

# ATTACK ON AMERICA

BY GENERAL H. A. W. WHITE  
W. N. U. Release

**THE STORY SO FAR:** More than 200,000 foreign troops which had been secretly transported to Mexico suddenly invaded the United States. Intelligence Officer Benning had discovered their plans while a spy in Mexico City where he had gained the confidence of Fincke and Bravot, two enemy officers, but

**CHAPTER XIV—Continued**  
Colonel Flagwill was asleep at his desk when Benning reported at the War Department in mid-afternoon. The G-2 Chief woke with a start and vigorously shook himself into full wakefulness.

"You've certainly justified your existence again!" Flagwill exclaimed, smiling at his assistant. "We've already ordered the prompt arrest of all Andes stockholders—innocent and guilty alike. That means the biggest spy roundup in history. We can separate sheep from goats after we've arrested the whole lot. Now is no time for half measures."

Benning said, "I'm sorry Bravot got away, sir."

"He'll be a magician," Flagwill vowed, "if he gets through the nets we've laid for him."

As Flagwill turned back to his littered desk, his eye fell upon a penciled memorandum. He looked up sharply at Benning.

"I've just found another little chore for you—to sit in on a very secret party row over successor to the Presidency," Flagwill lowered his voice and spoke rapidly. "A partisan intrigue to force Senator Tannard, Secretary of State, out of the line of succession. It all hinges on the fact that Tannard received an interim appointment from the President last fall, when Secretary Hinges died. Tannard has not yet been confirmed by the Senate."

"Now, if Congress rejects Tannard's appointment, the Presidency falls by law to Judge Baucom, Secretary of the Treasury. Since Baucom is party leader and wheel horse, it is likely that a swift party coup will bring this about, as Tannard may not want to make a fight for his confirmation under all the circumstances."

On reaching Capitol Hill a few minutes before four o'clock, Benning passed the House Chamber, went downstairs, and took the tunnel-trolley across to the Senate Office Building.

The selected senators, leaders of the party in power, were just arriving when Benning reached the Baucom conference room and was admitted by a Baucom secretary. Secretary Baucom rose promptly when the door closed on the last of those he had summoned. Baucom was a large man, square-faced, straight-lipped, with friendly, level gray eyes.

"Friends, I must announce that there will be a slight delay," Baucom said abruptly. His eyes ran slowly from face to face as if to test the mettle of those present against what he had to say. "I have just sent for Secretary Tannard."

Benning saw an interchange of astonished glances among those present and felt his own brows knot at Baucom's astounding announcement. Tannard long had been known as the particular political foe of Secretary Baucom.

"My reason for asking Tannard here," he said in a low, determined voice, "is I consider him the man best qualified among all of us to lead the country through our present crisis."

Senator Vren, veteran Senate leader, was on his feet. In his taut face was reflected the prevalent astonishment at Baucom's invitation to Tannard.

"Please be informed, sir, that I consulted the majority opinion before we came here. Therefore, I speak their opinion as well as my own when I inform you, sir, that it is your distinguished self we intend to name President of the United States, and this by the simple method of disqualifying Secretary Tannard."

Baucom's face softened to a serene smile, but he slowly shook his massive gray head.

"I appreciate the honor you pay me, Vren," he interrupted. "But we face an emergency, gentlemen, in which men are going to surrender their lives to their sense of duty—just as Captain Boll did. That makes it very easy for me to surrender so small a thing as my personal ambition. From now on we must resolve to smash party considerations. Our national crisis is serious enough without divisions among ourselves. I must set a personal example and confess to you frankly that I am too old and lack the vigor and, frankly, the abilities that are needed at this time."

He paused a moment, his eyes fixed defiantly on Vren, then he went on in a milder voice.

"If your minds, gentlemen, are free of purely partisan prejudices, you will not challenge my proposal of Tannard for President. Tannard has comparative youth and vigor. As Secretary of State, while he is new in that position, he is the lawful successor, unless we disqualify him on mere technicality. He has brains and guts and he has both feet on the ground. He is the man we need to lead us in this emergency, and I intend to do everything within my power looking to his confirmation."

## INSTALLMENT FOURTEEN

his warnings had gone unheeded. The President was killed when Washington was bombed. General Brill, commander of the U. S. army in Texas, was opposed by greatly superior forces led by Van Hasek. In spite of Brill's desperate resistance, Van Hasek's troops pushed relentlessly forward. Returning

Baucom broke off and his eyes searched each face again as if seeking challenge to the words he had spoken. Only a stunned silence met him. His eyes lifted and a friendly smile wreathed his face as the door of the conference room opened. A tall, erect man stood at the door, gravely hesitant.

"Come right on in, Tannard," Baucom invited. He stepped forward to extend a congratulatory hand and his smile widened as he added, without formality: "I hope your heart is in good shape to stand a hard shock, Senator. But the gentlemen present wish you to serve as President of the United States. Your confirmation will be voted without serious opposition."

Tannard's alert eyes searched the room. He was a man of fifty, physically fit, appearing much younger than his age. His face was angular, strong-featured. Tannard looked the born leader of men, man of action governed by an active, orderly mind.

In his steel-blue eyes there shined no gleam of personal triumph at Baucom's announcement. His emotional response was a tightening of the muscles of his jaw, a drawing erect of his wide shoulders.

Tannard gave his answer in a measured voice.

"Very good, gentlemen, if that is your decision, I accept. Forgive me



"I hope your heart is good."

If I have no platitudes of gratitude to offer, nor promises of performance. I will say only that I deeply deplore the unhappy circumstance that brings about my succession to the Presidency. If your position be confirmed by the Senate I will do my best, and I will expect the fullest support from you and from every American. If there is nothing further, gentlemen, I'll excuse myself."

## CHAPTER XV

Van Hasek's Austrian spy was on hand at the Shoreham promptly at eight the next morning. Fincke was glum and jumpy as they ordered breakfast, and from time to time cast covert glances about the dining-room.

"Why the jitters, Fincke?" Benning asked him.

The Austrian took several nervous gulps of coffee and said: "Something's gone wrong, Bromlitz. I want to get out of this town as quick as possible."

"Heard anything from Bravot?"

"No word from anybody, not since the last time I saw you. I can't figure it out, but it's there. Sometimes I think I'm being watched and G-2 has my number." Fincke pushed aside his unfinished breakfast and got up. "Come on, Bromlitz, let's get out of this town!"

Benning asked, as they took a taxicab to the depot, "Did Bravot furnish you with travel authority?"

"Last I heard it was all fixed up. All we have to do is show up at the gangplank and say, 'Passage for Amsterdam, Stateroom twelve.'" The Austrian turned suddenly to Benning with suspicion glinting in his eyes. "Say, Bromlitz, are you asking for information, or just feeling me out?"

"Isn't it natural, Fincke," Benning retorted, "for me to satisfy myself you've really got authority to go along? I hope you're not going to spoil everything by getting suspicious of me."

"No, but after the deal I got from Boggio, you can't blame me for wondering if I'm the goat," Fincke muttered. "Sorry if I rubbed you the wrong way."

Fincke's fears relaxed somewhat

**NEXT WEEK**  
Another Absorbing Installment

to Washington, Benning met Fincke who had come there to do espionage work for his government, but continued to pose as a friend. Benning soon unearthed the vast spy ring that was operating in this country to learn military secrets and sabotage production. Now continue with the story.

when he and Benning reached New York in early afternoon. They went to Central Park and walked about deserted paths until time to go to the pier. Promptly at four Fincke presented himself to a hulking Norwegian first mate who stood at the gangplank of the tramp freighter, a single-funnel steamer.

The Fincke formula put them on board without question. Benning noted, as they were escorted by a cabin boy to their stateroom, that the decks were deserted, no preparations to sail were in evidence.

Fincke promptly slammed the door, peeled off his cotton coat, and sprawled on a bunk.

Benning threw off his coat, lay down on his berth, and took up the late New York editions he had bought before coming aboard. Later he meant to force the issue of a reconnaissance of the ship in preparation for the Navy's boarding party.

Headlines screamed the defeat of Mole's Second Division, the capture of San Antonio.

Mole's truck columns had sped his broken infantry and artillery to a new position near Austin along the Colorado River. There he was organizing a new defensive position, reinforced by Texas regiments. Van Hasek columns were moving on Austin for pre-empt attack.

Van Hasek had taken over San Antonio at daybreak and established headquarters in the City Hall at the old Spanish Plaza. A subordinate, General Alvido, had taken over the government as military governor under a decree of martial law, hauled down the American flag and hoisted the saber flag over the city.

Alvido claimed all of Texas under his decree. A Van Hasek truck column was moving on Galveston to occupy that city, and later, Houston. Air raids had extended north last night. Fort Worth, Dallas, and Shreveport had been heavily pounded with the loss of hundreds of lives. Terror was sweeping other southern cities. Little Rock, Oklahoma City, Montgomery, Birmingham, even Nashville and Atlanta were within bombing range. There was no anti-aircraft now available for these cities. Thousands were fleeing into the hills and countryside.

When he had sketched through the day's news, Benning sat up and made a cast at Fincke.

"What gets me," he complained, "is why we have to go all the way to Amsterdam when there's so much going on in these parts, Fincke." Fincke snapped erect, his eyes blazing suspicion, and snarled, "You know damned well we're not going to Amsterdam, Bromlitz! What's your game—always feeling me out?" Benning coolly drawled, "Evidently you suspect I'm a spotter for Boggio or Bravot. If that's in your mind, I resent it."

"Sorry if I blew up again," Fincke relented. "But we're playing for big game this time, Bromlitz, and you can't blame me for being touchy after what happened before." A Norwegian deckhand brought dinner into their stateroom at six o'clock. Two empty hours followed. At eight o'clock the engines began churning, the Norwegian tramp eased out of her berth and headed down the harbor.

Fincke brightened as the ship cast off, then was attacked by a restlessness that set him pacing the little cabin. Dusk slowly deepened into night. Benning knew that the ship was spotted by Navy observers, that they would take no chance of letting her slip out of the harbor. He chafed under his inability to break further into the Fincke confidence or to effect a survey of the ship's passengers.

The Austrian suddenly seized his cotton coat and straw hat. "All right, Bromlitz!" he exclaimed excitedly. "It's nine o'clock and pitch dark. Here's where we move out!"

Benning followed the Austrian down the unlighted deck. There was a black huddle of figures at the rail where Fincke halted. Benning's straining eyes, now adjusted to the darkness, made out that the figures were moving over the side.

In a moment Fincke vanished. Benning hesitated, then groped his way down the Jacob's ladder. At the bottom a gasoline launch chugged tenaciously alongside in choppy water. As Benning, following the others, stepped precariously aboard, the launch cast off.

In the vague light shed by a lantern in the bow of the launch, Benning slowly counted noses. There were five passengers, two boatmen. Benning saw that the man beside whom he had found a seat was not Fincke. An intuition warned him, his eyes verified the warning as he traced out the man's profile. The passenger at his elbow was Bravot.

Van Hasek's fugitive spy master silently stared into the wet night. Benning's hand sought the pocket of his cotton coat and released the safety lock of his automatic. (TO BE CONTINUED)

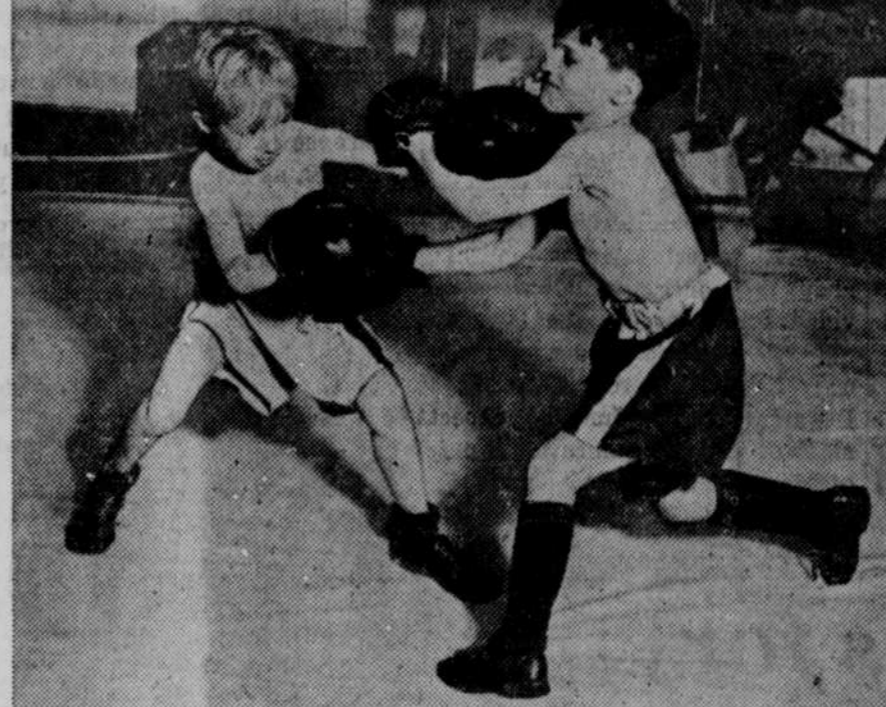
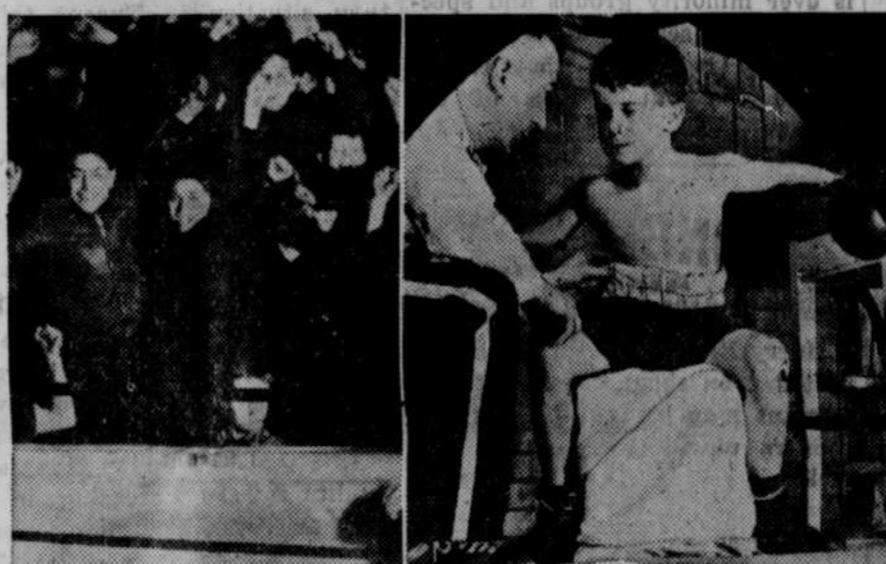
## Battling Babies

To the majority of American children Saturday night means dunking. To the 2,500 boys who belong to Kips Bay Boys' club in New York, Saturday night means battle. The boxer with the highest number of points gets a watch. Age range, 6 to 21.

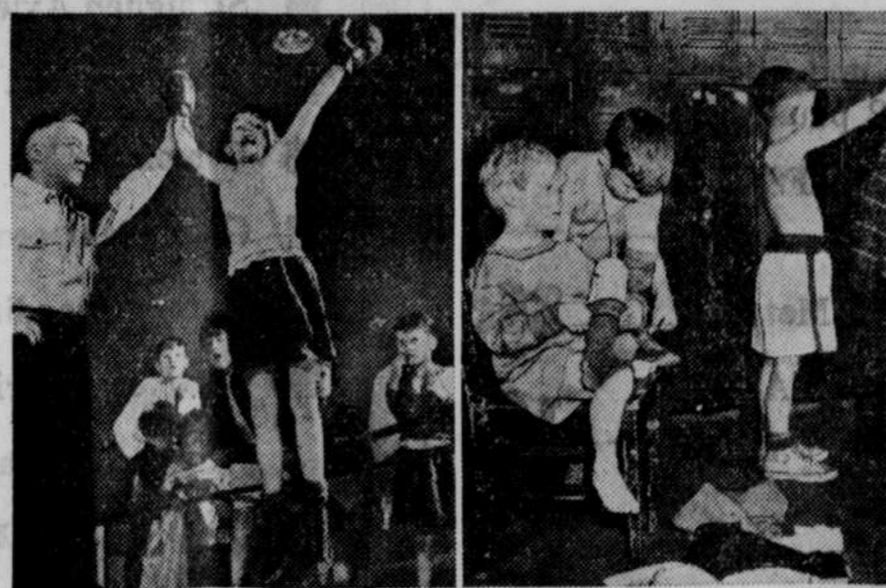
This series of pictures takes you to the club. Right: This little fellow is loaded for bear. The gloves they use are well padded, so, except for a bloody nose or two, no damage is possible.



The gladiators are shown here weighing in for the bouts. Weights range from 50 pounds to 135 pounds.



Upper right: Director John McCrory gives one of his gladiators last-minute instructions. Below: And here is one of the encounters. Two mosquito weights are belting away in the center of the ring.



The winnah! Referee McCrory holds up the hand of a winner, who leaps into the air in great glee.

Post-war . . . After a frolic in the club pool, the ertshile foes meet in the locker rooms and resume friendly relations.



## Star Dust

STAGE-SCREEN-RADIO  
By VIRGINIA VALE  
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

**B**ECAUSE Carole Lombard and Clark Gable interested themselves in his career, tall, handsome Reed Hadley, who hails from Texas via New York theater and radio acting stopovers, appears to be safely launched in Hollywood.

He first attracted Miss Lombard's attention a few weeks ago, when he appeared with her on a national broadcast in New York. Gable met him at that time also. Both were impressed with young Hadley's appearance and talents. Gable suggested to Director Clarence Brown that Hadley be tested for the role of a young British officer in "The Uniform," at Metro, in which Gable and Rosalind Russell are co-starring. An important requirement was that the actor chosen for the role be able to wear a uniform worn by Gable. The young actor fitted the uniform, and the part was his—no test was required, just an interview with Brown. At the same time casting officials grabbed him for "Man From the City," with Robert Sterling, Paul Kelly and Marsha Hunt.

Ray Milland is moving right ahead, and fast. After turning in a fine performance in "I Wanted Wings" he was chosen by Cecil B. De Mille for one of the two male starring roles in "Reap the Wild Wind." It's a tale of the Florida keys a hundred years ago, and Milland is a fighting young lawyer from Charleston, who smashes a desperate crew of ship wreckers and wins the girl. John Wayne has the other stellar male role—that of a sea captain who also wants the girl. And all in Technicolor.

Getting a screen test isn't too easy, and Richard Wallace, director of Harold Lloyd's first production for RKO, "A Girl, a Guy and a Gob," explained why the other day. He computes the cost of a test at from \$1,500 to \$3,000. The candidate is brought to Hollywood, make-up artists go to work, hairdressers and wardrobe department heads are called in. An experienced actor is selected to appear opposite the candidate—and there are the salaries of the director, cameraman, electricians, sound men, etc. Then the candidate may be no good!

George Raft, who has one of the largest and most expensive wardrobes owned by Hollywood actors, is breaking in some \$22.50 suits for his role as a power lineman in Warner Bros. "Manpower." That's the picture in which Humphrey Bogart was slated to share honors with Raft and Marlene Dietrich, but Raft, who wisely realizes his limitations, refused to appear with him. Ida Lupino didn't want the talented Mr. Bogart in "The Gentle People" with her, either. Warners offered him a nice, fat part in "Bad Men of Missouri" but he would have none of it, and was suspended.

John Loveton, producer of "The Court of Missing Heirs," insists that actors in mob scenes say sane, pertinent words. He had his lesson long ago; he was part of a mob scene on a radio drama broadcast, and when an unexpected silence fell on the air his voice boomed out, shouting "Gobble! Gobble! Gobble!" He's never acted since, but as a director he cracks down on anyone who doesn't contribute something sensible to those background murmurs and mutterings.

Paramount believes that a new Jean Harlow, or Clara Bow, has been discovered in the person of "sultry, blonde" Veronica Lake, (to quote a press agent) who is featured in "I Wanted Wings." "Not since Greta Garbo leaped to overnight fame in her first picture, "The Torrent," have New York movie critics lavished such acclaim upon a newcomer," to quote another press release. Maybe so, but the low cut of Miss Lake's necklines made such an impression on a good many people that they hadn't a great deal to say about her acting.

**ODDS AND ENDS**—Universal has taken an option on the screen services of Baby Sandy's brother—who is one week old . . . The March of Time's latest, "The F. B. I.—1941," shows how the Federal Bureau of Investigation is concentrating on the prevention of espionage and sabotage in industry . . . Mutual's "The People's Playhouse," heard Tuesdays and Thursdays, presents dramatic sketches based on ideas submitted by the public . . . RKO is screening "Parachute Battalion," with Robert Preston, Nancy Kelly and Harry Carey . . . You'll see Tommy Harmon, All-American half-back, in "Harmon of Michigan."

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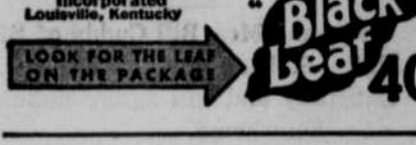
## INDIGESTION

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Absence diminishes little passions and increases great ones, as wind extinguishes candles and fans a fire.—La Rochefoucauld.

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Lost or Won  
The next dreadful thing to a battle lost is a battle won.—Wellington.

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