

ATTACK ON AMERICA

BY GENERAL
ARED WHITE

W. N. U. Release

THE STORY SO FAR: Colonel Flag-will, acting assistant chief of U. S. Intelligence department G-2, estimated there were 200,000 European troops in Mexico poised for an attack on the United States. Both he and the President were powerless to act because Con-

CHAPTER IV—Continued.

By the end of a week, Benning had gained something of Fincke's confidence together with a knowledge of the workings of Van Hasek's headquarters at the palace. He had adopted the habit of going for a walk each evening with the Austrian, usually to the Alameda.

Benning had learned that the Austrian was an artilleryman, on temporary detail at headquarters because of knowledge of the United States.

"But at headquarters, Fincke," Benning prompted, "life is not too active. Isn't it your experience that once headquarters gets its claws on an officer he's sunk?"

The Austrian responded with a

grunt of contempt.

"I'm an artilleryman, not a staff officer," he snapped. "My battery of seventy-sevens is at Jolisco for target practice and I'm in Mexico City only until the show opens!"

Benning laughed and said, "But with your fluency in English, your chief isn't likely to part company with you when our troops head into the United States."

"I've Colonel Bravot's word for it!" Fincke said hotly. "Yes, and I'll remind him of it as soon as he returns from Washington, which ought to be any day now."

Benning prolonged the promenade with Fincke, stopping from time to time at the bar of the Gonzales near the park for Scotch-and-soda. Once the Fincke artilleryman enthusiasm was aroused, the Austrian needed little urging to talk.

At first he boasted of his own guns, then branched off into the subject of Van Hasek's superiority in artillery. He painted a picture of well trained regiments splendidly equipped with the best armament. "What a wonderful show, Bromlitz!" Fincke exclaimed after he had elaborated the weapons in detail. "Particularly when we pound their artillery to pieces with our superior ranges. Himmelkreuz! They will be helpless in counter-battery."

"Not too fast, Fincke," Benning cautioned. "We mustn't forget their tremendous manpower once they get them equipped."

"But a million men can crush the Americans before they can get themselves ready!"

"A million men, perhaps, but how can we ever expect to get a million men mobilized in Mexico without rousing the Americans finally to action?"

Fincke stopped in his tracks and his blue eyes looked gravely at Benning through their thick lenses. The Austrian lowered his voice.

"That is not mere surmise, Bromlitz. This I will tell you in the deepest confidence. One day in General Van Hasek's office I glimpsed his little map of the United States and on it are red arrows pointing in from the south, the east, and the west. I had only a glimpse before he returned the map to his desk, but I caught figures enough to convince me of a million men."

Benning managed an indifferent smile and decided to close this dangerous subject.

"With a million men, Fincke, a great deal might be done," he said, and added, with a glance at his wrist watch, "but it's getting late and what do you say to some dinner?"

The two went to a Mexican cabaret on Avenida Hidalgo, a favorite spot of officers of the new regime. Benning ordered dinner and picked at his meal. Apparently he was mildly entertained by the show about him. Actually he was only vaguely conscious of his surroundings. His mind was busy with Fincke's disclosures, with a piecing together of the things Van Hasek had told him.

Benning made his decision. There was the air corps yet to check, and some verification of Fincke's disclosures. That should not be difficult. But only Van Hasek would know the broader plan of attack on the United States and Benning knew now that he must find some way to tap the Van Hasek brain, at any cost. A glance at the Van Hasek operation map might answer all questions. In some way he meant to get his eyes on that map.

His thoughts were interrupted by the action of Fincke in springing abruptly to his feet. A dark, erect man in Mexican uniform paused at their table to acknowledge the Austrian's greetings.

"My colonel, I am overjoyed to see you back in Mexico!" the Austrian exclaimed. He turned to Benning, who got to his feet. "I wish, my colonel, to present our new officer, Major Bromlitz, who has reported to us from Europe in your absence. Major, our chief of service, Colonel Bravot."

The Frenchman searched Benning with a quizzical glint as if trying to associate him with some vague memory. In a moment his black eyes cleared and he passed on with a stiff bow.

Benning's memory had clicked instantly on seeing the colonel. Bravot, his chief of service, unmistakably was Sergeant Gaudios, the masquer-

INSTALLMENT THREE

gress and the general public failed to realize the significance of the troops. To obtain more definite proof, Captain Benning, American intelligence officer, went to Mexico City where he posed as Bromlitz, former American army officer who had been captured in Paris after turning

rader in American uniform on whose trail he had been camping at San Antonio.

Benning had little more than settled down at his allotment of American newspapers the next morning than Van Hasek's majordomo, Captain Schreff, came in with a summons.

"Excellency directs that you report to him immediately," Schreff muttered.

Benning promptly went down the tiled corridor to the Van Hasek suite. He had spent the night on pins and needles, knowing that once the Bravot memory clicked the jig was up with him. What did this summons mean? However, he kept his faith in his masquerade.

Since leaving Bordeaux he had effected those slight changes in appearance that are the most effective masquerade. The Atlantic sun and wind had given his face a deep tan, and he had cultivated a thin mustache cut at a rakish angle. At San Antonio his hair had been rather full, now it was cropped close at the sides and the length of his head increased by a bristling pompadour. His new Mexican uniform, cut wide at the shoulders, gave his torso a different appearance from that of the civilian clothes he had worn in Texas.

There was a catlike animation in Van Hasek's one straight eye that



Kissed him ardently—

puzzled Benning. The peculiar smile on the general's thick lips was equally baffling.

"Sit down, Bromlitz. I want to talk to you," Van Hasek invited. "Tell me, are you very much in love?"

Benning blinked at the amazing query, then smiled back with a shake of his head.

"There was a young lady in Luxembourg, eh?"

Benning's mind instantly picked up the Van Hasek purport and he confessed, "Yes, Excellency."

"Her name?"

"Mademoiselle Lucette Ducos."

"And you promised you would bring her to Mexico City with your first month's pay, Bromlitz?"

"Usually, in such cases," Benning evaded, "one attempts to make parting as painless as possible."

Van Hasek chuckled. "But sometimes such promises come home to roost, Bromlitz." He pushed his call button and Schreff came in. Van Hasek grunted instructions.

Schreff left the room to return in a moment with a young woman. Ignoring Van Hasek she rushed up to Benning and threw her arms around his neck and kissed him ardently on the mouth.

"Chere!" she exclaimed. "Oh, but Henri, I couldn't wait for you to send for me! My uncle gave me a ticket to Vera Cruz and here I am!" Benning coldly received the caress. He saw that she was French, undoubtedly the French operative, Lucette Ducos, who had been Bromlitz' undoing. She was small, trim, and had a doll-like face, but with an intelligence in her large blue eyes that set her apart from the doll variety.

A glance gave Benning his appraisal. A girl to turn any man's head, and he understood at once Bromlitz' mad infatuation for the girl. He felt a stir of revolt at the thought of an ally from the French secret service, but promptly remembered that he had a role to play.

"You shouldn't have come here this way, Lucette," he coolly told her. "I've a man's role to play here and it's no place for a woman."

Van Hasek came from behind his desk to intervene. He took the French girl's elbows in his chubby hands and his voice was ingratiating.

NEXT WEEK

Another Absorbing Installment

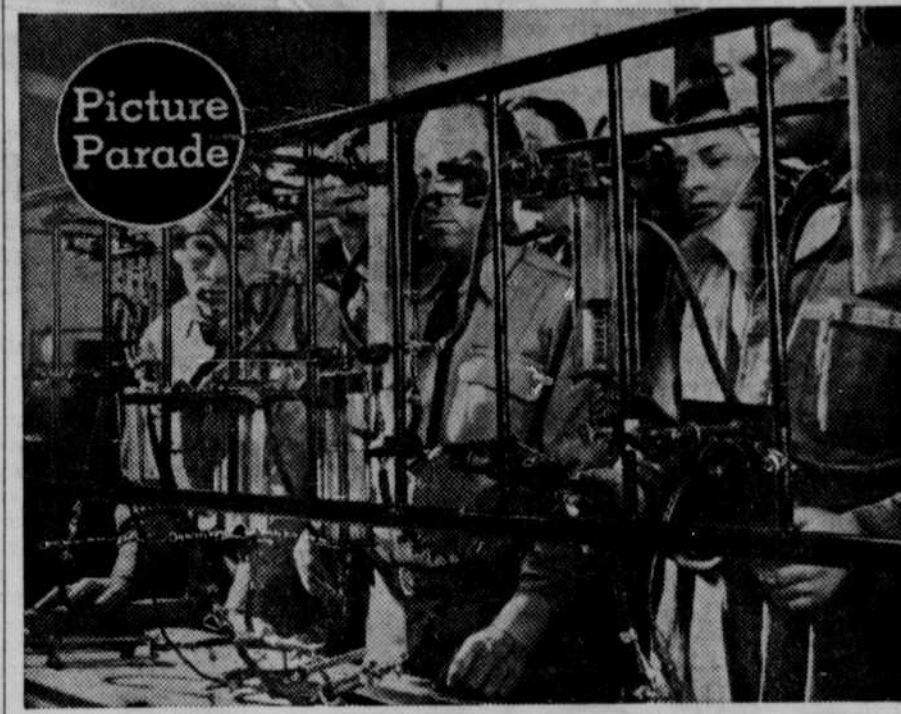
Men Beneath the Wings

Important in the scheme of things to come are the men beneath the wings of our air fleets—the earthbound, overland technicians who design and build the planes and the men who keep them in shape to take the air safely. This series of photos takes you to one of the schools where these experts receive their training—the Casey Jones School of Aeronautics, at Newark, N. J.

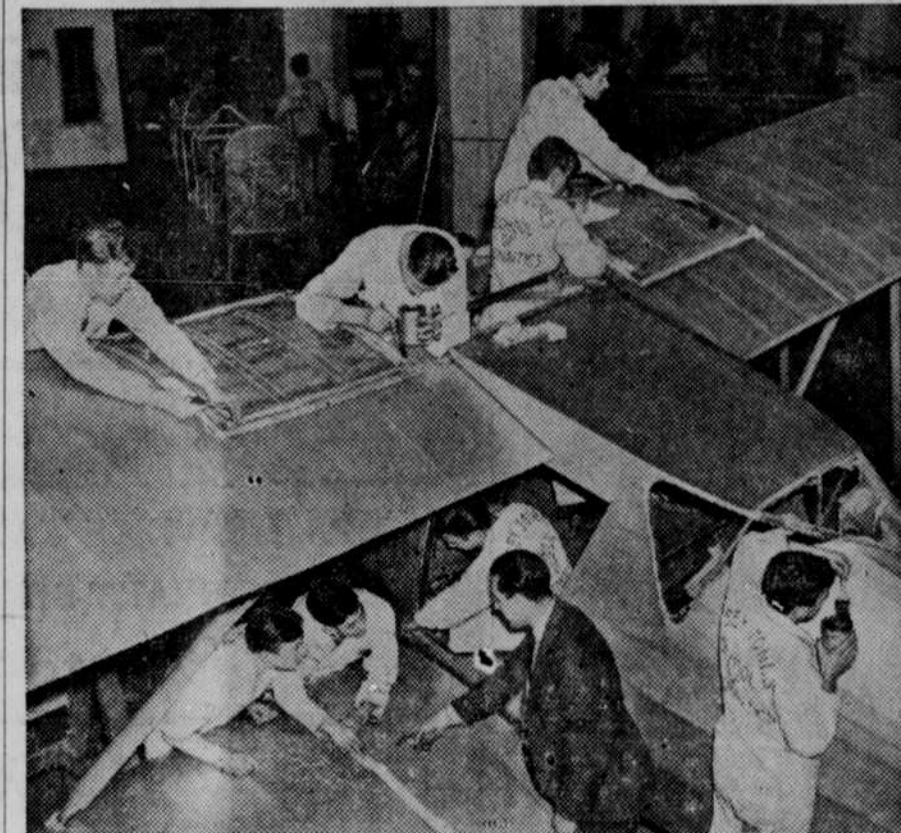


A student studies a collection of propellers taken from wrecked aircraft. To make such "props" usable again is a factory job, but wrecks tell stories.

This student is "doping" the wing of an airplane. He is using a spray gun and must wear a nose mask to keep from inhaling the fine spray of varnish.



Soldier-Students... Students from the U. S. army air corps, enlisted men, working on a hydraulic system. The students can study the action of the system in the glass cylinders of the class model.



An instructor supervises the work of a group of students here in the construction of an airplane body. The faculty of the school is composed of men who have had long and varied experience.



C. S. (Casey) Jones, president of the school, is giving his personal attention to a pair of students at work on an air-cooled engine. Students must know all there is to know on the subject.

There is enough space in this classroom to stage a polo game or an infantry drill. Planes of all makes and all shapes and sizes are here to aid in the education of aeronautical students.



Begoggled students in the welding shop using the torches that cut through steel as a hot knife cuts through butter.

REASON FOR SACRIFICE

By KARL GRAYSON
(Associated Newspapers.)
WNU Service.

ATTORNEY GENERAL CHENEY was admitted at once to Inspector Piper's office. His attitude was one of familiarity and confidence; thinly masking knowledge of his own importance.

Inspector Piper rose at sight of his visitor. The inspector's attitude was respectful.

"Good morning, Mr. Cheney. This is rather unusual, isn't it? Frankly, I'm flattered."

Attorney Cheney extended his hand, smiled easily and snapped open a cigarette case, which he offered his host.

"Hello, Piper. I know you're busy; must apologize for dropping in so abruptly. Wanted a word with you about young Noyes."

Piper arched his brows. "Noyes? Victor Noyes? You mean that young nobody we booked last night in connection with the Proctor woman murder?"

"The same. Mind telling me the facts about the case, Inspector?"

Cheney's manner was slightly ingratiating. This was odd. Piper spread his hands in a gesture of resignation.

"On the face of it, it looks dead open and shut. The woman was found dead in her apartment. Shot through the head. Sound of the shot attracted the attention of two men passing through the hall. They crashed open Miss Proctor's door and found her lying on the floor in a pool of blood. Young Noyes was standing over the body with a gun in his hand." Piper shrugged. "Dead open and shut. The kid was caught in the act of robbing the apartment and, in desperation, killing the woman."

Cheney saw the doubt in the inspector's eyes. He said, "Where's the hitch, Inspector? There's some-



"Howard, some people die to realize an ambition. I guess I'm like that."

thing screwy some place. You're not sold on the idea the kid killed her." The lawyer crushed out his cigarette. "Piper, I knew that boy when we were youngsters. Grew up in the same town together. He never seemed to me like a killer."

Piper was silent a moment. "Tell you what, Mr. Cheney, take a run down and talk with Noyes yourself. I'd like to check with your reactions after you've seen him."

Victor Noyes recognized the great attorney at once. He shook hands warmly, and Cheney saw that there was no trace of fear or dreaded anticipation in the youth's eyes.

"Sorry to see you in this jam, Vic. Read about it an hour ago. Tell me what happened. I'd like to help you, if possible."

Noyes laughed. He was a small man and weak looking. "You'll have a fine time helping me, Howard. I haven't got a leg to stand on."

"You mean you admit killing Grace Proctor?"

"I don't have to admit it. It's all settled as far as the public is concerned." He was silent a moment. Then, "Howard, I'm glad you dropped in. Remember when we were kids you once said I'd never amount to anything, never attract any attention? Those words have always haunted me."

"We were kids then, Vic. That's past. I'd like to help you now."

"Perhaps you can, but not in the way you think." Young Noyes's eyes were gleaming. "Howard, I'm satisfied. I've always wanted people to know who I am. Well, I've got that wish. There isn't a paper in the country that didn't publish my picture this morning. Grace Proctor was a pretty popular opera star. But I'll bet she never got the publicity I'm getting now!"

"Maybe I am. After all, what is it that a man wants to live for? To realize an ambition, isn't it? To do something that will attract attention, to make people know who he is. Anyway, that's what I always wanted to live for. All my life I never amounted to much, or attracted any attention. I lost one job after another. I tried to live straight and honest, and found it didn't get me anywhere. Nobody knew who I was or cared. And all the time there was that burning sensation inside of me to attract attention. Howard, some people die to realize an ambition. I guess I'm like that."

Attorney Cheney looked deep into the younger man's eyes and saw

there a longing that he had never imagined any man could possess. A glimmering of understanding came to him and as quickly vanished.

"Listen, you fool! You'll go to the chair for this, burn for something you never did! That's a hell of a way to die!"

"It'll be a long time before the trial is over, Howard, and folks will know who I am. The papers will be full of me. I'll read 'em every day, and that will be worth dying for."

Cheney still clutched the youth's shoulders. "Listen, you idiot! You didn't kill Grace Proctor! There was another man there! You were hiding in the room. You heard what was said. You saw him draw a gun and shoot. You watched him escape down the fire escape. And you let them think you did it! You're crazy!"

Noyes smiled. "Dramatic as always, eh, Howard. Yes, I think that would go over pretty good in a court room. But it wouldn't prove anything."

"How come?"

"Because you recognized that other man. You could identify him, prove he was there!"

For fully a minute the eyes of the two men looked deeply into each other's. Each knew what the other was thinking; each read accurately the message the other was seeking to convey. There was no need for words. Each understood.

Presently the man who would soon be charged with murder in the first degree, and who later would without doubt pay the supreme penalty, laid his hand on the arm of the man who had come to help him.

"Don't say it, Howard. I understand, and I'm willing to die. My life hasn't been worth living anyhow. With you it's different. You've accomplished all the things you've set out to do. You've made a name for yourself, become a big man. You've lived the kind of life I would have liked to live, but couldn't. And now the thing you can do that will help me most is to try and understand—and forget the rest."

Cheney stood back. The understanding that had lighted his face a few moments before returned and did not again vanish. He fought and triumphed over a desire to plead once more with the youth. And in that instant he harked back over his own experience, tried to compare his own life with that of young Victor Noyes and found himself groping for something to say that would change the youth's mind.

He turned at last and reached the door before turning. Victor was still sitting on the cot, smiling happily. Newspapers whose front pages emblazoned his name were strewn about the floor at his feet. His thoughts fled back to the night previous, to the weeks before, during which he had suffered the agonies of the damned in withholding knowledge of his mad love affair with Grace Proctor from his wife and the prying curiosity of the public. And then again his mind dwelt on Victor Noyes, and for the first time in months his soul was at peace.

Remembers Her Manners, Even While in Swimming

And there was the party on a houseboat anchored in a harbor on the sound. It was a hot July afternoon, and a lot of us were sitting around on deck, and suddenly somebody said, "Look! What on earth are they doing?" and we all looked. There was a large proud yacht anchored near by and what they were doing was obvious enough—they were lowering a dower down the side of the yacht into the water. She was a large, proud dower to match, and she wore a bathing suit and a vast straw hat; and it took two members of the crew to get her down the steps, and in. They launched her finally, however, while we watched fascinated.

Once embarked, she became a swimming hat, with plump white arms. She swam a breast-stroke, small and slow, but steady. Somebody said in a hushed voice, "She seems to be coming over here," and it did indeed begin to look that way, and presently there was no doubt about it. We all flocked to the rail to welcome her, and we all leaned over. When she was within speaking distance, she paused, and did a kind of dog-paddle to keep herself afloat and said, "Good afternoon. Is Mrs. Weeks on board?"

"No," we said. "No—unfortunately—Mrs. Weeks has gone ashore."

"Ah," said the seagoing dower with a nod of her hat. "Sorry I've missed her." At this point she sank a little, but came up again at once, blowing out water. She turned and resumed the small, slow breast-stroke—but for a few strokes only. Then she had a social afterthought, and she paused again, and dog-paddled once more, and added gravely—all in a drawing room—"When Mrs. Weeks returns, will you tell her, please, that Mrs. DeCourcy K. Breckonridge CALLED?"

Rolling Grocery

Down in Bowling Green, Ky., is a curiosity on wheels—a 1923 "flyver" truck converted into a rolling grocery store. In its owner, Harry Stevens, covers the entire residential area six days a week. During 17 years the motor of the rolling grocery has run an estimated 35,000 hours—or four solid years. In all that time, according to the owner, the only repairs have been a valve grinding job and new spark plugs.