

SEABEE NEWS SERVICE

FOR SEABEE
EDITORS...

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WASHINGTON REPORTS

OVERSEAS SEABEES
passed the 200,000 mark this week to set a new record for both number and percentage of Construction Battalion men in overseas billets. The percentage rose to 81.25.

Stateside based Seabees numbered approximately 46,000 as compared to 200,061 outside the country. However, of those in the states, nearly 21,000 are in units already formed and assigned to overseas projects. Station forces in the U. S. comprise only three per cent of the entire complement.

COST OF WORLD WAR II has gone past the trillion-dollar mark, the staff of American University, Washington, D.C., has calculated. Expenditures for war, since 1934, the university declared, amount to more than \$500 for every man, woman and child in the world.

The total, more than \$1,030,000,000,000, does not indicate the destruction and damage of public and private property. It likewise does not include Chinese expenditures in the fourteen-year war with Japan, which the university has been unable to determine.

PEACETIME MILITARY CONSCRIPTION is supported by majority of Americans, latest Fortune poll indicates. Vote was 69.2 per cent in favor, 23 per cent against and 7.4 per cent undecided. Analysis of mens' and womens' votes showed only a very small variation.

MORE SHIPS RELEASED FOR PACIFIC by end of the convoy system in the Atlantic, War Shipping Administration has announced.

Elimination of convoys means ships in Atlantic can travel faster, use shorter routes. Before V-E Day, shipping lost en route to Europe was replaced by new vessels. New construction now will be added to the total fleet.

COMBAT ZONES

JAP AIRBORNE LANDING ON OKINAWA AIRSTRIP
aimed at knocking out important Yontan Field, last week was repelled by American fliers and service troops. A Marine sergeant and a Seabee carpenter's mate emerged as individual heroes of the two-hour battle.

The Seabee identified in early news reports only as a petty officer second class, rescued five men after an enemy plane crashed into a searchlight control tower, burying its occupants. Alone, he clawed and dug the dirt for three hours until all five had been uncovered. When the three survivors had been taken to a hospital he collapsed.

The Japanese launched their assault, officially called "the most audacious attack on our aviation installations of this campaign," an hour and a half before midnight. Of five to twelve twin-engined airplanes which attempted to land, only one got through. Its grenade-carrying occupants were loose two hours before they were wiped out.

Battlefront reporter W.H. Lawrence wired to the "New York Times": "With no regular troops nearby to repel the invaders, mechanics and fliers grabbed rifles and carbines to combat the Japanese, who were armed with light machine guns as well as rifles and grenades.

The Japs made a weird picture as they launched their miniature invasion, running about the airfield area in the light of a full moon, chucking grenades at planes and engaging in small-arms duels with the American defenders.

A Marine technical sergeant, who killed two Japanese, the first he had seen close-up in three years' service, vouched that the invaders got a hot reception. "Marines and Seabees were firing all over the field at everything that moved," he said.

AHEAD OF OKINAWA'S FRONT LINES went a five-man surveying team to lay out the site for a new air field. CCM Doyle L. Crowell and his men worked in "no man's land" for two days -- sometimes more than a half-mile in front of the fighting. The Marines didn't catch up with the surveyors until the third day.

With Crowell on his front-line jaunt were Edward M. Dvorak, S1c; Roy C. Alletag, SK3c; Grady M. Goodnight, CM3c; and Homer S. Freeman, CM1c.

ENEMY PLANES BOMBED and strafed one end of an airfield while the 58th Battalion was repairing the other end. Damage control parties were hitting the deck only when planes were immediately overhead. Men scrambled out of foxholes and shelters after the raiders passed to keep runways serviceable almost without a break. The unit's bomb disposal and mine detection group not only cleared the field but combed the campsite and cargo areas as well.

LAND MINE BLAST on Iwo killed seven Seabees riding in a truck. Two others died of wounds from the same explosion and a third man is missing. Still another, a tractor operator, died of injuries when his dozer set off a mine.

TERSE AND TO THE POINT are the following entries taken from the log of the perimeter guard of the 62nd Battalion:

Sighted 2 enemy; killed 1.
Sighted 2 enemy; killed 1. 1 POW taken.
Sighted 28 enemy; killed 2.
Sighted 12 enemy; killed 12.
Sighted 10 enemy; killed 4; 2 POWs taken.

SERVICE BASES

A NEW CRANE for the 84th Battalion was the Seabees' reward for fast salvage work.

An Army unit had lost a new Buckeye crane (crawler and cab) in 67 feet of water. The 84th learned the equipment had been declared surveyed and would become the property of the salvaging unit. In just one day the crane was raised -- and the property of the Seabees.

They constructed a jury rig of an A frame plus a combination of the single steel blocks available to form a 10-part line. Motive power was furnished by the dragline lead of an Insley crane mounted at the forward end of the barge. The Insley was placed so that the load line could be used in placing tackle and rigging gear, then, later, in retrieving it as the crane was raised.

The cab, broken loose from the crane was located by Seabee divers. It was raised by progressive lifts to the deck of the pontoon barge. The crane mechanism and crawler were located next and the lifting line attached to the gantry bar. Progressive lifts were made of approximately ten feet each, the barge being moved inshore with each lift until the crawler treads began to strike bottom. The load would then be tied off and rigged for another lift.

When the crane was approximately ten feet below the water surface, the barge proceeded to the other side of the harbor where a naval repair ship had offered to make the final lift and set the crane onto the barge. The load was transferred from the jury rig to the ship's crane and the retrieved crane taken to shore on the deck of the pontoon barge.

The battalion's heavy equipment department took over the following day. Within a week the crane was in operation.

WAR MOVES ON but still takes its toll in the rear areas. The 118th Battalion medical department, under Lt. S. J. Hansen, MC, USNR, worked all night saving nine of 19 natives wounded when a "dud" Jap mortar shell exploded. The Seabees raced 17 miles to the native town to answer the emergency call.

GUN-POINT LUMBERING is the 118th Battalion's speciality. After taking over an island sawmill, the battalion turned out 145,143 board feet of lumber in one month--but had to fight Japs to do it. Armed Jap stragglers necessitated maintenance of a large security detail and armed guards with each logging crew. One logging crew had to withdraw from a timber stand when a superior force of enemy troops appeared. The crew returned after the security detail handled the matter.

AROUND THE WORLD 71 TIMES is the record the 135th Battalion claims for vehicles operated by its transportation department. They've been run 1,778,251 miles. And the department's safety record is still intact.

INNER-TUBE ICE BAG is recent product of 47th Battalion. Here's how to do it: (1) Cut a small hole in a good piece of inner-tube, approximately nine inches long. (2) Insert a screw cap made of light metal, preferably from a surveyed kerosene can. (3) Secure by vulcanizing or by use of rubber cement. (4) Seal both ends with patches or vulcanize them.

MIX CONCRETE IN TRANSIT rather than haul sand, stone, cement, water and mixer to every spot where a small quantity of concrete is to be poured, CBMU 524 suggests.

The outfit put the idea into practice by mounting a two-bag mixer on a salvaged truck body. The mixer is loaded at a central plant and the concrete mixed en route. Two men assigned to the mixer truck have successfully taken care of all small construction and maintenance work on the base, saving time, labor, material and truck mileage, the unit reports.

AIR PRESSURE WATER-SYSTEM devised by 94th Battalion to supply 250-man galley with water under suitable pressure employs two salvaged T-6 pontoon units and one 10 CFM air compressor, eliminating necessity for tower and pumps. Mounted on skids, the entire setup may be quickly transported and put into operation by making two simple connections. One pontoon is used as a water reservoir, the other as a compressed air receiver. Air pressure from the receiver is also used to raise water from truck-mounted pontoon unit into the reservoir. After each filling the pressure in the tank is built up to 20 pounds per square inch, providing steady flow of water through both hot and cold faucets.

AN OLD-FASHIONED FISH FRY helped break the monotony for CBMU 521 after a dozen of the mates hauled in the makings. The Seabees came up with 111 "skip jacks," reported to be similar to tuna, and a few red snappers. Total catch weighed almost 600 pounds.

Even the KPs got into the spirit of things. They produced native limes for those who ordinarily like lemon with fish.

MAKE YOUR OWN SOAP, says the 38th Batt. which divulges this technique:

Salvage fat from the galley (the 38th averages about 30 gallons a week.) Add water and 30 lbs. of lye. Result is approximately 214 gallons -- 1700 lbs. -- of solidified soap good enough for laundry use.

The 38th figures its own product is the equivalent of 300 lbs. of the commercial product and that it is superior for use in hard water, in rinsing qualities, in results obtained, and in absence of soap speck and odor.

FROM THE HOLD

BIGGEST ASSAULT JOB for Seabee Specials has been the Okinawa operation, with one augmented special battalion of 1,600 men reported making cargo handling history.

The assignment began to shape up in February when the outfit, overseas 20 months, was augmented by additional personnel, split into two divisions of nine 80-men teams each and sent to two staging areas, where the teams were assigned to assault ships. The Seabees loaded the vessels which were to carry them to the target, had practice runs, then set out for Okinawa.

Unloading continued around-the-clock on L-day, although Jap raiders numbered persistently at American shipping. The battalion suffered 14 casualties during the early days of the assault.

On L-plus-1, six cranes, five bulldozers and a number of flood-light trailers were on the beaches. When the discharge of assault cargo was completed, the specialists turned to evacuation and construction work, even helped on the installation of anti-aircraft gun emplacements, until the second echelon of supply ships arrived a week later.

Camp life was rough; the bivouac area, perilously near the beach, more than once was a bombing target, twice was heavily strafed.

Unloading records, nevertheless, were good. In one 24-hour period, the Seabees discharged several thousand tons of ammunition from one vessel although air raids cut their actual working time by more than 16 per cent.

The captain of an APA, a veteran of six invasions and many garrison supplying trips, lauded the work of the specialists as the finest he had ever witnessed.

OKINAWA ALREADY A GREAT PORT, figures released from that base indicate. Brigadier General Blakelock declared the island's supply officers soon will be handling as much tonnage a month as those at the port of Honolulu.

THE SPECIAL BATTALIONS are still doing a top-notch job. Here's an excerpt from one of the recent commendations, this one from the master of a transport to the OinC of the 5th Special: "...work was accomplished with speed and dispatch, damage to cargo and ship was held at an absolute minimum. The quality of workmanship I observed here is on a par with any I have seen in our best ports at home."

PLANE RECOGNITION LESSON for an unidentified Navy Seabee was given on Okinawa.

When the air raid siren started to wail his first night ashore, he remained calm, cool, and curious. While his mates scrambled for their foxholes, he nonchalantly scanned the skies.

Suddenly two Jap Bettys roared in.

"Is them Hell Cats or Jap Cats?" he asked.

"Them is Jap Cats," replied his mate, cowering in his shelter.

"MOVE OVER!" cried the enlightened stevedore as he dived to safety.

SEABEE OF THE WEEK

EARL R. LEYTHAM, PTR. 2C, was scheduled to be left in the rear echelon when his battalion lifted anchor for Okinawa. Not wanting to miss the show, he swung a bargain which enabled him to go along. Specifically, he volunteered to take a bulldozer ashore on L-Day.

On the beach they asked for directions. "Head that way," an MP motioned vaguely inland, "and keep asking."

The assault waves hit the beaches on schedule. Less than four hours later a call came for a 'dozer to excavate a gas dump reticent "somewhere up at the front." Leytham, his machine and two mates, Egbert H. Vaughan, S1c, and Byron R. Hunt, MM1c, were sent ashore.

Leytham and his companions went "that way," the former driving his R-4, Vaughan and Hunt afoot, their carbines on the ready. They continued to ask MPs for directions. The MPs continued to wave them inland.

Finally the Seabees pulled to a stop. There weren't any more MPs, they noticed. In fact, there weren't any more Marines or anything else.

They decided there was nothing to do but go on. Just as they started, a Marine scout patrol overtook them. "What in hell are you doing up here with that thing?" they queried.

"We're looking for the place we're supposed to dig a gas dump. It's somewhere near the front."

"Front, hell!" yelled the sergeant. "You just passed the last advance scouting parties about 200 yards back!"

It was dark before the cat skimmers made their way back to the beach. But Leytham was satisfied. He had been "in on the show."

THE FLEET NAVY

NEARLY 20,000 NEW SHIPS will join the Navy this year, among which will be 271 new front-line fighting ships, it was stated in Washington this week. The additions to the fleet will give the United States the staggering total of 127,268 vessels, more than 1,400 of which are combat craft. Of these, 100,000 have joined the fleet since Pearl Harbor, including 1,150 combat craft.

Ships now under construction include two battleships, fifteen aircraft carriers, thirty carrier escorts, forty-seven cruisers, 104 destroyers, six destroyer escorts, twenty-two fast transports and forty-five submarines.

These vessels will be added to a Navy which already has twenty-three battleships, sixty-seven cruisers, twenty-six carriers, sixty-five escort carriers, 386 destroyers and 368 destroyer escorts.

SUBS HAVE SUNK 1,119 JAP SHIPS since the war started, Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz declared. He said American underseas craft have accounted for 4,500,000 tons of enemy shipping in the Pacific, 2,000,000 of it in the last year.

"We have all out severed the lines which connected the Japanese Empire with its stolen possessions," he declared. "Today no enemy warship and no enemy merchant ship can venture upon the waters of the Pacific without the well-grounded fear in the hearts of its men that they will never return to the home base."

DAMAGE TO USS FRANKLIN, the "unsinkable carrier", was estimated at \$45,000,000 by Comdr. Robert N. Downes, its damage control officer. He said the vessel is still "\$30,000,000 worth of good ship," which will be reconditioned within a year for \$20,000,000 less than a replacement would cost. The Franklin will be rebuilt from her third deck up, Comdr. Downes indicated.

"WELL DONE"

LARGEST NUMBER OF BRONZE STAR MEDALS ever awarded a single Seabee unit was presented recently to officers and men of the 121st Battalion. Twenty-nine awards were made, one posthumously.

In congratulating the Seabees, Brig. Gen. V. H. Kinble, USA, lauded the 121st for a "magnificent contribution...to the war in the Pacific" and told the men they had worked on one of the "largest single developments of the present war."

The medals, for outstanding performance during a combat operation, went to the following - all members of the USNR:

Lt. Comdr. Thomas H. Flinn, CEC; Lt. John W. Partridge, CEC; Lt. Lawrence M. Rist, CEC; Lt. (jg) Warren B. Woodrich, CEC; Lt. (jg) Charles C. Fiske, CEC; Lt. (jg) Norman M. Jackson, CEC; Carpenter Willard S. Hammerman, CEC; John L. Block, CM3c; Allen W. Brunk, CCM; Floyd H. Faust, CSF; Thomas V. Fitzgerald, CM3c; Joseph H. Frasier, SF2c; Donald F. Gans, CCM; George R. Hager, CCM; Clarence G. King, CCM;

Joseph A. Korn, EM2c; Harold G. Nilsen, CCM; Thomas W. Molan, CM3c; Wenny W. Pfaff, CSF; Paul L. Phillipson, MM3c; Stephen F. Pillsbury, GM1c; Kenneth F. Taylor, GM1c; Claude A. Thornburg, SF2c; Vernon C. Vaughn, EM2c; William F. Wadsworth, CCM; Theodore J. Wardzala, Flc; Frank R. Watson, SF3c; Marcello G. Montesi, Flc; and Ralph Deyoung, MM2c.

The award to Montesi was made posthumously. He died last June of wounds received in action.

Deyoung's medal was forwarded to a Naval hospital where he is a patient.

"COOLNESS AND COURAGE" displayed during action with an Army combat patrol won an Army commendation for Robert A. Droeger, CM1c. The Seabee participated in 12 night ambushes, company sweeps and combat patrols against Japanese forces.

DOGGED DETERMINATION marked the work of the 302nd Battalion during a recent combat operation, said the commander of a task unit to which the Seabees were assigned.

"The Seabee unit worked ceaselessly and untiringly each day," he said, "many times in heavy surf, in order to complete their assigned mission."

"Their efforts, initiative and dogged determination are deserving of highest praise and indicative of the fine traditions of the Seabees, which are so well known throughout the service."

COMDR. RUDOLPH Y. TAGGART, CEC, USNR, has been commended by Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, USN, for outstanding professional service as OinC of a Seabee Regiment during construction of facilities in the 14th Naval District from 17 May 1943 to 28 November 1944.

LONG MONTHS OVERSEAS haven't crimped the 47th efficiency, judging from a list of commendations for routine jobs done well. The commendations range from clearing and segregating hospital equipment and making dance music to welding, shore patrol duty and electrical and shipboard installation. Some of the good words:

"....a credit to the ability of the personnel"...."Subject band has brought happiness to many men"...."the efforts and spirit displayed by these men is to be commended"...."excellent work they accomplished while serving at this unit"...."shore patrol duty in a foreign port requires intelligence, patience and tact.... they performed services beyond those required...."

FIRE FIGHTING was a volunteer job for three 87th Battalion men who won commendations from the ship's master for aiding the crew in extinguishing a stubborn carbide fire in the cargo vessel's hold.

The three, Theodore Marienthal, Sr., CBM, Lloyd C. Engquist, CM1c and Glen E. Ludwig, CM3c, "ran grave personal danger because of the type of fire, splashing of acid and fumes," the commendation declared.

FREAK ACCIDENT which caused a load of lumber being swung to strike the winch controls and knock the winchman from the control

bridge into the winches resulted in only the single injury when two men crawled down through the deck load and stopped the winches. The Seabees, Matt White, S1c, and D. P. Woodward, SK1c, both of the 14th Special, were commended by their C1nC.

WHAT THEY SAY

"CONSTRUCTION HAS BEEN THE GOLDEN KEY to our steam-roller advance," said Major Frank P. Crum, AAF, a veteran of three years' service in the Pacific.

"The one thing that has always symbolized American civilization is winning the war," he continued, "not the power to destroy, but the power to construct. . . . And this power to construct, that works under front line fire, that works under the most primitive conditions that combines speed and quality on an utterly unprecedented scale is symbolized in one stark human figure - our Seabees.

"The Seabees can do anything, anywhere, and anytime, with any kind of materials. And if they have no material, or don't get it in time, they are the most ingenious improvisers I have ever seen -- eminently American. They always come up with the solution: correct, sturdy and as demanded.

"Nearly every effort we have made out here in the Pacific has depended on the Seabees. . . . When we compare what we know of Japanese construction equipment and troops with our own, we begin to realize where our true superiority lies."

AIRFIELD CONSTRUCTION EXPERIENCE will stand Seabees in good stead when the Civil Aeronautics Administration undertakes its National Airport Plan.

In an article in Contractors and Engineers Monthly, CAA administrator T. P. Wright states: "Our airport plan proposes the construction of 3,050 new airports and improvement of 1,625 existing fields, at an estimated cost of \$1,021,567,945 for clearing, grading, paving, lighting and radio facilities, plus about \$230,000,000 for land and buildings other than hangars.

"For the first time, the CAA has suggested that a system of Federal aid be inaugurated matching with Federal money that invested by the states and communities. Thus, we would invest a total of \$1,250,000,000 in airports in a period of ten years, half of it borne by the Federal government, and half by local sponsors."

SUICIDE PLANES are Japan's only hope, Nip Lieut. Gen. Reikichi Tada believes. "I honestly believe," he said, "that there is no other way to overcome the present war crisis."

ENTIRE MILITARY MIGHT of the United States will be employed to help speed final victory over Japan, Acting Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson told newsmen during the War Department's weekly war review press conference.

"We are taking the steps to bring the full weight of American military power to bear upon Japan," Mr. Patterson declared. "Men, planes, weapons and equipment will be massed to such degree of superiority that, in the end, victory will come more quickly and with less cost."

SOUTH PACIFIC NATIVES WILL FORGET AMERICANS after they leave, a veteran missionary predicted in an interview with the editors of "Globe News," Seabee newspaper published in that area.

The missionary said the natives' lack of curiosity, together with the suddenness of the American arrival, would result in short-lived local remembrance for the servicemen. He expected the natives to revert to their more-or-less aboriginal status. In support of his contention, he described natives who had formerly worked for the Army or Navy and later returned to their native villages. They seemed to remember the Americans only dimly, he testified.

FYI

JAP WOMEN SOLDIERS and whether or not they actually existed has long been a subject of conjecture

among American fighting men in the Pacific. The question finally has been answered - in the affirmative. Comdr. Robert N. Downes, USN, revealed the USS Franklin, aircraft carrier, had taken one into custody about a year ago. She was the first of her kind captured, he said.

She was described as being 29 years old and carrying some buttons, thread and a wrist watch, some Japanese aspirin and "cheap Japanese perfume." Marines captured her while she was sniping from a coconut tree on Eniwetok.

Aboard the carrier she was treated as an ordinary prisoner, except that she was detained alone in the contagious ward of the carrier's sick bay. She was transferred to a prisoner-of-war camp in Hawaii.

INGENIOUS RAMP built by the Seabees has been disclosed as the means of getting invasion supplies ashore despite 15-foot high cliffs on Tinian.

Called the "Doodlebug," the ramp was designed by Commodore (then Captain) Paul J. Halloran, CEC, USN. It was built on a converted LVT. Then a series of wooden beams were laid out in railroad tie fashion at intervals of six inches along the I-beams.

Holes were drilled through the outer ends of these beams to permit the passage of steel cables through pipe spacers, the result being an articulated mat of great strength. Ends of the cables were, at one end of the ramps, bolted to the upper two ends of the I-beams -- the only point where the steel beams and the wood ladder were held rigid. Inverted channel beam sections were welded to the under edges of the upper ends of the I-beams to form a hook into the rough coral cliffs which the ramp would recline against. The lower ends of the I-beams were cut at a sharp angle with inverted channel ground grippers.

The rigid end of the ladder-like ramp was cantilevered over the bow of the LVT, and the aft end shoes were supported in special brackets on the sides of the amphibious tank. Bundles of Marston mat on the stern provided counterbalance.

A Seabee reconnaissance party of 30 men under charge of Lt. C. F. Amos, Lt. R. N.

Barton, Lt. (jg) John P. Smith and Corp. Willard S. Hammeron operated the "Doodlebugs." In the wake of the first Marine invaders, the "Doodlebugs" crawled up to the cliffs. Ramp hooks caught firmly on the cliff-tops. Then the amphibs reversed, working out from under the ramps until the sharply pointed lower ends of the ladder-like structure dropped into the water. The articulated platforms slipped over the bow and fell into place on top of their side-supporting I-beams -- 4.0!

BOYS, 15, CALLED TO RED ARMY as Soviet Union embarks upon its biggest peacetime military training schedule. A spokesman said the nation-wide muster of 15- and 16-year-olds will be a 100 per cent call.

FIERY LAVA is spread by new M-74 fire bombs being dropped on Japan. The lava, synthetic but worse than the original, flies for 25 yards when a bomb bursts, landing under the eaves and walls of the target, and clinging tenaciously to the surface as it burns. It is almost impossible to put out the fire with standard fire-fighting tactics.

NO ENLISTED MEN MESS COOKS was the good news handed down to mates of the 24th Special recently. The unit has hired native labor for details and odd jobs. Men freed from maintenance assignments made up two new stevedore gangs.

JAPS SHAKE UP NAVAL COMMAND, with Vice Admiral Jisaburo Ozawa, deputy chief of the Naval General Staff named new commander in chief.

No longer talking of offensive operations, Jap propaganda sources confined themselves to expressions of confidence that the new high command would "plan and execute resourceful operations in carrying out a decisive battle for the defense of the Japanese mainland."

TAKING A TIP FROM NATIVE FISHERMEN might save homefront sportsmen a lot of money they would otherwise spend on lures and tackle, according to Seabee Joseph F. Salek, recently returned from a tour of duty on New Georgia.

"A New Georgia native takes the hollow stem of some plant and puts one end of it in to a small fire," said Salek. "The heat turns the sap to steam, which is emitted from the hollow tube at just the convenient pressure. A strip of tortoise shell is held in this small jet of steam until it is pliable, then it's fashioned into a fish hook. Then the native devises a realistic looking minnow from a piece of mother-of-pearl, attaches it to the hook, and there you have it --- a very good permanent lure."

LONG ROAD BACK was taken by Miguel C. Castro, Mlc, who joined Seabees in November 1942 as the best bet to get back to his native Chamorro village on Guam which he left 17 years before. But luck ran against him for 13 months when his outfit did a tour of duty in the Aleutians. Rehabilitation leave brought him back to the states before embarking on a luckier second tour. Now in the Marianas, Seabee Castro is close enough to Guam to get "home" every once in a while. During his absence, his mother died, but relatives and friends are still there to greet him.

FORTY-SIX STATES are represented by officers and men of the 67th Battalion, and the unit also has personnel from the District of Columbia, Hawaii and Canada. New York leads with 92, Pennsylvania's 83 takes second and Illinois is third with 72. (Only states missing are Nevada and Delaware.)

STATESIDE

JAP BALLOON ATTACKS against U. S. mainland have been launched in enemy's home islands and are controlled by an automatic ballast-dropping device, states Lyle F. Watts, chief of the U.S. Forest Service, which has been assisting the Army in preventing damage from the balloons.

It was disclosed that some of the bomb-carrying balloons had landed recently on the West Coast but had not caused property damage.

They are launched from Japanese war plants, Watts said, where officials "make a lot of speeches, stir up workers to a frenzy and then launch the balloons from the plant for their trip to the United States."

The missiles travel up to 125 miles an hour; take 80 to 120 hours to reach this country. Their treat, apparently, is minor. "We are less worried about the Japanese balloon attack," the forestry chief said, "than we are with matches and smoke in the hands of good Americans hiking and camping in the woods."

NEW CARS THIS YEAR will be 1942 models with a face-lifting operation, declared Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., of General Motors Corp. Light metals will be used more extensively in the new cars, he said, particularly in doors. General Motors will not produce a brand new post-war car for about two years, he added.

FORMER FRENCH LINER NORMANDIE, now the U. S. S. Lafayette, probably won't see war service in the Pacific, SecNav Forrestal told reporters. The vessel, which burned and capsized in New York Harbor while being converted to a transport is too large to traverse the Panama Canal and, in addition, he said manpower and material are lacking to prepare the ship for war service.

IT'S NEWS AT HOME ... that the Illinois State Highway commission has outlined a plan to provide CHICAGO with 60 plus miles of expressways into the loop from North, South and West... that Sgt. George Murphy returned home to SEATTLE with 15 cents in his pocket. He led squad which blasted open Hitler's fabulous gold reserve in a salt mine... that a DETROIT second lieutenant was divorced by his wife for refusing to carry groceries for her. Said it did not become his rank... that Joseph Charles Manning of SALT LAKE CITY would like to fight Japan because he figures it would be a snap after what he endured in the Civil War. He's 100... that a teen-aged boy in BROOKLYN locked an Independent Subway conductor off his own train and took an eight mile drive through Brooklyn to Long Island City...

AND IT'S ALSO NEWS... that a sailor from ENID, OKLA. tossed an 11-year-old boy into New York's Central Park Lake. Told police he only had 48-hour pass and kid was interrupting his love-making... that 17 year locusts re-

turned to TRENTON, N. J. on schedule May 23..
..T/Sgt Euclid Johnson of PADUCAH, KY. bought \$5,300 of war bonds with back pay he received while in Jap prison camp....that a bolt of lightning in WELLSVILLE, N.Y. knocked the four shoes off a horse without injuring him...that public officials in COLUMBUS, OHIO, are toying with the idea of eating the pigeons that flutter around the capital...that school kids in LONG BEACH, CALIF. studying the weather released observation balloons that scared local citizens and police who mistook them for Jap incendiary balloons....

AND IT'S STILL MORE NEWS......that the ATLANTA, GA., Journal made a study to determine if the term "cracker" connotes something derogatory and found out that sometimes it does. ...that the president of a television company predicts table model sets will be sold as low as \$100 within a year after the war....that a CORINTH, N. Y. man accidentally drowned in the kitchen sink of his home after fainting and thereby clogging the drain....that Lt. Warren R. Lasser of WATERLOO, IA., was the pilot of the Navy Mariner plane which annihilated a 5-ship Jap convoy...that the Census Bureau says U. S. population has increased 7,286,000 over 1940 to a total of 138,955,469 on Jan. 1, 1946that a 17-year-old NEW YORK CITY student reached eighth grade without ever having learned to read.

FOR THE BOOK

had dug up some umpteen tons of earth in an attempt to find a land deed and other valuables buried by the Jap before the American invasion of the island. The Jap, living in the Japanese Relocation Camp under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Civil Affairs, needed the deed to establish his ownership claim to the property now occupied by Seabees. He was sure he could locate the hiding place because of a certain landmark--a breadfruit tree. But the tree was gone--and so was everything else.

Three times he pointed out the spot he was sure was his cache and three times the Seabee dug deep but turned up nothing.

At length he had called a halt. He recovered his dignity and said sadly, "Americans too much move things around!" Then with a courteous bow of his head, and a sad smile, he went away.

MILD CONSTERNATION resulted in the Public Relations office at Camp Parks when a letter was received from the American Legion Post of Livermore, Calif., making preparations for its Memorial Day exercises. The veterans requested a speaker--and a firing squad.

FAMILY MAN is Willis B. Hunsaker, Seabee from Honeyville, Utah, who numbers at least 1,200 living relatives.

Willie's Mormon grandfather had 52 children. Then he adopted seven more. All but six of the 59 lived long enough to marry and have children of their own. Today there are even great-great-grandchildren. All of which makes it exceedingly unlikely the Seabee ever will run out of kinfolk.

TO SAVE A BURNING TRUCK, a Seabee in the Admiralties leaped into the cab and headed the vehicle for a nearby lagoon, relates William D. Sessions, MM3c. As the truck rolled into the water, the waves smothered the flames. The fire was just about out, when the truck suddenly disappeared -- under the water.

In the Seabee's excitement, Sessions explained, he'd forgotten that a dragline had been digging coral in that very spot, leaving a ten-foot-deep pit.

A moment after the truck went down the driver popped to the surface and swam to shore. As he stepped on the beach, he sputtered, "Well, I put the fire out!"

SMUGGLING PETS aboard troop transports is an old game, but sometimes difficulties develop.

A medical officer attached to a Seabee battalion gave a monkey a sleeping powder before he tried to get him aboard. The idea was the monkey would be less likely to chatter as he was being smuggled past the guards. It worked fine except when the monkey woke up he refused to have anything to do with the doctor, much less speak to him.

A few days after the monkey's divorce proceedings, a routine inspection disclosed a cleverly-constructed cage concealing some poultry and chicken feed. An explanation was in order.

"They're fighting cocks," the Seabee hastily explained, adding that they had become imbued with the national sport of the Philippines and brought along their own fighting cocks.

The captain accepted that, with tongue in cheek, and the matter rested until just before the end of the voyage. At that time, the captain was expressing his appreciation of the fine cooperation and spirit of the Seabees aboard.

"But one thing more," he added. "Official reports disclosed the unauthorized presence of some 'fighting cocks.' Imagine my surprise to be presented with three eggs in a nest marked:

'Layed on board.'"

MUSICAL DOUBLE TALK actually has two meanings for Phillip P. Hulsey, EM3c, since the St. Louis Seabee landed on Iwo Jima.

At home, Phil was a drummer with a swing band. When he hit Iwo with the Seabees, he found himself with a shovel in his hands -- and hasn't been able to get rid of it since.

"In jive talk," he says, "'dig this' means 'look at this.' Out here, 'dig this' means 'dig this' ... and not with a set of drums!"

TWO NAVY VETERANS of 20 years experience stared helplessly at a dismantled heavy-duty sewing machine, intended for stitching canvas.

"We don't know what to do with this thing," one said. "We've always sewed everything by hand. It takes a sailmaker to run

one of these gadgets."

That was the cue for Seabee Leif Osmundsen, BM1c. He volunteered to assemble the machine, then retired happily to the bosun's locker to run it the rest of the voyage. It was like old times:--he'd had 21 years experience-----as a sailmaker!

SPECIALIST IN TRENCHING JOBS, Corp. G.A. Rosenbaum, USNR, has as his present assignment a 12,000-ft. trench for a water line. After that project is completed, if any similar ones remain they'll probably go to him. He's recognized as the base's expert in that phase of construction.

In the last war, the warrant officer was assigned to an infantry outfit, requested a transfer to the tank corps, "because trench digging was hard."

"And where did it get me?" he asked. "Here I am, 27 years later, digging trenches again."

SHOP TALK

air-mailed to Seabee News Service, Bureau of Yards and Docks, Washington 25, D. C.

STATESIDE PUBLICITY would be aided if reporters who some battalions have named to prepare "home town" stories would keep a few fundamentals in mind. Complete names and addresses are paramount. The style preferred by the Fleet Home Town Distribution Center is: "Joseph P. Jones, Carpenter's Mate, Second Class, 421 South Main Street, Monroe, Louisiana." Also requested is the name and address of the wife, parents or next of kin. Unless local papers can positively identify a man and, preferably also establish his relationship with a local person, they are disinclined to use a story about him.

All stateside papers are suffering a shortage of newsprint and are consequently running "tight" papers. This means that battalion reporters will have better luck if the stories they submit have news merit above and beyond the mere mention of a hometown boy. Large papers, in particular, will not use a story unless it is of general interest or significance.

Pictures have been submitted for hometown use which show men from widely scattered parts of the U. S. pictured in the same group. Far more effective is to picture a group all from the same town, or at least from the same small area. It goes without saying that individuals must be positively identified, left to right, and the picture taken at close enough range so that the individuals are clearly recognizable.

OUR VOTE for this week's best paper goes to the 49th Buzzin' Briefs, published in the Pacific. An eight-page job, photo-offset from typewritten copy, publication has the benefit of expert layout, artwork and photography. Editorial job is good, possibly might be improved by inclusion of more news of what other Seabee units are doing.

Acting Editor of Buzzin' Briefs is Russell H. Brown, CM3c. Robert Hendrixon, Cox, is Art Editor; John Crivelli, PhOM1c, and Seymour Wold, PhOM3c, Photographers; John C. Kemper, Y2c, Typographer; F. C. Barnett, MoMM3c, Printer.

THE BULLPEN

THERE ARE DARK DAYS ahead for night baseball says Larry MacPhail, the man who inaugurated major

league after-dark contests ten years ago while general manager of the Cincinnati Reds.

"I predicted then, despite the laughs of numerous national league owners, that within five years every club in the league would be playing night games at home or on the road. It happened quicker than that and I now predict that we can't wait five years to do something about unrestricted night games," he said.

Now part owner and president of the Yankees, Larry said, "Unlimited night baseball as we have now in both of the major leagues defeats itself. Not only that, but it is likely to ruin attendance at the day games. I always have believed that seven night games at home for each club is enough."

Only major league parks still not equipped for night ball are those used by the two Boston clubs, Chicago Cubs, Detroit Tigers and the Yankees. According to MacPhail the Yankees probably will install lighting equipment after the war "but they will never play more than seven games a year after dark at home," he said emphatically.

PHIL RIZUTTO may have been the Yankees' outstanding infielder and one of the top shortstops in the major leagues, but, after tangling with the 22nd Special Seabees, he was just another muscle-stiff softball player. Assigned to a 7th Fleet cargo vessel, Phil, a Sp(A)2c, recently led a team ashore at a Pacific base to help the 22nd celebrate a year's overseas duty. The Seabees won.

"Softball is a different game," the grinning Rizutto alibied to the director of Navy athletics for the southwest Pacific area. "You hit, run and field differently. I've been through a lot of baseball, but after two days of softball I'm stiff as a board."

UNDEFEATED IN TOURNAMENT sponsored by American Red Cross in London, Lee Walker, S1c of Baltimore, Md., with 30th Special (1st sec) captured United Kingdom's junior welterweight title, winning three of four bouts by KOs.

DISA AND DATA. Cardinals disposed of salary controversy with Mort Cooper by trading him to the Boston Braves for an unannounced amount of cash and right-hander Charley "Red" Barrett... Case of brother Walker, now in Navy, pending... In one of the most surprising trades of recent years, Athletics traded Frankie Hayes, "iron-man" catcher, to the Indians for Buddy Rosar, holdout catcher. Hayes, in the midst of a bid to set an all-time major league record for backstops, had caught 189 consecutive games for the A's, only 28 short of the 217 set in 1943 and 1944 by Ray Mueller of the Reds.... Winning their first championship since 1934, Illinois scored most stunning upset in years to win Big 10 track title. The Illini tallied 65½ points to 54 1/6 for Michigan which virtually had been conceded its 21st conference title and third in a row.... Middles from Naval Academy hung up a new team scoring record as they chalked up second straight win in IC4A outdoor track and field championships. Cadets finished second.