

RAID ON DUNEDIN—"ALL THEIR PLANES RETURNED SAFELY."

It is October 18, 1965.

In Army Headquarters, somewhere in New Zealand, confusion reigns supreme. The sanctum has been disturbed. Colonels and majors, rudely awakened from their mid-day nap, rush hither and yon, brushing the sleep from their bleary eyes. The soft thud of slippers rises to a roar like distant thunder. Doormats, wrenched from their age-old moorings, drift about like leaves on the April wind. New Zealand is on the alert.

Somewhere, out in the waste of waters, a lonely sailor, perched on the top of a pitching mast, has sighted something suspicious moving in the darkness. The warning, dashed off immediately on the ship's wireless, has gradually come to the Dominion, and now, after passing through the outer chambers, has at last reached the sanctum of the most high. The show is on. Somewhere in the labyrinth of offices a diligent officer races to the phone, rings Army Signals, and puts through an urgent call to the city of the south. After an hour and a-half, during which he has short but interesting conversations with the City Dyeworks, Arthur Barnett's, and a certain Mrs Henry Brown, Jnr, he contacts the local A.A. Regiment, and the defences of Dunedin spring into sudden life.

The Colonel, for the sixth consecutive flap of the war, is absent on duty. But Sergt. Cunningham, as good a driver as ever in spite of his failing health and fourteen children, is off the mark in AS 22,560,284, and brings the Colonel in past the place where the guard used to be. He is lowered into his waiting bath-chair, and immediately orders the leave to be cut down to 75 per cent.

By now, the shades of night are falling fast. Through the twilight appears the figure of the Adjutant, moving stealthily with a Tommy-gun poised at the ready under each arm. From beyond him, on the parade ground, comes the snarl of grinding gears as Mr Masters, his beard entangling itself in the gear-lever, gets in some feverish last-minute practice at handling a gun-tractor. The whole scene is one of great efficiency, and only by the determined looks and clenched teeth of officers and men would one guess that they were the actors in a mighty drama of life and death. The fact of the danger

overshadowing the town is kept a close secret, but if the citizens of Dunedin were only privileged to see the camp and to sense the atmosphere within it, they would sleep secure in the belief that their safety lay in the hands of valiant men.

At this moment, a patrol plane of the ever-watchful R.N.Z.A.F. roars over the city, and the whole of the populace, as if in some strange manner the secret of the threat has become known, crowds off the pavement on to the roadway and gazes upwards.

As the darkness grows murkier, the network of radio-location stations scattered over the suburbs and harbour comes into action, and invisible fingers of radio begin to probe the hidden mysteries of the ether. Though the rest of the defence mechanism seems to slumber, these nerve-centres are ever-watchful. If once the telephone should ring on the line connecting these stations, the whole of the Regiment will leap out of bed and into life. While all others sleep, the radio-location operators toil on, their knitting growing longer and longer as the watches of the night crawl by.

Suddenly, like the knell of doom, the bell tinkles. From a score of beds the officers come tumbling. A score of ears are glued to receivers and a score of hearts beat faster. The lions are poised for the kill. They listen with bated breath as the voice of the W.A.A.C. operator comes over the line:

"Could you tell me what the time is, please? I'm sure it must be time for the next shift."

Slowly and wearily the officers lower their heavy limbs back on to their downy couches. But hardly have they begun to dream of the days when they will all be colonels before the bell rings again. No mistake this time. A target is sighted. The alarm is sounded, and the camp re-echoes to the sound of frantic hooves as the Regiment goes into action. This is the time they have been waiting for. This is the culmination of the long, weary years of training. The time has come for the taking of blood!

First, the guns must be lined up. Men on all sides work feverishly till the cold sweat—purely from their terrific exertion—pours from their brows. As they toil, the sound of the plane comes to their ears, stimulating them to