnerstag
Sonntag	an	Montevideo	ab	Donnerstag
Sonntag	an	Buenos Aires	ab	Donnerstag
Montag	an	Santiago/Chile	ab	Mittwoch

*) Ab 17. 6. nur 14tägig

FLUGDIENST AIR FRANCE

FLUGPLAN				
Sonnabend		Berlin		Donnerstag
Sonnabend		Frankfurt (M.)		Donnerstag
Sonntag		Paris		Mittwoch
Sonntag		Toulouse		Mittwoch
Sonntag		Barcelona		Mittwoch
Montag		Dakar		Dienstag
Montag		Natal		Montag
Dienstag		Rio de Janeiro		Sonntag
Mittwoch		Montevideo		Sonntag
Mittwoch		Buenos Aires		Sonntag
Donnerstag		Santiago / Chile		Sonnabend

ÄNDERUNGEN VORBEHALTEN



POSTSCHLUSSE

in und außerhalb Deutschlands richten sich nach dem Aufgabert. Fragen Sie daher Ihr Postamt nach dem Postschluß in Ihrem Auflieferungsor. Leichte Postschlüsse bei den Sammelstellen für die Luftpost des Südamerika-Dienstes:

DEUTSCHER LUFTPOSTDIENST:

Berlin: Postamt C2, Königstraße 61, jeden Mittwoch 21 Uhr.
Frankfurt (M.): Postamt 2, Flughafen, jeden Donnerstag 2.45 Uhr.
Leichte Auflieferungsmöglichkeit in:

FRANZÖSISCHER LUFTPOSTDIENST:

Berlin: Postamt C2, jeden Sonnabend 13.40 Uhr.
Frankfurt (M.): Bahnpostamt 19, jeden Sonnabend 13 Uhr.
Leichte Auflieferungsmöglichkeit in:

POSTGEBÜHREN AB DEUTSCHLAND:

Gewöhnliche Auslands-Freigebür:

Briefe bis 20 Gramm	25 Rpf.
(jede weiteren 20 Gramm 15 Rpf.)	
Postkarten	15 Rpf.
Drucksachen je 50 Gramm	5 Rpf.
Warenproben je 50 Gramm	5 Rpf.
	Mindestsatz 10 Rpf.
Geschäftspapiere je 50 Gramm	5 Rpf.
	Mindestsatz 25 Rpf.

Päckchen nur nach Britisch-Gambia, Brasilien und Argentinien.
Höchstgewicht 1 kg. Auskunft bei allen Postanstalten!

Luftpostzuschläge (außer der gewöhnlichen Auslands-Freigebür):

Nach den Kanarischen Inseln Briefsendungen jeder Art — je 5 Gramm	15 Rpf.
Nach Bathurst (Britisch-Gambia) für Briefe — je 5 Gramm — und Postkarten	30 Rpf.
für andere Briefsendungen je 25 Gramm	40 Rpf.
Nach Brasilien für Briefe je 5 Gramm — andere Briefsendungen je 25 Gramm und Postkarten	1,25 RM.
Pakete (nur bei Luftschiffreisen) je 500 Gramm	6,— RM.
nach Argentinien, Bolivien, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay	1,50 RM.
Pakete (nur bei Luftschiffreisen) je 500 Gramm	7,— RM.

2 X WÖCHENTLICH LUFTPOST NACH SÜDAMERIKA



Promoting the Service



LUFTSCHIFFFAHRTEN DER DEUTSCHEN ZEPPELIN-REEDEREI 1936
EUROPA—SÜDAMERIKA

ABFAHRZEITEN AB FRANKFURT (M.):

APRIL	27./28.
MAI	11./12., 25./26.
JUNI	8./9.
JUNI	24./25.
JULI	8./9., 20./21./1., 29./30.
AUGUST	12./13., 26./27.
SEPTEMBER	9./10., 23./24.
OKTOBER	7./8., 21./22., 28./29.
NOVEMBER	4./5., 11./12., 18./19., 25./26.
DEZEMBER	2./3.

Auf diesen Fahrten werden nur Drucksachen und Pakete befördert (keine Briefpost).
*) Keine Briefpost

ÄNDERUNGEN VORBEHALTEN

DEUTSCHE LUFTHANSA



Südamerika erwartet schnelle Post

AUSKUNFTE erteilen:
Sämtliche Postanstalten sowie alle Dienststellen der Deutschen Lufthansa, der Air France und der Deutschen Zeppelin-Reederei

SPEZIAL-LUFTPOSTPAPIER
Umschlag u. 2 Briefbogen — 5 Gramm
im Papierhandel erhältlich

LUFTSCHIFFFAHRTEN DER DEUTSCHEN ZEPPELIN-REEDEREI 1936
SÜDAMERIKA—EUROPA

ABFAHRZEITEN AB RIO DE JANEIRO:

APRIL	18.
MAI	2., 16., 30.
JUNI	13.
JULI	1., 15., 25./1.
AUGUST	5., 19.
SEPTEMBER	3., 16., 30.
OKTOBER	14., 29.
NOVEMBER	4., 12., 18., 26.
DEZEMBER	2., 10.

Auf diesen Fahrten werden nur Drucksachen und Pakete befördert (keine Briefpost).
*) Keine Briefpost

ÄNDERUNGEN VORBEHALTEN



DEUTSCHE LUFTHANSA · BERLIN SW 68 · LINDENSTRASSE 35
 Werbung 701V.34.70000 · Gedruckt in Deutschland. Printed in Germany. Imprimé en Allemagne.

Other Significant Flights

First Acceptance – London/South America via DLH

April 13, 1934



Other Significant Flights

First Acceptance Southbound London / Gambia

July 27, 1934



Other Significant Flights

First Acceptance Northbound Gambia / London
November 9, 1934 - Special FFC Cachet



Other Significant Flights

Normal Northbound Gambia / London

Modified Cachet



Other Significant Flights

West African Utilization of Bathurst / DLH Routes



Further Contract Negotiations 1934

- **May 4th 1934** – DLH applies for a landplane aerodrome
- Requested use of the Gambian military aerodrome denied
- **Nov 9th** – DLH secures 59 acres of private land in Jeshwang
- **Dec 1st** – Gambia issues license



Further Contract Negotiations 1935

- **Concerns about Yellow Fever** - International Sanitary Convention for Aerial Navigation
- **DLH** requested an extension of the Jeshwang landing field
- **DLH** requested a waiver of import taxes
- Hundreds of pages of correspondence



The Overall Record 1934-1935

- 47 DLH flights in 1934
- 79 DLH flights in 1935
(excluding Zeppelin transfers)
- Mail averaged 100kg to 250kg per trip
- Nothing is perfect...



Aviation Disaster

Floatplane Tapajoz Crashes in Rio de Janeiro
Carrying DLH Mail – April 28, 1934



Aviation Disaster

Rostock Crashes at Jeshwang

Carrying DLH Mail – March 12, 1937



Connections Throughout South America



Connections Throughout South America

Asuncion, Paraguay (RR) / Buenos Aires / Frankfort



Connections Throughout South America

Washington DC/ Miami /Buenos Aires / Vienna -- FDC



Connections Worldwide

Canton, China / Hong Kong / Brindisi / Paris
Marseilles / Stuttgart / Marseilles / Valencia / Seville /
Las Palmas / Bathurst / Fernando / Natal / Sao Paulo



Departed Canton
28-Nov-1935



Arrived Sao Paulo
23-Dec-1935
26 Days Transit Time

The Rest of the Story

- **June 1st 1935** – Bathurst renews the DLH licenses & landing authorities for 12 months
- Identical renewals in 1936-1939
- **August 25, 1939** – Germany orders DLH's equipment home



Last Flight North

August 20, 1939

Natal / Recalled / Natal / Ostmark (at Bolama) / Las Palmas...



Last Connection South

August 25, 1939

Garmish-Partenkirchen / Sao Paulo



Perhaps Sept 8/9
Arrival



Surface Mail – Delivery Failed

August 23, 1939

Bathurst / Germany

NO SERVICE / RETURN TO SENDER



Resumption of DLH Flights

July 14, 1940

Cable from Governor of Gambia
To Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic , *et al*

“Persistent rumours for last several days that a delegation consisting of two or more Germans and Italians would arrive or may have already arrived by Air at Dakar object to reopen Air Mail Service with South America by Luft Hanse Line.”

- No such representatives appeared
- DLH European / South American service was permanently ended



How Postal Agreements Develop:

**The British-German Collaboration
on Deutsche Lufthansa's Routes to South America**

Thank You For Your Attention!

Gary Wayne Loew

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