

S7 Special - Operation Christmas Duff

Transcribed by John Koster, corrections by Tony Wills. Final corrections by Helen.

GREENSLADE:

This is the General Overseas Service of the BBC. This program is specially dedicated to Her Majesty's Forces Overseas and to the Trans-Antarctic Expedition, the Falkland Islands Dependency Survey Teams and the Royal Society Expedition at Halley Bay. Greetings from the Goons.

ECCLES:

Hello.

ORCHESTRA:

ROYAL FANFARE.

SELLERS:

This is a story of a great endeavour. A story of land, sea and air. And in some cases, both. The date: the 23rd of November 1956. Christmas was coming. The geese were getting fat. But one problem lay heavily on Parliament's conscience.

OMNES:

FADE IN TO CROWD TALKING.

CRUN:

[SELLERS]

Gentlemen!

MP 1:

[MILLIGAN]

What's happened to the colonies?

CRUN:

[SELLERS]

What are colonies?

MP 1:

Ahm, I do not...

MP 2:

[SECOMBE]

Think of something.

MP 1:

Piece of land, surrounded by dollars.

CRUN:

Aah! As Minister of Military-type Foods, I must state that the picture regarding Christmas puddings for the forces overseas looks pretty black.

MP 2:

Then why don't we send them black puddings?

ORCHESTRA:

CORNY CHORD.

GELDRAV:

Hoi!

CRUN:

Thank you, Sir Hartley Shawcross KC. And now, a few statistics from our resident statisticker.

ORCHESTRA:

LIVELY INTRODUCTORY-TYPE MUSIC.

SPRIGGS:

I say, I say, I say, I say.

MP 3:

[SELLERS]

A soldier.

SPRIGGS:

I say, gentlemen.

MP 3:

I don't wish to know that.

SPRIGGS:

Owing to the shortage of civilian contractors, they cannot supply sufficient Xmas-type duff for our forces overseas.

CROWD:

CROWD RUMBLING.

MILLIGAN:

Oh, a Calamity, a terrible calamity

SCOTTISH VOICE:

[SECOMBE]

What about the Naafi?

CRUN:

Naafi, what is Naafi?

SCOTTISH VOICE:

An organisation working for the downfall of the British Army.

CRUN:

Have they succeeded?

SCOTTISH VOICE:

Several times.

SPRIGGS:

Gentlemen. Gentlemen, I have a solution. I just took it off a bicycle tyre.

CRUN:

Speak up!

SPRIGGS:

Now, listen to me, please.

CRUN:

We are here.

SPRIGGS:

Why don't the services all combine in the building of a giant Christmas pudding for their [UNCLEAR]?

GRAMS:

CROWD - APPLAUSE, "WELL DONE, WELL DONE." CHEERS, FADE IN SINGING OF "LAND OF HOPE AND GLORY", SPED UP.

SELLERS:

The motion was adopted and passed. But meanwhile, at the Admiralty...

FX:

DOOR OPENS. BOSUN'S WHISTLE.

SPARKS:

[MILLIGAN]

Ah, pardon me, sir RN.

SEAGOON:

What is it, Sparks?

SPARKS:

I'm sorry to interrupt you at squash, sir.

SEAGOON:

It's all right, I'll drink it later.

SPARKS:

Right. Ah, this Morse signal just arrived from Magadan Trans-Antarctic Ehhhhhhh-Expedition, sir.

SEAGOON:

Really? What's it say?

SPARKS:

I don't know, it's all little dots and dashes, I...

SEAGOON:

I see. Play it on the gramophone.

SPARKS:

Right.

FX:

BEEPS IN MORSE.

SEAGOON:

What a lovely tune. What's it called?

SPARKS:

It says: "We-want-a-Christmas-Pudding-for-Christmas-by-the-boys-of-the-Trans-Antarctic-Exarrh-pedition-with-Taffy-Williams-at-the-mighty-Morse-keys".

SEAGOON:

Three words a minute, that's his lot. Gad!

SPARKS:

Good luck, Captain.

SEAGOON:

You mean those lads out there in all that sand and snow are to be denied a Christmas pudding?

SPARKS:

I fear so, sir.

SEAGOON:

It's not British, I tell you, it's not British.

SPARKS:

Very few Christmas puddings are these days, sir. They're made in Japan.

SEAGOON:

Wait, wait! I have it, Robin.

SPARKS:

Have you, sir?

SEAGOON:

I have indeed, Robin. We will have to ask the service chefs to increase the size of the giant Christmas pudding to allow for an extra slice for the Antarctic base.

SPARKS:

Magnificent, sir. Do you know, they're mixing it at Chatham at this very moment, sir.

SELLERS:

(OFF) Well done.

SPARKS:

I'll drive you there. Giddup, sir!

SEAGOON:

(NEIGHING)

SPARKS:

Giddup!

SEAGOON:

(NEIGHING)

FX:

TWO MEN RUNNING AWAY.

ORCHESTRA:

"CLAIRE DE LUNE". CYMBOL CLASH.

GREENSLADE:

We included that brief excerpt from "Clair de lune" for people who speak French. And now, over to Richard Dimbleby.

FX:

INDUSTRIAL SOUNDS. BUBBLING, CHUGGING MOTOR NOISE. UNDER:

DIMBLEBY:

[SELLERS]

The sound you are now hearing is the great combined Services Christmas pudding in the making. Now, I'm standing by the great dry dock at Chatham in which the Christmas pudding is being mixed. Standing next to me is Admiral Seagoon, RN.

SEAGOON:

Well, we've had a good day today.

DIMBLEBY:

Grand, sir.

SEAGOON:

Number three flotilla motor torpedo boats have been going backwards and forwards churning up the mixture. The cruiser Ajax has been following in their wake, dropping depth charges to bring the raisins to the surface.

DIMBLEBY:

How perfectly splendid to see the... the finest traditions of the silent service being maintained.

SEAGOON:

Yes, yes, we... we try to keep the men happy when they're off duty by giving them little tasks like this.

DIMBLEBY:

We could do with more of that spirit. Yes.

SEAMAN:

[MILLIGAN]

(UNCOUTH) You could do with a big clout up the back of your big fat steaming nut, there.

SEAGOON:

Put that admiral under arrest.

SEAMAN:

I'll write to my MP.

DIMBLEBY:

How do you...

SEAMAN:

It's not right.

DIMBLEBY:

How do you test the... the density of this great patriotic pudding mixture?

SEAGOON:

We've sent a diver down. He went down half an hour ago. We're getting rather worried.

DIMBLEBY:

Why?

SEAGOON:

He hasn't got a diving suit on.

DIMBLEBY:

Ha, ha, what a splendid joke that was to play on him.

FX:

PROPELLER AEROPLANE NOISE.

DIMBLEBY:

And now the great dockyard is being cleared, as the Fairey Gannets of 824 Squadron swoop low over the pudding. Their bomb bays are open and yes, down comes the candied peel, stone ginger and sultanas.

FX:

LOW WHISTLE OF BOMBS FALLING AND LANDING WITH SPLOGGG NOISES IN PUDDING MIXTURE.

DIMBLEBY:

A direct hit on the great Christmas pudding mixture. This is indeed a grand day for the Empire.

SEAMAN:

[MILLIGAN]

Errr, pardon me, sir. Errr, oil tankers standing by for to take on the pudding, sir.

SEAGOON:

Right!

SEAMAN:

Right you are.

SEAGOON:

Tell them to drop the suction pumps into the mixture and suck it!

SEAMAN:

Right-oh, sir.

FX:

PUMPING. CHUG CHUG OF PUMPS, SLOPPING NOISES.

DIMBLEBY:

And so the great pudding mixture is siphoned out of the dry dock and into the great all-British oil tanker Aristotle Onassis.

SEAGOON:

Yes. She'll transport it to an empty gasometer near Salisbury Plain. From then on the pudding is under Army command. Unfortunately.

DIMBLEBY:

Thank, you, Admiral Seagoon. And before we go, what is the great record of your choice?

SEAGOON:

I should say... Max Geldray.

SELLERS:

I'm off, then.

MAX GELDRAI:

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

GREENSLADE:

Operation Christmas Duff, part two.

MILLIGAN:

(BURPS).

FX:

BUGLE CALL, SPEEDING UP AND DOWN.

BLOODNOK:

Oh, oh, ooweeoweeowee! (LIP SMACKING NOISES) Reveille! And first thing in the morning, too! Oh, what a shock. Quick, get me some brandy.

CAPTAIN THING:

[MILLIGAN]

Have you got a weak heart, sir?

BLOODNOK:

No, a weak will. Oh, Captain Thing, what's the latest sit. rep.?

CAPTAIN THING:

Oh-six-hundred hours, sir.

BLOODNOK:

Yes, yes.

CAPTAIN THING:

Tank transporter arrived with converted gasometer containing six hundred tons of Christmas pudding, ready for cooking.

BLOODNOK:

What's its map reference?

CAPTAIN THING:

Seven-nine-eight-one.

BLOODNOK:

Salisbury Plain?

CAPTAIN THING:

Yes, sir.

BLOODNOK:

Where's that?

CAPTAIN THING:

You're standing on it, sir!

BLOODNOK:

Oh, I'm dreadfully sorry, I hope I haven't dirtied it.

CAPTAIN THING:

It's... it's all right, sir, we have it blanco'd every other day.

BLOODNOK:

Yes.

FX:

KNOCKING ON DOOR.

BLOODNOK:

Come in! Two, three!

FX:

DOOR OPENS. BOSUN'S WHISTLE.

BLOODNOK:

Oh, it's a naval snotty, RN! What are you doing so far inland?

SEAGOON:

I ran aground, sir. I was sent alongside to report on the cooking.

BLOODNOK:

Mmmm, well, you'd... you'd... you'd... you'd better follow me.

SEAGOON:

Oh.

BLOODNOK:

The, er, Derbyshire Yeomanry have laid on fourteen flame-throwing tanks.

SEAGOON:

I see.

FX:

BUGLE: "COME TO THE COOKHOUSE DOOR".

SEAGOON:

I say, what call is that?

BLOODNOK:

Cook-house. Number one on our hit parade, you know. Has been for three hundred years now.

SEAGOON:

Well done. Yes, yes.

BLOODNOK:

Now, here we are. Now, if you'll just come to this observation post you'll be able to watch to whole of the Christmas pudding being cooked.

SEAGOON:

Oh, good.

BLOODNOK:

Now, let's go over to this [UNCLEAR]...

SEAGOON:

Right, yes, yes. I see.

FX:

HISS OF FLAME-THROWERS.

GREENSLADE:

Hello, listeners. The sound you're hearing are the tanks which are bringing their flame-throwers to bear as they cook the giant Christmas pudding in its gasometer. And now a word from our military observer.

CAPTAIN BERK:

[SECOMBE]

Well, at dawn this morning number forty-five commando went in under cover of daylight and brought back samples for testing by the Army Catering Corps.

GREENSLADE:

What was it like?

CAPTAIN BERK:

Pretty good.

BLOODNOK:

I say, Captain Berk.

CAPTAIN BERK:

Sir, two, three, four.

BLOODNOK:

Er, field intelligence reports that the pudding is done.

CAPTAIN BERK:

Splendid, sir, absolutely, first class!

BLOODNOK:

Yes.

CAPTAIN BERK:

Yes, I should wait till things have cooled down a bit then send in the Sappers who blast open the gasometer with Bangalore torpedoes, leaving the pudding completely at our mercy.

BLOODNOK:

Splendid, have a Roger and out.

CAPTAIN BERK:

Thank you.

GREENSLADE:

Excuse me, Major. Er, I'm from the BBC.

BLOODNOK:

I'm sorry, I don't have any money on me, I... Ask John Snagge, he's got a fortune in his mattress, you know.

FX:

EXPLOSIONS.

BLOODNOK:

Ohhhhh! There she goes! There she goes. You see that? Split the gasometer completely in two. Well done, Slappers!

GREENSLADE:

Indeed, yes, listeners. Right in two. Revealing a great big steaming Christmas pudding.

GRAMS:

FIRING OF HEAVY GUNS UNDER:

GREENSLADE:

And there you hear the 74th Medium Regiment R.A., firing over open sights smack into the pudding itself. Er, tell me, Major, what are they firing?

BLOODNOK:

Thrippenny bits.

CAPTAIN BERK:

Excuse me, sir, the infantry have gone in. Their CO's on the walkie-talkie.

BLOODNOK:

Oh, hello, Sunray here.

MASTERS:

[MILLIGAN]

Masters speaking.

BLOODNOK:

Yes.

MASTERS:

Here's a sit. rep., sir.

BLOODNOK:

Yes.

MASTERS:

B Company, 2nd Force Hamps, have reached the summit of the Christmas pudding.

BLOODNOK:

Oh, right. Consolidate. Roger and out.

MASTERS:

(OFF) Roger and out, sir.

BLOODNOK:

Gentlemen, the Army's task in this matter is completed. It is now under RAF command.
Unfortunately.

GRAMS:

LAST TWO LINES OF LAND OF HOPE AND GLORY

SECOMBE:

That night, an excited House was given the news.

FX:

CROWD NOISES - HEAVY MUTTERINGS.

CHURCHILL:

[SELLERS]

(ECHOEY) Honourable members. I have, this moment, received good news. At 1700 hours British troops began the summit of the combined Services Christmas pudding and there planted the British holly.

OMNES:

APPLAUSE AND CHEERS.

CHURCHILL:

One hour later, Sopwith Camels of Bomber Command dropped delayed brandy bombs and set the pudding on fire. The magnificent Christmas duff is now ready for transporting

GRAMS:

CHEERS, ALL SING "LAND OF HOPE AND GLORY" WITH ORCHESTRA BACKING.

GREENSLADE:

Late that night, Service chiefs were given their instructions at the War Office.

FX:

BAR ROOM NOISES, HONKY TONK PIANO.

SEAGOON:

Gentlemen, please, please. If the Chief of the Imperial General Staff will lay off the joanna, thank you.

THROAT:

Cor blimy, I've always played it before.

SEAGOON:

I have here sealed orders containing four tickets for the Windmill and this message...

COCKNEY 1:

[MILLIGAN]

Oi, oi! Good luck, there.

SEAGOON:

"The pudding will be..." (SECOMBE LAUGHS)

COCKNEY 1

What about the old General Staff, there?

SEAGOON:

I don't wish to know that.

COCKNEY 1:

What about the old-fashioned [UNCLEAR], there?

SEAGOON:

I say, look here.

COCKNEY 2:

[SELLERS]

What about the flyin' duck, there?

SEAGOON:

What about it? What about the turkey in the shop? And now, then. "The pudding will be divided as follows. One slice to be cut and filled with anti-freeze for immediate transport to the Trans-Antarctic expedition. The remainder of the giant Christmas pudding will be fitted with wheels, a diesel engine and driven to the Middle East depots for distribution. Signed, Field Marshall Montgoonery."

OMNES:

CROWD NOISES.

ORCHESTRA:

MUSICAL LINK.

GRAMS:

VEHICLE DRIVING IN SAND STORM, GREAT CLASHING OF GEARS.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Have you ever driven a Christmas pudding before, Eccles?

ECCLES:

No, I never driven anything before.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Then how did you get the job?

ECCLES:

Well, the sergeant said, "One pace forward, my good man, anyone who can play the piano".

BLUEBOTTLE:

Oh. Can you play the piano, then?

ECCLES:

No.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Then why are you driving a Christmas pudding?

ECCLES:

I want to learn to play the piano.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Then it's true what the recruiting posters say.

ECCLES:

What... what do the recruiting posters say?

BLUEBOTTLE:

They say: "You're *somebody* in the modern army of today".

ECCLES:

Oohh. And what are you?

BLUEBOTTLE:

I'm somebody in the modern army of today.

ECCLES:

Oh, I wondered who you were.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Hello, Kitty, hello, Kay.

ECCLES:

Hello, Jim. Um, um. How did you... how did you join?

BLUEBOTTLE:

Well...

ECCLES:

Well?

BLUEBOTTLE:

I was in the street...

ECCLES:

Yah?

BLUEBOTTLE:

...writing something on a wall.

ECCLES:

Oohh!

BLUEBOTTLE:

No! I was only writing my name.

ECCLES:

Oh, w... w... wouldn't they know who done it, then?

BLUEBOTTLE:

No, I didn't sign it.

ECCLES:

Oh, you got brains, Bottle.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Then...

ECCLES:

Go... go on, then.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Then up comes a naughty hairy man wearing a soldier set.

ECCLES:

Uh-huh.

BLUEBOTTLE:

And he said, "Little Finchley lad. You don't want to write your name in silly chalk, you want to write your name in ink." And then I said, "Where?" And he said, "On this nice military dotted line". So I signed it. And then they said, "Can you play the piano?" And I said, "Yes". And here I am.

ECCLES:

Give us a tune.

BLUEBOTTLE:

What would you like?

ECCLES:

My ticket.

BLUEBOTTLE:

How does it go?

ECCLES:

It goes (SINGS):

Doctor,

My dear military doctor.

You gotta believe me, I got a bad back in the front.

I'm not fit for active service.

I gotta bone in my leg.

And when I close my eyes, I can't see.

When I lie down it hurts me to lie sideways.

And...

(NORMAL) Ohh, it's time for Ray Ellington.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Go man, go!

RAY ELLINGTON QUARTET:

"OLD MAN RIVER".

GRAMS:

WIND BLOWING UNDER...

GRYTPYPE:

Moriarty?

MORIARTY:

Grytpype?

GRYTPYPE:

Tell them who we are.

MORIARTY:

Moriarty and Grytpype. It got a laugh, it passed the time. Continue.

GRYTPYPE:

Hello, Ted.

MORIARTY:

Hello, Jim.

GRYTPYPE:

What's that coming round the mountain pass in Cyrenaica?

MORIARTY:

I'll soon tell, hand me my wig. I'll just trim the fringe. (MAKES SCISSOR-CUTTING NOISE) Ah, yes. Sapristi bompet! It's a giant Christmas pudding with a sign on top that says "Low bridge".

GRYTPYPE:

Anything else?

MORIARTY:

Yes, a low bridge. This is our big chance.

GRYTPYPE:

Big chance to what?

MORIARTY:

To eat! Oh! (SMACKS LIPS) Food! I've got to have food! Oohhh. Give me my teeth back. Give me my teeth back!

GRYTPYPE:

Shan't have them, Moriarty, they're mine.

MORIARTY:

What? No!

GRYTPYPE:

They're mine forever.

MORIARTY:

Oh, ya, noo aah. Be kind to a little steaming recorder.

GRYTPYPE:

Never... You should never have left France.

MORIARTY:

(LIP SMACKING NOISES) No, no, I never lefted it, it left me.

GRYTPYPE:

You... you... you nifty Norman, you. First we must stop them, Moriarty. Now, you lay across the road and show the top of your boot.

MORIARTY:

Right.

GRYTPYPE:

Not too much, though, it may be a lady driver.

MORIARTY:

Right!

FX:

SCREECHING TYRES TO A STOP.

GRYTPYPE:

There, Moriarty, she pulled up!

MORIARTY:

But they ran over me first!

GRYTPYPE:

(LAUGHING) And I ruined the gag.

MORIARTY:

And I continued as if nothing had happened.

GRYTPYPE:

I shall follow suit.

BLUEBOTTLE:

Ah, poor little thin man. Did we hurt you?

MORIARTY:

Yes, little cardboard string lad. Only one thing can save poor old Moriarty's life.

GRYTPYPE:

Yes, he must have a diet of military Christmas pudding which he must eat on the move.

ECCLES:

That's a bit of luck! Christmas pudding will keep you on the move, alright, chum! And we're... we're... we're driving one on the move, as well.

GRYTPYPE:

Quick! Help me get him inside, then.

ECCLES:

OK, I'll... I'll take his legs, you take his arm and I'll take the... well, there's nothing left, is there...

GREENSLADE:

Meanwhile... Meanwhile, the portion of the pudding destined for the Antarctic base was on board the Theron, going full steam ahead over the ice floes.

GRAMS:

WIND AND SEA. BREAKING OF ICE.

BLOODNOK:

Oh, gad, what a night. Nothing but sleep. I tell you... I tell you it's hell out there.

SEAGOON:

Actually, it's a little bit colder.

BLOODNOK:

Ohhhhhh!

SEAGOON:

Keep your chin up, Major!

BLOODNOK:

Why?

SEAGOON:

It's in the soup!

BLOODNOK:

I'm sorry, I thought my beard was on fire.

SEAMAN:

[MILLIGAN]

Land ahead!

SEAGOON:

Hear that? They've sighted the Thurston ice-shelf. Gad, in a few days we'll be at the base with the pudding. What a thrill it will be. I can see Dr Fuchs's face now.

BLOODNOK:

You've got damned good eyesight...

SEAGOON:

Thank you.

BLOODNOK:

...that's all I can [UNCLEAR].

SEAGOON:

Prepare... to unload pudding, dogs and sleds. Woowowohhww!

ORCHESTRA:

DRAMATIC CHORDS.

GREENSLADE:

Seven months later...

GRAMS:

WIND UNDER:

BLOODNOK:

Ahhh! Oh, Seagoon. What's the time?

SEAGOON:

I can't tell you until it gets dark.

BLOODNOK:

Why not?

SEAGOON:

My watch has got a luminous dial.

BLOODNOK:

Curse. We shall have to wait till nightfall before we know it's late.

SEAGOON:

Who cares about things like that? When we've... we've run out of food!

BLOODNOK:

We've still got the Christmas pudding. Let us eat that.

SEAGOON:

What? You touch that, Bloodnok and I'll... I'll drop you in your tracks.

BLOODNOK:

Oohh!

SEAGOON:

Ahh, that's for the boys at the Antarctic base.

BLOODNOK:

But if we don't eat it, we won't have the strength to pull it.

SEAGOON:

At the back of my legs I knew he was right. All right, Bloodnok. But we'll... we'll just have a thin quarter ounce slice of pudding each.

BLOODNOK:

Can't I have a thick quarter ounce slice?

SEAGOON:

No, but... I'll meet you halfway.

BLOODNOK:

Alright, I'll see you there, then. Forward!

ABDUL:

(OFF) Give him a [UNCLEAR] of gin.

ORCHESTRA:

DRAMATIC CHORDS.

GRAMS:

ICY WIND HOWLING.

SEAGOON:

December 52nd. Took off record of effects. (GRAMS CEASE) For three nights now, gallant Bloodnok has volunteered to stay awake and guard the pudding.

BLOODNOK:

December 1st, pudding getting smaller.

SEAGOON:

Bloodnok getting bigger.

BLOODNOK:

Seagoon getting suspicious.

SEAGOON:

December 19th!

BLOODNOK:

Oohhh!

SEAGOON:

Caught Bloodnok brown-handed digging into the pudding!

BLOODNOK:

It's a lie!. We're just good friends, I tell you. Officer, arrest that pudding for molesting me out of season, do you hear!

MILLIGAN:

Right. Come along.

SEAGOON:

Bloodnok, you...

BLOODNOK:

Ohhh!

SEAGOON:

You devil of the snows!

BLOODNOK:

Oohh!

SEAGOON:

Open your hand!

FX:

COINS FALLING TO FLOOR.

BLOODNOK:

Aahh!

SEAGOON:

AAhhhhh! So that's what you're after, the thruppenny bits!

BLOODNOK:

Yes, I wanted to make a brown phone call!

SEAGOON:

Phones? Here? Ha, ha, ha, ha.

FX:

PHONE RINGING.

SEAGOON:

Don't answer it, it's a mirage.

BLOODNOK:

Nonsense, it's a phone.

FX:

PHONE PICKED UP.

BLOODNOK:

Hello?

MIRAGE:

[MILLIGAN]

(SPRIGGS VOICE) Hello, this is a mirage speaking.

FX:

PHONE THROWN DOWN.

BLOODNOK:

Ooohh. You were right, Seagoon. Ooh, unless we reach the base soon my mind will give out.

SEAGOON:

Well, try to use it as little as possible.

BLOODNOK:

I always do!

GRAMS:

TRUCK TYRES SQUEALING TO A STOP.

ECCLES:

Heeelloolloo! Hellooo, fellers. Hello. We've brought you your Christmas pudding.

SEAGOON:

What? What? What? What? What? What? What? What? What? What? What? What? What?
What? What? What? What? What? What? What?

ECCLES:

No... no thanks, I'm trying to give them up. Here, I bet this is the first time you've had snow in Libya.

BLOODNOK:

What? We're in Libya?

SEAGOON:

Nonsense.

ECCLES:

I am.

SEAGOON:

According to my cuculations and our position on the map, we're 20 miles south of here.

BLOODNOK:

Well, we shall soon settle this. Let's ask somebody. Excuse me, sir, where's our position?

GREENSLADE:

Cher monsieur, soyez le bienvenue a` New York.

BLOODNOK:

He says, "Welcome to New York".

ECCLES:

What's New York doing in Libya?

SEAGOON:

Nonsense. Nonsense, Eccles. You mean what's New York doing in the Antarctic?

BLOODNOK:

Perhaps it's on holiday.

ECCLES:

It... it's a bad time of the year.

SEAGOON:

Will you stop talking rubbish!

ECCLES:

I make my living doing that.

BLOODNOK:

Sing, Frankie. Well, we'll soon settle where we are. Stand me on my head. Right.

ECCLES:

No!

BLOODNOK:

Now then, I'll just toss this coin, this melody coin.

FX:

COIN FALLING.

BLOODNOK:

Ah! Heads! There! We *are* in Mongolia!

SEAGOON:

Ah! But you're using a Mongolian penny.

BLOODNOK:

Yes, but only from the inside.

SEAGOON:

What does that mean?

BLOODNOK:

It means we are in Mongolia!

ECCLES:

I want to learn the piano.

SEAGOON:

Liberace started out live and look how he's turned out.

(CONTINUE ARGUING AS GREENSLADE STARTS HIS NEXT LINE BELOW)

ECCLES:

Wait a minute.

GREENSLADE:

(OVER OTHERS ARGUING) Here is an urgent communiqué from the War Office. If a sledge drawn by Seagoon RN should arrive at the transit camp in Melbourne, will the commanding officer please redirect him to the Antarctic base.

SELLERS:

(ACCOMPANIED BY ECCLES REPEATING EVERYTHING) Here is a further message. If a hollow Christmas pudding on wheels should report to the British Embassy in...

ECCLES:

(STARTS REPEATING SELLERS' LINES)

SELLERS:

...Calcutta, will they please shoot the driver. And, er... oh, yes. Merry Christmas to you all. Goodnight!

SEAGOON:

Good night!

ORCHESTRA:

PLAY OUT.

GREENSLADE:

That was the Goon Show, a BBC recorded programme featuring Peter Sellers, Harry Secombe and Spike Milligan with the Ray Ellington quartet, Max Geldray and the orchestra conducted by Wally Stott, script by Spike Milligan and Larry Stephens, announcer Wallace Greenslade, the program produced by Pat Dixon.

NOTES:

The Gannet was a plane with twin contra-rotating props fitted on one shaft, made by Fairey Aviation.

Onassis was a famous Greek shipping magnate (who later married President J. F. Kennedy's widow, Jacqueline). Hence the reference to the "all-British oil tanker Aristotle Onassis" is a wry joke.

Sir Vivian Fuchs was a famous Antarctic explorer who co-authored the book The Crossing of Antarctica.