

ATTACK ON AMERICA

BY GENERAL ARED WHITE
W. H. U. Release

THE STORY SO FAR: Intelligence Officer Benning's warning that 200,000 foreign troops were poised in Mexico for an attack on the United States caused grave concern in army headquarters, but the people branded the statement as "war mongering." Four large southern cities were suddenly attacked from

CHAPTER VIII—Continued
As Boll's eye went back into the air, his mind was lifted suddenly out of the depths of black despair by a joyous miracle of development. Those new planes were closing in and he made out by the shape of wings and fuselage that they were not Van Hasek planes.

Boll's hand flashed out his field-glasses. He glued them to the skies. From under the wings of those intruding squadrons flashed the glorious legend "U. S. Army."

American planes plummeted down. Van Hasek's hornets now were droning about in a Lufberry circle awaiting the developments of attack. In a twinkling the American bird-men projected an audacious assault. Planes circled, dove, rolled, darted in the throes of combat. A plane came whistling down. Boll's jaw tightened as he saw the first casualty was an American plane. But quickly two of Van Hasek's bird-men came tumbling out of the sky.

If the Van Hasek pilots had stalled for reinforcements, they now decided upon precipitate flight against superior number. Another Van Hasek plane went down. In a minute the cloud of darting falcons passed into the distance behind.

A noon sun was burning the baked hills and swales when Boll's survivors rolled in on a Second Division outpost south of Kirk. Boll's cheek, caked in blood, was throbbing with pain, his right arm hung stiff and useless at his side. He climbed from the truck and stolidly checked his command as it came through the outpost. Forty-two moaned in the throes of wounds, twenty-nine had been left dead along the crimson road from Laredo.

The outpost commander came hurrying up.

"Sorry to report in with my command shot to pieces like this, Colonel," Boll reported in grim dejection. "But the only choice was—capture. Where's the hospital, sir? My wounded must have care at once!"

"Eleventh's men are being evacuated to San Antonio, Captain," the outpost commander advised. "Colonel Denn was killed, total casualties over three hundred men. But maybe that's not too bad when you consider our border cavalry was all gobbled up. The Twelfth and Fifth are still fighting it out, but they haven't any more chance than Custer had. From all reconnaissance reports, we'll be attacked in force here before many hours pass. All right, Boll, get rolling."

CHAPTER IX

In Washington, Captain Benning spent a sleepless nightmare of a night on the assignment from Flagwill of observing panic-stricken streets.

Daybreak and exhaustion restored some degree of reason. People moved about now as if stunned, but from time to time looking fearfully into the skies or straining at every word of radio loudspeakers that had been put in service on principal streets.

Traffic jams finally had been reduced, steady streams of cabs and cars were pouring out of the city on all roads. Thousands flocked about the railway station clamoring for standing space on any train that led away from Washington.

Extra editions of newspapers burst into the streets at frequent intervals.

Texas invaded. Extras massed black headlines over meager dispatches from San Antonio. Van Hasek was moving north in three columns. American infantry and cavalry were fighting him at the Rio Grande. American Second Division was moving south to repel the invasion.

Another extra dashed out. Washington safe! Benning read eagerly. It had been as Flagwill guessed. The night raiders had planted a refueling field. Back of the Tennessee River, southwest from Nashville. The thing had been camouflaged as a new airways enterprise, had even been fostered by ambitious and unsuspecting chambers of commerce.

When the bombers and their convoys of fighting craft had put down to fill their tanks after bombing Washington, a few mounted machine guns had kept curious natives away. The aircraft had taken all personnel off at resuming their flight back to Mexico. Another raid on Washington would be impossible—unless attack could be launched from the sea.

That subdued hum of relentless activity filled the Munitions Building. Faces were lined and gray from strain and fatigue, but eyes burned from smudged sockets with stern resolution.

The night's panic had swept the whole country. In the midwest there had been incredulity at first. The whole thing seemed too inconceivable. Invasions, bomber raids, were an intangible atrocity occurring to distant peoples and recorded in dispatches. Those inexplicable atroci-

INSTALLMENT NINE
the air, Washington was bombed and the President killed. General Brill, commander of the army in Texas, reported to General Hague at Washington that he was opposed by greatly superior forces. General Hague told him to resist the enemy's advance at all costs. Brill ordered Captain Boll to lead the 11th U. S. Infantry into position for battle. Boll's motor column bravely withstood a terrific strafing from enemy aircraft, but he ordered the men to abandon their trucks when he observed twenty more planes approaching. Further resistance seemed useless to him.

Now continue with the story.
ties belonged to the black pages of Shanghai, Canton, and Madrid. Already the hue and cry was rising west of the Alleghenies sharp on the heels of the first hysterical waves of fear. What of the Army? Why had our armed forces been caught napping? Why hadn't the raiders been detected and shot down?

The first reports of mobilization of Army and National Guard were pouring in. Mobilization was less than one fourth complete. The Regular Army was ready to entrain for concentration points from its far-flung network of small garrisons whose location had been dictated by chambers of commerce and congressmen rather than by the necessities of military training in the vital team-play of larger units.

Plans were being laid for a call for 500,000 volunteers. That would have to wait action by Congress, but Congress could be depended upon now to go the limit. A draft army of a million men would come next.

As for modern equipment, that would have to wait. There would be no such thing as buying it in France and England, even in Canada, as at the time of the World War. A year, or two years, might elapse before industrial mobilization, the country's own resources, could



"I have two reports that will interest you."

provide anything more than the crudest necessities of combat. If a major war was in the offing, the country would have to depend upon the massed valor of its manpower to take unequal red losses and drive through at all costs.

It was nine o'clock before Colonel Flagwill stamped in from the Chief of Staff's office. His face was ashen and lined, but his level black eyes glowed vitality.

"What an inglorious tangle!" he muttered to Benning with a tormented shake of his head. "Which way to turn, that's the question bedeviling all of us."

"I've been reading the reports and recommendations of the staff sections, sir," Benning answered. "Mobilization seems to be moving right along and the panic is cooling off, even in Washington."

"Mobilizing is one thing, fighting another," Flagwill snapped out. "By tonight, when the Second gets cracked at San Antonio, the whole country will be howling for action. The howl for anti-aircraft is already pouring in—and every one of our ten regiments of anti-aircraft is short something, a battery or two, a full battalion, or essential equipment. Not to mention ammunition."

"The big trouble is, we don't know yet what we're up against and we've got to play a cautious game. If all we had to consider was Van Hasek, we'd rush troops in there and give him his lesson in a very few weeks. What the public will not be able to understand, nor even Congress, is that we've got to use most of our peace-strength army as a framework for building a national army."

"But anyhow, come what may with the future," Flagwill went on with a sardonic grin. "The Chief has just made one ten-strike of a decision. We're to make our first real military stand down around Fort Worth, which is about as far as Van Hasek would dare go in any event."

Flagwill bolted a sandwich and washed it down with a cup of coffee, then pulled himself up to his desk. "I've two reports that will interest you, Benning," he announced abruptly. "First, we've a tip from London that the Coalition espionage system in the United States is organized to completely wreck our industrial organization. That merely

confirms what we'd guessed long ago. They also suggest that the enemy espionage has its headquarters in New York, disguised as some large corporation, no details available. Second, I have positive information that Van Hasek's bombers had ground liaison in Washington last night. Light signals were flashed from the area of the White House during both raids."

Benning started. Into his mind flashed Captain Fincke's cryptic statements at the Shoreham. Promptly he decided against reporting this conversation for the time being. He gave Flagwill a brief account of his discovery of the Austrian captain and Colonel Boggio and explained his logic in not immediately causing their arrest.

"All right, Benning," Flagwill said, his eyes snapping. "I'll assume you made no mistake in not arresting them last night. But now you forget everything else and get out after them! Use your own judgment about when you make arrests, but see to it they don't get away from you. I needn't tell you that the Coalition spy net is ten times more dangerous in the long run than Van Hasek's present rotten invasion."

CHAPTER X

General Mole sat in the hot shelter of his command post which had been dug by engineers into the reverse slope of a squat ridge. He puffed glumly at the stub of a cigar as he observed the arrival of his regimental and battalion commanders whom he had summoned from over his battle position.

Planes soared overhead, American combat planes covering his position against air attack. From time to time an observation plane dashed low with a dropped message reporting progress of the Van Hasek approach. At last word, the main Van Hasek column had cleared the Nueces River after routing a motorized battalion strong-point that Mole had sent out to gain contact and delay the enemy.

Mole's plan of battle was shaped; his formal orders had been distributed. Since morning the men had been digging in.

All his artillery had been dug in and camouflaged. Here he had an immense, hastily organized citadel of mutually supporting strong-points. Machine guns had been placed for the maximum of destructive effect. The breaking of one line yielded the enemy the grim necessity of attacking a new one. Roads menacing his flanks were strongly covered. It was not such a position as he would have selected of his own choice, but since necessity forced it on him, he meant to make the most of his opportunities for stubborn resistance.

His senior aide-de-camp came up to him and saluted.

"Sir, the officers are assembled," the captain advised.

There was a greenish hue to the general's lean, cadaverous face, brought by the stress of the past few days. His eyes were bloodshot under pufty black lids, but they shone with a stout, even glitter, that proclaimed the mastery of will over flesh. As he stood up to face his assembled commanders, he was perfectly contained.

"I wanted a few words with you before we go into action, gentlemen," he began in a calm voice. "The decision to fight here was made for us by General Hague. Therefore, it becomes our decision. Let me frankly say that the Army is on the spot, that the people wouldn't understand the simple wisdom of our falling back without a fight."

He paused and his pale, bluish lips drew down into an expression of bitterness.

"All right, we'll go through! We'll hold! We'll give the country a new tradition to remember! We'll fight Van Hasek with one regiment to four or five! If we're attacked this afternoon we'll fight until night. We'll hold through tomorrow. Then I'll make my further decision. When the time comes I'll give the order for withdrawal which must be by night."

General Mole paused again to look about among them and then spoke in slow, biting words.

"Gentlemen, a final word! We'll show the country what our mettle is. We'll show the enemy what they can expect to meet once our armies are mobilized and organized and trained. Remember this, if we lost every last man in the Second Division, our losses would still be only a fraction of what the good old Second took in France, even if nobody remembers that fact but the Second's survivors!"

His voice rose to a furious intensity and his clenched hand rose above his head.

"A new Alamo to remember, gentlemen! That's what we'll give the country—a new Alamo to remember! Put that thought into the teeth of your men. That's all!"

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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Queer Oaths

Three Indian women who were witnesses in a case at Port Arthur danced past the judge instead of taking the oath. This, according to their religion, bound them to speak the truth. If they then lied, they would incur the wrath of their ancestors. In British courts Moslems swear on the Koran, and Sikhs on the Bhagvad Gita, their equivalent of the Bible.

When a Chinese takes the oath he raises a saucer above his head and smashes it to the floor, saying as the fragments fly: "If I tell a lie, may my soul be shattered, like that saucer, into a thousand fragments."

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Ask Me Another
A General Quiz

The Questions

1. Who was the father of King Solomon?
2. In what year was the "Star Spangled Banner" designated by congress as the national anthem?
3. Jefferson Davis' first wife was the daughter of what President of the United States?
4. How long is a song protected by the copyright law?
5. Which of the following is a detergent—soap, handcuffs or sulphuric acid?
6. Do any banks in the United States have resources of over a billion dollars?
7. Is there any temple in the world dedicated to the founder of another religion?
8. In what profession is a metronome used?

The Answers

1. David was the father of King Solomon.
2. In 1931.
3. Zachary Taylor.
4. Fifty-six years. The term of copyright is 28 years, with right of renewal for 28 years.
5. Soap.
6. Yes, eight have.
7. The Mohammedan mosque in Damascus is named in honor of Jesus Christ.
8. Music (a device for marking time).

Lips a Door
Lips are no part of the head, only made for a double-leaf door for the mouth.—Lily.

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