BOMBS BURST ONCE

By GRANVILLE CHURCH

W.N.U. SERVICE

STORY SO FAR: Jeff Curtis and [illegible], Lee, are already on their way to [illegible] Libre when he receives a note [illegible] Zora Mitchell warning them not to [illegible]. When they arrive in Tierra Libre [illegible] find both Zora and her husband [illegible]. It is Mitchell's job as chief engi[illegible] for a fruit company that Jeff has [illegible] called to fill. Later Jeff's friend [illegible] Anderson is also killed, and Jeff [illegible] to his employer, Senor Montaya, [illegible]ordering him; and the Mitchells be[illegible] they have found a clue to the [illegible] things going on at the plantation. [illegible] sinister figures are the company [illegible] Toenjes, and the flyers, [illegible]nnestock. Jeff and Lee [illegible] their housemaid is spying [illegible] a man named Collins arrives [illegible] Zone to see Mitchell, and [illegible] without arousing Mon[illegible]. Jeff finds his cart[illegible] tampered with.

[illegible]UE WITH THE STORY

[illegible]PTER XIV

[illegible] to bed Curt talked [illegible] Monaha[illegible] about Collins.

"He'll ma[illegible] a good man," Slats [illegible]eported. "A little awkward at first, [illegible]ut he knows Diesels and I'd say [illegible] had the makings."

Evidently Collins had raised speculations in Monahan, too, for Slats' voice was asking questions—who, what, why? But Curt didn't know the answers himself—and Emilio shared the same tent with him now that he had shared with Montaya on his first visit to this camp.

But the matter of Collins didn't end there. As Curt called at Montaya's office on his return to San Alejo—the following noon, Friday—he found "The Dark Lily" frowning and in a bad humor. The Spaniard came [illegible] the point without his usual circumspect approach to a subject.

"You hired a man named Collins, no?" he commenced bluntly. "I had not forbidden this especial, Mr. Curtis, but it must not be repeated. If the occasion arises to hire a person locally, I must first interview that person and decide for myself."

Curt stared, unbelieving, then [illegible]

[illegible]er words, you don't trust [illegible]nent? Or is it me you don't [illegible]

[illegible] voice became icy. [illegible]t the question. If I had [illegible] your judgment I would [illegible]red you. This, Mr. Cur[illegible] ironclad rule I will not [illegible]." He paused, then add[illegible] know this man?"

[illegible] had a man I do [illegible] Monahan tells [illegible]ry. I need such [illegible] my hiring him [illegible]ds. He's not un[illegible]

[illegible]ved in his face. [illegible]n equally irk[illegible] milder tone, [illegible]n explosion. [illegible]ning. Emilio [illegible]eparated on the [illegible]

[illegible]eared I would censure [illegible] should learn about it. He [illegible]e in order to protect him[illegible] Mr. Curtis, I told you distinctly [illegible] Emilio is to accompany you—"

This was too much for Curt. He broke out hotly, "Senor Montaya, if I'm in danger I want to know it! And what the danger is! Standing a bodyguard over me hampers my movements—"

"But I do not wish to alarm you. I repeat, you are in no danger personally—so long as Emilio accompanies you!"

Curt was in a rage when he left Montaya—such a rage that he couldn't go home and face Lee at once. Too quick to read him, was Lee. Nor did he want to go to his office in his present state. So he had a Tom Collins at the club bar, then another. With the second drink he recovered himself to the point of lighting his pipe and headed for home.

There he found that Lee and the children were at the swimming pool behind the clubhouse, had been while he'd been fuming to himself just a few yards away. The cook, about to climb into a hammock slung under the house for her midday siesta, called the information to him. Ines was off duty in the middle of the day—from eleven to three—so the house was empty.

Just as well, Curt thought, for this gave him a chance to inspect his stock of cartridges. The incident of the evening before was still sharp in his mind.

He went to the escaparate in the bedroom, the tall two-door wardrobe that held his things and Lee's. From the top shelf he took down the small paper box that held the rest of this lot of bullets.

He turned it over in his hands, read the label, spilled the contents onto the bed. He examined the shells one by one, but could detect nothing wrong with them.

The bullets he'd shot simply [illegible]n't had standard charges. Then [illegible] rest could be faulty, too. While [illegible]ning this over in his mind his [illegible]d was pushing the bullets ab[illegible]tly into piles of six, the number [illegible] in a clip.

[illegible]is brows knit. He counted the [illegible]s again. Yes, six in each, and [illegible]e were four piles. But here [illegible] three bullets left over! Twen[illegible]ven bullets on the bedspread.

[illegible] thought back. He hadn't shot [illegible]un since about a year ago, [illegible]'d done some target prac[illegible] three full clips—eighteen shells—from a fresh box. A fourth loading of six from the same box had been in his gun ever since landing here.

Each box held fifty. Eighteen and six and twenty-seven are fifty-one. There should have been but fifty. Someone had replaced his supply of cartridges—and those loaded in his gun—with cleverly forged, undercharged shells. Ha! but they'd made a mistake in counting his good bullets and had left one too many in their place! This must be the explanation of those duds he'd shot.

Now, who could have done this? Who had access to the house? Ines, of course! Her name leaped to mind, knowing as he did that she deliberately spied on him in his family life. Lee took the children to the pool each day, the girl had plenty of opportunity.

Thoughtfully Curt went to a wardrobe trunk in a corner of the room, unlocked it, and took from one of the drawers a fresh box of cartridges. This he broke open, to load his clip with shells he knew to be good. He also loaded two spare clips which he slipped into his pocket.

The two three-yard shovels ordered before Curt took over, would arrive on Saturday—tomorrow. So Montaya had said. Curt wanted to be on hand at Cabeza de Negro when the ship docked. This meant he would have to go down river on the first boat at daylight, all of which gave him an excuse to spend the night at Tempujo and thus avoid the questions he knew Lee would have for him—when she caught his

Someone had replaced his supply of cartridges.

present mood.

He packed his musette bag with fresh clothing, scribbled a note for Lee, and left.

The afternoon he spent at his office cleaning up detail work, then pulled out for Tempujo. There, too, he plunged into paper work for an hour, then at seven had supper at the mess-hall. Emilio, of course, clung like a leech.

"Senor Montaya will be here early on Sunday," Curt told his shadow. "He wants to talk with Collins. Get word to camp by the supply launch in the morning for Collins to come to Tempujo on its return. It'll be the last chance to get him here in time."

He got to bed early, put in a good night's rest, and, after snatching breakfast in the cold gray of the false dawn, made an uneventful trip down river to Cabeza. Emilio Vargas was silent with early morning sulks.

Two ships were in port. One was Japanese—the Keito Maru. It had docked the day before. The other was a Norwegian steamer chartered by the company for the New Orleans run. This ship carried the two tractor shovels, minus their booms and dippers, as a deck load.

Ryden was on hand and in a short humor. He spoke in grunts or monosyllables. Curt tried a pleasantry or two and when these didn't work fell silent.

It was midmorning by the time the tarpaulins had been removed and the first shovel lowered over the side to the dock. Its own brakes released, the big machine was hauled by the dock's baby tractor to the side of the river steamer then loading.

Curt's purpose in c[illegible]ing to Cabeza had been two-fold. First was the natural anxiety to get at the new machines, the child's reaction toward promised toys. But, specifically, he'd intended trying to jolly Ryden into delivering them at the job upriver, instead of at Tempujo.

In any case, Ryden's present humor meant a definite refusal of Curt's plan, together with possible unpleasantness, perhaps even a quarrel, so Curt remained silent, puffing steadily at his pipe as he glumly looked on.

He stood on one foot, the other planted firmly on a keg. Emilio straddled another keg nearby. Ryden came up behind the two and now offered his first voluntary remark of the day.

"Am I handling satisfactory so far?"

There was no mistaking the guttural-voiced sarcasm. Curt swung around leisurely, looked at Ryden a moment, and his lips framed a natural reply. But, determined not to quarrel with the man, instead of answering insolence with insolence Curt indicated a huge, square case then being hoisted by the thick-rope cargo carried to the deck of the river steamer. The box hovered over the open hatch, then slowly disappeared into the hold. There was a twin to the box on the dock awaiting its turn.

Both cases were of heavy lumber, were marked from Hamburg via Vladivostok, and the labeled inscription said they were generators. Electrical equipment was of prime interest to Curt, who was responsible for the electric plants at San Alejo and Tempujo, if not for the small plant at the airfield.

Pointing with his pipe stem, he asked mildly, "Those generators. Are they for me? I didn't know of any on order."

The Swede stared through and through Curt. At length he said thickly, "Ask Senor Montaya, if you must know. I know only my own job."

Curt's temper had been building up for a blow-off ever since his encounter with Montaya yesterday. Still, he'd nursed himself along so far and nothing was to be gained by words. With a jerk of his head at Emilio he strode angrily from the dock. Vargas, his features set incuriously, followed, trotting to keep up.

"Clubby chap, what?" said Curt, with a short laugh, when he could trust his own voice. To help cover his feelings he fumbled with his pipe, knocking out the ashes, stuffing it again. Then he simmered down and added grudgingly, "Of course, he's right in a way, but aren't we all working toward one end here? I need a drink. How about you?"

He was about to turn into the cantina he'd visited the day of landing here, but Emilio held back.

"There's another bar down the street," he said hurriedly. "You may like it better."

Curt, however, was in a mood.

"Man, what's the difference, this one, that one? Come along!" He pushed Emilio into the room and to the bar.

Fresh from the glaring sun, his eyes didn't take in the scene immediately. He was half blind as he mounted a stool, ordered a drink, and indicated with a wave of the hand that Emilio should order for himself.

Then his pupils expanded. In the mirror behind the bar he saw the Tierra Libre customs official and his lieutenant. They were drinking and playing poker dice with a man whose face was vaguely familiar. Curt had noticed on the dock that morning that there had been no customs official to inspect freight as it was unloaded. He'd given this no special thought at the time.

To cover his thoughts, but still frowning, Curt pulled a notebook from his pocket, scribbled a few words, ripped out the page. He pushed the paper toward Emilio.

"I need a hundred men at Tempujo by one o'clock," he growled. "Also, the launch will have to make another trip to the levee camp to bring down Monahan. Get this message off for me, will you?"

All the while, however, he was racking his brain over the third man with the customs officers. He was a Nordic, certainly. At last it came to him. The man was one of the mechanics who'd been working at the C. A. T. airfield the day of his visit there.

As they returned to the dock Emilio had the radio message sent off, and by eleven they were on their way back to Tempujo with the one machine this steamer could carry.

Reaching the river port by one-thirty, he found Collins and the rapidly gathering gang of men. Monahan arrived by two o'clock, and the rest of the day was spent in getting the two machines assembled, serviced, and on their way to pick up their sectors of levee work.

This job went smoothly, however, and it was just as well, Curt was thinking, that he hadn't made an issue of his plan to unload on the river bank at the job. If things went as well tomorrow, the two shovels would be at work Monday morning.

But it had been a strenuous, tiring job. After an early supper at the Tempujo mess-hall—with Collins and Monahan occupying a table not far from Curt and Emilio—Curt returned to his bungalow.

He switched on the lights, flung his hat to the table by the door. Emilio settled himself on the porch, with magazines and his ever-ready pack of native cigarillos. Curt had his trip across the river in mind. This was Saturday, the night he'd arranged to meet McInnis at Riverbend. He had to get rid of Vargas somehow.

"I'm going to bed," he told the man. "Need a good night's rest. You'd better get one, too. When you leave, see that the night latch is on. Good night."

"Buenas noches, Senor."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

U. S. Christmas Is Melting Pot Of Traditions

Christmas in America really is Something! It is an observation of traditions heralding from all parts of the world.

While there is no conclusive proof that December 25th is the exact anniversary of the Lord's birth, astronomers and historians have calculated that it must have occurred about the time of the winter solstice—e.i., the time when the sun is farthest from the earth.

This was a season of great feasting among the Romans: the festival of Saturnalia, celebrating the return of the sun in its course.

During the Fourth century, when the Roman emperor Constantine recognized and championed the Chris-

tian faith, the celebration of Christmas became an established custom: inheriting the feasting of ancient peoples, the devotion and sacrifice of the early martyrs, and the message of hope and love which the angel of the Lord had declared unto the shepherds of Bethlehem.

The very first Christians solemnized the Mass of Christ, whence the word "Christmas" has been derived, at this time. And later, in the beginning of the Christian era, the Fathers of the Church thought it best to do away with the heathen Saturnalia entirely.

Of course, the Roman emperors objected at first and many of the early faithful were put to death for having observed and celebrated, not Saturnalia, but the festival of the birth of Christ.

In America this year, we will cherish the ancient traditions: we will deck the halls and fill the stockings, light the trees and sing the carols, and humbly join our churches in the solemnization of Christ's Day so that the faith of our fathers may be renewed in the hearts of ALL people who look to Him Who was born in the manger for salvation, in faith believing that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and His Kingdom is everlasting.

Yule Candy a 'Must' For Kiddies: Here's Sweet Tooth Remedy

How it so happened that candy and Christmas became synonymous in the minds of children as turkey or chicken or goose in the minds of grown folks, no one knows definitely. You can be sure, though, as you might know from practical experience hearing the kiddies ask for candy a short time after they have gorged themselves with a big holiday dinner, that candy is one of the "musts" around the house during the Christmas season.

Fortunately, candy is one of the most available products at Christmas time. If you are in the candy-making mood, here is a recipe for chocolate fudge which will appease the sweet tooths of both young and old:

Chocolate Fudge.

2 squares unsweetened chocolate
¾ cup milk
2 cups sugar
Dash of salt
2 tablespoons butter
1 teaspoon vanilla

Add the chocolate to the milk and place over a low flame. Cook until the mixture is smooth and blended, stirring constantly. Add the sugar and salt; stir until the sugar is dissolved and the mixture boils. Continue boiling, without stirring, until a small amount of the mixture forms a very soft ball in cold water (232 degrees Fahrenheit).

If you are too busy to make candy, or just can't get a "batch" to come out, try hard as you may, there are always the stores to which you can go and make your purchases of this last-week-of-the-year necessity.

Incidentally, someone said that there must be a Good Fairy guarding over not only the young children with an insatiable desire for candy, but also the grown people with a similar desire. For if such a Good Fairy wasn't around, there wouldn't be enough doctors available to take care of the stomach distress.

Warm Christmas

Despite the quaint Old world atmosphere which characterizes Nassau, capital of the Bahamas, its observance of Christmas is identical with that of the United States in many respects. But down here—but a short hop from Miami, Fla.—instead of wishing for galoshes and sleds the children want sun suits and water skis. Here Christmas is observed against a tropical setting, and marked by a pleasant blending of English and American customs. It is strictly an outdoor holiday.

ON THE HOME FRONT

With RUTH WYETH SPEARS

THIS good looking davenport gives no hint that its early life was spent as an iron cot with a thin cotton pad. The sketch shows how the frame is made. It is covered with rather heavy green cotton material. The pad of the cot is also covered with this goods and the ruffle across the front is attached to it.

The separate cushions are covered with rose and green chintz and all seams are finished with deep rose cord welting. For the covering 12¼ yards of 36-inch wide plain material and six yards of flowered were used and 52 yards of welting at a few cents a yard.

NOTE: Clip and keep these directions as they are not in any of the home-making booklets prepared by Mrs. Spears for our readers. In the new BOOK 8 of this series you will find dimensions for many other economical things to make for your home. To get a copy of BOOK 8, send your order direct to:

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Bedford Hills New York
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Enclose 10 cents for Book 8.

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PREPAREDNESS

by the AMERICAN RED CROSS

THE Junior Red Cross is the American Red Cross in the schools of the nation. It is also the world's largest youth organization, with more than 14,000,000 members in the United States.

The principal duty of the Junior Red Cross in war time is the making of comfort and recreational articles for our service men everywhere. During the past year, Junior Red Cross members made more than 3,000,000 such articles, such as games, recreation room furniture and writing kits.

The Junior Red Cross has also taken a very active part in the making of many essential articles for Civilian Defense organizations throughout the nation. These items included splints, stretchers, and first aid cabinets.

"Earn, buy, make, give," are the four steps all Junior Red Cross members take in raising and using the money they get in their national enrollment drive. They must earn the money to buy the materials to make the articles to give to the hospital, army camp or Civilian Defense organization.

Junior Red Cross members have also been very active in salvage campaigns of all kinds throughout the nation, contributing more than half of the salvage gathered by children of school age throughout the country.

In addition to furnishing opportunity to learn by making these articles for service men and others, the Junior Red Cross affords children of school age basic training in civilian preparedness so that they may take their places later on in the volunteer activities of the Red Cross or the Office of Civilian Defense.

Approximately half the pupil population of all elementary and secondary schools in the nation were enrolled as members in the Junior Red Cross campaign just completed.

Prepared Exclusively for WNU.

Temple Bill Boards

The Hindus of India are the only people who permit the exterior walls of their temples of worship to be used as billboards, selling the space to advertisers who plaster it with large posters, proclaiming the merits of everything from malaria medicine to bathing hats, says Collier's. Even government offices often paste their public announcements on temple walls.

YOU CAN'T BUY ASPIRIN that can do more for you than St. Joseph Aspirin. Why pay more? World's largest seller at 10c. Demand St. Joseph Aspirin.

Refuge of Weak

Idleness is only the refuge of weak minds, and the holiday of fools.—Lord Chesterfield.

Millions have used—
PAZO for Simple PILES
Relieves pain and soreness

There's good reason why PAZO ointment has been used by so many millions of sufferers from simple Piles. First, PAZO ointment soothes inflamed areas—relieves pain and itching. Second, PAZO ointment lubricates hardened, dried parts—helps prevent cracking and soreness. Third, PAZO ointment tends to reduce swelling and check bleeding. Fourth, it's easy to use. PAZO ointment's perforated Pile Pipe makes application simple, thorough. Your doctor can tell you about PAZO ointment.

Get PAZO Today! At Drugstores!

—Buy War Savings Bonds—

SNAPPY FACTS ABOUT RUBBER

A single bicycle tire and tube gives rubber enough for the insulation of six Army radio sets.

Just because the synthetic rubber program has been upped to 1,100,000 tons production capacity by the end of 1943, the chances of car owners getting synthetic tires before 1945 have not been increased. War needs will take the bulk of the synthetic.

In normal times, say 1940, the average car owner expended only $15 a year for tire and tube replacements. He spent $117 for gasoline and $10 for oil out of his annual $159 expenditure for car maintenance, exclusive of heavy repairs.

Picture 16,000 automobile tires and you have an idea of the amount of rubber used in the construction of a battleship—75 tons.

Jerry Shaw

In war or peace
B.F.Goodrich
FIRST IN RUBBER

Shop with Confidence in Your Home Town Newspaper—You will see America's best known and most reliable merchandise featured.