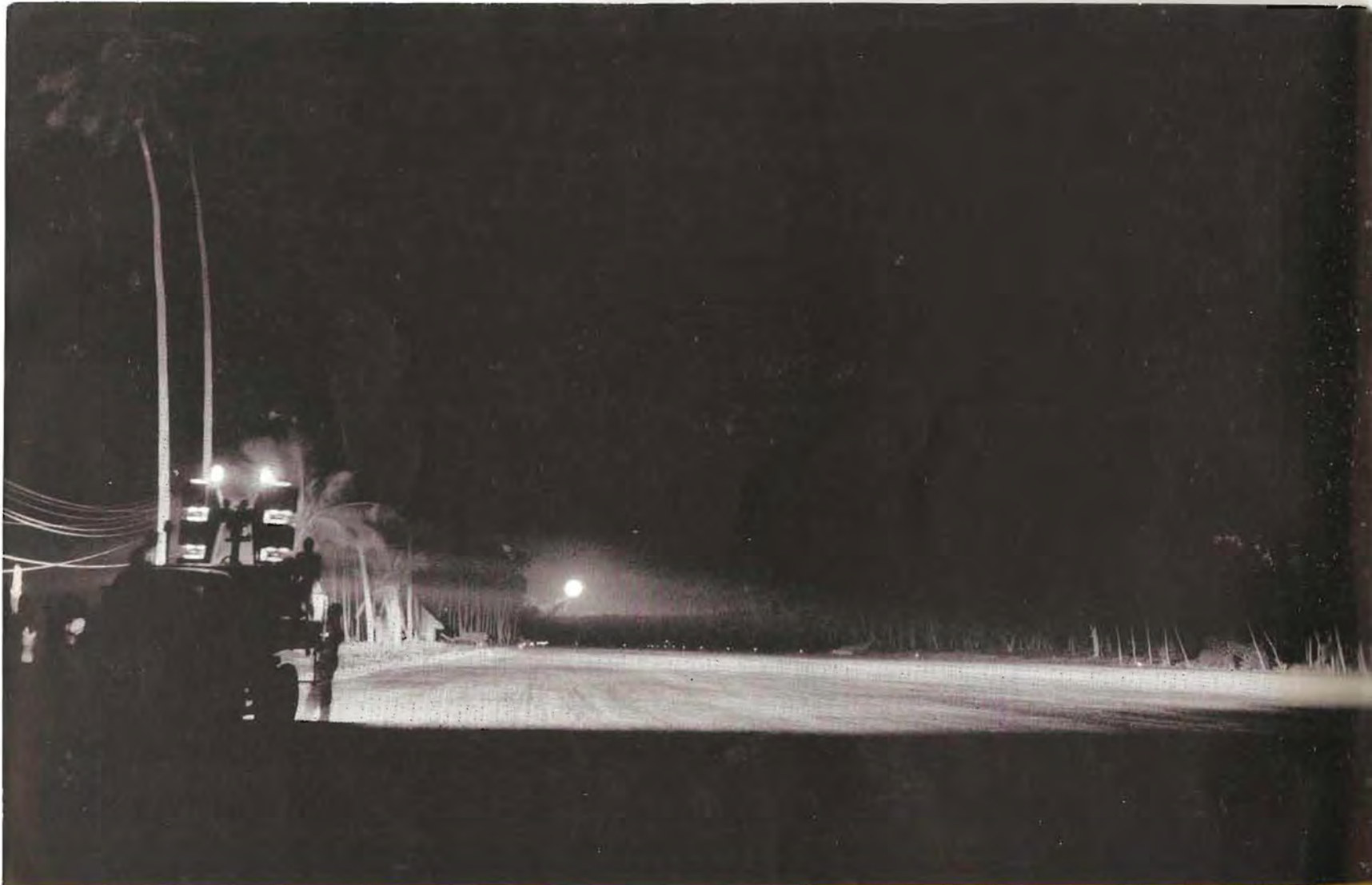


THE SEABEES



UNITED STATES NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BATTALIONS



● Portable floodlights are thrown on a Seabee-built landing field somewhere in the Southwest Pacific. The full tropical moon and the waving palms supply a romantic background as our planes

take off from this strip and many others like it which dot the South Sea Islands, from the Samoans to the Solomons—from New Zealand to Midway.

"THE SHIPS WITH BASES ARE THE SHIPS THAT COUNT"

This has long been a Navy axiom and it has never been truer than in the present conflict.

As our ships of the line seek out the enemy, challenging him in his home waters, thousands of miles from our own shores, they are backed by an ever increasing string of advance and mobile bases; safe harbors to which they can return for refueling and repair before again pouncing upon the foe. Naval aviation is operating from landing strips and airfields mushrooming into existence on far flung shores and islands.

To construct these bases the Bureau of Yards and Docks of the Navy conceived the idea of the United States Naval Construction Battalions. In late October, 1941, the organization of five Naval Construction companies, totaling approximately 500 officers and men, was authorized, the purpose being to supervise and inspect the construction work done for the Navy by private contractors at outlying bases such as Iceland and Alaska, Mid-Pacific and such other places where it was impossible to obtain the services of qualified civilian personnel to handle the work.

With the advent of war it became apparent immediately that the services of contractors and their civilian

employees could not be utilized adequately for construction work outside the continental limits of the United States in potential combat zones. Under military law, the contractor's forces, in their status as civilians, could not offer resistance when the bases they were constructing were under attack. A civilian bearing arms is considered a guerrilla and as such is liable to summary execution if captured. Furthermore, even had they the opportunity, they lacked the necessary training to defend themselves.

This was the lesson of Wake, Cavite, Guam. The answer, of course, was a trained military organization; men equally skilled in the science of construction and the art of war. In other words, the Seabees.

Accordingly, the first Navy Seabee Regiment, consisting of some 3,300 officers and men, was officially authorized on December 28, 1941.

Starting from scratch, the Navy engineers today are more than 230,000 strong. Over 130,000 Seabees already are overseas; the others are in training and soon will be on their way.

The bases which these men have constructed have played an important part in at least three of the most notable naval victories of this war.



● Rear Admiral Ben Moreell, Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks and Chief of the Civil Engineers of the Navy, under whose direction the Construction Battalions were organized.

ENLISTED MEN

From the ranks of labor came carpenters, electricians, plumbers, draftsmen, steel workers, welders, wharf builders, powdermen, longshoremen, mechanics of all varieties, and dozens of other skilled trades. They were the men who, before Pearl Harbor, built the roads, the skyscrapers, the tunnels, the subways, the dams, the railroads, the airports, and all of the other tremendous construction projects that make America great.

They left their highly paid civilian pursuits to lend their skills and experience to the Navy—thousands refused draft deferments to join this new organization of front-line builders—other thousands, over the age limit, and, in many cases, veterans of the first World War, voluntarily gave up their comfortable, established ways of life for the hard, dangerous assignments that are the everyday lot of the Naval Construction Battalions.

OFFICERS

The Seabees are under the command of officers of the Navy's Civil Engineer Corps. These men, each a graduate of a recognized college or university, or the possessor of equivalent practical experience, know their business. Their success, and that of the enlisted men serving under them, is best measured by their achievements in the field.

In civilian life they were instructors, civil engineers, construction engineers or superintendents, or

important construction contractors. Today their highly specialized talents are helping the Navy carry the war to the foe.

TRAINING CAMPS

The first Seabees, lacking their own stations, trained at National Youth Administration Centers; the Naval Air Station at Quonset Point, Rhode Island; and the Naval Operating Base at Norfolk, Virginia. On March 13, 1942, Camp Allen, near Norfolk, was placed in service and soon after Camp Bradford, a few miles from Camp Allen, was also opened to the Naval Construction Battalions.

As the organization expanded, Camp Allen and Camp Bradford were taxed beyond their facilities by the incoming recruits, and Camp Peary, near Williamsburg, Virginia, replaced them as the receiving and training station for new Seabees.

Other Naval Construction Training Centers are now located at Camp Lee-Stephenson, Quoddy Village, Maine, and Camp Endicott, Davisville, Rhode Island. An Advance Base Depot is also maintained at Davisville, where battalions may be moved after completing primary and advanced training. Here, or at other Advanced Base Depots located at Port Hueneme, California, and Gulfport, Mississippi, battalions are outfitted with equipment in preparation for shoving off to Island "X."

A Recuperation and Replacement Center is maintained at Camp Parks, Shoemaker, California,

● Rear Admiral L. B. Combs, C.E.C., U.S.N., Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, who, from the conception, assisted in the formation and organization of the Seabees.





● Captain John R. Perry, C.E.C., U.S.N., Director of the Administration and Personnel Department of the Bureau of Yards and Docks.

where battalions returning from overseas duty have an opportunity for rest and reorganization in preparation for a new assignment.

THE SEABEE INSIGNIA

“Seabee” is a play on the initials C. B. (Construction Battalions). The name is characteristic of the organization—nautical, as suggested in the first syllable, and industrious, as suggested by the busy “bee” of the second syllable.

The insignia is a flying bee—fighting mad—with a sailor hat on his head, a spitting “Tommy Gun” in his forehand, a wrench clasped in his midship hand, and a carpenter’s hammer gripped in the aft hand.

The sleeves, in respective order, bear the Naval rating badges of a Gunner’s Mate, Machinist’s Mate and Carpenter’s Mate, each indicative of the tool in the appropriate hand. The background is sea blue, and the entire insignia is encircled by a hawser to identify the Seabees as being a part of the Navy.

Also included in the insignia is the corps device of the Civil Engineer Corps of the Navy on each of the bee’s wrists, indicating the relationship between the Naval Construction Battalions, the Civil Engineer Corps, and the Bureau of Yards and Docks.



TRAINING OF SEABEES

Today all Seabees receive their primary or "boot" training at the Naval Construction Training Center, Camp Peary, Williamsburg, Virginia.

Inasmuch as Seabees are already trained and experienced from civilian life in their various trades, the primary training is devoted to the military.

The new Seabees are taught the fundamentals of military courtesy, extended and close order drills, combat signals, scouting and patrolling, fire distribution, control and fire orders, and security on the march. They are shown how to deploy from aircraft and how to use their rifles for anti-aircraft fire. Their field manoeuvres are practiced in heavily wooded terrain. Bayonet and hand grenade use—commando tactics—unarmed defense through Judo and hand to hand combat—instruction in field fortifications, booby traps, jungle warfare and trail cutting—first aid—all play their part in the transition of builder to first class fighting man.

Camp Peary's site was especially chosen to provide a variety of terrain—sand dunes, beaches, swamps, lakes, wooded uplands, lowlands thick with scrub brush, and open fields. The recruit from the very beginning is prepared for similar conditions he may encounter on foreign shores.

ADVANCED TRAINING

Following "boot" camp, the new Seabee is assigned to a battalion. In most instances, he remains with



● Seabees are taught landing tactics on the sand beaches near Camp Peary. They soon become proficient in "hitting the deck" and inching their way toward an imaginary enemy.



● Dress review of the 100th Naval Construction Battalion at the time of its commissioning, July 24, 1943—marking the half-way point in the authorized strength of the Seabees.



● A group of Seabees climbing down one of the cargo nets at Camp Endicott, Davisville, Rhode Island. This is but one of the obstacles in the tough Commando Course.



Like skilled trapeze stars, these Seabees make their way across a wire rope stretched over swampland. It's a hardening-up exercise, but also good training for jungle fighters.

this unit, which becomes his permanent outfit.

The first four weeks of the battalion's life is given over to advanced training. During this period, its organization begins to take shape. Skilled tradesmen are brought together in the proper complement. Companies and platoons are formed under the officers who will command them from that point on. Selected men are sent to special schools so they may become familiar with advance base gear. Instruction is given in such subjects as evaporators and purifiers, air raid protection and camouflage, pontoons, propulsion units, dry refrigeration, diving, earth-moving, hut erection, etc.

Military training continues, with the emphasis on "toughening up." Men run the commando course; are taken on long hikes; sleep out in the open; subsist on field rations; practice storming "enemy" beaches, landing with full fighting equipment from standard invasion craft; and engage in sham battles with live ammunition.

Advanced training is given at Camp Peary, Williamsburg, Virginia; Camp Endicott, Davisville, Rhode Island; or Camp Lee-Stephenson, Quoddy Village, Maine.

ADVANCE BASE DEPOTS

After a pre-embarkation leave (usually ten days) battalions are sent to an advance base depot.

Here technical and military training continue while the battalion is being outfitted for its overseas station. The colossal task of assembling gear and

supplies begins. Everything to sustain a fighting, building battalion must be taken along—arms and ammunition—clothing—food—medical supplies—recreation gear—office supplies—records—all the tools and equipment necessary to build a naval base, ranging from screw drivers to bulldozers, from nails to generators.

Finally ships are loaded, sea bags packed, and the men swing up the gangplank to start the risky sea voyage to an as yet undisclosed Island "X."

On shipboard, the Seabees assume many of the routine duties of the crew; watches, galley duty, repair work, etc.

Physical training, inspections, schools, study, all continue aboard ship. Life boat and abandon ship drills are held. Guns are manned, for some Seabee battalions see action even before Island "X" is reached.

At last the ship drops anchor and the barren shores of a northern island or the dense tropical growth of the South Pacific may greet the arriving Seabees. The enemy may be lying in wait, or the landing may be uncontested.

But whatever is in store, the Seabees are ready, and the long weeks of training bear fruit.

★ ★ ★

Seabee organization falls into five groups: Regular Construction Battalions, Seabee Specials, Construction Battalion Maintenance Units, Marine Detachments, and Demolition Units. The organization and functions of each group follows.



● As part of the technical training in the use of advance base gear, these Seabees are receiving instruction in the operation of a water purifying unit.



● As part of advanced training at Port Hueneme, Calif., Seabees receive intensive training in landing operations. Equipment is being unloaded over a pontoon causeway from the LST.



● One of the most important Seabee assignments is the construction of airfields and landing strips. Heavy metal mats are linked together and laid over a level sandy surface.



● Reconstruction of a warehouse dock at Naval Operating Base, Bermuda. Experienced wharf builders and carpenters make short work of an assignment like this.

CONSTRUCTION

What assignments await the Seabees depends on what kind of blows the Navy intends to launch from the bases they build.

It might be the construction of an air strip on some jungle island in the South Pacific from which our bombers and fighters can take off; it might be the installation of a submarine base on an island in the Atlantic; it might be the building of a base where our fleet could put in for fuel and supplies; it might serve any of a score of purposes.

To meet these diversified demands, a regular Seabee battalion must be composed of men with widely varied skills. Each of its four construction companies comprises 224 men representing some 60 different trades: carpenters, sheet metal workers, electricians, motor mechanics, plumbers, concrete workers, welders, steel workers and similar skilled tradesmen. In addition, the battalion complement calls for a headquarters company of 176 men who serve as office workers and specialists. This company makes it possible for the battalion to operate as a self-contained unit.

Organization along military lines is followed closely; each company is composed of platoons which are further sub-divided into squads.

The total complement of a battalion consists of 1,079 men and 32 officers. Of the latter, 26 are members of the Civil Engineer Corps, two are doctors, one a dentist, two supply and disbursing officers, and a chaplain.

BATTALIONS

Because of the high degree of skills represented, the Seabees have a much higher percentage of rated men than any other naval unit. Approximately 70% of the enlisted personnel hold petty-officer ratings. This fact, together with a policy of advancing men in rating in recognition of demonstrated skill and initiative, have contributed in a large degree to the high morale of the Seabees.

Another of the contributing factors is that every Seabee not only knows he is doing his bit in the prosecution of the war effort, but he is given the chance to capitalize on his civilian experience by doing the things he knows best. Furthermore, he is keeping abreast of all changes in construction work, learning new methods and equipment. Thus, when he returns to civilian life, he will find himself able to command more responsible positions, since he has kept in step with the advancements made in construction methods.

Established naval ratings are used but with wide latitude. For instance, a concrete worker is given a carpenter's rating because there is no comparable naval rating since concrete workers are not needed aboard ship. Seabee shipfitters include draftsmen, pipefitters, plumbers, pipelayers, and steelworkers. Boatswain's mates include riggers, divers, dredgemen, etc. Machinist's mates include bulldozer and crane operators—a far cry from the machinists aboard ship.

Regular naval uniforms are worn by Seabees with



● Alaskan Sector. Seabees are unloading lumber from an LCT with the aid of a crane. The curved sections in the foreground are parts of Pacific huts.



● One of the many difficulties encountered by the Seabees in the building of a road through a primitive jungle.



● Pouring concrete into two huge forms of a marginal wharf at Bermuda. 225 cu. yards of concrete were used.

the exception that all rating badges are worn on the left sleeve, the artificer status of all Seabees being the reason for this change from regular procedure. Distinguishing letters "CB" are worn on the left sleeve midway between the elbow and the wrist.

In addition to the ordinary gear normally needed on a construction project, Seabees, embarking for "Island X," must take along equipment peculiar to advance base construction. Such items include apparatus to distill sea water for drinking purposes, water purifiers, generators for electric power and pontoons—those ingenious contrivances with so many uses that they have been dubbed the "Jeeps of the Seabees."

Pontoon units are in such wide demand that at one

Southwest Pacific advanced base, an entire detachment devotes its full time to their assembly and repair.

Pontoon units were invented by Captain J. W. Laycock (CEC) USN, head of the War Plans Division of the Bureau of Yards and Docks. These floating steel boxes are used to make landing barges, piers, causeways, and bridges, in any size desired. Pontoon landing barges, powered by huge outboard motors, are used to lighter supplies from ship to shore. In many instances, large steel storage tanks are secured on these pontoon barges enabling them to transport heavy supplies of fuel from base to base.

Instructions in the use of the various types of arms are included in the boot training period. Military equipment includes the rifle, issued to all enlisted men, and carbines,

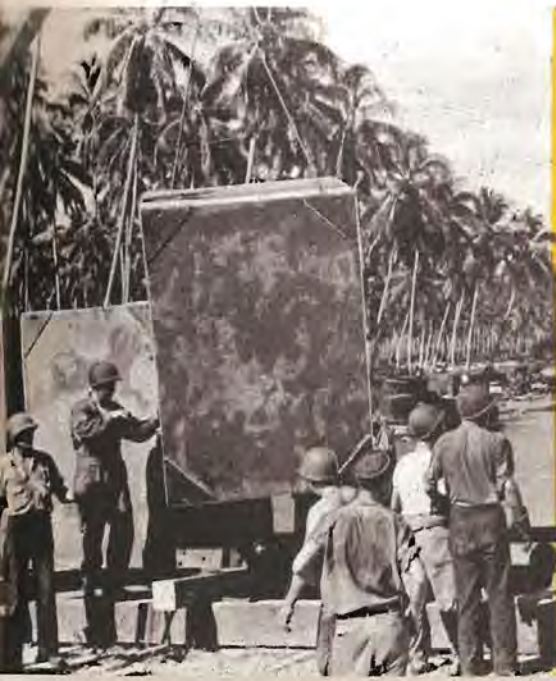
issued to Officers and Chief Petty Officers. Selected men are given special training in the use of 20 and 40 millimeter guns, mortars, and anti-aircraft guns, together with other weapons depending upon the proximity of the battalion to the combat zone. Instruction continues even at the advance bases where Seabee battalions fire for record under supervision of Marine instructors.

When three or more battalions are stationed in the same general sector, a regiment is formed, with a regimental staff directing the activities of the battalions. The battalion retains its individual identity, however, and handles its own personnel problems, local work assignments, etc., but through the regimental staff, groups of skilled men are shifted temporarily from one battalion

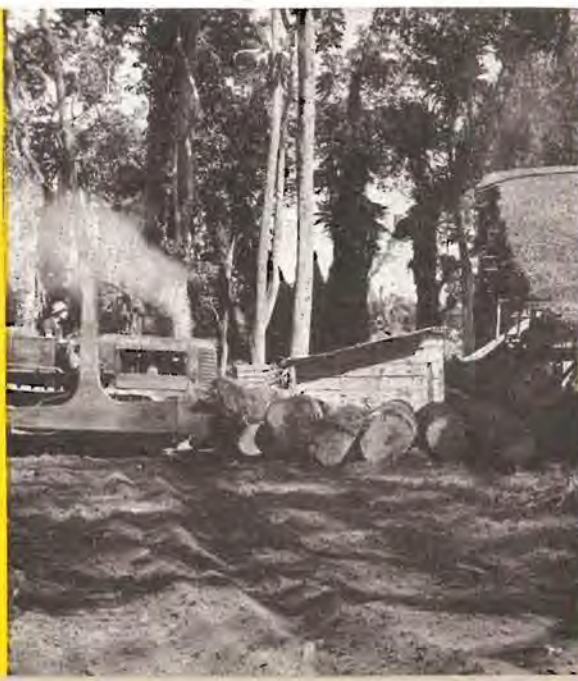
to another to speed the construction of projects of high priority. The regimental staff divorces itself from the details of battalion administration and operation and devotes itself entirely to the more important functions of over-all and long range planning, inter-battalion policies, logistics and consultation.

In turn, when two or more regiments are stationed in the same locality, a construction brigade is formed to direct the activities of the regiments.

All Seabee construction is not confined solely to the building of naval installations. Time and again, the Construction Battalions have been called upon to construct bases for the Army, Marines and for our Allies . . . and to help establish beach heads and unload



● Assembling all-purpose steel pontoons—the “Jeeps of the Seabees.” This photo was taken at a South Sea base.



● Seabee sawmill on Guadalcanal. A bulldozer caterpillar is used to push logs into position for sawing.



● When the mud is too deep to make use of mesh wire, Seabees use coconut logs to form the base for a temporary road, upon which crushed coral is spread to provide a smoother surface.

● It takes heavy equipment to build roads in the Aleutians. Here Seabees are shearing a road out of a mountainside so that supplies may be moved quickly and easily.

supplies in spite of the efforts of the enemy to stop them.

In addition to their formal motto of “Construimus Batuimus” (“We Build—We Fight”), the Seabees have a time-saving, laconic expression—“Can Do”—which was their stock reply when asked if they could do a job. To this expression was added another equally brief—“Will Do”—and today these twin shouts are famous on battle fronts and advance bases all over the globe.

INGENUITY

Seabees have had to use constantly every ounce of ingenuity they possess. Finding themselves thousands of miles from any spare parts and faced with the necessity of

keeping every piece of machinery and equipment working up to 24 hours a day, Seabees have had to improvise.

Soft drink bottles have been used as insulators when power lines had to be extended quickly. Empty gasoline drums have been split and flattened and used as roofing, as lining for drainage ditches, culverts, and as dock shoring. Coral has been blasted and dragged from the sea as surfacing for airfields.

Bulldozers, characterized as the machines of a thousand uses, have been used to pull landing ships ashore and to push over trees in the preparation of landing fields. Automobile transmissions have been improvised into drill presses. Nothing is too old or broken to be discarded by the Seabees.

SEABEE SPECIALS

A critical problem encountered at ports supplying the fighting fronts is that of unloading cargo ships filled with vital supplies and equipment.

Vessels awaiting unloading offer tempting targets for enemy bombers and many, laden with the result of months of back-breaking toil and paid for by the sacrifices of American workers, have been blasted to the bottom because of lack of unloading facilities.

Freighters lay for days, even weeks, waiting their turn to be unloaded by untrained members of the combat services, and even pressed into service were inadequate and inexperienced native laborers.

The lack of dock facilities still further complicated the problem. In combat zones, docks built one day would become targets for bombing raids the next. Ferrying cargoes ashore in small boats and barges was the only solution, necessitating the double handling of a cargo.

Relief came with the inception of the "Seabee Specials"—men trained and experienced in the loading and unloading of cargo from ships.

Men experienced in stevedoring were enlisted for the nucleus of the battalions. In addition, a school was established where inexperienced personnel could be trained in the various branches of cargo handling,

● Seabee Specials lowering a pallet load of cases into the hold of the simulated training ship at Camp Peary. They are thoroughly trained in every loading and unloading operation.

● At a Southwest Pacific Advance Base, the Specials put into practice all they have learned on Camp Peary's dryland ships. No more bottlenecks at this port.





● Whether it's light supplies or heavy equipment—it's all in a day's work for the Seabee Specialists. This American-built shovel will soon be tearing up earth on a South Sea island.

such as winch operating, gangway tending, slinging, holding, tiering, tractor and fork truck operation, coopering, gear maintenance and repair.

The officers who command the "Specials" are commissioned from civilian life. They were former executives of steamship companies and stevedoring firms. In addition to the regular officer's indoctrination course at Camp Peary, they are sent to the Special Seabees' waterfront school in New York, where a practical course in discharging and loading operations for all types of commercial and military cargoes is taught.

Two training ships were built at Camp Peary to familiarize the men with their work. These "dry-land" ships are identical, for stevedoring purposes, with their floating counterparts.

Operations continue day and night, in all kinds of weather, simulating conditions which are met in the field where supplies must move regardless of rain, snow, sleet or other climatic conditions.

Crates are loaded and unloaded over and over until the operation is efficient enough to satisfy the most critical supervisor. Every size and shape of box, barrel, case and bag is hoisted in and out of the holds with the same type of winches and booms in use on modern Liberty ships.

Hold men are taught how to stow and properly sling freight to prevent accidents and damage to property and personnel. Dock men learn to tier cargo to prevent the collapse of piles and also to operate lift trucks, tractors, dock cranes, conveyors

and other mechanical aids. Gear repair and maintenance men are taught how to inspect all gear and equipment for signs of wear and to make repairs.

Unloading and loading operations are often carried on under enemy fire; thus the military training of the "Specials" is identical with that of the regular Construction Battalions. Battalion organization is also the same with one headquarters company and four stevedore companies.

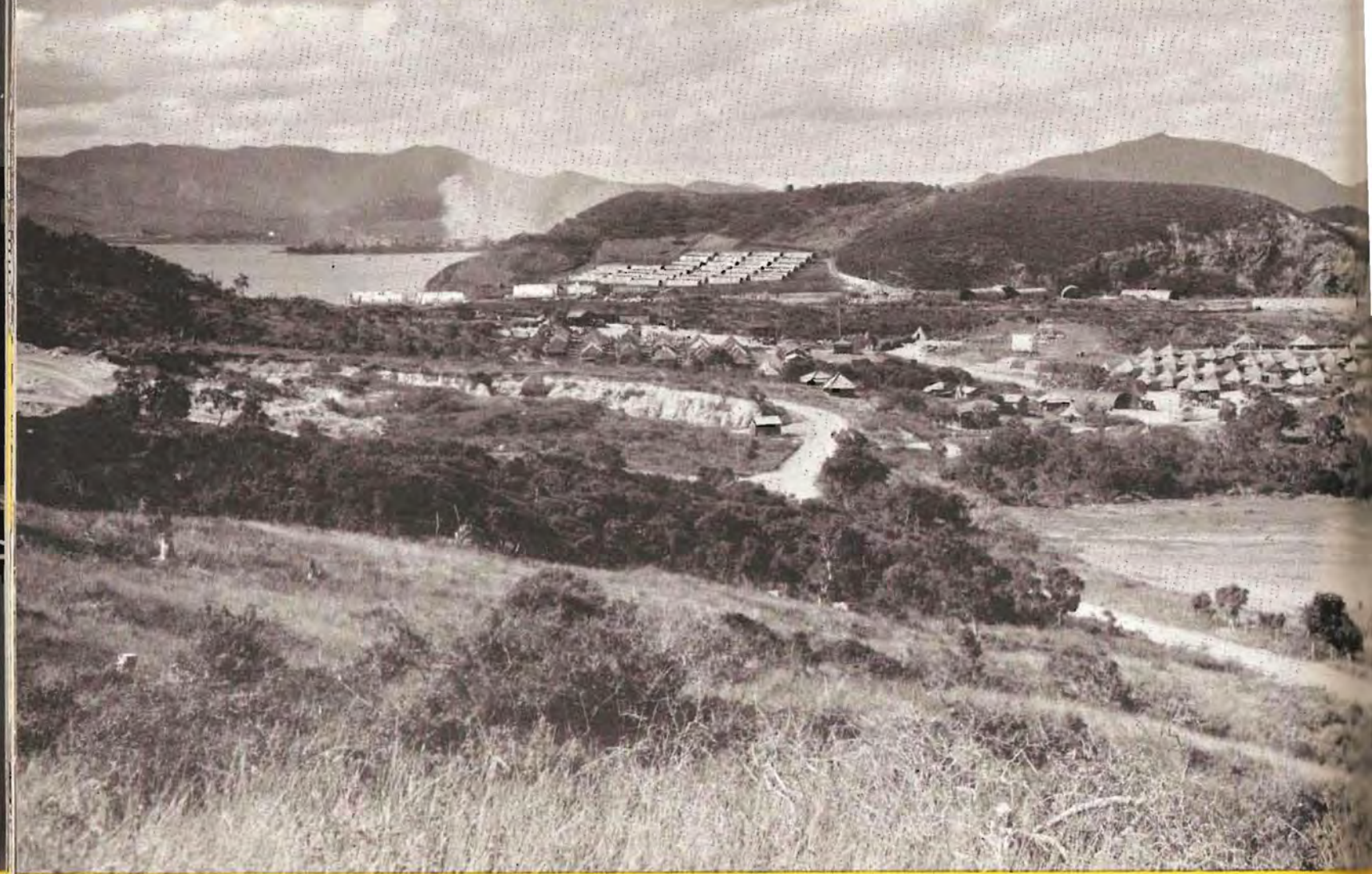
The trades represented in the stevedore companies differ from those in the regular Construction Battalion. Winch men, gangway men, sailmakers, wire splicers, head hatch checkers, leading slingers, tierers, launchmen, and others pertaining to long-shoring operations predominate.

The efficiency of stevedoring depends upon the speed with which the cargo hook moves the sling-loads of freight. The faster the hook, the more freight is handled. So, in addition to the "Can Do" motto of the Regular Construction Battalions, Seabee Specials have evolved one of their own—"Keep the Hook Moving."

Seabee Specials are living up to the high traditions built up by the Construction Battalions. They have trimmed days off the time required to unload from ships the munitions and supplies needed at these advance bases located as they are in the combat areas. They have greatly increased the "turn-around" at advance base ports, enabling ships to increase the number of round trips made in a given time.

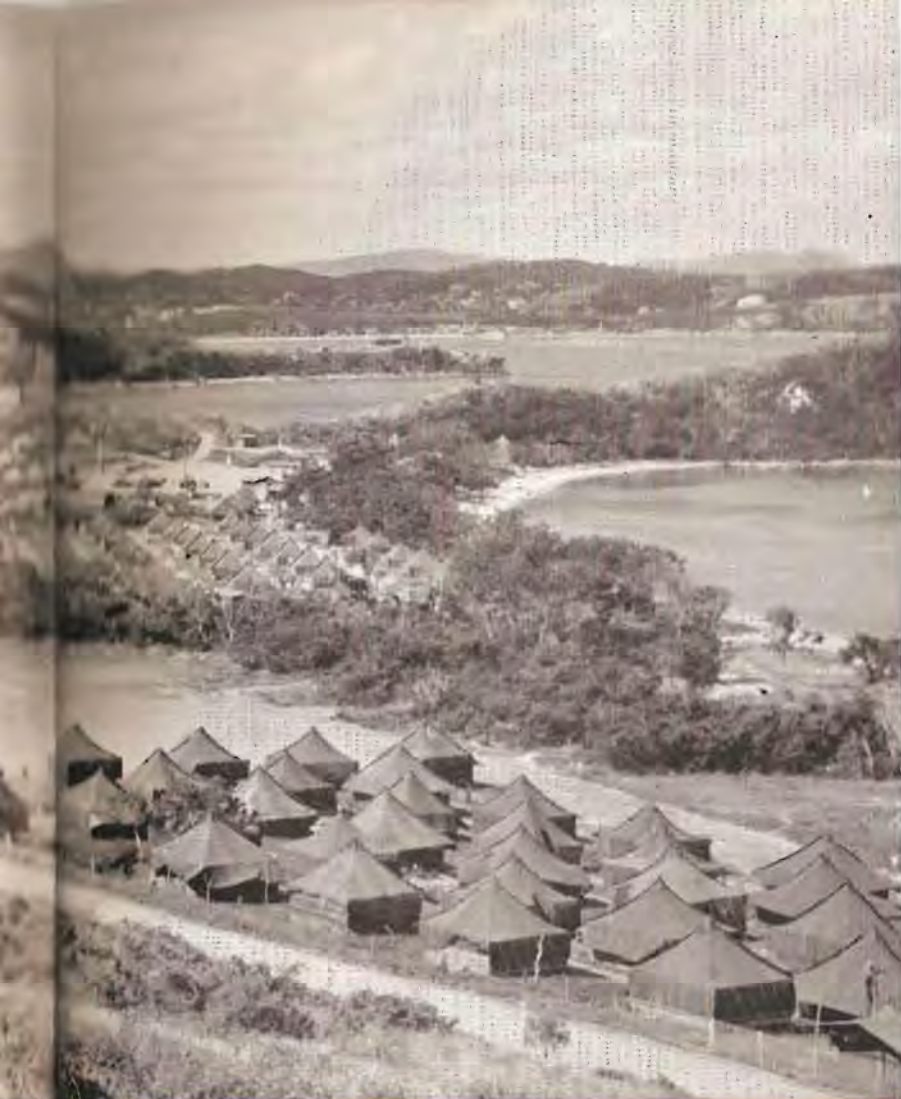
● Seabee Specials swarm about the "dockside" at Camp Peary, busily engaged in unloading one of the dry-land ships, a replica of a Liberty ship as far as cargo operations are concerned.





● Panoramic view of a completed base built by a Construction Battalion. Upon completion, a Maintenance Unit took over and

will be responsible for the upkeep and the providing of a public works maintenance and operating force. The Maintenance Unit



MAINTENANCE UNITS

When a Construction Battalion has completed the work of building a base, it is generally relieved by a Construction Battalion (Seabee) Maintenance Unit.

It is the duty of such a unit to maintain facilities, make repairs and improvements and, in some cases, complete construction work previously initiated or begin new projects which may be assigned.

The complement of the Maintenance Unit depends upon the size of the base to be taken over, but usually consists of about one-fourth of a battalion, or 275 officers and men.

The Maintenance Unit is a miniature battalion and therefore all trades are represented as the unit must be self-sufficient.

Since a well constructed and equipped base is a prize target for enemy raids, with the possibility of attack ever present, Maintenance Units receive the same military training and equipment as their larger counterparts.

Other branches of the armed services are, of course, stationed at the base, but in the event of attack the Seabees are called upon to defend what their mates have built.

While the work of the Maintenance Units may not appear as glamorous as the carving of a base out of a jungle, all hands realize their duty is equally vital to the war effort.

may also be called upon to improve and extend facilities, and in event of attack will defend what has been built.


MARINE DETACHMENTS

In order to release highly trained Marine combat personnel from the arduous duties of running equipment and supplies ashore, a Seabee Marine Detachment is attached to each Marine Division. Such detachments also provide the Marines with roads, barracks, landing strips and other facilities which may be needed in the operation.

Upon completion of the regular Seabee primary and advanced training, specially selected men are sent to Marine training camps at New River, North Carolina, or Oceanside, California. There, as an integral part of the Marines in landing and fighting operations, they receive the same rugged amphibious training as the "Leathernecks."

Complete Marine Corps uniforms are issued and Naval gear is put aside. Naval rating badges are worn on the left sleeve of the Marine jacket and the letters "CB" are displayed on the left shoulder. In place of the regular Marine cap insignia, a bronze shield bearing the Seabee motto—"Construimus Batuimus" ("We Build—We Fight")—is worn.

Because of the additional Marine training, these detachments, while primarily Construction Battalions, form important combat and defense units.



● In traditional Marine fashion, part of a Seabee-Marine Detachment storms the beach of a Southwest Pacific island. They have been thoroughly trained and equipped for this operation.

● Several battalions of colored Seabees have been organized in order to take advantage of the many skilled tradesmen among the negro race. These battalions in the field are making outstanding

contributions to the building of the Seabee tradition. The picture below shows the amphibious training given to all Construction Battalions.



● Cap device worn by Seabee Marine Detachments in place of the regular Marine insignia.



● Seabee Demolition Units receiving training in the use of explosives at Camp Peary. The scene has been repeated many times on many foreign shores.

DEMOLITION UNITS

One of the most dangerous jobs this war has produced is that of blowing up obstructions placed by the enemy to prevent or delay beach landings.

From the ranks of the fighter-builders have volunteered men with courage and physical endurance, who were organized into Demolition Units. These units, consisting of one officer and four men each, precede assault forces and blow up the obstructions, whatever they might be.

Trained to the same high Seabee standards in military discipline, courtesy and conduct, the Demolitioners undergo a special toughening-up process besides learning the rudimentary uses of dynamite at Camp Peary.

Upon completion of this course, they are sent to Fort Pierce, Florida, where they are instructed in the military use of explosives. They are taught methods used in impeding the enemy by destroying bridges, roads, airports, harbors and docks. They learn how to lay mine fields and booby traps.

On the offensive they are taught how to destroy mine fields, barbed wire entanglements, pillboxes, mechanized units, as well as enemy personnel. Particular emphasis is placed on the art of detecting enemy booby traps.

These men are also trained in undersea work—clearing harbors of debris so vital supplies may be brought in.



● Seabee Demolition Units being trained in landing operations at Camp Peary. Each man has his particular task to perform when shore is reached and split-second timing insures the success of the operation.

● Some of the equipment used by Demolition Units—TNT, fuses, land mines, and the strange looking, pipe-like device, a product of Seabee ingenuity, which makes short work of barbed wire defenses.



SEABEE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

For the Seabees, Island "X" may be anywhere . . . in any combat zone, under any condition of weather or enemy action. It may be one of the fog-bound Aleutians—a hitherto unknown pin-speck in the South Pacific—a Mediterranean island—or any one of a thousand places destined to be headline news tomorrow.

Construction Battalions have been stationed in all theaters of action—from the wastelands of the Aleutians to the jungles of the Southwest Pacific—from Mid-Pacific to the Atlantic, Africa and Italy.

Following are highlights of Seabee accomplishments in all theaters of operations during the past two years.

ALASKAN SECTOR

Numbing cold, fog, sleet, snow, fantastic "williwaw" storms . . . these are enemies just as much as Jap bombers to the Seabees in the far north as they construct a bridge from Kodiak to Tokyo via the Aleutians.

In June, 1942, the same month the Japs bombed Dutch Harbor, the first Seabee units arrived. Since then, many battalions have reinforced them, including Seabee Specials, whose work in keeping cargo moving has been an important factor in the success of the Aleutian campaign.

Among the first to land on Adak, Attu, Kiska and Amchitka, Seabees have gone to work carving airfields



● One of the difficulties encountered by Seabees building roads on Kiska is the deep mud, while at other points on the same island volcanic rock had to be blasted to clear the way.



● Seabees pull a 40 mm. gun out of Aleutian mud with the aid of a tractor caterpillar. These men have received special training in gunnery, and are on permanent anti-aircraft duty.

out of almost solid rock—building roads through swampy tundra—erecting barracks for Army and Marine Corps personnel as well as their own use—conducting diving operations in icy waters to build wharfs and docks and numerous other facilities—and, on one occasion, even rehabilitating a beached transport ship and placing her back in service.

The Aleutians represent not one base but a string of bases. The immensity of the job the Seabees have undertaken is illustrated graphically by the cost of a single base—\$75,000,000—the cost of one of the greatest engineering miracles of all times . . . Boulder Dam.



● On an Aleutian beach Seabees set up a Diesel Electric Generator as quickly as possible after landing in order to supply electric power.



● Seabees use heavy equipment in the Aleutians to build the landing fields, docks and encampments for the Army, Navy and Marines.



● Temporary road cut by bulldozers through the frozen tundra of an Aleutian beach. At this point it is far from a park boulevard but today it is firm and serviceable.

MID-PACIFIC

This area of operations includes Pearl Harbor and other installations in the Hawaiian Islands, Midway, Palmyra, and the Johnston Islands.


The first and biggest job for the Seabees in the Mid-Pacific area was to assist in repairing the Pearl Harbor defenses destroyed or damaged in the Jap raid, and to extend and complete other bases previously begun by civilian contractors.

Existing airfields were expanded; new ones were built. Immense dumps for the storing of gasoline, ammunition and other supplies went up in record time. Fortifications were improved. Tremendous housing facilities accommodating thousands of Marines, Army and Navy men rose quickly. Hospitals capable of caring for large numbers of wounded service men held a high place on the Seabee construction priority list. The Naval Construction Battalions contributed much to making these islands the powerful, efficiently-operating shuttle points between the mainland and the Pacific war zones which they are today.

It was in this area, too, that the Seabees played their part in the rescue of Captain Eddie Rickenbacker. The emergency hospital erected to care for him and other members of his party was also a Seabee undertaking.



● Recreation building under construction in the Hawaiians. Frame buildings like this are typical in this area.



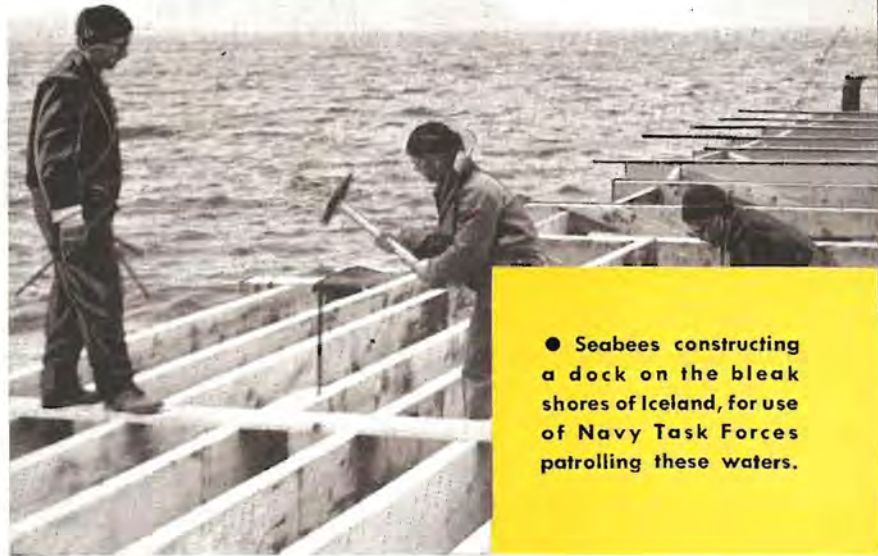
● Seabees grease giant gun barrel from the former USS Arizona — part of the work of reconstruction of Pearl Harbor.

ICELAND

When negotiations were completed with the Danish Government to take over Iceland and Greenland for the duration of the war, work was started immediately on a large naval base in Iceland. The original contract was given to a civilian contractor. When Germany and Italy followed Japan's attack with their own declaration of war, it was apparent that this base would play a key-role in our fleet's North Atlantic operations. The contractor's civilian forces were relieved by Seabees to insure more rapid completion of the military installations under way.

The natural harbor of Reykjavik was improved, fortifications installed, airfields built, and facilities constructed for storage of war materiel. As great convoys with vital supplies steamed to Russia, ship repair facilities in Iceland became increasingly important.

Actual construction of bases on this island is now virtually completed and Seabee Maintenance Units are taking over, providing a public works maintenance and operating force.



● Seabees constructing a dock on the bleak shores of Iceland, for use of Navy Task Forces patrolling these waters.



● Pierced plank is used in Iceland, as well as in the tropics, to provide runways for bombers and fighting planes.

UNITED KINGDOM

In December, 1942, Seabees took over the great Derry Naval Base, Londonderry, Northern Ireland. The major part of the work on this base had been completed by civilian contractors, but Construction Battalions were called upon to extend and improve facilities.

A tank farm was completed and a boiler plant assembled. Quonset Huts were erected. Pumphouses and a wharf were built. Roads were extended and improved. A maintenance shop was built and equipped. And an eleven-mile pipeline was laid down through the rocky Irish countryside.

Today, maintained and operated by Seabees, Derry base is functioning as a service station for convoy escort vessels of our Navy as well as those flying the Canadian and British flags.

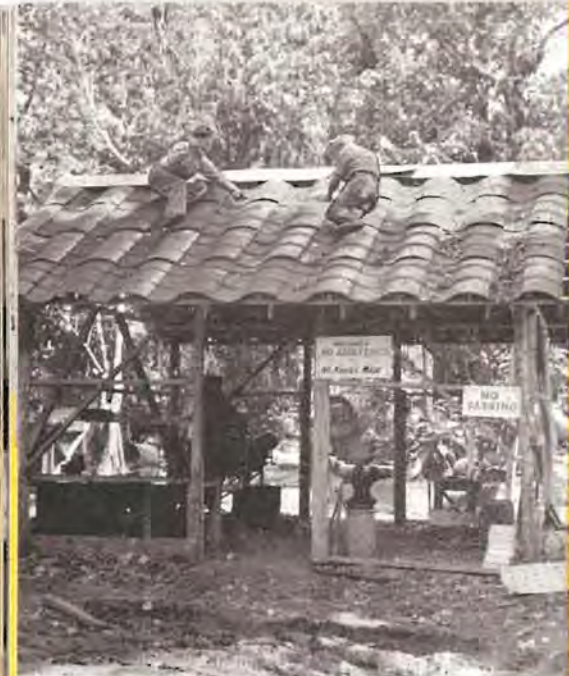
Other Seabee units are stationed at several points along the English and Scottish coasts. These detachments are in charge of public works maintenance and operation at the Navy's several bases in the British Isles.



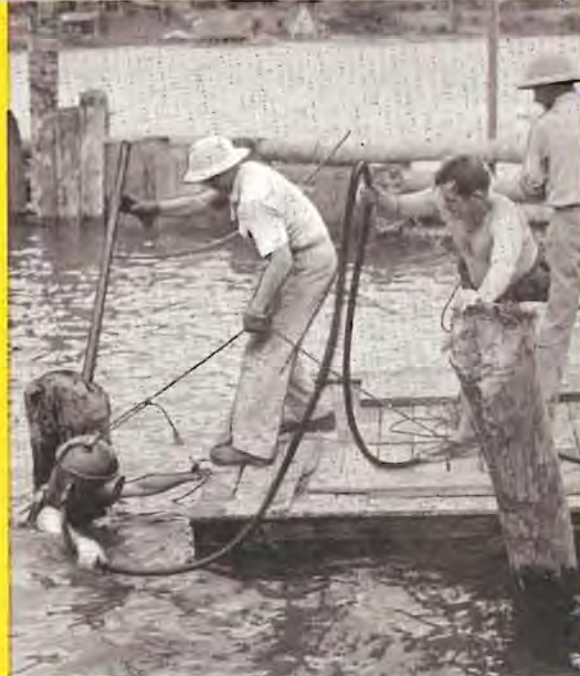
● British sailors greet American Seabees as they arrive at Londonderry base to take over the completion and operation. This great naval base was built in the short space of six months.



● The Stars and Stripes and the British White Ensign fly side by side over Londonderry, America's premier naval base located in Ulster, Northern Ireland.



● Shop roof in the South Pacific being constructed of curved segments of gasoline drums laid Spanish tile fashion.



● Diving operations preliminary to wharf construction by the Seabees in the Southwest Pacific.

SOUTH AND SOUTHWEST PACIFIC

In the amphibious war our armed forces are now carrying to the Japs, the names of once obscure islands in the South and Southwest Pacific loom large. And on almost every one, as soon as our forces take over, the Seabees go to work. Seabee-built bases already dot the South Pacific from the Samoans to Australia, from the Solomons to New Zealand.

A partial list of advance base facilities constructed by the Seabees includes Noumea, New Caledonia, Espirito Santo, Australia, New Georgia, New Guinea, Ellice Islands, Funa Futi, Guadalcanal, Munda, New Zealand, Russell Islands, Tutuila, Bora Bora, Fiji Islands, Upolu

Islands, Vella La Vella, Wallis Islands, Woodlark, Efate Islands, and Rendova.

Seabees in the Pacific area have had more than one opportunity to demonstrate they can fight as well as build. At Guadalcanal in September, 1942, Seabees received their first baptism of enemy fire as they were supporting the Marines in the completion of Henderson Field and preparing other vital installations. At Vella La Vella, Rendova, and most recently in the Gilberts, the battling builders landed with the Marines and the Army, under heavy enemy fire. Supplies were unloaded as Jap planes dived and strafed. But in between and

even during enemy attacks, the Seabees continued at their work.

They built roads through mud two feet deep. Their bulldozers crashed through dense tropical growth. They hacked airfields out of island wildernesses—planes were landing and taking off—in days instead of weeks.

The Seabees built bridges as shells burst overhead. Sometimes even as bulldozers were being driven off landing barges to tear roads through the jungle, other Seabees were helping to fight off the enemy. At times the road building proceeded so rapidly that Seabees actually were ahead of the front lines.

In addition to roads and airfields, Naval Construction Battalions built hospitals, wharves, docks, warehouses, bar-

racks, repair shops, and all the other facilities that go to make up an advance base.

Seabee Special Battalions loaded and unloaded cargo ships as quickly as they came in, breaking up what until then had been a serious bottleneck. The Seabees made it possible for transports to “turn around” in less time than would ordinarily have been required in the States with complete modern dockside facilities.

Thousands of stories could be told of Seabee heroism . . . of working 'round the clock . . . of hardships . . . of impossible weather conditions—torrential rains—hurricanes—humidity . . . of bases springing up almost overnight . . . but through it all the Seabees have demonstrated they “Can Do” and “Will Do”—“Did.”



● Working under floodlights, sheep-foot rollers are used to compact the earth to provide a smooth, level runway.



● South Sea native with outrigger sailing canoe finds a ready market for pineapple and other fruit.



● Another of the numerous tasks accomplished by the Seabees has been the establishment of seaplane bases. Sometimes concrete has not been obtainable, so Seabees build aprons of sand

with breakwaters to prevent erosion. The seaplane base above is in a secluded cove somewhere in the Solomon Islands. Site was chosen for the natural camouflage of the foliage.

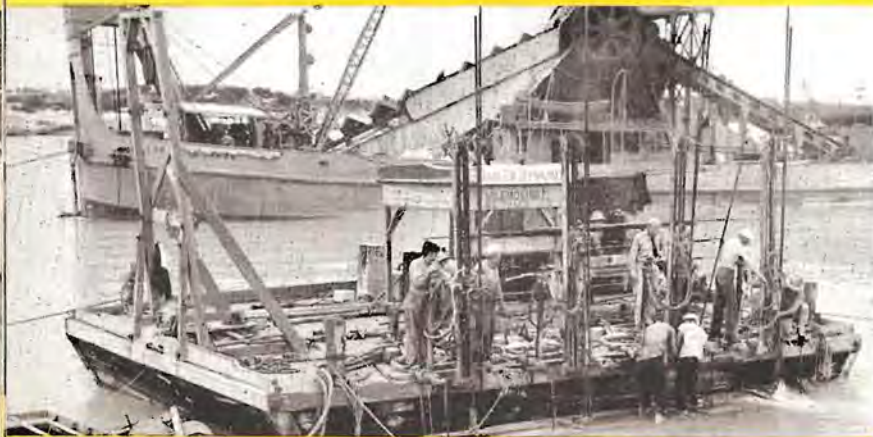


● Seabees bring supplies ashore from an LST on the beach at Rendova. Seabees were in the first wave ashore at this island, the taking of which was hotly contested. They were an important

factor in taking this base, which was later destined to become the springboard for attack on other islands occupied by the Japanese in this same vicinity.



● Bermuda. Excavating coral rock which forms the basis of all roads on this island. The entire road system at this base was greatly improved by the Seabees.



● Caribbean. Blasting huge coral growths to make way for the construction of a marginal wharf at this outlying base. Seabees on a dredge derrick drill before laying dynamite charges.

ATLANTIC AREA

Before our entry into the war, the United States had leased bases in Newfoundland, Bermuda, Trinidad and other islands in the Caribbean from England. Construction was started by civilian contractors' forces and later augmented by Seabee Battalions.

These island bases comprise our outer ring of defense in the Atlantic area. Other bases in the same zone where Seabees maintain and operate public works are St. Thomas, the Canal Zone, Panama, and British Guiana.

The Bermuda base particularly is large and well-equipped. Lying in the regular shipping lanes between the East Coast and the British Isles as well as being an important stopping point for vessels bound for the Mediterranean, this base is in a strategic position for the repair and refueling of ships and planes, and for the storing and disposition of supplies.

Except for the submarine menace, these bases have been free from enemy action. They have provided an important link in the defense of our coastline and if an invasion had been attempted from the east, they would have been vital.

SICILY AND ITALY

In this theater of operations, Seabee Demolition Units played an important part in the success of the invasion.

Huge barbed wire entanglements, six to eight feet high, and thickly criss-crossed, barred the way of the shock troops, but the Demolitioners made short work of them with their high explosive gear. While the shore was being cleared, other Seabee Demolition Units were blowing up buildings and structures which the Italians had mined with booby traps. Still other units were detonating land mines.

Seabee volunteers from a battalion on duty at Bizerte aided in running materiel ashore. Another unit built pontoon causeways to facilitate unloading of supplies. Some 10,000 Army vehicles were unloaded over causeways from LST's and LCT's.

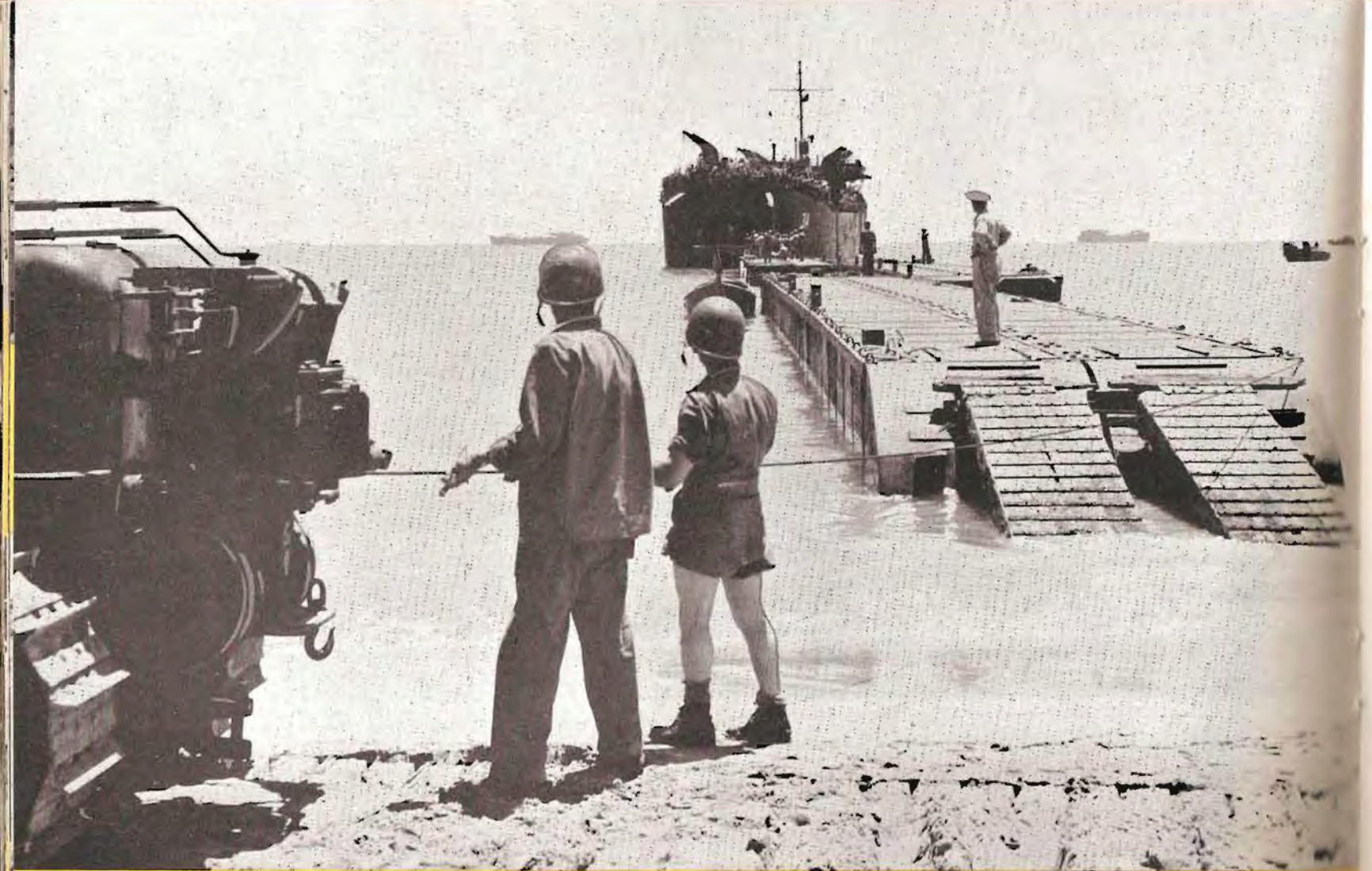
Again at Salerno on the Italian mainland, the Seabees were among the first in—clearing space for dressing stations, dragging ashore the trench diggers and bulldozers, blasting barbed wire entanglements, unloading supplies, and at the same time doing their share of the actual fighting.



● On the beach at Sicily. Seabees run a bulldozer ashore over the pontoon causeway from the LST. Other Seabees unconcernedly are swimming alongside the landing craft.



● Salerno, Italy. Seabees unloading Army tanks from an LST. Wire mesh has been laid over the soft sand on the beach so that vehicles may proceed quickly to the front lines.



● Navy LST's carry their own road—pontoon gear is carried on the side and when rocks and shoals prevent a closeup landing, a pontoon road is laid to the shore. Here Seabees have swung

the pontoon bridge in position and soon will be moving bulldozers and other heavy equipment ashore. This photograph was taken at Licata, Sicily.

COMMENDATIONS

Seabee accomplishments have won the commendation of high ranking officers in all branches of the service. A few of the instances where Seabee ingenuity and skill have earned for them the praise and admiration of high Army, Navy and Marine Corps officers are cited in the following commendatory letters which are typical of hundreds.



ARMY

**From Major General A. M. Patch
Commanding XIV Army Corps**

"This is to express my appreciation of the help given by you and your splendid organization in the preparation of the new camp for this headquarters, at a time when I know you were operating under a very considerable burden of other work.

"It has been a constant source of wonder to me how one unit could possess so many skills and accomplish such a huge amount and variety of work, all at the same time, and under the existing difficulties of weather, inadequate equipment, and heavy traffic.

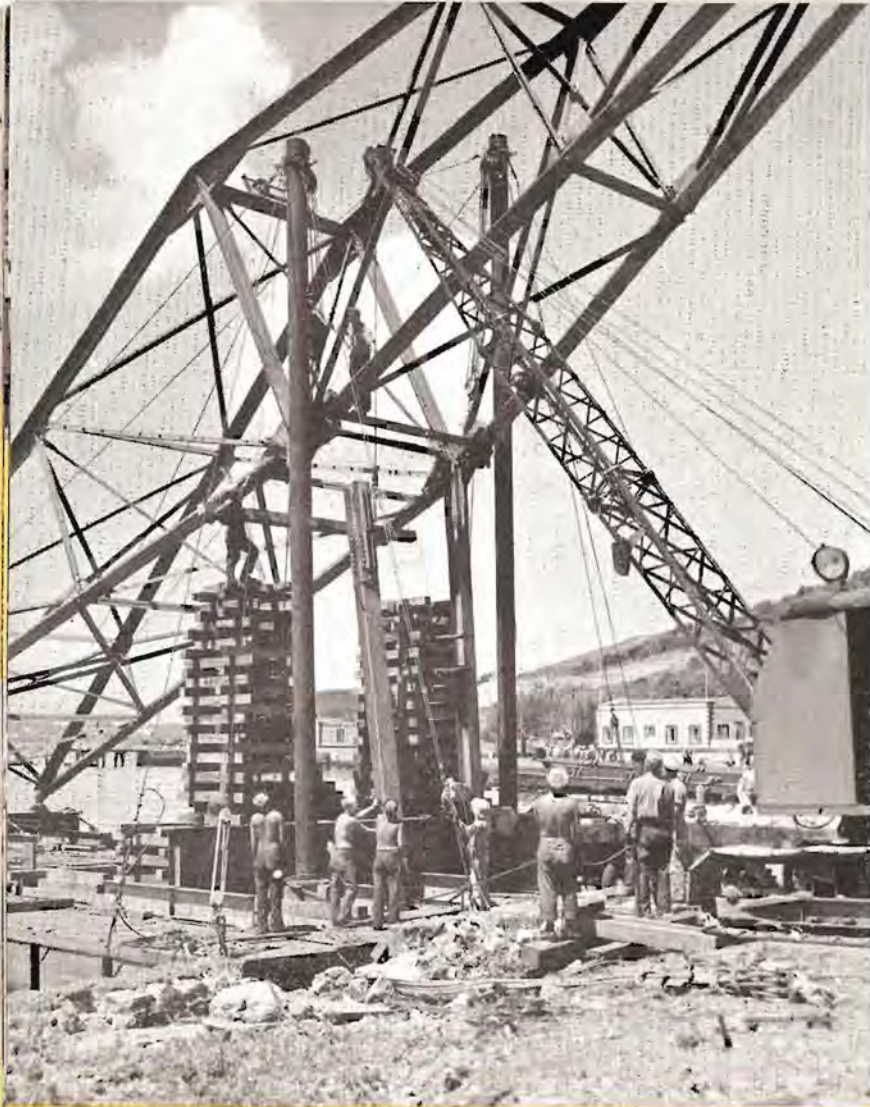
"I especially wish to commend the spirit of cooperation that pervades your whole command, which on more than one occasion during the recent tactical operations, was of inestimable value to our united efforts."

**From Major General C. H. Bonesteel
Commanding United States Army Forces in Iceland**

"It has been my pleasure in the past to have pointed out the accomplishments of the U. S. Naval Construction Battalions Nine and Twenty Eight in the construction of Meeks Field at Keflavik.

"On the occasion of my departure from Iceland I wish to express to you and through you to the officers and men of the construction battalions my grateful appreciation for their outstanding work and for the outstanding spirit which has marked their individual effort.

"Beginning with the arrival of the Ninth Construction Battalion in August, 1942, and augmented by the Twenty-Eighth Battalion in December, 1942, the construction progressed without loss of energy or impulse. They worked side by side with Army Engineers, Infantry, Artillery and



● A seventy-five ton floating crane—typical of the heavier equipment operated by the Seabees. Materiel of this type and size must be transported to all parts of the world.

Medical troops on a 24 hour basis including Sundays under the most severe winter requiring the maximum in leadership, teamwork, individual skill and devotion to duty.”

**From Major W. E. Dawes, Commanding
Air Service Command, Headquarters 38th Sub-Depot**

“I wish to acknowledge with thanks your letter of appreciation for the mess service which was rendered your men during the reclamation of the B-17. This commendation is being forwarded to the Commanding Officer of Gulfport Field as the officer in charge and the staff of Mess Hall Number One were responsible for this fine service.

“I wish again to express our thanks and appreciation for the assistance your battalion rendered the Air Corps in recovering this airplane. The reclamation will save the government many thousands of dollars which would have been impossible with the inadequate equipment and facilities of this Sub-Depot.”

**From Lt. Colonel Thomas S. Poole
Headquarters 165th Field Artillery Battalion**

“The undersigned wishes to express his appreciation for the cooperation by the commanding officer of this battalion in pushing the construction of the Bay Road to enable us to place a battery in position.

“He also wishes to commend the work being done by the gang under Chief Petty Officer Baker, in blasting the way past—. The men are working hard and efficiently.”

**From Captain George J. Kruse
10th Ordnance Service Company, U.S.A.**

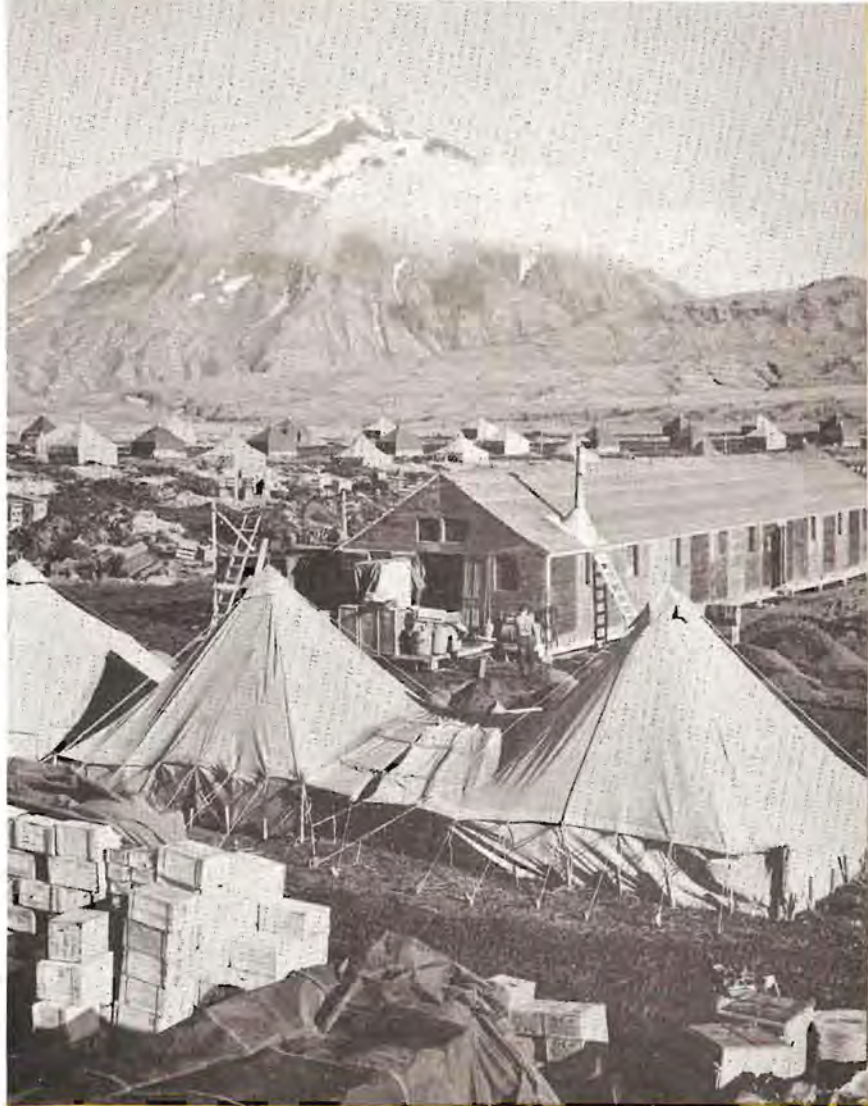
“This office wishes to express its commendation to the officers and men of “A” Co., 51st N.C.B., for their excellent work on the construction of the gun plugs, magazines and various installations in connection with the 8-inch battery.

“Mr. Aaron Zeff, civilian employee of the Ordnance Dept., U. S. Army, has checked the plugs and mounting of the guns thereon. He states they are superior to any similar installation that he has seen in his many years of experience.

“We pass this information on to you, feeling that it may provide further gratification for a difficult project well done.”

From Brigadier General B. C. Lockwood, Jr.

“I wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation of, and to commend you and the numerous units and activities constituting the Construction Regiment for a big job that has been undertaken and is being pushed to rapid completion.



● Tent City, Attu—forerunner of the permanent base now under construction. Supplies are kept under tarpaulin atop wire mats. In center are temporary mess hall and personnel quarters.



● One of the principal jobs of the Seabees is the installation and repair of power and light facilities at advance bases. This picture was taken at Amchitka.

“The efficiency shown, excellence of workmanship, cooperation, assistance rendered to other activities and ability to produce results in spite of difficulties have all been of a very high order and reflect great credit upon you and all activities connected with the Construction Regiment.

“I request that this letter be brought to the attention of all personnel as the efficiency and cooperation by all ranks is much appreciated by all Army activities as well as myself.”

**From Brigadier General E. B. Colladay
U. S. Army, Commanding Unalaska, Alaska**

“The Seabee personnel were stationed here under conditions of difficult terrain and extremely adverse weather which necessitated unusual and extensive protection measures. Excellent progress has been achieved and a high standard of workmanship maintained.

“The Officer-in-Charge, Lt. Gustafson, and his assistants have shown exceptional ability in organizing and supervising this project and, together with their men, deserve great credit for the results thus far obtained. The officers and men have demonstrated their intense interest in the job by their wholehearted response to every demand made on them to advance the work.

* * * *

“Inasmuch as the Army building program in

Unalaska called for dispersed garrisons including housing, utilities, shops and roads, all types of construction skills were required. The men of the 4th NCB possess these skills to a marked degree and used them unreservedly in carrying on the work.

“Due to construction demands of other projects the 4th was never able to muster full strength on Army work. However, problems of organization, procurement and supply of materials and equipment were solved. Handicaps of extreme weather and almost impossible terrain were overcome and the work in the valley has been substantially completed.

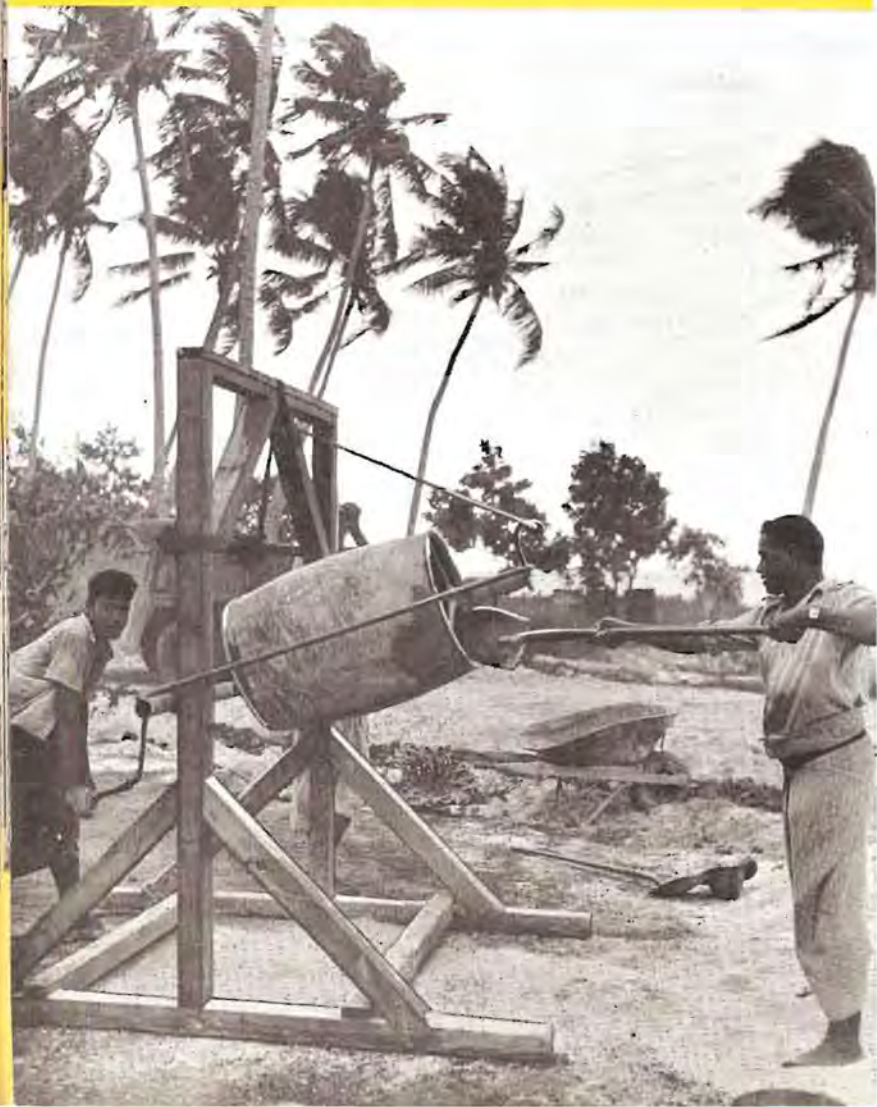
“Lieut. C. C. Stroud was in charge of the Unalaska program during most of the past year. The excellent progress achieved and the present stage of construction reflects his ability in solving perplexing problems of supply, transportation and disagreeable weather, as well as a commendable interest in the progress of the construction program. Much credit is also due to Lieut. O. E. Forbess and the efficient commanders. The enlisted personnel have all contributed materially to the successful prosecution of the job and have reason to be proud of their participation therein.

“I wish you to convey to Commander Kingsley and to all the officers and men of the 4th N. C. Battalion my sincere appreciation of their efforts in carrying on the Army work; and to wish them

● Housing facilities under construction at a base in British Guiana, South America. At many of these bases throughout the Caribbean, native labor is under Seabee direction.



● Native Samoan laborers use a Seabee improvised concrete mixer. In a land where time means nothing to the natives, the wrist watch on the man to the right seems out of place.



good luck in whatever new assignment they undertake.”

From Colonel Joseph P. Cleland

“Upon the occasion of my departure from this station I wish to commend you for the cooperation this command has always received from the 26th CB’s.

“Your organization was instrumental in helping us to make a start on our construction program, loaning us our first bulldozer, and has at numerous times since lent a helping hand. The cooperative spirit of your unit has been exemplified in the qualities you have displayed of willingness, energy, and painstaking attention to details. In particular, I would add, speaking not only for myself but for my staff, that the cordial relations which have at all times obtained between our units have been in no small measure due to your unfailing cheerfulness and pleasing personality.”

From Captain Edward V. Rickenbacker

“It has been my good fortune to see, and associate myself with, the Seabee units of the Navy throughout the Pacific.

“Without a doubt they are proving themselves one of the most important units of our Military Forces in this life and death struggle throughout the world.”



● Army jeeps roll along the pontoon causeway from the LST to the beach at Licata, Sicily. Over 10,000 army vehicles were unloaded in this fashion by Seabees in the Sicilian operation. The

machine at the left has begun the construction of a road across the beach, while other Seabee-operated equipment is digging fox holes and slit trenches for the protection of Army troops.



● As Marine Raiders seek out the Japs hidden in the jungle on this Southwest Pacific Island "X", Seabees continue with unloading operations long after sundown. This is but one of a long

string of islands in this theater of operations where Seabees and Marines stormed beach heads together, and worked and fought side by side.

SEMPER FIDELIS



MARINE CORPS

**From Major General R. J. Mitchell
Commanding General, 1st Marine Air Wing
U. S. Marine Corps**

"It gives me a great deal of pleasure to pass on to you, as a result of my recent visit to the South Pacific, the very favorable impression I obtained of the work being done by the Construction Battalions in that area. Without fail, every military commander mentioned these fine organizations and every one was loud in his praise of accomplishments. It appears that the units have served a splendid purpose, that they have been carefully organized with highly skilled personnel, that they have been intelligently equipped, that they know their business, and that their ingenuity and speed of work have been, indeed, remarkable. The only complaint heard, if this could be considered a complaint, was 'we need more of them.' The CB's are being used for almost every type of work. As an aviator, I was more interested in air field construction, revetments, hide-outs, etc., than anything else. I was particularly impressed by one piece of work at Wallis Island where a field was entirely built and

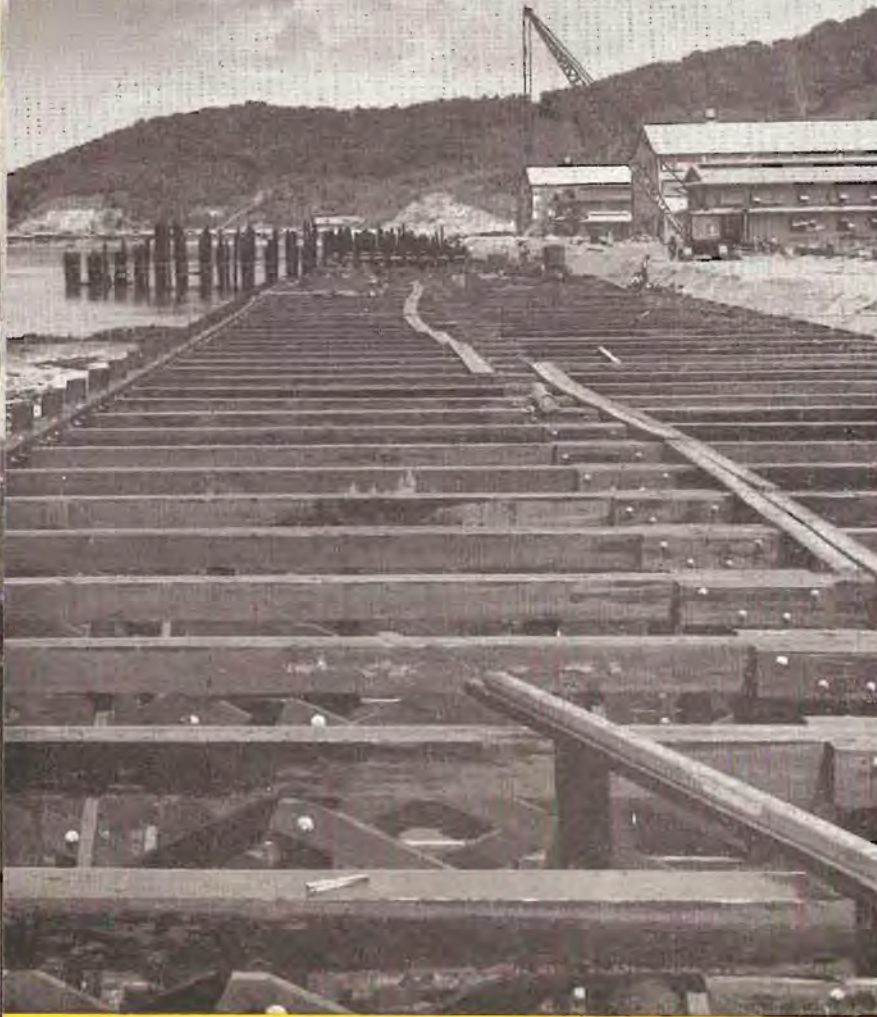
finished within 30 days. This record speaks for itself. I congratulate you upon your success with these units. They fill a long needed want and they are producing. May the good work continue."

**From Lt. Colonel W. J. Scheyer
9th Defense Battalion, Fleet Marine Force
U. S. Marine Corps**

"From a study of tanks operating in this area it was learned that the Japanese successfully stopped our tanks by thrusting a bar in the trailing idler.

"In order to combat this procedure, the tanks of this battalion have been modified to the extent of closing the trailing idler and making a disc wheel except for an opening of about three inches in diameter adjacent to the grease filling. It is intended to close this opening with another smaller plate bolted on the base plate so that it can be removed for purposes of greasing the trailing idler.

"This work was accomplished by the Fourteenth Naval Construction Battalion using petal-shaped sections cut



● Construction of quay at Naval Operating Base, Trinidad, British West Indies. This is one of the many tremendous projects undertaken by Seabees at this base.

from the ends of heavy oil drums and electrically spot-welded to the spokes of the trailing idler.

* * * *

“The Commanding Officer, Ninth Defense, desires to express his appreciation to the Commanding Officer, officers, and men of the 14th Seabees for the service rendered the Ninth Defense Battalion during its tour in this area.

“Our relations have, at all times, been most pleasant and we leave hoping it will be our good fortune to serve together again.”

First Endorsement:

**From Major General Clayton B. Vogel
Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force
San Diego, Calif., U. S. Marine Corps**

“It has been noted from reports that our tanks were stopped by the Japs by the method described in the basic letter. The method used to correct an obvious defensive weakness of the tank is a simple one but appears to be effective. It is recommended that steps be taken to modify the manufacture of all sprockets and idlers on tanks so that the web will be closed. The tank on which the modification described was applied is identified as the light M3A1 tank.

“A copy of basic letter is being forwarded to all

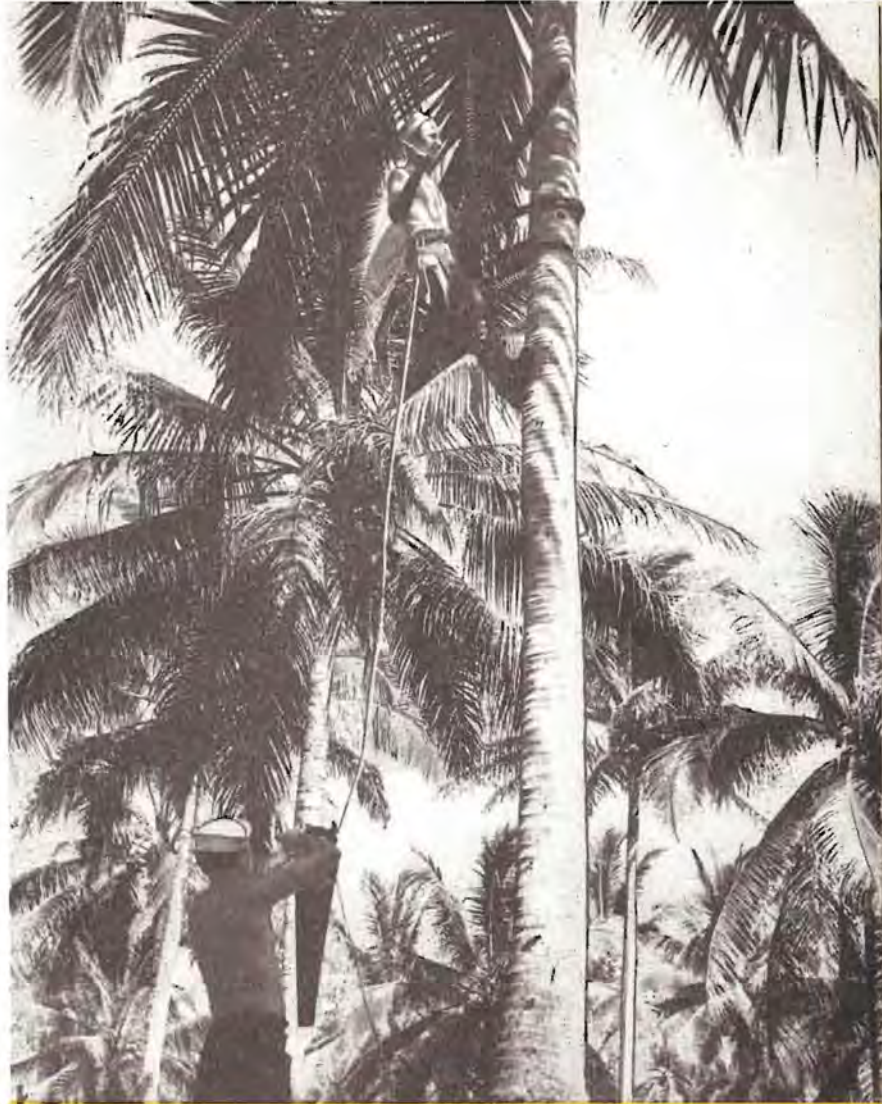
organizations of this Corps equipped with tanks, with the suggestion that tanks assigned to them be similarly modified.”

**From Major General H. M. Smith, U.S.M.C.
Naval Air Station, Alaska**

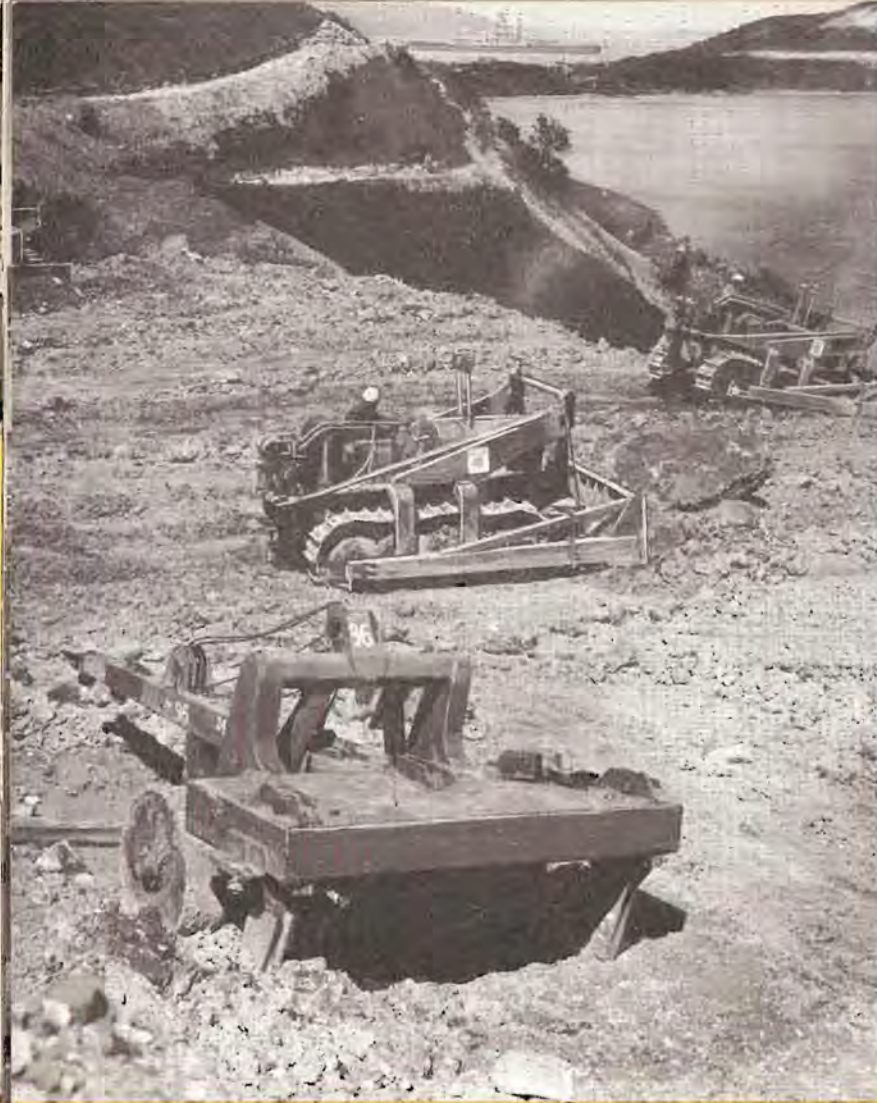
“Thanks for your letter and consideration. These are busy days for me and my staff. You doubtless know what we are doing. Your Seabees are doing a magnificent job up here—as they are everywhere. It would do your heart good to hear from impartial sources the high praises bestowed upon them. There is no job which is not done in an outstanding manner. In my humble opinion they are the find of this war.”

**From Lieutenant General A. A. Vandegriff
Commanding General 1st Marine Amphibious Corps
U. S. Marine Corps**

“I wish to express at this time my appreciation for the work done by the Sixth Naval Construction Battalion at Guadalcanal. They were a splendid body of workmen who approached and successfully performed an unusual variety of tasks. Each of those tasks was intimately connected with the preparation and maintenance of Guadalcanal as a base. The members of the Battalion with courage and willingness undertook construction work of all types; and



● At the Naval Base on Espiritu Santo, Seabee electricians rig support arms on coconut palms for a power line. The tall straight palm trees are perfect for this purpose.



● As warships lie at anchor in the bay, a fleet of Seabee bulldozers move the earth in the preliminary construction of a connecting beach road at this Southwest Pacific island.

when the demand arose, they cheerfully turned to other tasks where hands were needed. During one period the pressure of enemy forces against us was so great that troops could not be spared to handle stores on the beaches. Fighting had to go on and ships had to be unloaded. Construction workers voluntarily took over that work and performed it exceedingly well.

“In addition to commenting upon the performance of duty by the ‘Seabees’, I wish to commend the wisdom that foresaw the need for such an organization. In the war in the Pacific in seizing one base after another, few of us realized the great amount of construction which would be necessary. Need for this arises almost immediately after the initial landing, and becomes greater as the area seized is developed into a real base. I do not know how we would have gotten along without the ‘Seabees’, and trust that they will be participants in every future operation in even larger numbers than at Guadalcanal.”

**From Brigadier General Henry L. Larsen
Commanding General, Training Center
U. S. Marine Corps Headquarters
Camp LeJeune, New River, North Carolina**

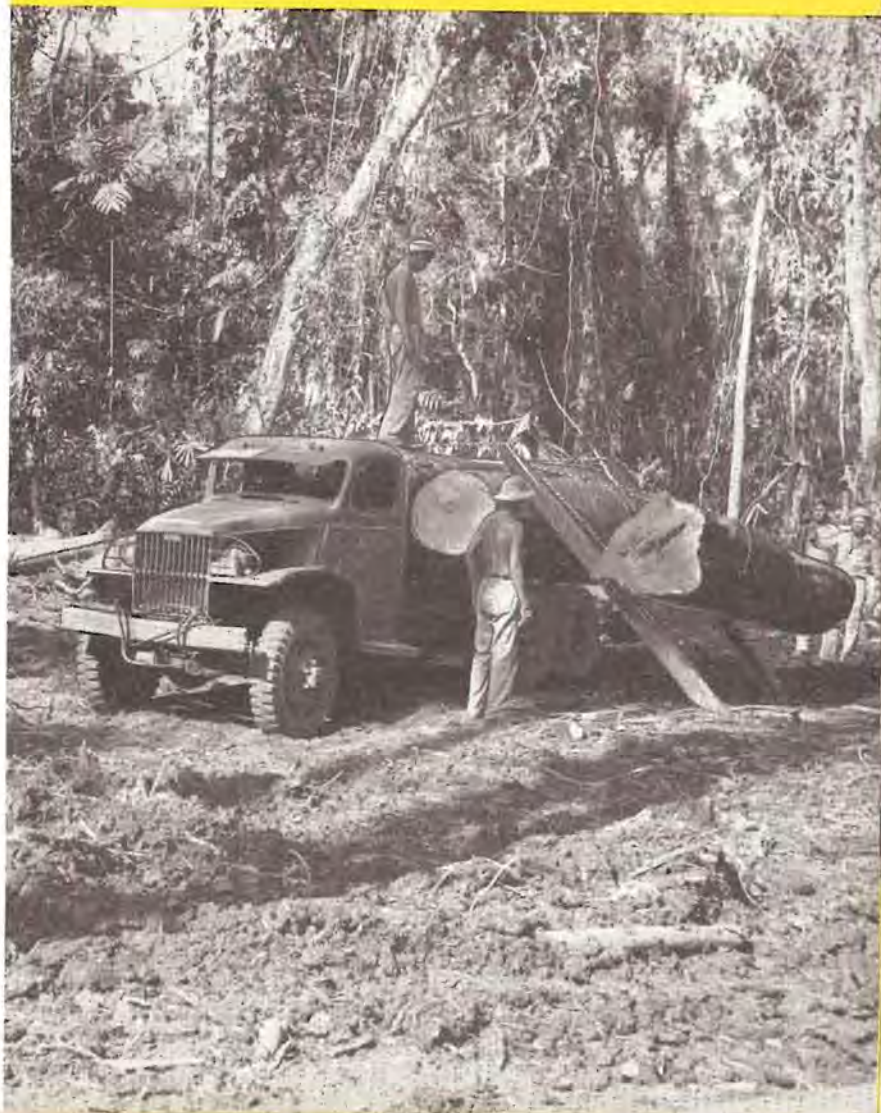
“Having just completed a tour of duty as Military Governor and Commanding General of Defense

Forces in . . . I wish to pay tribute to the valuable services rendered by construction battalion units of the Navy which served under my command.

"The Eleventh Construction Battalion was one of the first to be organized in the Navy and trained for this important duty. The personnel composing the battalion was selected from the construction field in civil life and included the widest possible range of skilled artisans in a well-balanced unit, all of whom were prepared to undertake practically any building project imaginable, employing almost any kind of machinery from bench tools to the heaviest equipment. Work involved: the construction of a complete airport requiring blasting away lava rock on one end and filling in with coral rock out over the fringing reef to make a runway; fuel storage tanks, a pumping system and fuel dock were constructed; a net depot; a repair base; the development of waterworks and systems of important proportions; power plants, systems and services, refrigeration plants to meet local and depot requirements; the construction of shelter, galleys, messhalls, storage buildings, and the installation of sewage systems for a mobile hospital or a large camp. The spirit of all ranks was most commendable and officers and men adapted themselves to conditions without confusion and assumed their duties with enthusiasm and marked skill.

"Under the conditions in which we were operating many difficult engineering problems were presented constantly. No obstacle was ever too great

● Logging operations in a Guadalcanal jungle. Huge palms and mahogany trees from virgin stands are hauled to the saw-mill. Mahogany logs 60 and 70 feet in length are common.



● Construction of a lookout tower on Guadalcanal. From this and many other similar towers spotted throughout the island warnings are given of impending Jap air raids.



for the Seabees; on the contrary these were always overcome, often by ingenious improvised methods. The demands made upon any commander in the field in organizing, establishing and maintaining an advance base and the conditions encountered in this theater of operations are such that in my opinion it would be practically impossible to carry on without the invaluable services provided by the Seabee battalions.

“It was in a large measure the services rendered by the Seabees which resulted in commendation of the undersigned by The Commander-in-Chief for services rendered in Samoa and it is wished to give tribute herewith for the invaluable cooperation and support given by the Seabees. Although this organization is new in the Navy, it has already demonstrated its importance and it has earned the highest respect and admiration among comrades in the Marine Corps. I am pleased to state that I have personally heard many other commanding officers speak of the work of Seabees under their commands and without exception it has been most favorable.

“While all ranks merit high praise, it is desired to particularly commend Commander Ernest Heckler, the commanding officer of the Eleventh Construction Battalion, and the officers and petty officers of his organization for their splendid cooperation and efficiency in their work under my command.”

**From Lieutenant-General T. Holcomb, Commandant
U. S. Marine Corps**

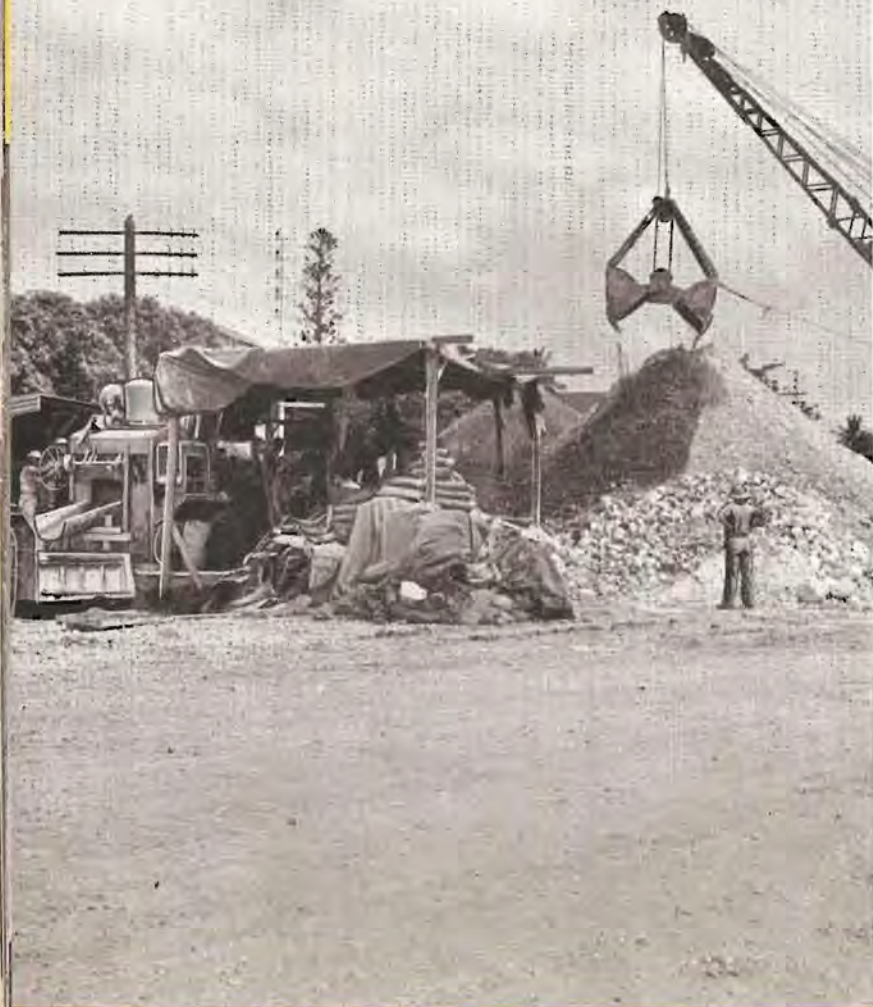
"During my recent inspection trip in the Central and South Pacific, during which I visited practically every place where Marines are serving, I had occasion to make inquiries as to the work being carried out by your construction battalions. As one of these battalions is to be attached to each of our divisions, I was naturally anxious to learn something of their performance of duty. Without exception, in every place where one of these battalions is serving, all hands were loud in their praise. The remark most frequently made was that they were the hardest working and the most efficient outfit in their line of work that any one had ever seen. In several cases I met officers of these battalions and in each case I was impressed with the fact that they were doing tremendously important work in a highly satisfactory way. It seems obvious to me that the organization and training of these battalions has been a most important contribution to the war effort and I am particularly pleased that you agreed to having a battalion in the Engineer Regiment of each of our divisions."

**From Colonel L. L. Leech
Commanding Officer of the Eighth Defense Battalion
Reinforced, Fleet Marine Force, U. S. Marine Corps**

"Slightly more than one year ago, you Seabees



● After logs have been hauled to the sawmill, they are stripped and sawed into planks and boards in a manner reminiscent of the old logging days in Northern Wisconsin and Minnesota.



● At a Caribbean base, this central concrete mixing plant looks almost modern. When feasible the central mixing system is used and the mixed concrete hauled away to the job.

CAME full of enthusiasm and confident of your abilities:

“*YOU SAW* a jungle island devoid of roads, and full of headaches in making the necessary installations; you pitched in wholeheartedly and skillfully to overcome all difficulties, and to construct air fields, roads, docks and dozens of other jobs with a spirit that brooked no interference, delay or failure:

“*YOU CONQUERED* the jungle, the mud and the weather. High morale and quiet efficiency enabled you to overcome all difficulties.

“The finest plane ramp, the finest roads and road net, and two of the finest air fields on any island in the South Pacific are monuments of your achievements. Now that your job here is completed you are being called to other important work and, on your departure, we thank you for all that you have done for our comfort. We hope you will not be long delayed in your return home and a well deserved vacation. You can return home with the realization and satisfaction of a tough job—*well done*. God go with you.”

**From Colonel LeRoy P. Hunt, U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding Marine Forces, 14th Naval District**

“In recent trips throughout the South Pacific, San Diego area and the Fourteenth Naval District, I have been afforded an opportunity to observe closely

several Naval Construction Battalions. I have seen them performing their duties in battle as well as under normal conditions.

“Everywhere I went I was very forcibly impressed with the efficiency, enthusiasm and spirit displayed by both officers and men of these organizations. Their willingness to work, cooperative spirit and general attitude of helpfulness have gained for them an enviable reputation among those with whom they have come in contact. There appears to be no job too difficult for them to do.

“In my opinion the Construction Battalions are a distinct asset to the Naval Service and the agency which conceived their establishment deserves much credit for its vision.”

**From Major General Chas. F. B. Price
Commanding General
Hq. Co. Marine Corps Unit 705**

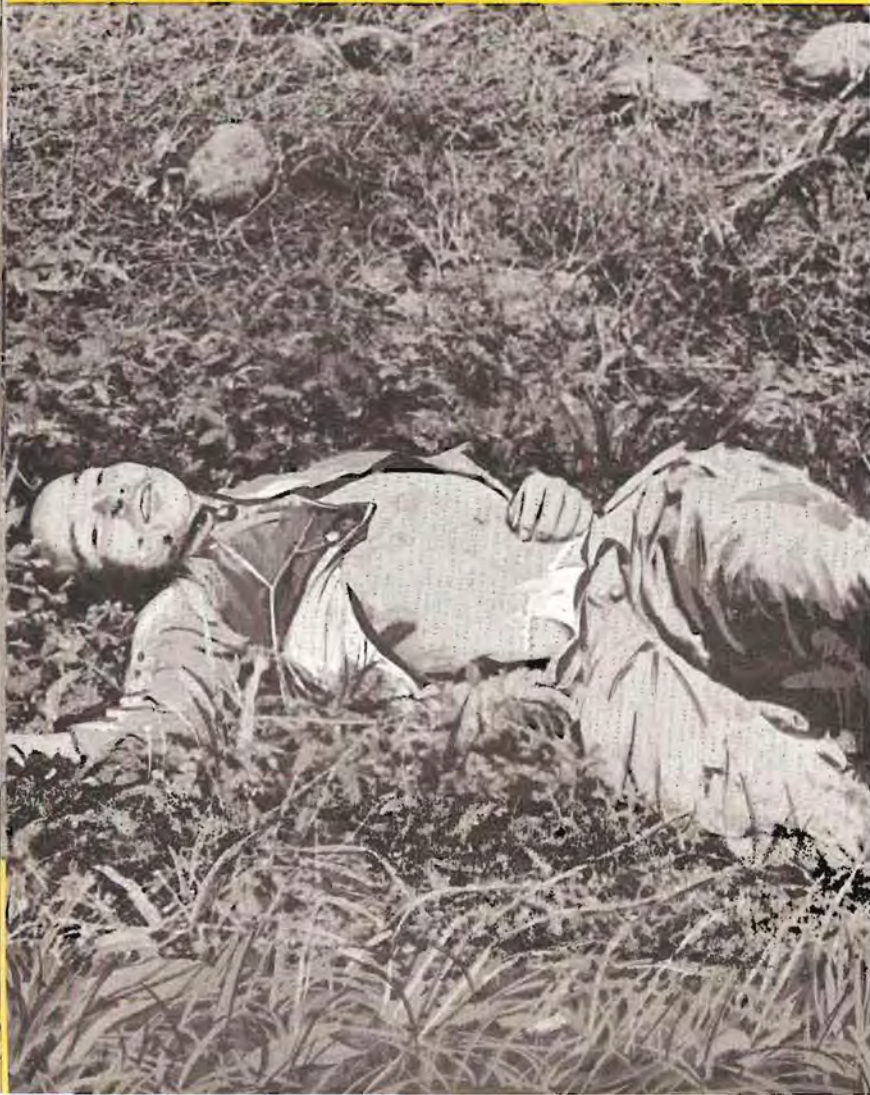
“It is desired to bring to the attention of the Chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks the excellent manner in which the Eleventh U. S. Naval Construction Battalion performed its duties while stationed in this area. All assignments were carried out with a willing spirit and in full cooperation with all other units and activities.

“All construction projects were carried forward in a highly efficient manner, and it is considered that this command was extremely fortunate in hav-

● **Maintenance Shop where every ounce of Seabee ingenuity is called upon to keep equipment in running order. Seabees fashion spare parts from materials at hand.**



● One of the first Japs to fall before Seabee fire at the hotly contested landing on Rendova beach. Long hours on the rifle range during training proved a life-saver here.



ing had this excellent organization during the period from August 27, 1942, to June 18, 1943.”

* * * * *

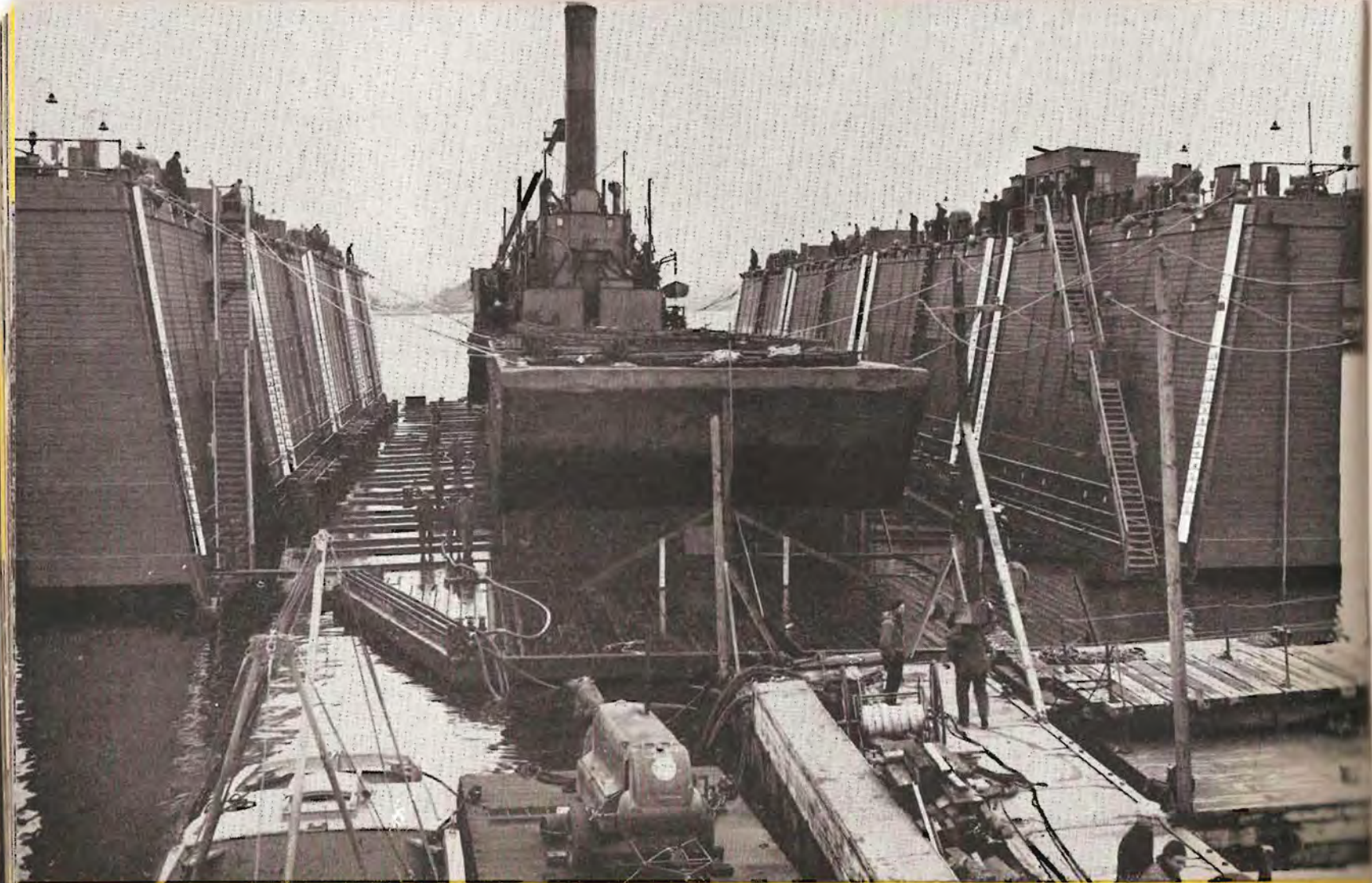
“In war nothing counts but the final results, so we keep plugging away to make sure that end is to our credit. In such an effort it is always nice to know that we have the support of a couple of Seabee battalions.”





● Seabees use familiar equipment in unfamiliar surroundings. But for the background of palm trees this scene might be typical of any construction project in America. This photograph was taken

on Guadalcanal, where Seabees built airfields, fighter strips, roads, and even constructed a railway about one and a half miles in length.



● Moorings for this drydock were built by Seabees at a Newfoundland base. The barge and dredge in the drydock when this picture was taken are being repaired on the spot—saving precious

weeks of time and thousands of miles of towing to a permanent dock in the States. Floating drydocks of this type represent other important Seabee contributions to the shortening of the war.



NAVY

**From the Honorable Frank Knox
Secretary of the Navy
to Rear Admiral Ben Moreell, C.E.C., U.S.N.**

"I think you probably have seen what I had to say publicly about the Seabees as the result of my observation on my recent trip. I want to say to you officially that wherever I encountered the members of your organization, I also encountered nothing but praise for them, usually in superlative terms.

"I think the idea was a splendid one and it has been given effect with high intelligence. The quality of the service these men are rendering is beyond praise. I have very earnestly recommended that a battalion of Seabees constitute a part of every future wave we make in our war in the Pacific.

"Particularly there ought to go with the first groups one battalion, or at least a part of a battalion, of men trained in building docks and a full battalion of stevedores."

**From Admiral C. W. Nimitz
Commander-in-Chief Pacific Fleet**

"Once again I cannot too strongly emphasize the appreciation which we all feel for the vigorous, cooperative, and imaginative way in which you and your corps are helping us in this Pacific war."

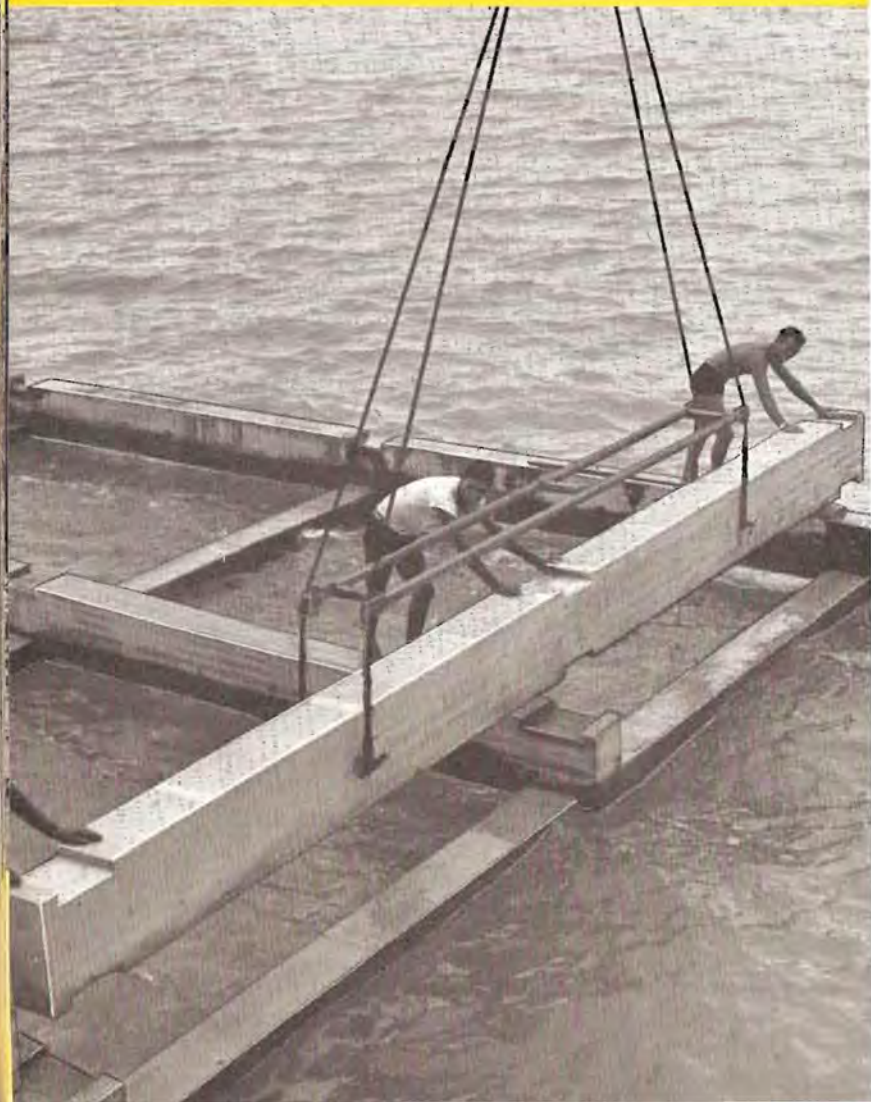
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"The Seabees continue to distinguish themselves wherever they may be found throughout the Pacific Ocean areas, as do also your officers of the Civil Engineer Corps."

**From Vice-Admiral W. L. Calhoun, U.S.N.
Commander Service Force, Pacific Fleet**

"Seabees that we bring out here make our job, Cincpac's job and your job that much easier . . . believe me in all sincerity I really mean the statement that the Navy will remember this war by its Seabees."

● Cribbing under construction for Marine dock in the South Atlantic. The huge beams are of concrete which have been cast by Seabee concrete workers and are now being set in place.



From Admiral W. F. Halsey, U.S.N.

Commander South Pacific Area and South Pacific Force

“The 37th Construction Battalion was assigned the job of remodeling the French ‘Intendance Militaire’ building for the South Pacific Headquarters Building. With a limited supply of materials and equipment, by ingenuity and skillful workmanship a rather dilapidated storehouse building was transformed into a modern, well designed Headquarters.

“The Commander South Pacific wishes to express his appreciation for these services, and it is desired that each member of your command be so informed.”

First Endorsement:

From the Captain

Commander Service Squadron, U. S. Pacific Fleet

South Pacific Force Service Squadron

“Forwarded. The Commander Service Squadron, South Pacific, notes with pleasure the excellent work accomplished by the 37th Construction Battalion in remodeling the French ‘Intendance’ building.”

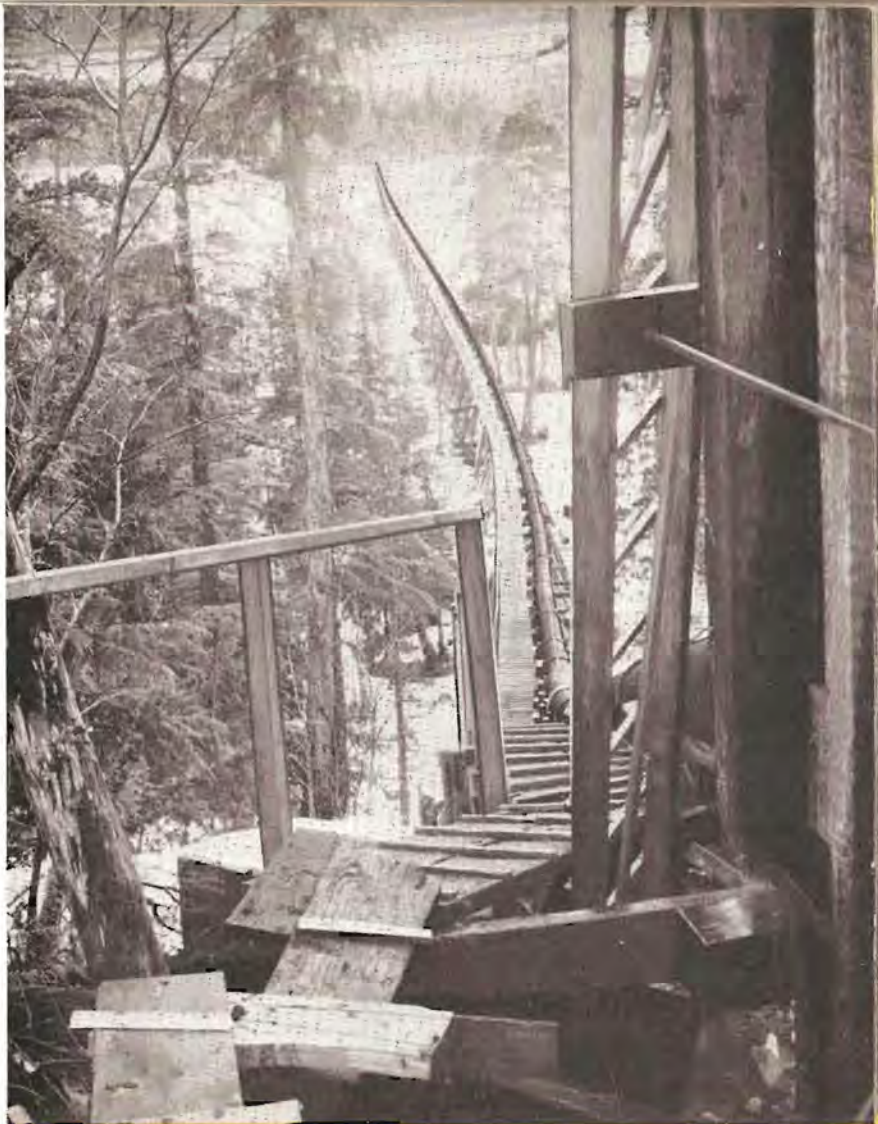
**From Rear Admiral G. H. Fort, U.S.N.
Commander Landing Craft Flotilla
South Pacific Force**

"The Commander Task Force requests that you express his appreciation to the officers and men of your command for the services they have rendered units of this task force during the period of the occupation of the Russell Islands—not only in conjunction with the operation itself but also in building the headquarters camp of the Task Force Commander and in the many special services provided the Commander and members of his staff.

"Their voluntary contribution of time, hard work, and equipment materially assisted the successful completion of the Russell Islands occupation."

**From the Rear Admiral
Commander Service Squadron, South Pacific Force**

"This command has noted with satisfaction the remarkable improvement in cargo loading and unloading at this port since the arrival of the Second Construction Battalion (special) under your command. It has further noted the marked reduction in damaged cargo and pilfered cargo since you have



● Flume box and pipe line constructed by Seabees at Dutch Harbor. This was one of the projects started by civilian contractors with civilian labor and later taken over by the Seabees.



● Before and after. The upper picture shows the beginning of a roadway along the beach; and below, the park-like drive which appeared in a few days.

assumed the important responsibility of representing the Navy's end of cargo unloading.

"Through the fine work of your Battalion you have helped eliminate one of the principal bottle-necks in the war effort in the South Pacific.

"Your contribution to the war effort in handling this important cargo handling activity of the South Pacific merits this letter of commendation. By copy of this letter the Commander Naval Base Noumea is requested to include it with your next fitness report as a permanent record of your outstanding performance."

First Endorsement:

**From the Commander, U. S. Naval Advanced Base
Noumea, New Caledonia**

"Forwarded, heartily concurring in the commendation expressed by the Commander Service Squadron, South Pacific Force. Your intelligent direction of cargo operations and the excellent example of tireless energy set for your men have proved of great value to those whose task is the supply of material for the fighting fronts."

**From Lieutenant S. E. Zimmerman, U.S.N.R.
Commanding Officer, U.S.S. YMS**

"Subject men have been engaged in divers repairs aboard this vessel. I have seen similar work performed at multifarious Navy and private yards, and at a number of section bases. But never in my experience has a group of men tackled any of those jobs with the enthusiasm and efficiency of these men. There were no idle hands and the work progressed with great rapidity. The men were all pleasant and cooperative.

"I feel that under all the circumstances and in view of the above, this notice is well merited. Company C, 54th Construction Battalion."

**From Rear Admiral J. W. Reeves, Jr., U.S.N.
Commander, Alaskan Sector,
Northwest Sea Frontier**

"Commander, Alaskan Sector, has noted with gratification the excellent job performed by various Naval units in the matter of the unloading and loading of a cargo ship. The speed with which the job was accomplished under adverse conditions is indicative of the high degree of cooperation attained.

● Guadalcanal sawmill nestled right in the jungle for concealment from enemy planes overhead. Tens of thousands of board-feet of lumber have been cut up at this mill.



● Navy Town, Adak, Alaska, begins to take shape. Seabees are constructing a new warehouse in the foreground. Seabee-built roads insure swift movement of men and supplies.



“These accomplishments could not have been attained without the wholehearted cooperation and best effort of yourself and the officers and men of your battalion. Please accept for yourself and convey to your battalion this expression of appreciation for your part in this ‘accomplishment’.

“The commendation referred to reads, in part, as follows:

“It is with pleasure and appreciation that I invite the attention of the Commander Alaskan Sector to the outstanding accomplishments of the Naval Air Facility, Amchitka, by means of which my command was enabled to carry out tasks assigned in the current operations against Attu. Working against time, on short notice, under the most arduous conditions and despite what appeared to be insuperable difficulties of supply, transportation, and terrain, the Naval Air Facility, Amchitka, was ready on May 1 with the essential facilities necessary to base and operate one bomber and one patrol squadron. This job could only have been done by a hard working efficient organization headed by an officer determined to let no obstacles stand in the way of accomplishment. From its beginning the Naval Air Facility, Amchitka, has given every possible support and cooperation to the units of this Wing operating from there . . .”

**From the Commander Eastern Bases and Training
Group and Commanding Officer AATB**

"Today, you and the men under your command are moving on to the advanced Tunisian area. All of you are volunteers, most of you were exempt from military service, many among you left comfortable and profitable berths in civil employment or businesses to contribute your share to our country's cause. For this, each and every one of you deserves praise.

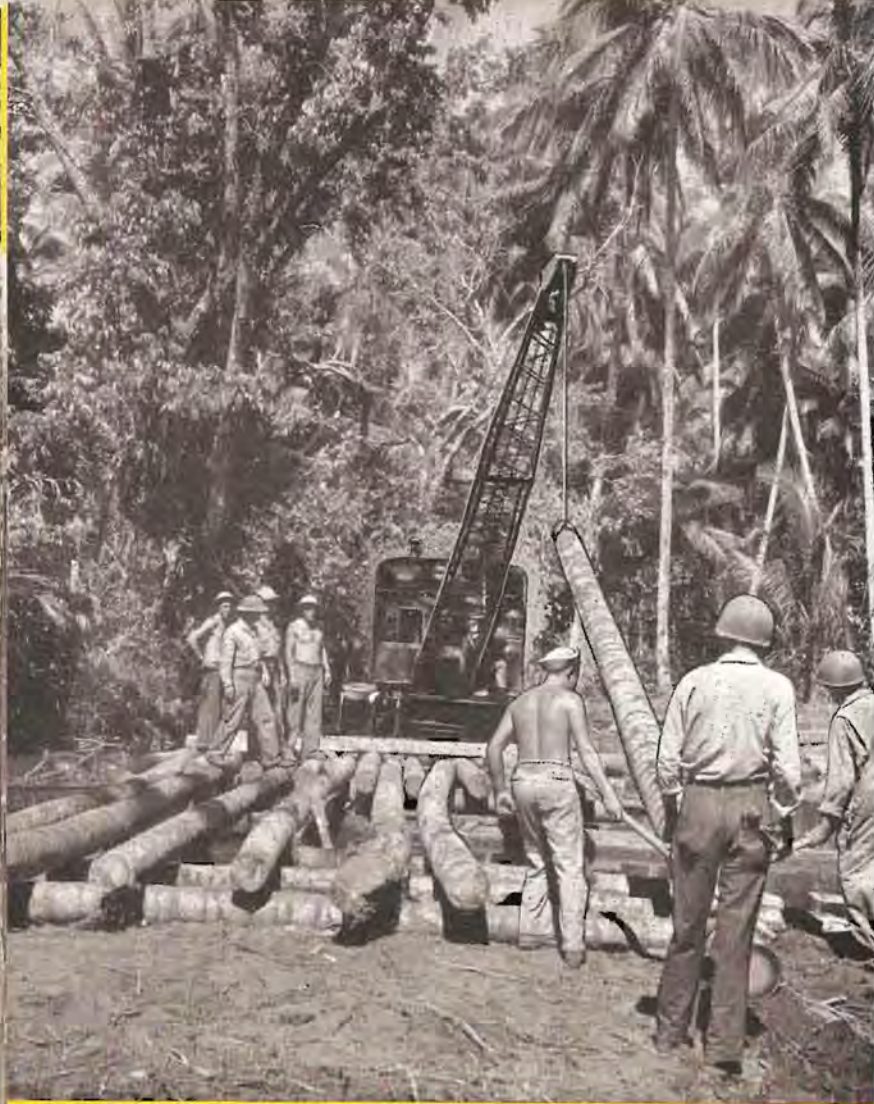
"You are worthy of far greater commendation for the way you have done your jobs. Through your skill, your craftsmanship, your devotion to duty and your long hours of work; you have transformed this spot of ancient North Africa into a living example of what can be done by the American spirit and the American will-to-win. You have accomplished wonders.

"You have been good shipmates. You have lived up to the best and finest traditions of the service. We hate to see you go. That, however, is one of the laws of the Navy. Those of us whom you are leaving behind have the satisfaction of knowing that you will do a good job no matter where you go.

"There is one flag signal hoist in the Navy for



● A seventy-five ton crane on a pontoon barge lifts a P T Boat from another pontoon barge moored alongside. The scene of this photograph is at a Mid-Pacific Island base.



● Native palms are used to form the base for a bridge across an inlet at this Southwest Pacific island. At other places coconut logs were used to form a corduroy road through the mud.

which every fighting man-of-warsman will willingly die in order to deserve. That signal is 'Well Done'. You deserve it. To you, the officers and men of Company 'C', 54th Construction Battalion, the Eastern Bases in Algeria hoists the signal 'Well Done'."

**From Rear Admiral R. L. Conolly, U.S.N.
Commander Landing Craft and Bases
Northwest African Waters**

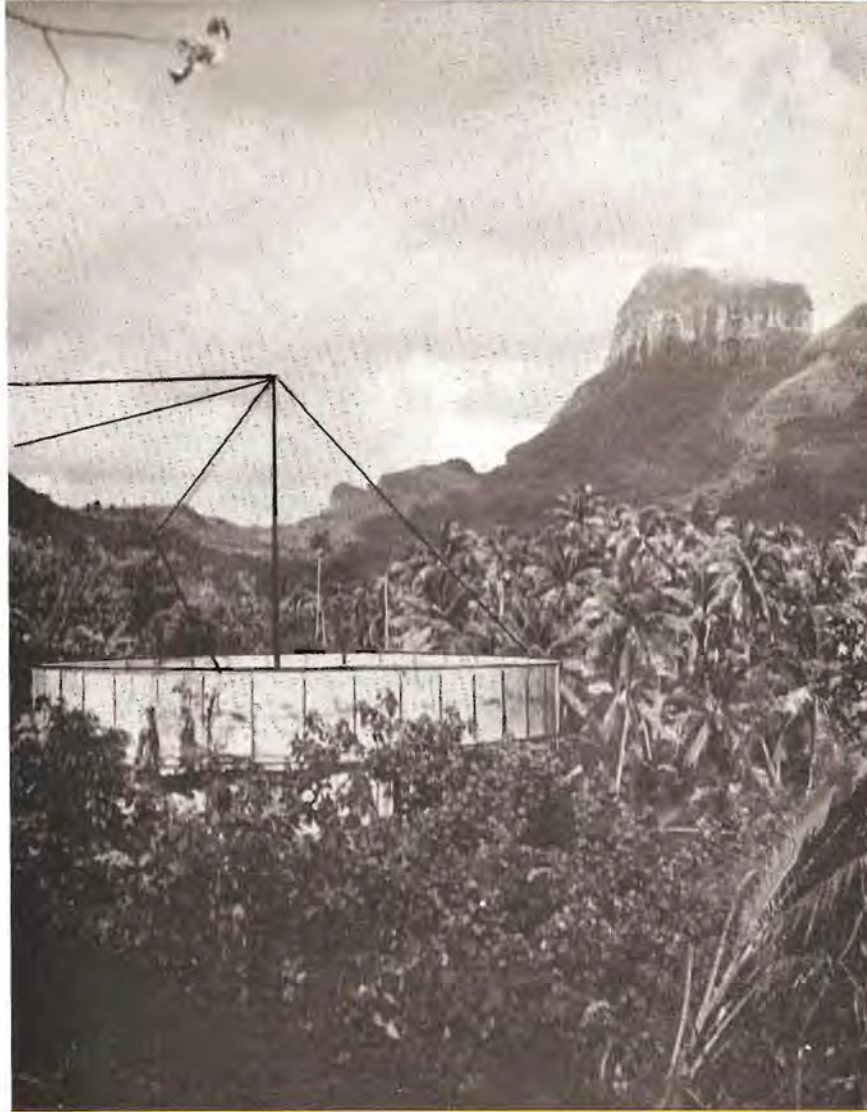
"The excellent manner in which you organized and placed on a production basis the pontoon assembly project at this Advanced Amphibious Training Base is highly commendable, especially so, considering the limited amount of equipment available for this work when the project was started.

"The rapidity of completion of pontoon causeway construction will be a direct contribution to the success of other operations being undertaken by this command.

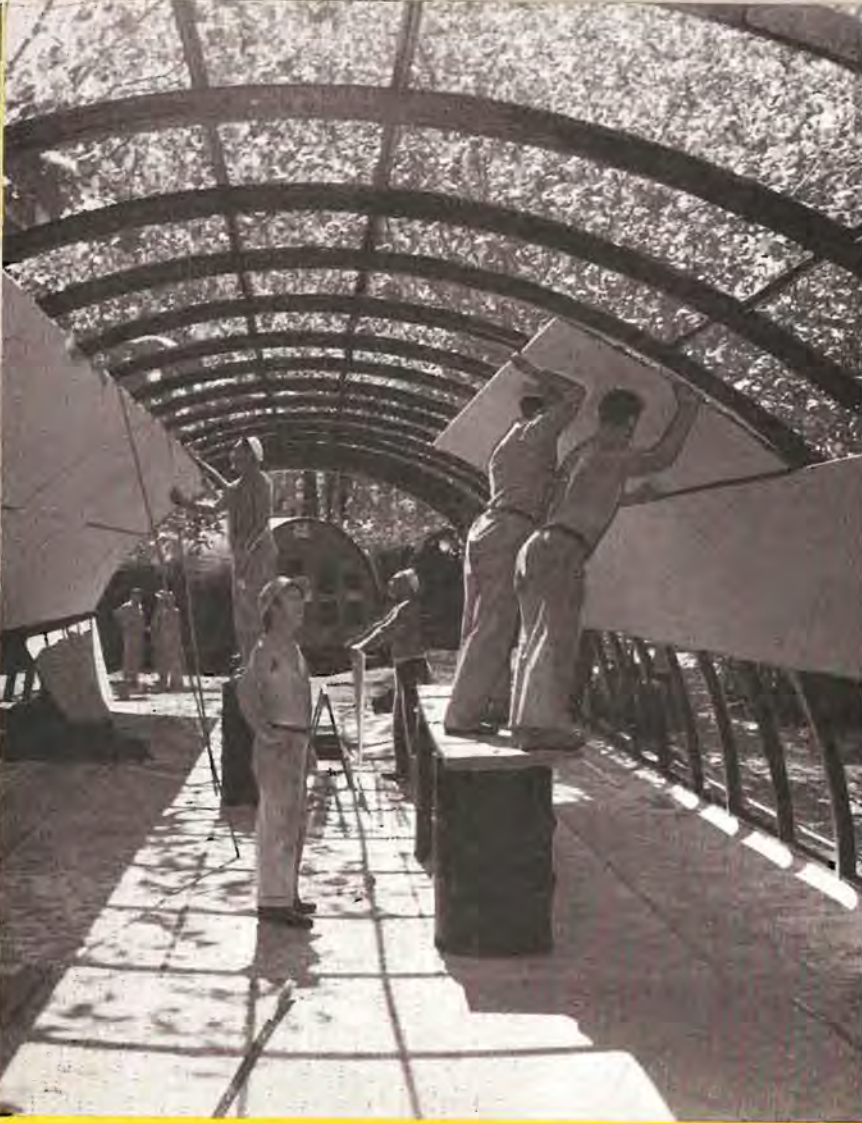
"It is requested that the contents of this letter be made known to all hands in your detachment whose efforts were contributory to such an outstanding accomplishment."

* * * *

"This message will be distributed to every landing craft under my command by Flotilla Commanders who will report when distribution is complete. I desire that every man in this command be fully informed that the invasion of Sicily on July tenth was the most successful and by far the largest amphibious operation ever accomplished. The part played by United States landing craft was indispensable to the success of this attack. Not only was the joint assault (more than one-fifth of the whole British and American effort) carried entirely in landing ships and craft but our Landing Craft performed tasks which were essential to the success of the other two United States Task Forces. Many heroic deeds were observed and have been reported. Instances of distinguished service and action were many. All known cases have been recommended for appropriate recognition. There are too many men who performed their duty in a highly satisfactory manner to be mentioned in any other way than by a general 'Well Done', which signal it is my pleasure to make to you. Since the assault much arduous service has been rendered and hearty support to our Army in Sicily continues. This is not a single shot organization. Prepare for another offensive."



● A 10,000 barrel water tank nestled in the tropical growth of a Mid-Pacific island. An adequate water supply is as important as oil and gasoline.



**From Commodore G. E. Short, Officer-in-Charge
Naval Operating Base
Midway Island**

“Since the assumption of command by the present Officer-in-Charge of the Naval Operating Base, Midway Island, the detachment of the Tenth Naval Construction Battalion on duty at this Base has performed its assignment tasks in a highly commendable manner and is considered to be deserving of special recognition for its accomplishments. This Detachment has completed a large volume of work with noteworthy efficiency, and the readiness of this Base to perform its mission has been materially increased through the devotion to duty of the members of this Detachment.

“Lieutenant Kenneth D. Sylvester, CEC-V(S), USNR, assumed command of the Detachment as Officer-in-Charge on May 24, 1943; however, he previously had served with the Detachment, having arrived here with one of the first contingents to report for duty at this Base. His leadership and intelligent direction of the officers and men under his command has fostered a high level of morale among the crew, and efficiency in the performance of their assigned duties.”

● Pre-fabricated, quickly-erected Quonset Huts are used both in the tropics and the arctic for men's quarters, as well as hospitals and other administrative buildings.

From The Commanding Officer, USS ———

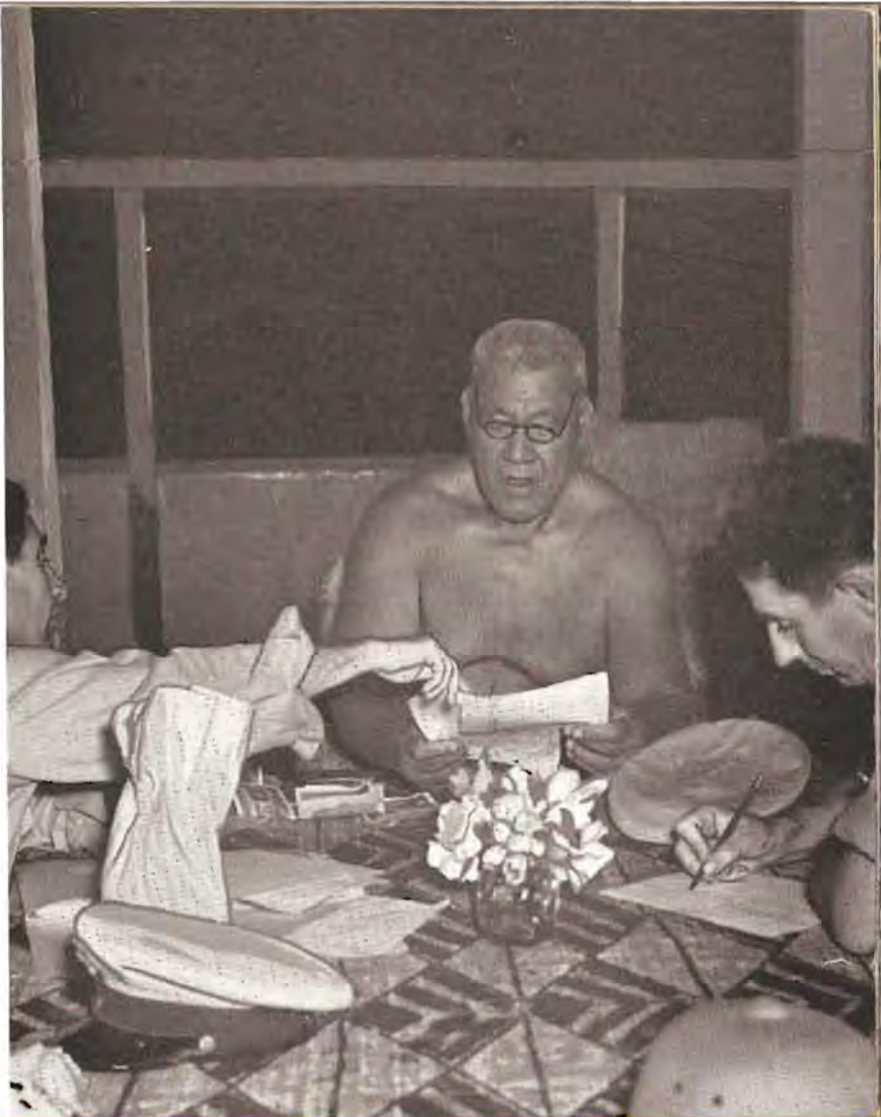
“The Commanding Officer wishes to express his appreciation for the cheerful cooperation and assistance received by this vessel from the Officers and Men of the 52nd Naval Construction Battalion at Sand Bay.

“The use of your Shipfitter, and the various repair jobs taken care of so cheerfully and efficiently by your Carpenter Shop and Machine Shop have saved several days’ work at a Repair Ship which would have taken this vessel away from her regular duties at this station.”

From The Troop Commander on board M.S. ———

“This officer takes great pleasure in expressing his appreciation to you, your officers and entire unit for services rendered on board this vessel.

“Since your arrival on board this vessel the conduct of your unit has been outstanding. The loyalty, industry, cooperation and initiative displayed in accomplishing engineering and maintenance work on board this vessel has been of immeasurable value. This reflects credit to your leadership.



● Native Samoan Chief meets with Seabee Chiefs to negotiate for native labor. In this area of operations native labor was relied upon, working under the direction of Seabees.

● The old familiar diesel-powered roller is just as useful on advance base road and airfield construction as it is home in the States. This picture was taken at a Mid-Pacific base.



“The extent of the work accomplished and the many contributions to the health, comfort, sanitation and security of the troops on board, will be the subject of a separate letter, copies of which will be furnished your command.

“With best wishes to Base Maintenance Unit 503 as a body and God speeding the successful completion of your mission, I am deeply gratified for your help and friendship.”

**From Commodore W. M. Quigley, U.S.N.
Commander, Naval Bases, Solomon Islands
United States Pacific Fleet South Pacific Force**

“Commander Naval Bases, Solomons, commends the efforts of you and those in your charge assisting in the rapid completion of this vital airfield project by your excellence in the performance of duty.

“It is known that you undertook your assignment of assisting other organizations with no thought of personal acclaim, but pursued your duties with perseverance and attention to the objective of doing a fast workmanlike job. Your devotion to duty under adverse weather conditions and enemy air action

has the deepest admiration of the Commander Naval Bases, Solomons.

“It is desired that you give this commendation wide distribution among those in your command.”

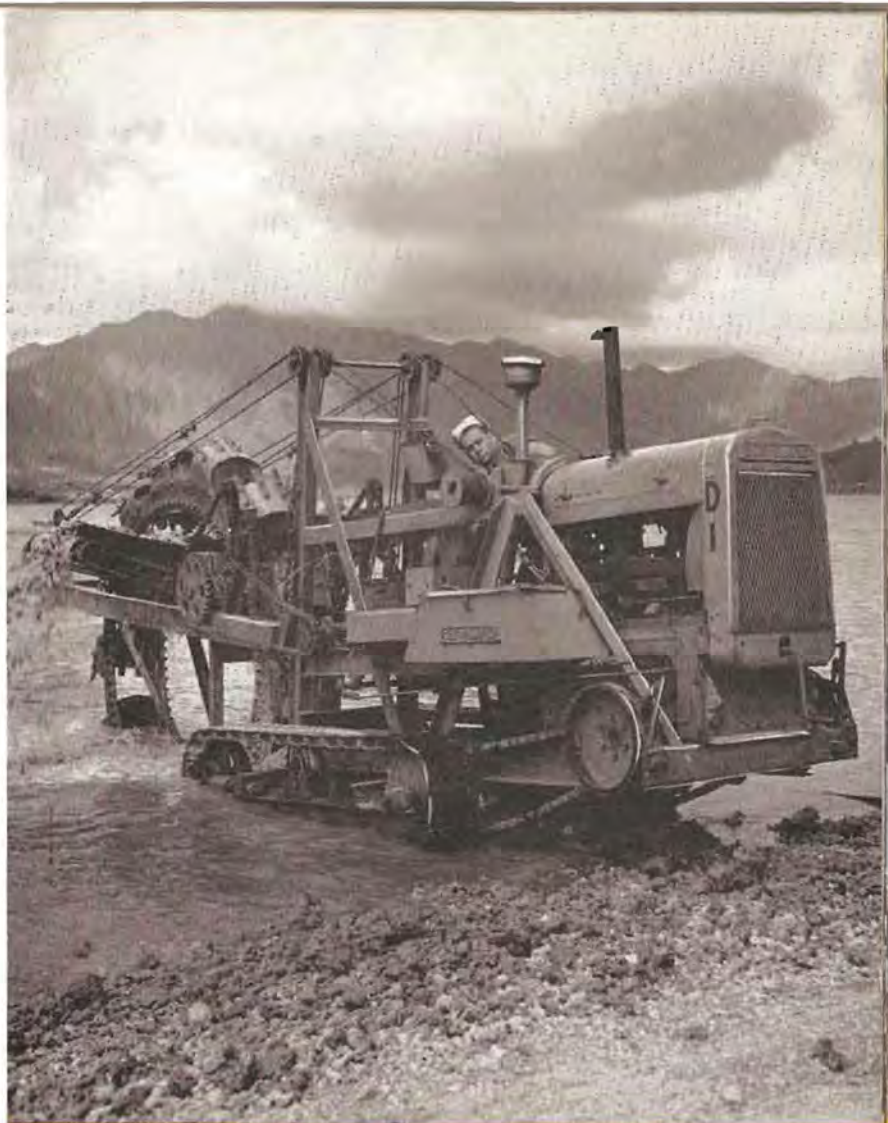
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“Inasmuch as the present operating crew of the Koli Tank Farm is to be relieved shortly, it is desired to commend the entire personnel (of the 14th U. S. Naval Construction Battalion) for unstinting performance of duty. The painstaking work of handling high test aviation gasoline was carried on without a single case of contamination or waste.

“The attitude of these men toward their work should serve as an example to other service organizations of the Navy.”

From Rear Admiral A. S. Carpender, U.S.N.

“On relinquishing command of the Southwest Pacific Force, I wish to express to you my very sincere appreciation of the superb job your Seabees are doing in that area.



● Hawaii. Laying telephone equipment and cable as part of an elaborate system of communications which links the various islands of the Hawaiian group together.



● In Sicily, camouflaged Seabee Demolition Experts like this man succeeded in clearing buildings and other places of booby traps and land mines left by the retreating Nazis.

“By their initiative, intelligence, and their loyal and devoted service they have not only been one of the outstanding units of the Naval Command but have won the respect and admiration of all the Allied Services in the Southwest Pacific Area. It has been a very definite privilege to have them under my command.

“There will be more Seabees but there will be none better.”

**From Captain W. C. Espach, Commanding Officer,
U. S. Naval Mobile Hospital Medical Corps**

“The 37th U. S. Naval Construction Battalion has, up to very recently, been assisting in the construction of this hospital. I would like to show my appreciation not only of the first-class work done, but of the fine spirit of cooperation shown by all the officers and men from the Commanding Officer down.”

**From Captain C. D. Glover, U.S.N.
Commanding Officer, U.S.S.**

“The U.S.S. arrived at a South Pacific Port from a West Coast Port loaded to capacity with

aircraft, miscellaneous spares, enlisted and officer passengers. It is understood that this was by far the greatest load so far transported to the South Pacific by a ship of this class.

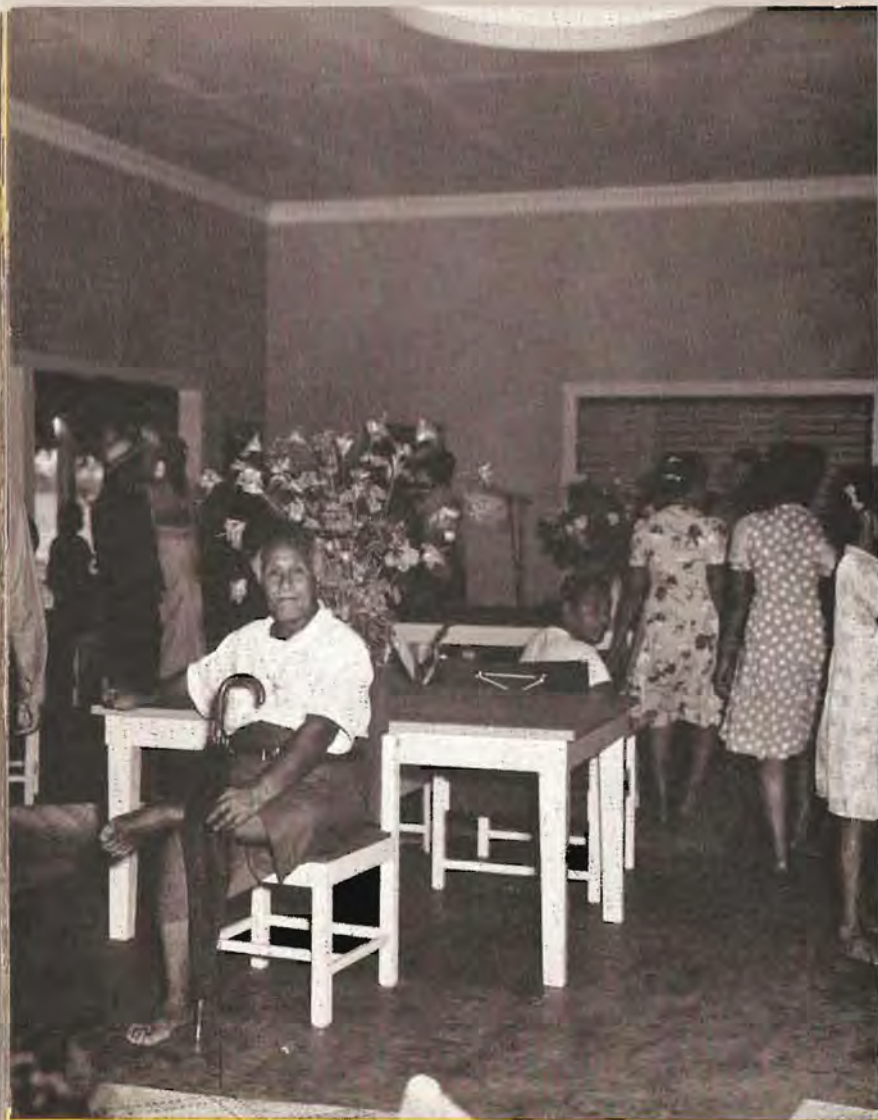
“Through the splendid cooperation of Lieutenant Commander C. A. Whyte, CEC, USNR, excellent services were rendered by the 37th Construction Battalion and the unloading and re-loading of this ship was accomplished in the surprisingly short period of three days. During this time, Ensign B. L. Nishkian, CEC, USNR, remained on the job every minute of the time and is largely responsible for accomplishment of this arduous task so expeditiously and so efficiently. I consider that Ensign Nishkian’s performance of duty in connection with the handling of the cargo of the vessel is deserving of commendation.

“The ship was anchored at a bay in order that full use could be made of the new dock facilities, now under construction but not yet completed. The proximity of this dock to the landing field facilitated tremendously the handling of cargo. Planes which were landed by barges were immediately hauled off clear of the dock area and to the landing field.

“En route to this port, the crew and passengers

● Steel pontoon causeways laid from ship to shore by Seabees provided easy means for speedy unloading of men and materiel. This view was taken from the beach at Licata, Sicily.





● Seabees hold open house for the natives of a South Pacific island, who inspect the new recreation house. Every attempt is made to provide interesting ways to pass leisure time.

were put to work conditioning the planes for immediate use, consequently, a large number of the planes were in the air a very short time after the arrival of the ship.”

**From Lt. Commander H. S. Parker, Jr., U.S.N.R.
Commander Motor Torpedo Boat Division**

“Your attention is invited to the work just accomplished on a USS PT-boat in repairing extensive hull damage which had rendered the boat unfit for service. This work was done by the following personnel of the 5th Naval Construction Battalion:

“Chief Carpenter’s Mate Busam and the men in his charge have been able to make these repairs under circumstances which otherwise might have kept the PT out of service for some time to come and would have tied up other Naval facilities and activities.

“Despite the extent of damage to be repaired and the extremely intricate specialized construction of the boat, the work was accomplished with such speed that time out of service was reduced to a minimum, and with such skill that the hull is now

in a better and apparently stronger condition than before the damage occurred.

“It is respectfully requested that the appreciation of this command be officially conveyed to the Officer-in-Charge, Fifth Naval Construction Battalion, and to the subject personnel for their cooperation, for the excellence of the work done, and for the speed with which it was accomplished.”

**From Rear Admiral W. S. Farber, U.S.N.
Assistant Vice-Chief of Naval Operations**

“During the period December 1 to 8, 1942, the following officers attached to your Command, who were in charge of a detail of 91 men, were employed on a special project under the direction of the Vice-Chief of Naval Operations: Lt. E. Reuter, CEC, USNR, Lt. L. C. Chamberlin, CEC, USNR, Lt. (jg) A. F. Phair, CEC, USNR, Ensign W. A. Slicer, CEC, USNR, Lt. (jg) W. R. Whitman (MC), USNR.

“The success of the operation was due in large measure to the zeal, thoroughness and intelligent devotion to duty with which these officers undertook and completed the assigned task.”



● Constructing a signal tower overlooking an Aleutian bay. Within the partially completed tower a signalman is using a blinker search light.

● Fresh meat—tons of it—are being unloaded at this Seabee base. There's a tradition throughout the South Seas that Seabees always have the best mess.



From Commanding Officer, USS West Virginia

“During the latter part of October 1942 the Commanding Officer, 16th Construction Battalion (Commander Leonard Miscall), was requested to assist the ship’s force of this vessel in the work of rehabilitation. This assistance was immediately given and was continued until the present time, which marked the completion of the work.

“The nature of the work performed was as follows:

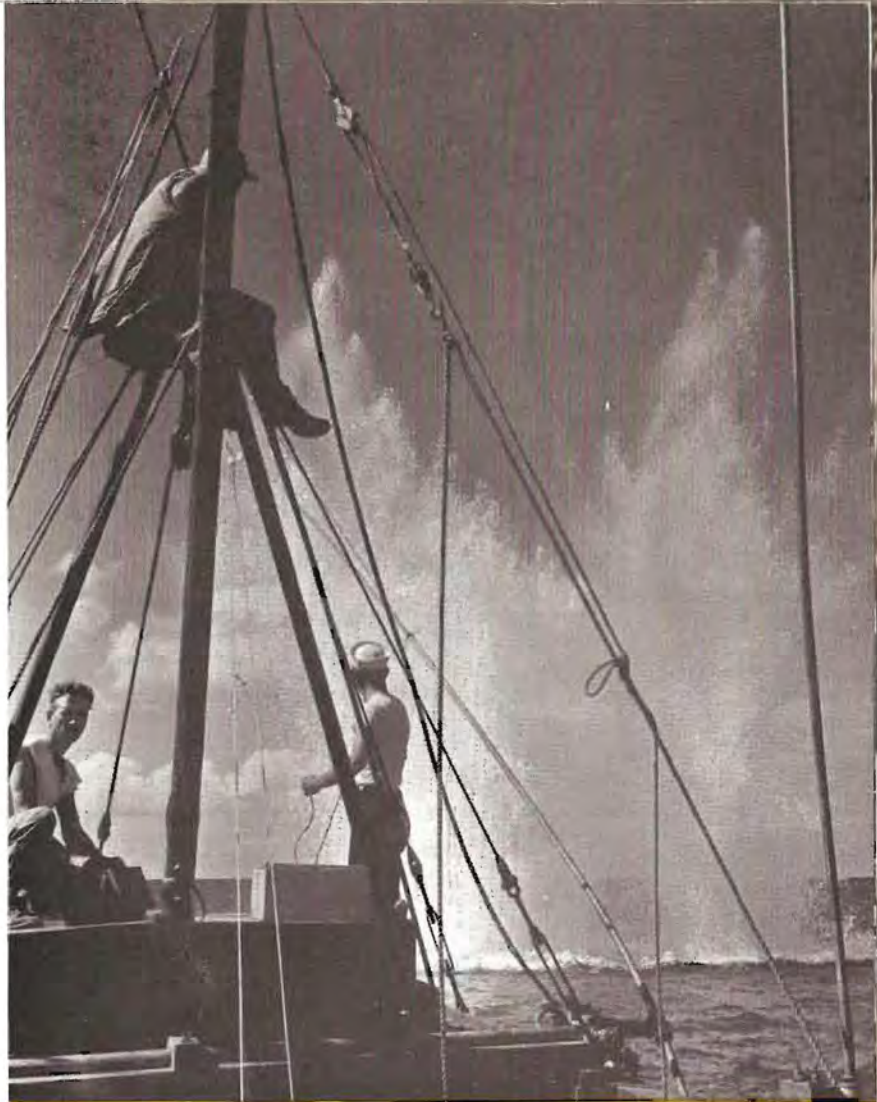
- (a) Approximately 70 per cent of the work necessary to guarantee watertightness of compartments.
- (b) Approximately 45 per cent of the work necessary for ship’s lighting, including development of a unique device for manufacture of straps for holding electric cable.
- (c) Miscellaneous piping for steam and water. The services of refractory bricklayers, to assist in reconditioning the boilers, were also furnished.
- (d) Assistance in riveting and rigging.
- (e) Manufacture of sheet metal articles for ships the value of which is incalculable.

(f) Assistance in chipping paint and cleaning of compartments which resulted in practically the whole ship's being cleaned.

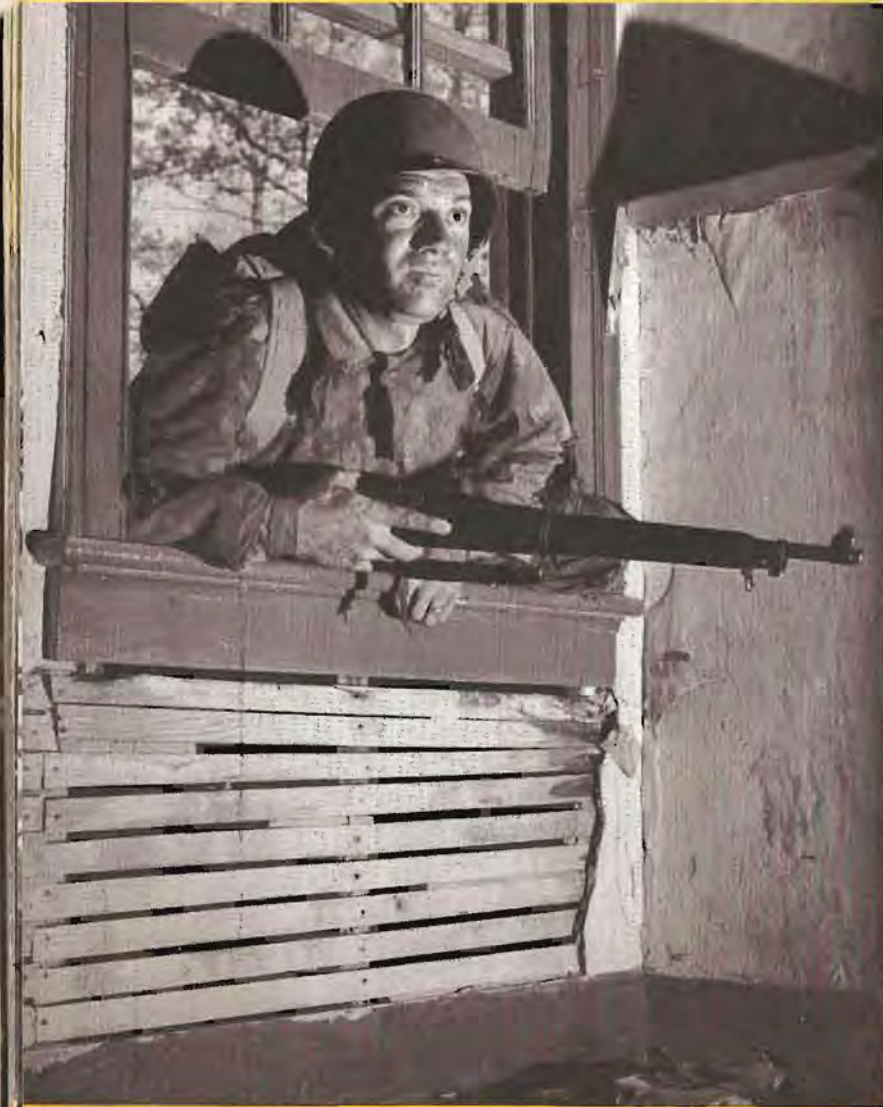
(g) In addition to the above any equipment needed was immediately loaned to the ship.

“Approximately 115,000 man hours were contributed by the 16th Battalion. The value of the work performed and the service to the nation cannot be reduced to any tangible figure.

“Commander Miscall is deserving of especial commendation and it is requested that this letter be made a part of his record.”



● Dangerous undersea coral "niggerheads" are blasted out of the way as a preliminary to the building of a seaplane apron and ramp. This is a job for Seabee powdermen.



● An abandoned and battle-scarred shack on the Sicilian beach may conceal mines and booby traps. The Seabee demolitioner takes no chances on going in the door.

OTHER COMMENDATIONS

From the Hon. Melvin J. Maas
Representative in Congress, 4th District, Minnesota
To Rear Admiral Ben Moreell, C.E.C., U.S.N.

"If you had never done anything else as Chief of the Bureau—and I assure you we all know you have done hundreds of things—but organize the Seabees, you would have more than justified your appointment as Chief of the Bureau.

"I have heard many officers in the Pacific during the past summer say that the greatest contribution to the Navy since the development of steam and the airplane was the invention and organization of Construction Battalions. I can assure you that you really anticipated one of the great needs and found a way to fill that need.

"I just don't know how we could have carried on the job we did in the Pacific without the Seabees! Many times on Guadalcanal the Seabees would be working on Henderson Field and other public works in the Marine-held area when Jap attacks were made. The Seabees would drop their tools, pick up their rifles, and fight side by side with the Marines, and, I may say, *like Marines*, which is the highest compliment I can pay; and when the attack was over, the Seabees would put down their guns and again pick up their tools and, in a matter of fact manner, go back to work. Their training and their spirit were superb.

"The Seabees have the unqualified admiration of the Marines.

"Again, Ben, I congratulate you, your Bureau, and all those who have had anything to do with the inception of the idea and organization and training of the Seabees!"

From Charles F. Palmer, Special Assistant to the President, to Rear Admiral Ben Moreell, C.E.C., U.S.N.

"No one knows better than you what a grand job your Seabees are doing, which the following story confirms.

"Commander Don Knowlton (M.C.) U.S.N.R., on duty with the Marines, came back from Guadalcanal last week and told me: 'about many experiences I had during the nightmare of Guadalcanal I am pretty hazy, but of one thing I am sure: the Seabees are the workingest, fightingest bunch of men I ever saw. Forty, fifty and even sixty years old, they work all day, then take up machine guns, rifles or any other kind of weapon which may be handy and fight all night. What we would have done without them, I don't know!'

"As their Daddy, because you certainly fathered them and brought them into being, you have every right to be proud."

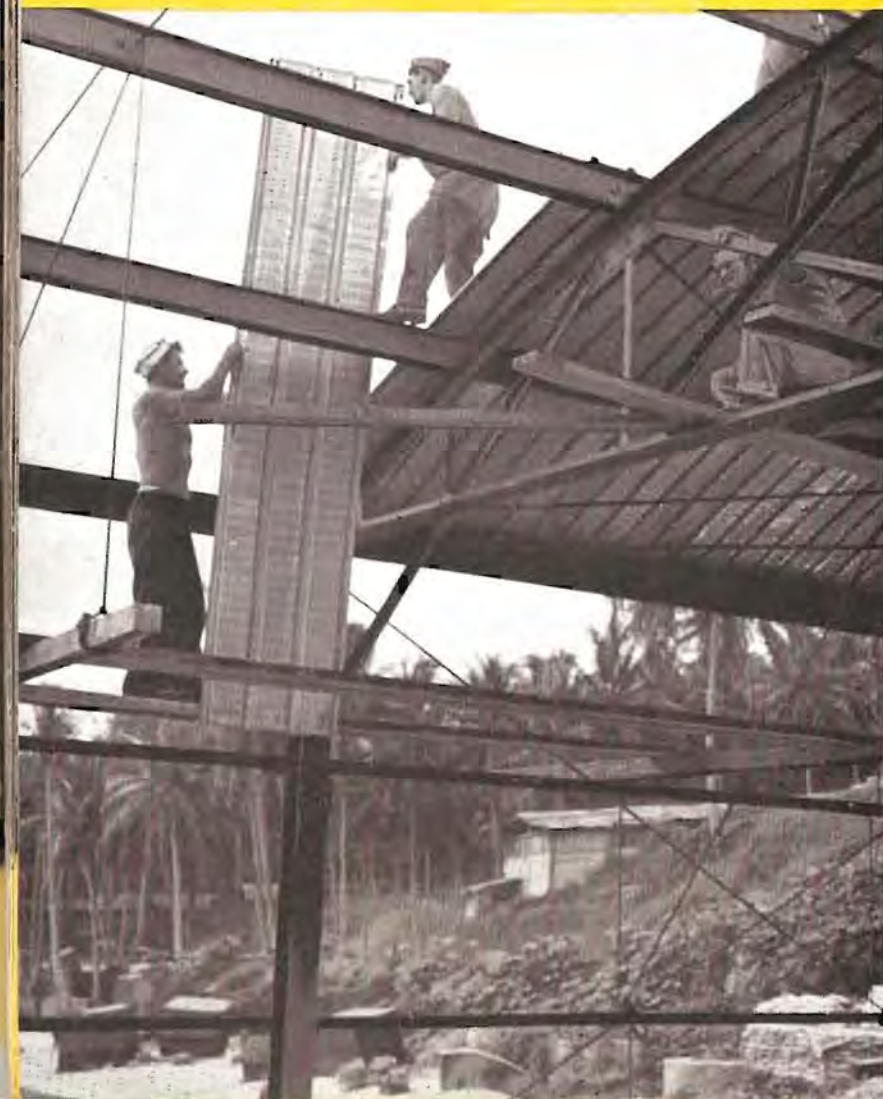
**From Officer-in-Charge of Administration
Headquarters, New Zealand Expeditionary Force
in the Pacific**

"I have to thank you for the interest taken by you in the training of twelve of our officers recently in the supervision and control of unloading ships. The



● Alaskan Sector. Seabees place a 100-foot foundation beam on piers for the construction of a warehouse. Barring inclement weather this warehouse should be completed inside of a week.

● In the South Pacific a more permanent type of warehouse is being built by Seabee ironworkers. This is primarily an assembly job as all parts are shipped from the States.



facilities afforded by you and the time spent in theoretical and practical instruction is also greatly appreciated.

“The need for having officers so trained in the Force is very great and I feel sure that the experience gained by the officers trained under you will prove invaluable in future operations.”

**From A. Holmes Johnson, M. D., Medical Director
Griffin Memorial Hospital**

“On behalf of the patients and staff of the Griffin Memorial Hospital, as well as the community, I want to thank you for the work of the C-B's who helped us out during our recent emergency when the furnace failed to function. As we had some quite seriously ill patients at the time, the continued work of these men until repairs were completed may have had much to do with the satisfactory progress of these patients.

“There being no one in our city who has either the knowledge or materials for this work makes us realize—even in these affairs—the indispensability of the United States Navy.

“I would like especially to mention the following men who worked night and day to repair the flues: under S. R. Martin, CMM, ...th, ...th Regiment Machine Shop: L. Stahura, S1c, ...st; O. M. Barnes, F1c, ...th; A. Oliver, SF3c, ...th; and the following who rewired and repaired the electrical end of the job, under Paul Kern, CEM, ...th; Lester Berman, EM1c; Fred Pratt, EM1c.

"No better service could have been given nor more competent and thorough work done by anyone and, believe me, it is thoroughly appreciated, by all.

"Thank you again."

From F. R. Main, Commander, Royal Navy

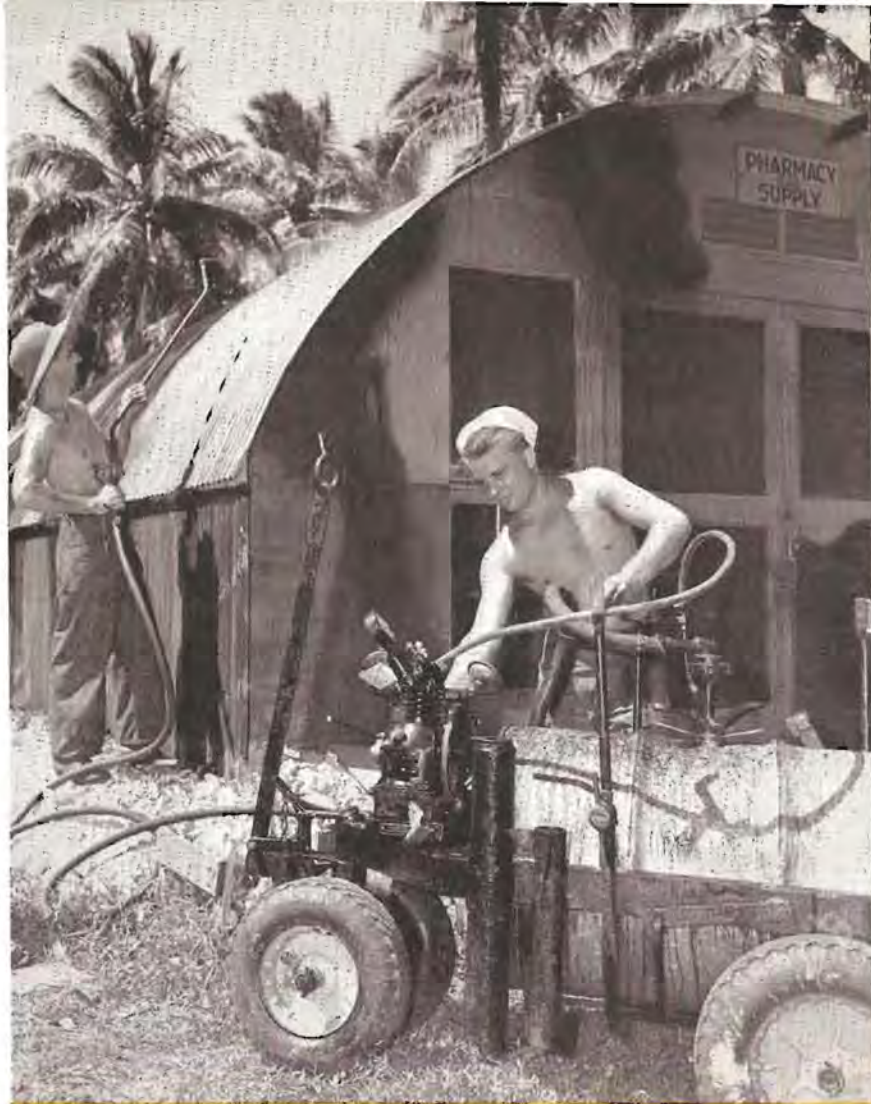
"I should like to thank you for the very great assistance which you gave to our two vessels unloading on 24th April. The work your chaps (29th Construction Battalion) did was magnificent and it was largely due to them that the unloading did not go until late in the evening.

"Please excuse me for not writing before but I have been very busy since returning from Ireland."

**From Colonel E. A. Austin
Transportation Service**

"It is because of your help and the Fifth Construction Battalion that the SS . . . was put into immediate urgent service without loss of time. If the Construction Battalion had not provided the additional berthing and toilet facilities, it would not have been possible to dispatch this vessel on important necessary missions.

"I wanted to thank you personally, not only for the gesture of co-operation in having this work done for us when other means were not available, but also for the excellence of the work performed in a short space of time."



● After a Quonset Hut has been assembled, Seabee painters, using paint sprayers, camouflage it to blend in with the surrounding foliage, making it invisible from the air.

THE FUTURE OF THE SEABEES

As each new Seabee unit embarks for their particular Island "X" they have for their inspiration a constantly growing list of heroic achievements of battalions who have gone before them.

As each new piece of territory is freed from Axis domination, new bases must be built, old bases repaired and maintained. It is a safe prophecy that the Seabees will continue to play their role of fighting builders whenever and wherever these bases are to be built.

When the final chapter of this war has been written, Seabees everywhere will have a justifiable pride in their accomplishments all over the world.



● Seabees snake logs to the sawmill with the aid of a caterpillar equipped with logging arch. Rarest teakwood, rosewood, mahogany and coconut palms, found in great abundance throughout the

Solomons, are used to make the most commonplace of structures and furniture. Woods like these, if purchased in the States, would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars.

