



ATTACK ON AMERICA

INSTALLMENT THREE

THE STORY SO FAR: Colonel Flagwill, 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 Congress 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 traitor to the United States. After a brief interview with Van Hassek, leader of the foreign armed forces in Mexico, Benning was accepted as a staff member. Here he strove to gain the confidence of Fincke, an enemy officer. Now continue with the story.

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 Hassek'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 artillery 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 Hassek'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 Hassek'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 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 Hassek 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 Hassek brain, at any cost. A glance at the Van Hassek 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 Gaujos, the masquerader 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 Hassek'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 Hassek 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.

There was a catlike animation in Van Hassek'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 Hassek 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 Hassek 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 Hassek chuckled. "But sometimes such promises come home to roost, Bromlitz." He pushed his call button and Schreff came in. Van Hassek grunted instructions.

Schreff left the room to return in a moment with a young woman. Ignoring Van Hassek 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 Hassek came from behind his

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

"Mademoiselle, now that your identity has been established to our satisfaction, you're welcome in Mexico. If your Heinie doesn't treat you as he should, my little cabbage, just you come back and report the facts to me!"

Mademoiselle threw her arms gratefully about Van Hassek's flabby red neck and kissed him on his cheek. Then she turned to Benning, linked her arm in his and gleefully took him out of the room. In the street Benning called a taxicab and drove to the Alameda, where he picked out a seat under a shady cypress.

"What is it you want here, mademoiselle?" he bluntly demanded.

"Information," she replied crisply. "Naturally, my government sent me."

"I should have guessed they had something like this in mind," he complained. "But why do you wish yourself off on me?"

"There are excellent reasons," she answered, regarding him with a level smile. "For one thing we are both after the same information and ought to be able to help each other."

Benning had decided that inevitably he must accept the French girl as an associate, since he was already in the palm of her hand if by caprice or stupidity she betrayed his masquerade.

"I'll be glad to give you advantage of anything I may learn," he told her. "But of course we must work separately."

"As you please," she agreed, and said with unabashed frankness, "but at least we'll have to live together."

Benning demanded, "Why do you propose that?"

"For two reasons. First, Van Hassek thinks I'm your mistress and I want him to continue thinking that, for the time being, at least."

"Your second reason?"

"That," she said, looking at him again with her level smile, "is the important one to you. Bromlitz escaped from Vincennes three days after you sailed for Vera Cruz."

Benning sat glaring while his mind swept to an estimate of that calamity.

"Don't blame my government," Mlle. Ducos spoke up at once. "It was wholly the fault of a stupid secretary from your embassy who was sent to the fort to interview Bromlitz. An hour after he left, a guard found your secretary bound in Bromlitz' cell. Bromlitz had escaped in the secretary's clothes and spectacles."

"You've no doubt Bromlitz will make his way to Mexico?"

Mlle. Ducos smiled unconcernedly. "Not the least. But now that we understand each other, monsieur, let's find a place to live. Tonight I'd like to have you take me to the Avenida Hidalgo to dine and dance."

On reporting at the palace next morning, Benning was steered by a new determination. He meant to play whatever risks were necessary promptly to close his mission in Mexico. With Colonel Bravot on the job, Bromlitz at large, and the French operative on his hands he knew he skated now on very thin ice.

With Mlle. Ducos he had struck a bargain. She was to keep strictly away from headquarters. He promised her any pertinent information he picked up and allotted her the task of checking on the air service. Also she was to keep on the alert for any cancellation of military leaves to Mexico City, which would be a significant development.

They set up together in an inexpensive suite on Jesus Maria. When they were alone in their apartment, Mlle. Ducos' attitude was one of a purely professional associate. But when they were together in public during evenings that followed, she kept up the ruse of a romantic attachment.

They had gone to the Avenida Hidalgo for dinner one evening when the French girl's covert flirtation with a bald-headed Italian officer in a colonel's uniform brought from Benning a sharp rebuke.

"Doesn't it strike you a bit inconsistent, mademoiselle," he charged, "for you to pose as my fiancée and at the same time flirt outrageously behind my back while we're dancing together? We agreed that you were to limit yourself at present to finding out about Van Hassek's air service."

She looked up at him and smiled as they danced, then put her lips close to his ear and spoke in a low voice.

"Would it interest you, monsieur, to know that I have learned most of what we wish to know? Van Hassek's air bases are located in Tamalpais, and he has a total of more than a thousand planes, with more coming by ship in the near future. Colonel Boggio, if you will take the trouble to study his insignia, is an officer of the air service."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

FARM TOPICS

BREEDING HENS NEED VITAMINS

Diet Will Influence Health Of Baby Chicks.

By PROF. C. S. PLATT

(Associate Poultryman, Rutgers University)

Check carefully on the diet of breeding hens. Vitamins A, D and G, or riboflavin, for instance, are necessary not only to the health and normality of chicks when hatched but also to their growth during their first few weeks of life.

The yellow corn and dried alfalfa commonly fed to birds contain enough vitamin A, and cod liver oil or sardine oil provide sufficient vitamin D. However, vitamin G, which is contained to some extent in dried alfalfa, is lacking in the other three products and is also lacking generally in poultry rations. But this factor may be added through the use of dried yeast or liver meal, although these products are relatively expensive. Or it may be supplied by dried skim milk or dried buttermilk if used in sufficient quantities.

For practical purposes, 100 birds should receive one pound of dried buttermilk or dried skim milk daily, either incorporated in the dry mash at the rate of 10 per cent, or fed separately in the moist mash directly in the quantity recommended. When a high quality of dried whey is used, the amount can be reduced to three-quarters of a pound per 100 birds daily. As in all vitamin products, the only guide for the purchaser is the reputation of the manufacturer for furnishing grades up to guarantee.

When the essential vitamin G quality is incorporated in a dry mash, care must be taken to insure that 100 birds daily eat at least 10 pounds of mash, otherwise their diet will not be complete. Because of this fact, breeding stock should be limited in the quantity of grain fed each day in order to encourage the proper consumption of dry mash.

Regrassing Old Fields Reduces Insect Danger

Range land well grassed and fairly free of weeds is not a favorable breeding place for most of the insects that are crop pests. Good woodland is also fairly safe. But the weedy old fields in moist regions and weedy land abandoned as too dry or too infertile for grain growing have proved almost "ideal breeding places for a large variety of agricultural pests, one of the most important of which is grasshoppers," according to Dr. P. N. Annand of the United States department of agriculture.

Abandonment of land in the Northwest—cropped during the twenties and stricken in the dry years of the thirties—has been a highly important factor in the grasshopper plagues of recent years, says Dr. Annand.

In the first years after abandonment and before a good grass cover can be restored, these fields are at their worst as a hazard to nearby crops. Any process that speeds up the regressing of land that never should have been ploughed is a step in the direction of insect control.

Mineral Deficiency

When cows and calves gnaw at fence posts and rails, it is usually a sign of mineral deficiency in the ration.

A sufficient quantity of calcium is usually contained in legume hays such as cowpea, soybean, clover and alfalfa if these crops are grown on soil not deficient in lime. Where the grain ration contains 30 per cent of wheat bran, cottonseed meal and soybean meal, there is usually a sufficient amount of phosphorus.

However, it will do no harm to allow the cows and calves free access to a mineral mixture composed of one part salt and four parts of steamed bone meal.

Agricultural News

The supply of vegetable seed for 1941 planting is expected to be somewhat short.

The milk of sheep, goat and buffalo is used for cheese-making in many European and Oriental countries.

Two-thirds of the people in South America are in agricultural occupations. One-fourth of the people in the United States are similarly engaged.

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Lots of Merriment

"I love looking at her when she laughs."

"Why?"

"There seems to be so much of her having a good time."

As They Come

"What's the difference between amonia and pneumonia?"

"One comes in bottles and the other in chests."

"IF MORE OLD PEOPLE

would use ADLERIKA they would feel better. I'm 70 and have had it on hand for 14 years." (L. M.-So. Dak.) For QUICK bowel action and relief from bloating gas, try ADLERIKA today.

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Shadows of Mind

The shadows of the mind are like those of the body. In the morning of life they lie behind us; at noon, we trample them under foot; and in the evening they stretch long, broad and deepening behind us.—Longfellow.

QUINTUPLETS use MUSTEROLE for CHEST COLDS

Mother! Give YOUR Child

The Same Expert Care

At the first sign of a chest cold—the Dianne Quintuplets' chests and throats are rubbed with Children's Mild Musterole—a product made especially to promptly relieve the DISTRESS of children's colds and resulting bronchial and croupy coughs.

Relief usually comes quickly because Musterole is MORE than an ordinary "salve." It helps break up local congestion. As Musterole is used on the Quints you may be sure you are using just about the BEST product made. Also in Regular and Extra Strength for those preferring a stronger product.

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Resourceless

The mouse that hath but one hole is quickly taken.—Plautus.

That Nagging Backache

May Warn of Disordered Kidney Action

Modern life with its hurry and worry, irregular habits, improper eating and drinking—its risk of exposure and infection—throws heavy strain on the work of the kidneys. They are apt to become over-taxed and fail to filter excess acid and other impurities from the life-giving blood.

You may suffer nagging backache, headache, dizziness, getting up nights, leg pains, swelling—feel constantly tired, nervous, all worn out. Other signs of kidney or bladder disorder are sometimes burning, scanty or too frequent urination.

Try Doan's Pills. Doan's help the kidneys to pass off harmful excess body waste. They have had more than half a century of public approval. Are recommended by grateful users everywhere. Ask your neighbor!

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