

Used Invisible Ink

Inter-American Employee Here Arrested by FBI as Nazi Spy

Post 8-8-43
Translator Got

Money From Lisbon,
Hoover Declares

Roberto Lanas Vallecilla, 35, a translator in the Office of Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, a native of Colombia, was arrested yesterday on charges of espionage by agents of the FBI.

The announcement of the arrest was made by J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI, who said Lanas had admitted writing three letters in invisible ink transmitting to the Nazis information concerning the national defense of the United States.

Hoover added that the man had been under the watch of the FBI for some time, and that his duties with the Inter-American Bureau were such as to preclude his having obtained any vital information that would have been of material use to the enemy.

Brought into the picture were all the "props" of the standard spy story. Besides the secret ink angle there also was the female spy, who, in this instance, refused to aid despite the offer of pay as high as \$450 a month.

Lanas, according to Hoover, admitted receiving money in large sums from Lisbon, Portugal. He is accused of having disclosed in his letters that from July, 1940, to March, 1941, a total of 7000 planes were delivered to the United States Government and that 4000 planes had been sent to England.

Acting on a tip from "highly confidential European sources," the FBI began watching the man in 1941, Hoover said they were in-



ROBERTO LANAS VALLECILLA

formed he was acting as a German agent. The first concrete evidence was the discovery of a letter written in invisible ink. It was addressed to an individual in Lisbon, Portugal.

The alleged spy is then said to have approached a beautiful New York model with his offer of \$450 a month pay. He gave her demonstrations in the use of invisible ink and in the development of invisible writing. He planned to use her as a courier to deliver material to other agents, but she refused to cooperate, Hoover said.

Lanas at one time worked as translator for the international labor organization which was affiliated with the League of Nations at Geneva, Switzerland. He came to New York in September, 1940. He went to work in the

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Inter-American office in February of 1942.

Six Nazi Saboteurs Executed Year Ago

Today will be the anniversary of the execution of six Nazi saboteurs in the District jail after they had been caught following their landing on Long Island from a German submarine.

The six graves at Blue Plains are marked only with weathered,

unpainted wooden, headboards bearing simply the numerals 276, 277, 278, 279, 280 and 281.

Unkempt grass and weeds add to the desolation of the place where the saboteurs lie, separated from some of the forgotten pauper dead of the District by a wire fence.

Yesterday the FBI warned that another class of saboteurs had been graduated from a saboteur academy located at Quenz Lake, Brandenburg, Germany, and that soon another attempt to damage American war industry could be expected.