



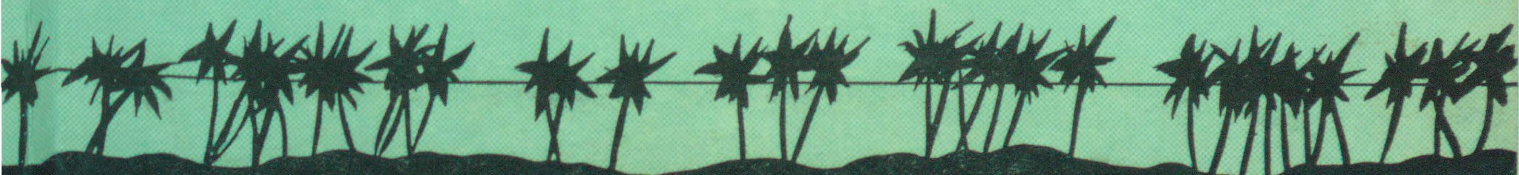
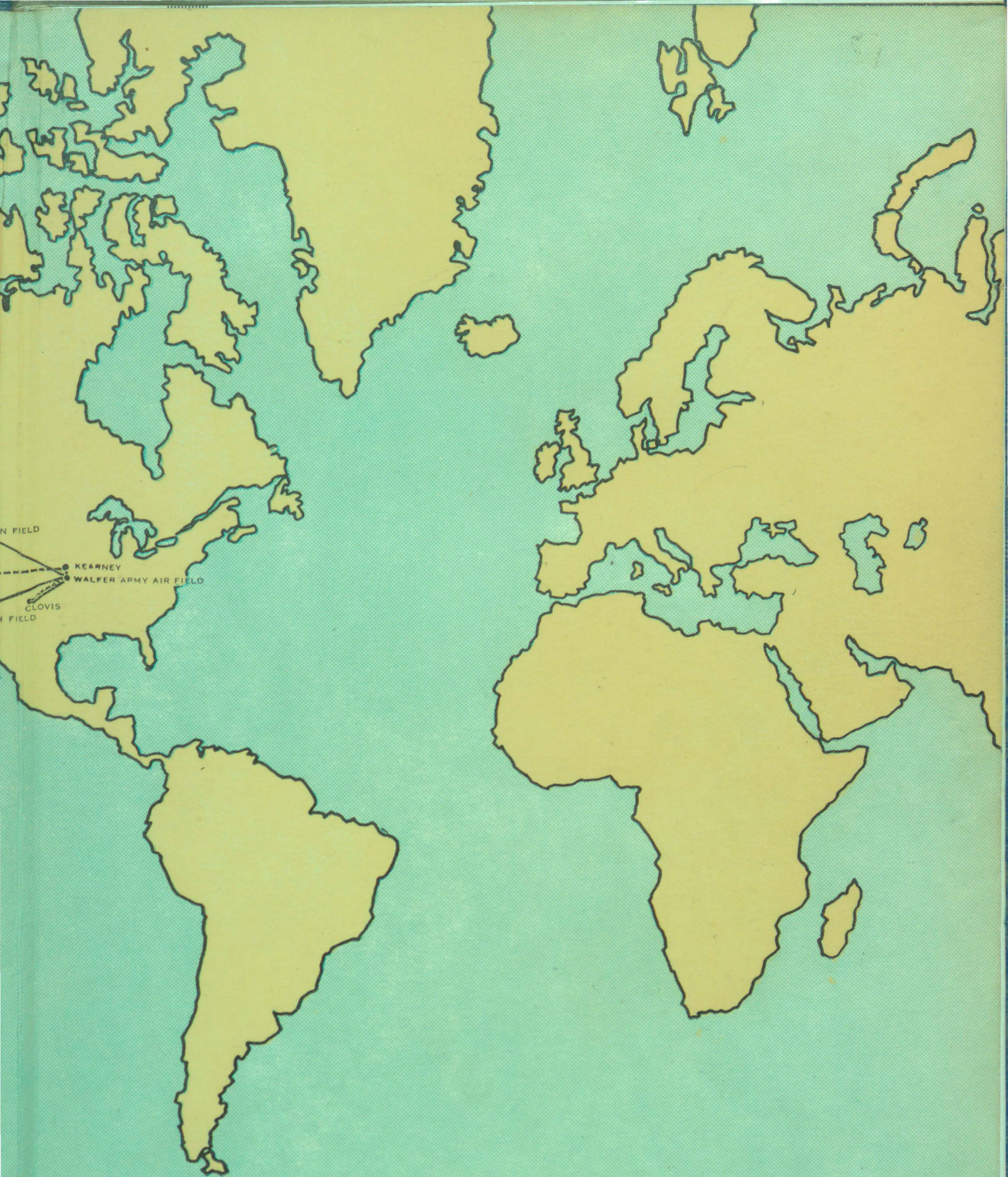
500th BOMBARDMENT GROUP

500th Bombardment Group

--- AIR ECHELON

— SURFACE MOVEMENT





AN UNOFFICIAL
PICTORIAL HISTORY
OF THE

500th Bombardment Group

One of the Four Combat Groups in 73rd Wing
under
21st Bomber Command and 20th Air Force



STATIONED FOR OVERSEAS OPERATIONS AT
SAIPAN
IN THE MARIANAS ISLANDS



Foreword

There was a certain irony in the "face saving" surrender of the Japanese after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaka, for it came when the war against their Empire had already been decided. When the B-29s moved into the Marianas, the war moved into a different epoch. Before the use of the atomic bomb, the U S had proved that it could wipe out Japanese cities, one after another, without the need to bring ground troops to close quarters at all. When the war ended, the AAF had the ability to knock out a city a night with incendiary attacks alone.

The chief agents of the annihilation of the land of the rising sun were the Superforts and the people who made up the Bombardment Groups that supported, maintained and flew them. This book is about just one of those Groups, the 500th, which came under the command of the 73rd Bombardment Wing, pioneer in carrying the full strategic, striking power of the Air Forces to the heart of Japan.

The pictures that follow were selected because of interest to former men of the 500th and are not intended to portray the broader history of the Pacific War nor even of the total B-29 program on Saipan. Inasmuch as possible, only photographs that tell a story were chosen. The people in the scenes are there because of what they are doing and not because they were members of a certain Squadron or Section.

Due to combat losses, reorganization and other exigencies of military service, many men frequently changed from one responsibility to another. Quite often a position was held by several people during the course of the Group's history. For this reason, only top command and staff personnel who held those positions during the peak of the 500th's effort against the enemy are pictured in that section of this volume.

It is my hope that you feel, as I do, that we had the privilege of serving our country in the best Group in the world's best Air Force.

GLENN E MCCLURE

Commanding Generals

AIR WAR AGAINST JAPAN



HENRY H. ARNOLD,
US Army Air Force and 20th Air Force



CARL SPAATZ,
US Strategic Air Force



CURTIS LEMAY,
21st Bomber Command



EMMETT O'DONNELL,
73rd Bombardment Wing

SUBJECT: Commendation

TO: All Former Members of the 500th Bombardment Group (VH)

I consider it a privilege to be able to convey my personal appreciation to the ex-members of the 500th Bombardment Group for a job well done. Men of your courage, resourcefulness, and determination enabled the B-29s to lay waste to the heart of the Japanese homeland and thus hasten the close of World War II.

Whether you are now in uniform or have returned to your civilian vocation, this pictorial history of the "Fighting 500th" will remain a symbol of your united and worthy contribution to the defeat of the Japanese Empire.

May this history also serve as a tribute in memory of those departed members of your group who were not permitted to share in the glorious victory.

CURTIS E. LeMAY,
Major General, U. S. Army

To Former Members of the 500th Bombardment Group:

It is, perhaps, trite to say that such and such an outfit is one of the best in the Army Air Forces. If the phrase can be applied to any organization, however, its use is certainly appropriate in describing the 500th Bombardment Group.

Throughout the campaign against the Japanese homeland, the 500th more than carried its share of the load and did so in a manner which marked it as a fighting unit of the highest quality. It obviously knew and understood its mission; it never failed to strive for additional excellence in performance, and it accepted its losses with a deadly, earnest resolve to avenge them.

Colonel King, until he was captured, and Colonel Dougherty, thereafter, molded a team which had confidence, ability, initiative, and determination. I could not help but feel its loyalty as an organization to the Wing and I deemed myself truly fortunate and privileged to command such a body of men.

My good wishes and hopes for success go to each of you in your new endeavors. May you always retain the fighting qualities which you so adequately manifested as members of the 500th Group and the 73rd Wing.

EMMETT O'DONNELL,
Brigadier General, U. S. Army

In the Beginning

On the 20th of November 1943 at Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho the 500th Bombardment Group (VH) was born. It consisted of four tactical squadrons and four maintenance squadrons and was assigned to the 73rd Wing, of which the 497th, 498th, and 499th were already a part.

In December of 1943 the four maintenance squadrons, the 29th, 30th, 31st, and 32nd, were moved from Gowen Field to Walker Army Air Field. At the same time, the Group Headquarters section was being formed at Clovis Army Air Field, New Mexico. On 27 January 1944 thirty officers and 127 men of the 480th Anti-Sub Group were assigned at Clovis as nuclei for the four tactical squadrons. Lt Col (then Major) Ralph Reeve assumed command.

Maintenance squadrons of the 500th began servicing and modifying B-29s of the 462nd Bomb Group when the ground echelon of that preceding outfit moved overseas in February. In March, fifty-one "war engines" were installed to help the departing Group make possible the fulfillment of the commitments made by General Arnold and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

On 8 March 1944 Colonel (then Lt Col) John E Dougherty assumed command of the Group at its Clovis headquarters.

On the 15th of April 1944 the four tactical squadrons and Group Headquarters moved to Walker. Later in the same month the maintenance squadrons were absorbed, as well as the 884th tactical squadron, into the three remaining squadrons, the 881st, 882nd and 883rd.

Colonel Richard T King, Jr, 1933 West Point graduate, took command on 5 May 1944.

Pictures on the next few pages should recall memories of training and organizational days at "Walker" located midway between towns of Russell and Hays, Kansas.









Above, The flight line at Walker. Lower left, Colonel Kenneth O Sanborn, Base Commanding Officer, greets General Emmett O'Donnell, 73rd Wing Commander, on his arrival from Colorado Springs, 20 May 1944 to present awards. Lower right, General O'Donnell speaks in Walker Theatre. Major, then Captain, David J Lloyd sits in the background.





A Wing meeting on 15 September 1944 again brought General O'Donnell, *upper photo*, to Walker. Lower picture shows Wing dinner at Officers' Mess. Other 73rd Wing Groups were located at Pratt, Great Bend and Salina, Kansas. Bomber Command was located at Salina, Wing Headquarters at Colorado Springs.

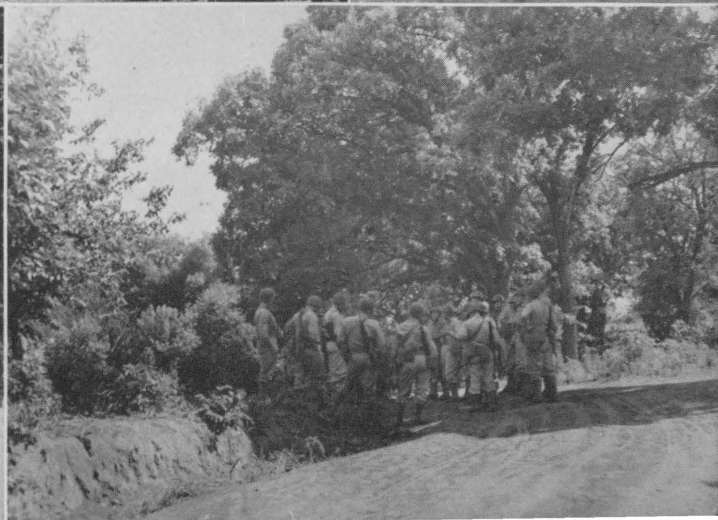
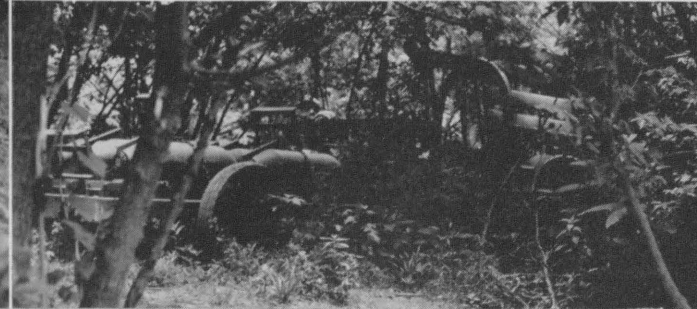
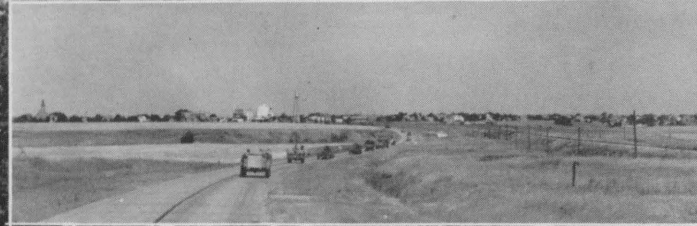
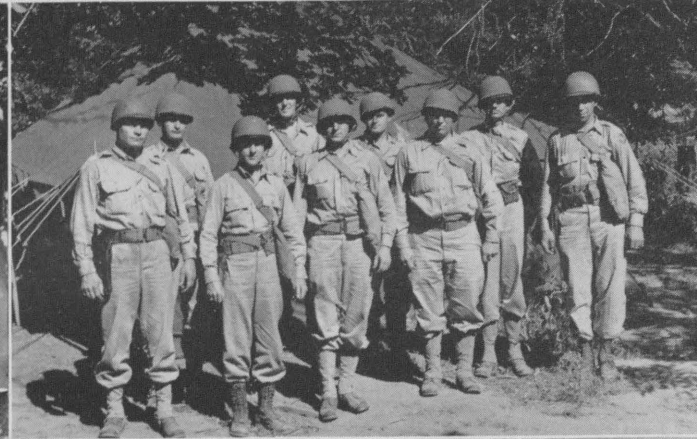




Flying training over Kansas farmlands began on the 1st of May 1944 and continued to end of September. The elimination of "bugs" in both ships and procedures was a never ending operation. Five training accidents cost the lives of twelve men and four planes. In October, missions were flown to a small island near Cuba and return. Pilots and crews learned more each day about their super secret plane.

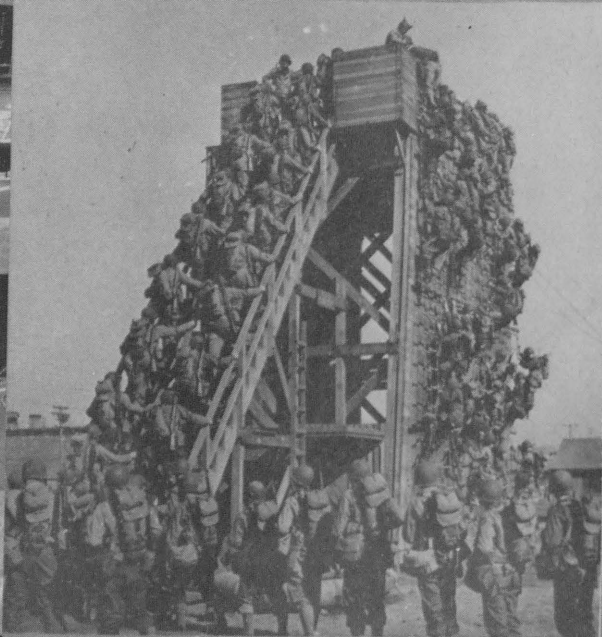
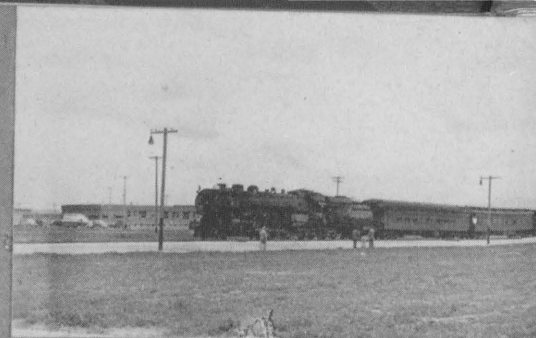
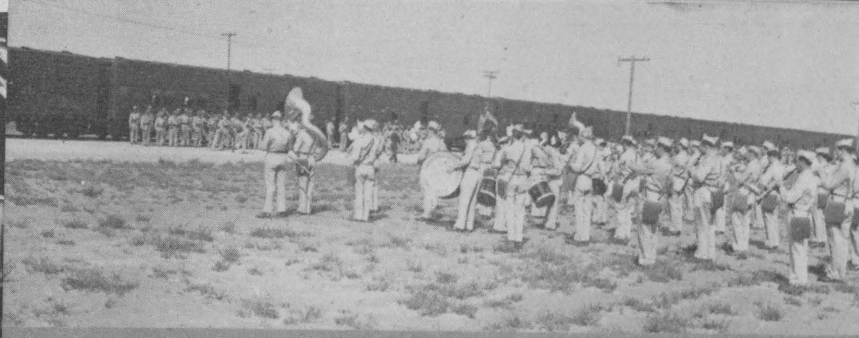
Ground crewmen who had begun their B-29 training on ships of the 462nd Bomb Group received a taste of other things to come in their bivouac at Kanopolis Dam near Ellsworth, Kansas. Mock low level air attacks by 500th combat men gave the participants experience in deploying from a convoy. As much realism as possible was incorporated in the trip, from the posting of sentries to the mundane labor of digging slit trenches.

While men were being trained by the military, the huge factory of Boeing-Wichita, 160 miles south of Walker, was turning out the planes they were to use in months to come. Pictures on two pages following bivouac scenes, *opposite page*, were furnished through courtesy of Public Relations Division of Boeing's Wichita plant.





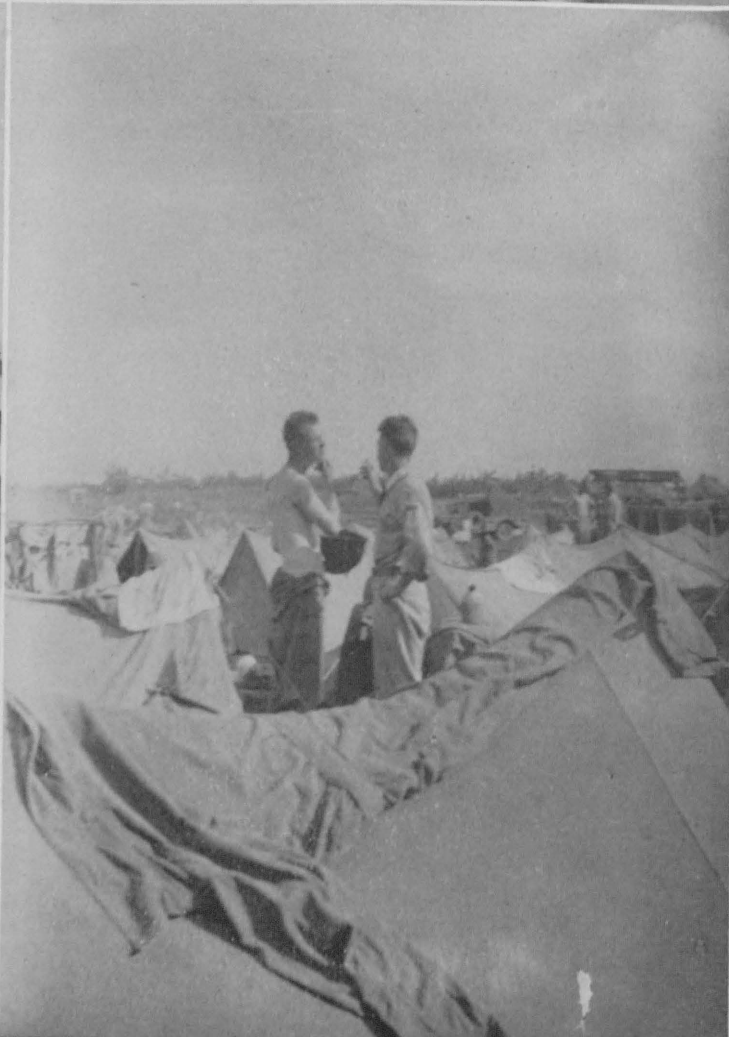






The advance echelon of the 500th Bomb Group left Walker via train on Sunday, 28 July 1944. After staging at Camp Anza, near Los Angeles, *left*, they set sail aboard the Alcoa Polaris, a converted merchantman, on 13 August. On the 20th the Polaris left Pearl Harbor. During the two week stopover at Enewietok, Major Robert E Wolcott, ground echelon commander, announced destination as Saipan.







On the 18th of September 1944 the Alcoa Polaris pulled into Tanapag Harbor, Saipan. The sight of the beautiful tree-covered island was a pleasant surprise to most men since they had expected something like the barren coral atoll at Enewietok which they had left just five days before.

Since a battle had taken place in the 500th's area, large quantities of ammunition, mortar shells and grenades had to be hauled away. More than 100 tons of Japanese dynamite were removed in the process.

Debarkation was followed immediately by mud, rain, "C" and "K" rations, pup tents and hard work. The cane field area had to be cleared, the ship unloaded and temporary quarters erected. Little time was available for sleeping and everyone worked "out of MOS." Technicians, mechanics and office workers became carpenters, ditch-diggers and longshoremen.

Water was strictly rationed. Being able to keep clean was considered a luxury. It seemed that it rained continually and when it didn't the tropical sun beat down unmercifully. Roads were rutted quagmires, filled with bumps of coral. It was almost impossible to go anywhere except by jeep or weapons carrier.



On the fourth day on the island a temporary Post Exchange had been set up, and 500th BG men were lined up to get their first beer in six weeks. Above picture was taken during third week. Tent on left was later used as a Red Cross office and one on the right as a PX Sales Store. Center pyramidal housed Special Services' office and portable library.

All hands turned to the task of unloading the ship and stacking supplies in the "dumps" seen behind the tents in above picture. This back-bending labor was performed on a round the clock basis. Although the piled up supplies seemed absolutely without order, every item of 500th equipment was finally accounted for and distributed to proper using unit.





Pyramidal tents soon replaced the pup tents, and a semblance of order grew in the bivouac area in a remarkably short time. A larger tent was erected to house the PX, *below*, and an outdoor theatre was built alongside it on a slope overlooking the 882nd area. First the ground and later sandbags, served as seats. An empty packing crate housed the 16 mm projector.





Construction went on at a rapid pace with the building of wooden frames for tents and the erection of Quonset huts for the coming combat crewmen. Maxwell, Pallas and Williams are shown above. Lower photo is of the sawmill, then located in what was later to be the motor pool area.





In the early days, the PX, Theatre, Special Service and Red Cross tents were the only recreational spots in the area. Athletic supplies, phonographs, radios and library books, all brought from the States, were issued from Special Services' and Red Cross tents shown above. Sandbag revetments by every office and in every living area were a "must." Krasnow, Williams and Pallas are shown at work on theirs, in photo below.





While 500th ground echelon men prepared quarters for the coming air echelon, Army Engineers worked night and day to complete the "strip" for the use of the B-29s. A paved "haul road" from coral pits to Isley Field carried an endless belt of dump trucks speeding over its curving length 24 hours a day. All other traffic had to use secondary coral or mud roads. Seven days after the invasion of Saipan began, Army Engineers



... had filled over 600 holes and craters of the Jap's much bombarded Aslito Airdrome and had it in operation for Thunderbolt fighters. In five more days they had tacked on another 1000 feet. In less than five months, B-29s were making regular runs from the same field, then one of the largest in the world. Work continued until a parallel companion strip had been completed, doubling the field's operational capacity.



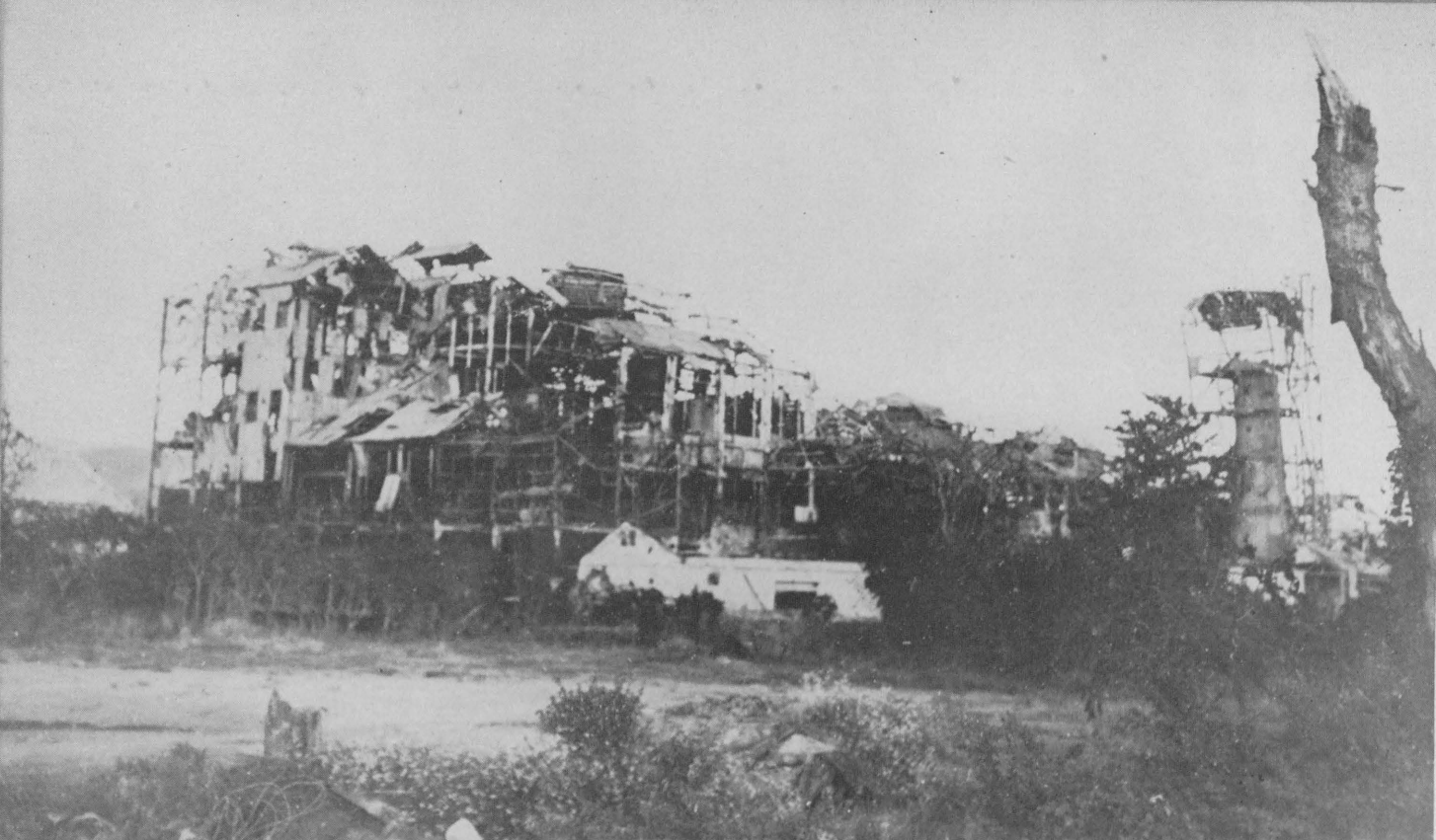
“Before and after” photos of capital city of Garapan. This thriving little community of about 10,000 people was the largest in the Marianas. Because the Japanese elected to hold it, our forces literally blasted it to rubble.

Life Photo by W Eugene Smith





A rough idea of the devastation wrought on Saipan may be gathered from scenes above. Eventually, our bulldozers and clean-up crews pushed most of this rubble into the sea and constructed huge warehouse Quonsets where Garapan had once stood.



Above, The war-torn sugar mill which became a principal check-point for GI drivers. Below, Capt Charles T Moreland and crew with Z-42 which they set down on Isley Field on 31st October, thus becoming the first of air echelon to reach their combat base. On the 14th of October the first crews had left Walker for staging at Kearney. Nebraska. On the 25th they began overseas movement via Mather Field, Oahu,





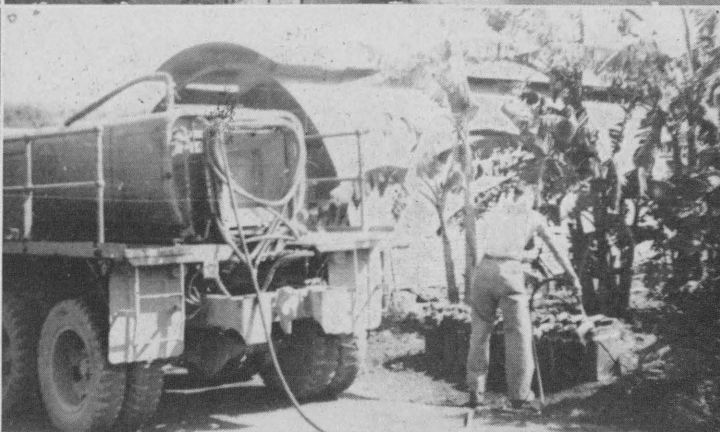
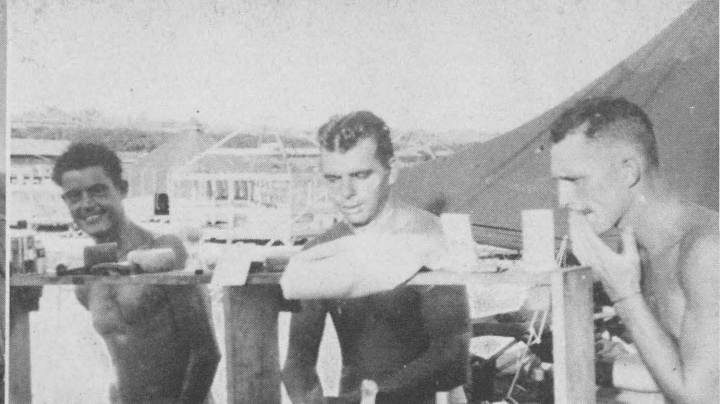
Johnston Island and Kwajalein. On the 18th of November the morning reports of the ground and air echelons were merged and the Group began operations as an integral unit. An old Japanese strong point, *below*, was converted to use as base operations for the B-29s. Air Transport Command and Transport Air Group planes used this strip also until completion of nearby Kobler Field.





Monotony of steady work was broken from time to time by brief exploration trips around the island. Bob Blankenberg is shown, *above*, in the cab of one of the engines of the narrow-gauge railway system formerly used by Japanese to haul sugar cane. *Below*, Lieutenants Grow and Turner pose by a wrecked Nip tank in a jungle battlefield.





Film was very hard to get for private cameras, and official photographers usually had more important duties, so complete coverage of activities was impossible. The above snapshots, as well as many others in this book, were taken unofficially and contributed for use in this volume.





Air raids by Japs were frequent up until first of 1945, sometimes occurring two or more times in a single 24-hour period. It was only very rarely that an enemy plane escaped destruction from either our fighters or ground fire. Pictures on these pages were taken during a noon raid on 29th of November 1944, which caught Saipan by surprise.

The first warning was the rattle of machine guns of the low-flying Zeros as they strafed the field and living areas. Six were shot down by fighters and seven by ack-ack. One falling Nip plane skimmed over the tops of 500th Headquarters officers' tents and crashed in the area shown above. Plane disintegrated as it struck between telephone poles and latrine, spraying flaming gas and oil over revetments and burning thirty-six men seriously. Those not evacuated are shown on later pages in the book, as they received Purple Hearts from Colonel Dougherty.

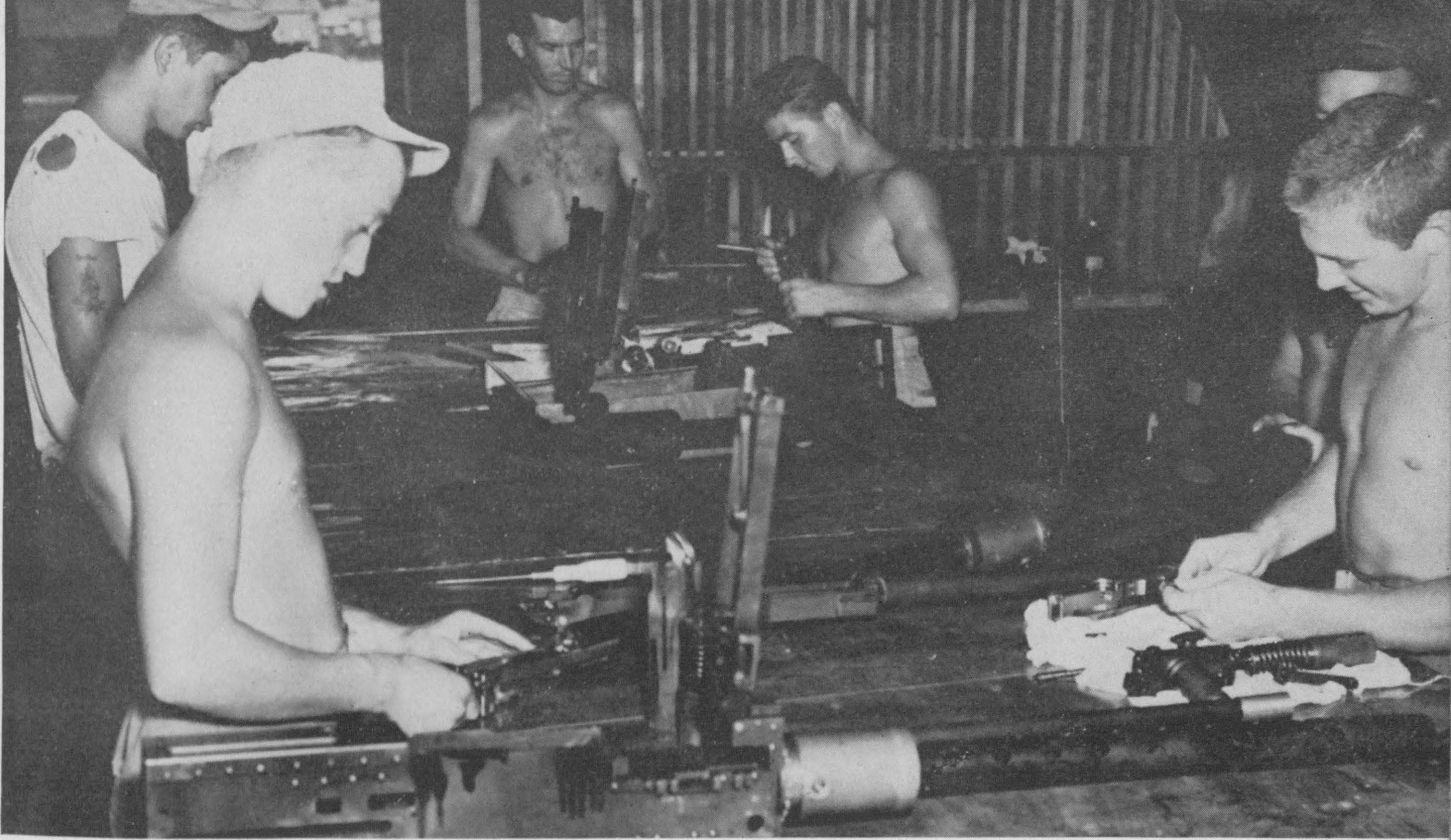
Most raids occurred on moonlight nights. Air Defense Command's complicated mechanism was usually set in motion by a radar man's, "I've picked up a bogey." Flash red alert was announced by the wailing of sirens that sent B-29ers to the comparative safety of fox holes. The kaleidoscopic display of ack-ack, tracers and searchlights during actual attacks created a scene that could never be forgotten.

Enemy planes who successfully attacked the island were invariably shot down later by Black Widows who waited off shore for their departure from range of land-based gunfire.

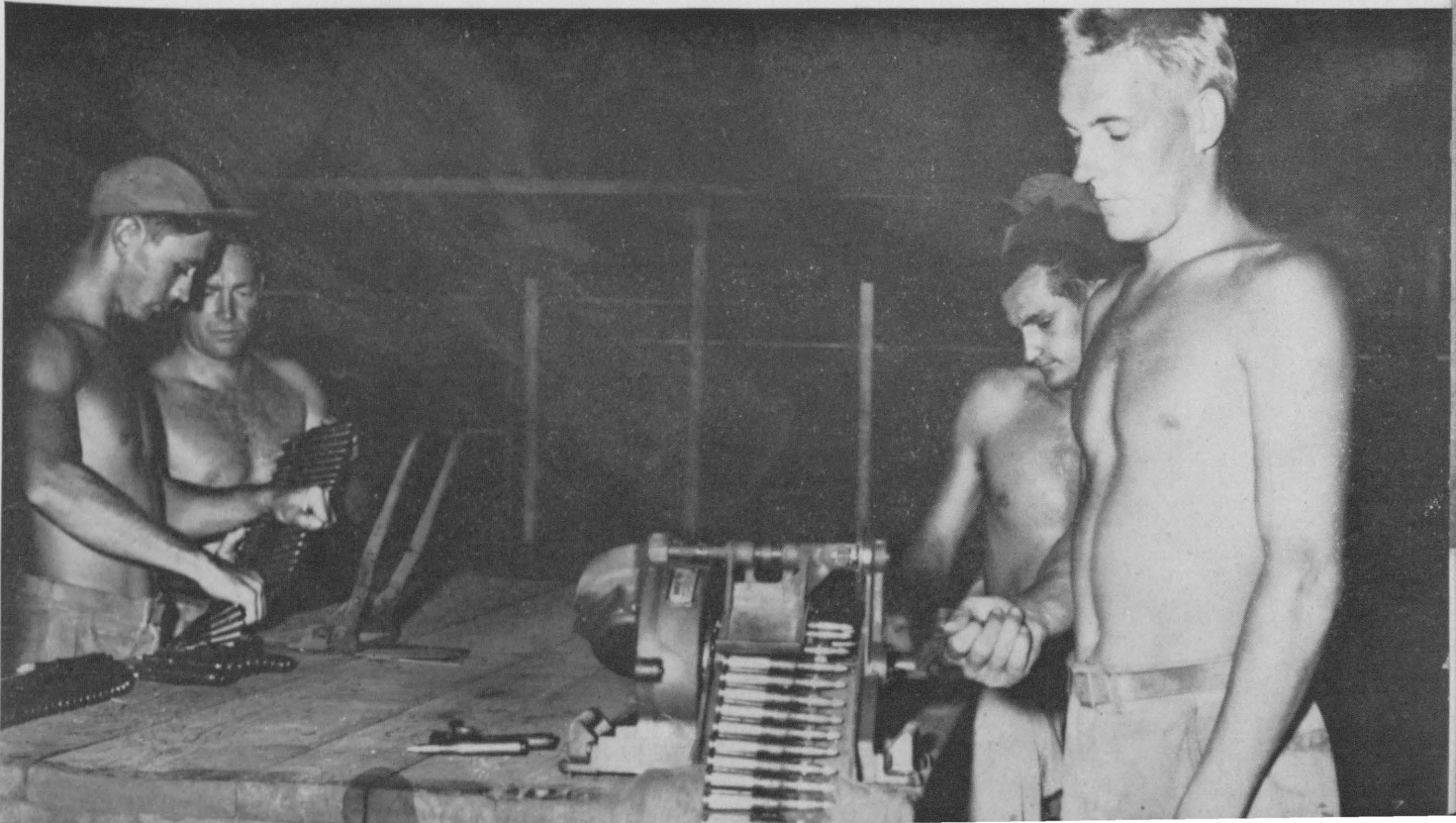


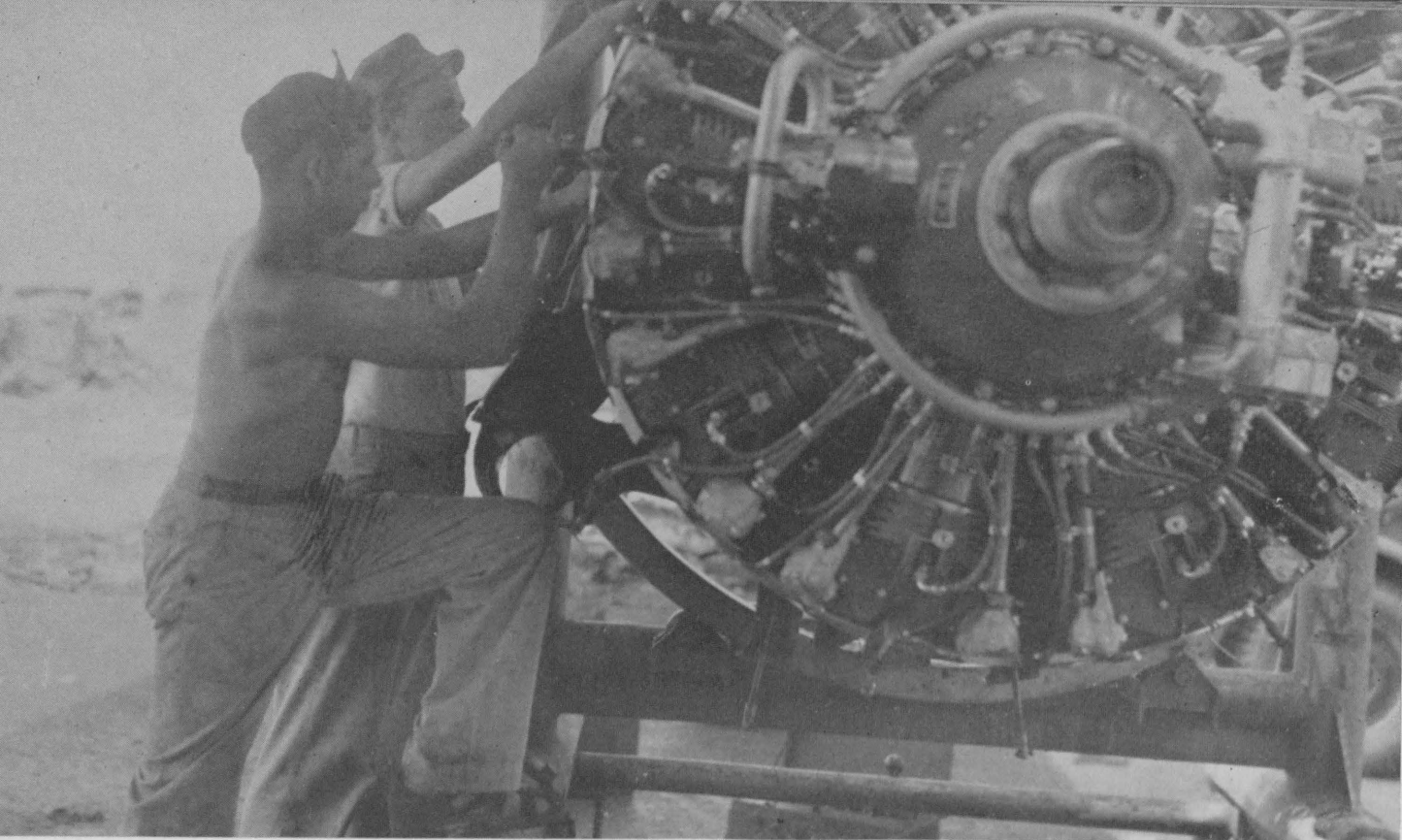
With the coming of the B-29s, maintenance crews again took up the tasks for which they had been trained. One of the trucks hauling men to the "line" may be seen coming up the hill in the above picture. The "portable" hangar, *below*, was later covered by canvas.





Ordnance men, *above*, are, left to right, Roy Franklin, Norman Roy, Edward Dyjak and Torio Saleminen. *Below*, left to right, Andrew Cika, William Kerkas, John Crocker, Steve Tatalik and Duane Chapman.





Many innovations and improvisations were instigated by maintenance men to keep the Superforts in commission to meet the gruelling schedule set up for the regular bombardment of the Japanese homeland. Production Line Maintenance speeded up



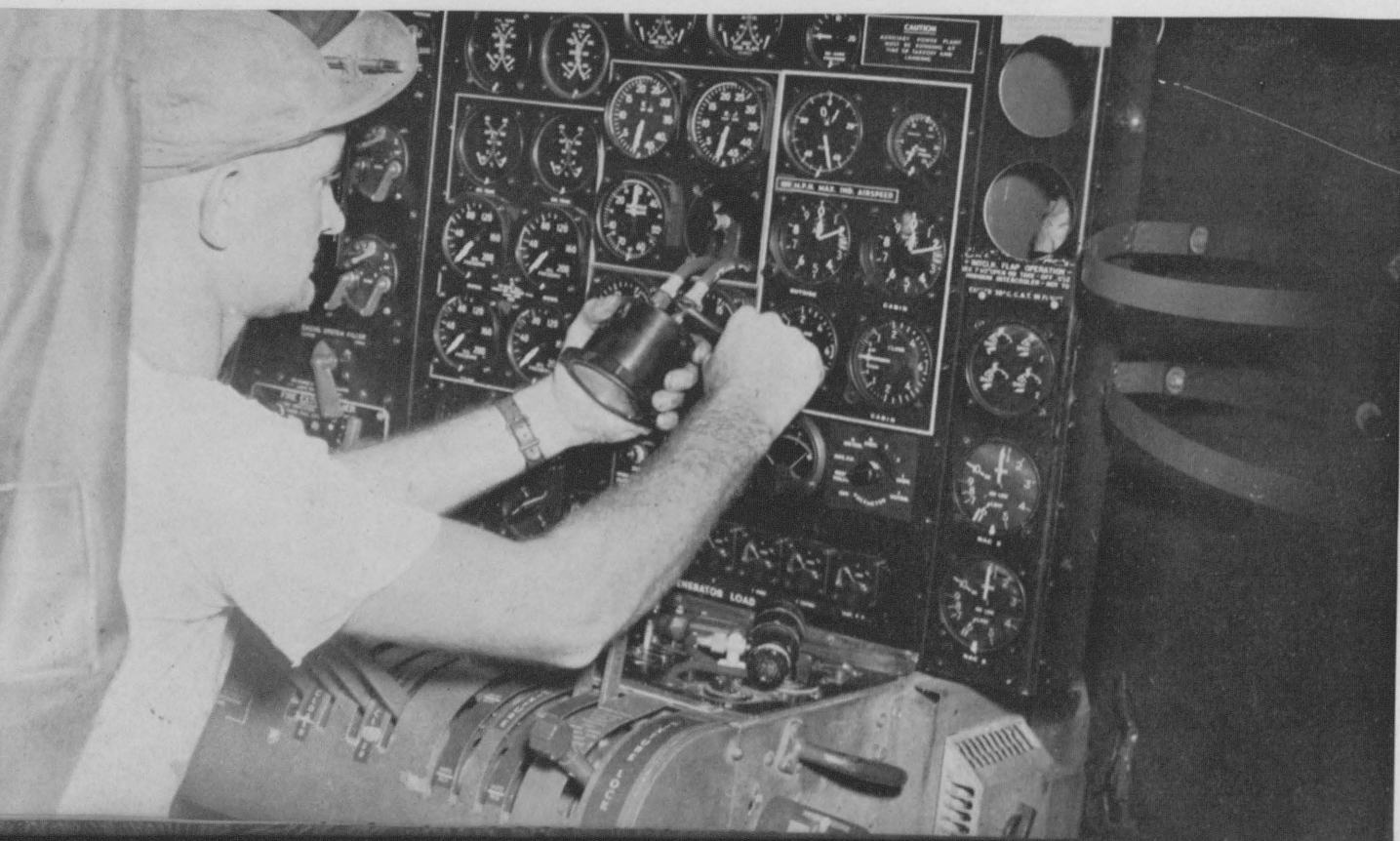


the process, but not without long hours of hard work on the part of the uncomplaining "line" personnel. PLM in the 500th became so good that groups on Guam and Tinian sent men on orders to study methods used by Major Ashley's men.



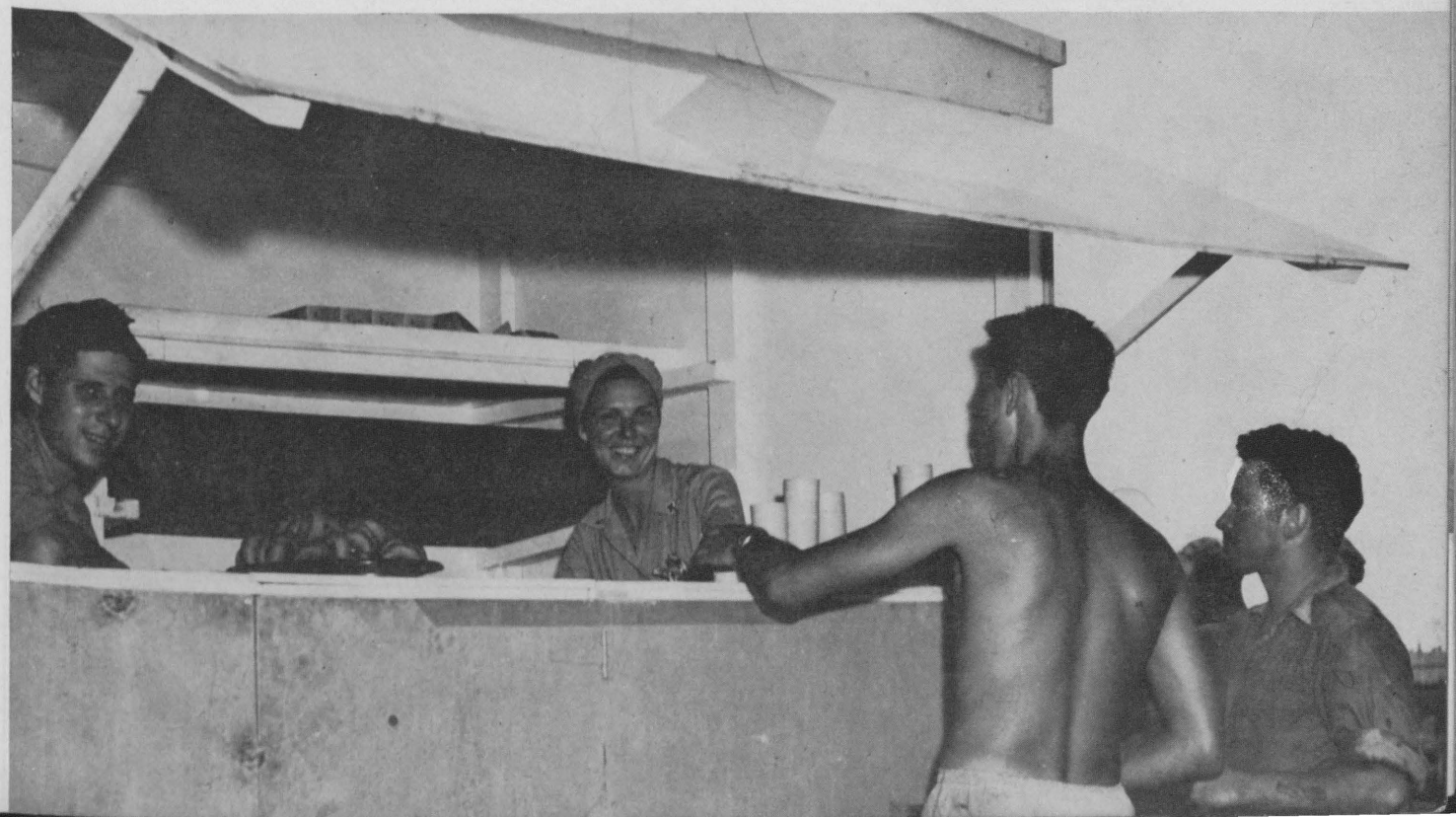


Above, A Sikorsky Helicopter hovers over a 500th plane with a load of small parts. These odd-looking craft furnished shuttle service from deck of repair ship in harbor to the parking ramp on the field. Below, An instrument check is given by Floyd Stevens.



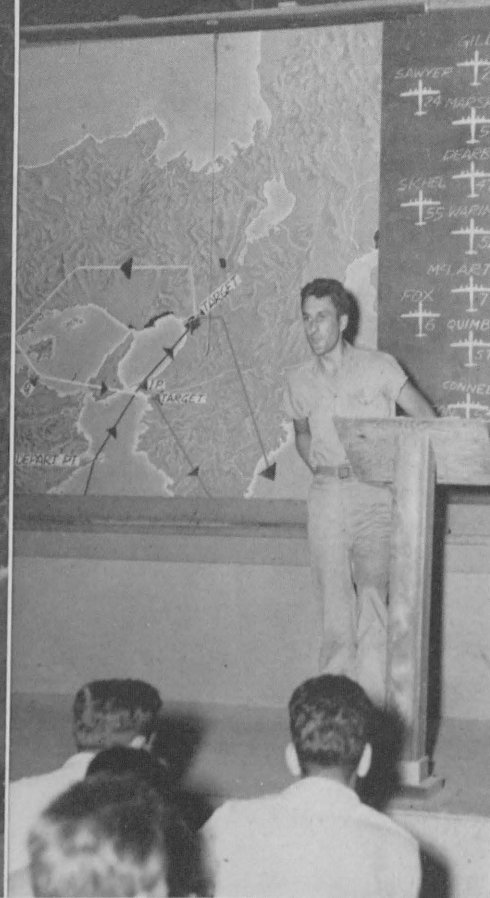
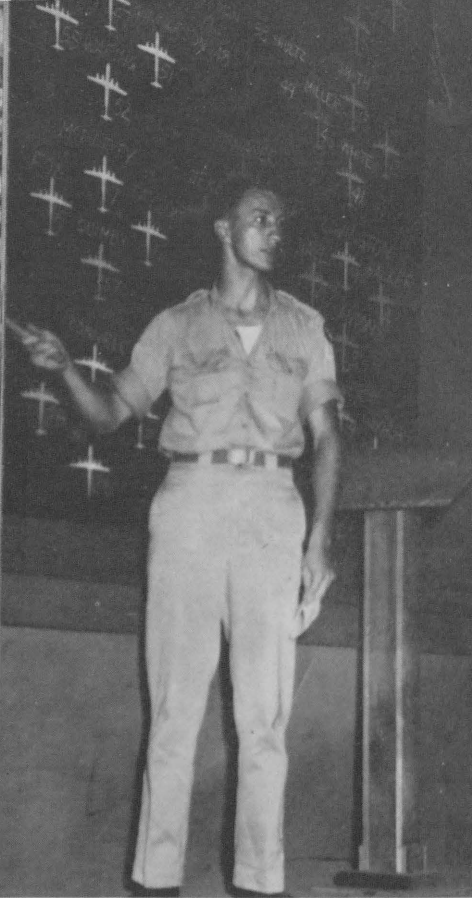


Above, Ordnance men prepare to take 50-calibre machine guns to shop after their use on a mission to Kobe. Below, A ten-minute break gives Edward Kane and Joseph Shannon a chance to visit the Red Cross truck for coffee and doughnuts. Miss Marjorie Edwards was assisted by Arnold Puch in bringing this welcome refreshment to men on the job.

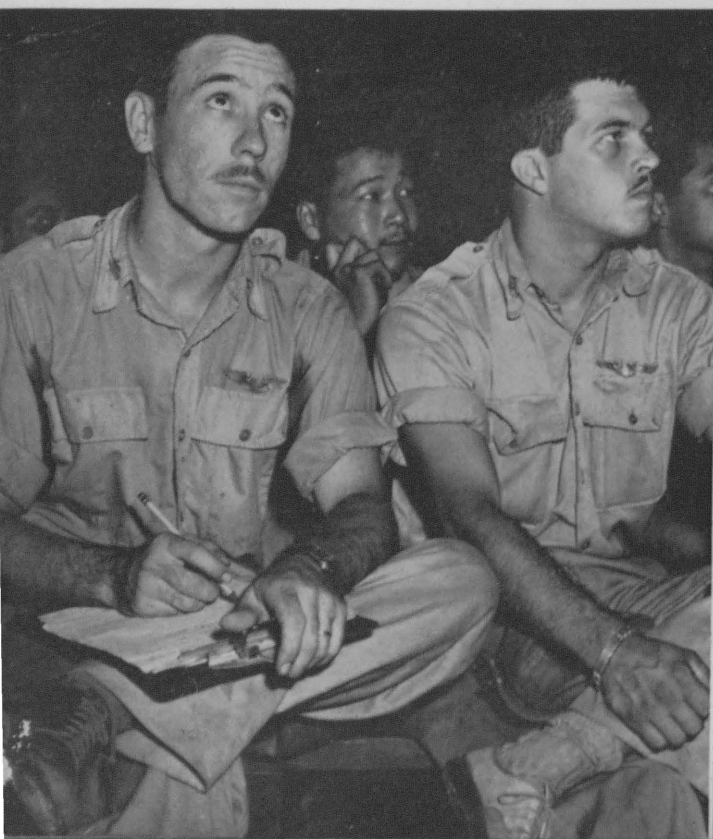








Lower left closeup shows Major Robert B Luman and Lt Donald C Hardy giving the typical attention accorded staff members, some of whom are shown, *above*, explaining an impending mission. *Lower right*, With weatherman Capt Merrihew alongside, Colonel John E Dougherty, Group Commander, listens carefully to his officers.

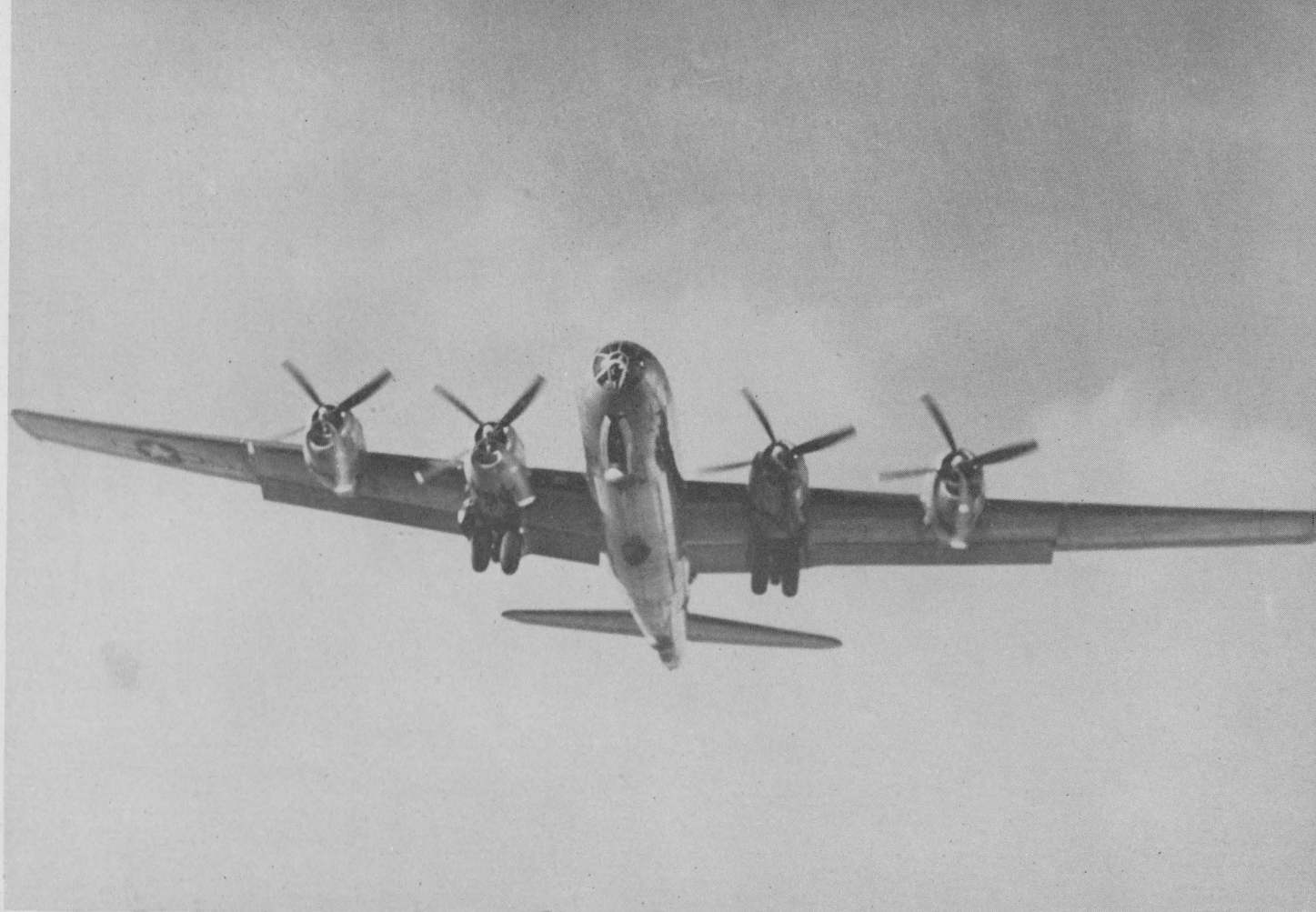


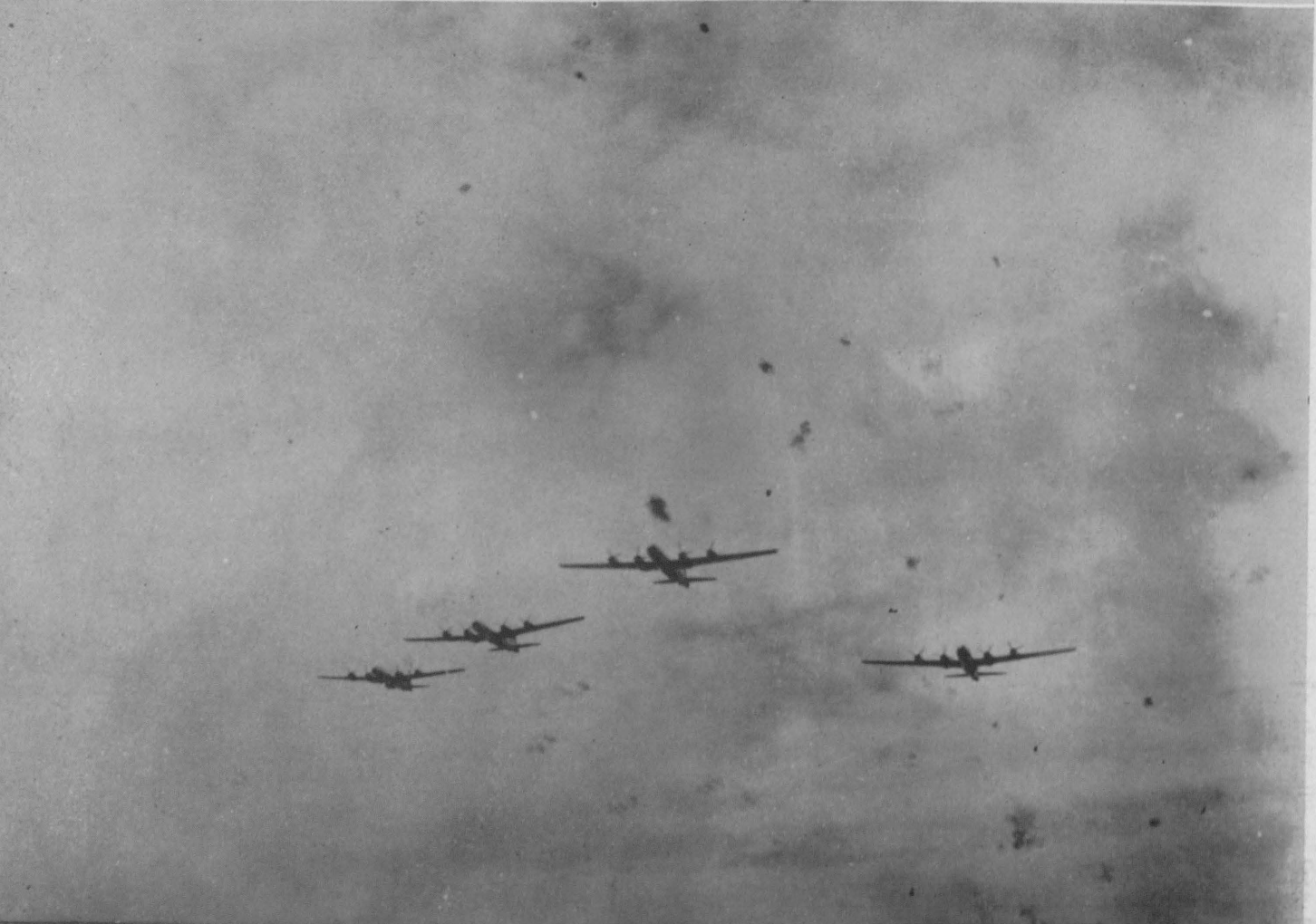


Above, Major English, gunnery officer, goes over details pertaining to his specialty. Below, Major Hale explains fine points on the M47A2 to his bombardiers. Staff members in upper photo on opposite page are Captains Smolenski, Oswald and Miller.













Toyama "burn job" of 1 August 1945. This Japanese aluminum producing city had a prewar population of nearly 128,000. Above photo shows 90% of area aflame. Later reconnaissance indicated a total demolition of 95.6%.



Tokyo as it looked just after the 300-plane raid on 9 March 1945. 16.7 square miles are shown destroyed in this picture. White-capped Fujiyama may be seen in distance. Thirteen major war plants were reduced to rubble, along with hundreds of small sub-contracting factories dispersed throughout the city.



On 19 February 1945, after 69 days of continuous "round the clock" bombardment by B-24s and Superforts, US amphibious forces invaded Iwo Jima, *above*. On 4 March a crippled B-29 made the first emergency landing there on the long road back from Japan. *Below*, Isley strip from the nose of a returning Superfort.





Above, Ground crewmen watch returning planes. Only when the big ships rolled safely to a halt did the long "sweat" end. *Below*, Lt Boren accepts hot coffee and doughnuts from Merlyn Lampe before going into booth for after-mission interrogation.





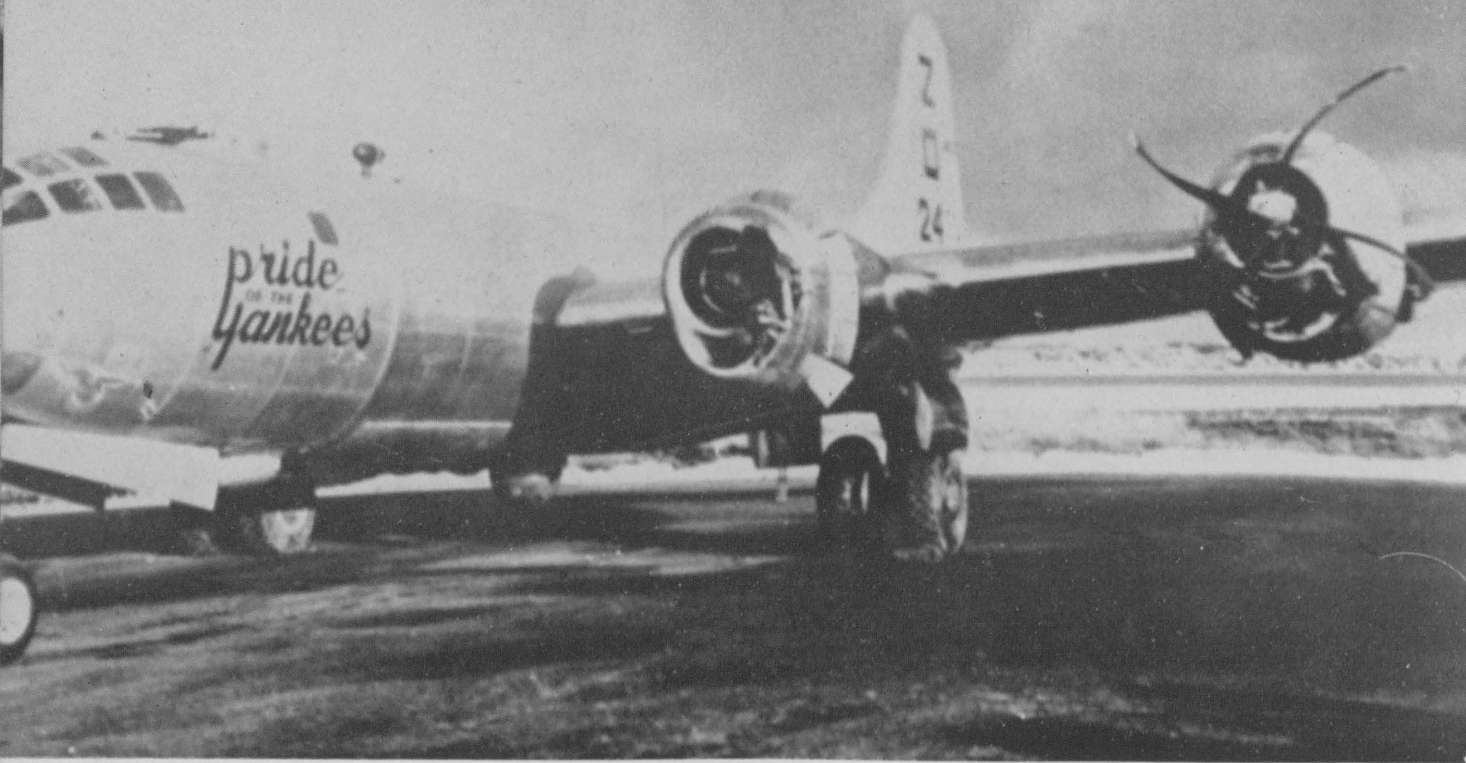
Above, Capt Walton S "Judge" Morrison interrogates Lt Sasser and crew. Below, Damage assessment board comes in for close scrutiny by the "men who were there." First priority on information was that given to any bits of knowledge regarding whereabouts of "ditched" Superforts.



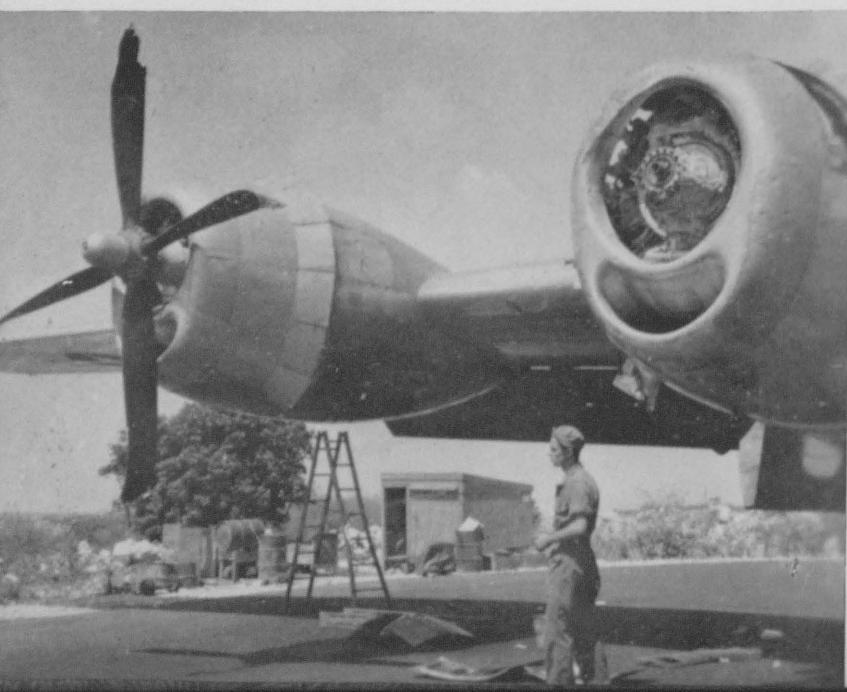


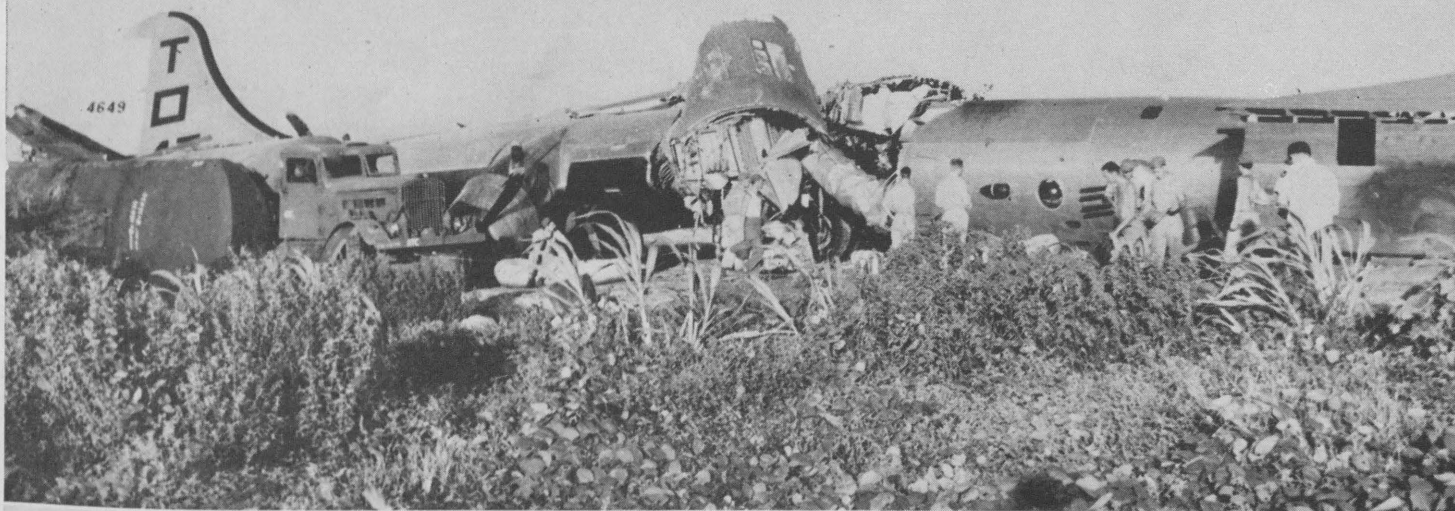
500th planes suffered very little damage due to operational maintenance failures. Not always, however, could the big ships be berthed or taken off without accident. Alert crews and medics were on hand for all takeoffs and landings.





While training in the States, the loss of one engine was cause for much concern. Lt "Chico" Carrico was the first to bring a Superfort, *above*, all the way back from Japan with two engines out on the same side. Ships flown by Capt James Pearson and by Capt Feathers, *lower left*, later repeated the feat. Crippled ships were usually accompanied back to base by "buddy" planes who stood by their comrades on the time-lengthened trip. Vinton Edwards, *lower right*, shows the size hole a Japanese 20 mm cannon shell makes. Planes on opposite page were not 500th ships.







BEFORE

On the 9th and 10th of July 1945, 115 aircraft of the 73rd Wing dropped 779 tons of fire bombs in the heart of the Sakai urban area. This congested city, a suburb of Osaka, had a population of 182,000, mostly war workers specializing in production of



BEFORE

Oita, home of the Jap 12th Naval Air Depot, with a population of 77,000, received a visit by 127 aircraft of the 73rd Wing on 16th and 17th of July 1945. In the center picture numerous fires can be seen starting as the first of the 808 tons of fire bombs



RING



AFTER

machinery, aluminum products, chemicals and explosives. Picture at far right shows 42% of housing, commercial and industrial facilities damaged or obliterated. Gutted buildings in city's center completely fill above, *far right*, photograph.



RING



AFTER

begin to hit their mark. More than 25% of the heart of the city was leveled, the vital center being reduced to ashes and ruin. Production at railway shops, aircraft factory, oil and tin refineries and textile plants, was brought to a halt.



Above picture of 500th area was taken by a Naval Reconnaissance plane prior to invasion of Saipan. Lower photo shows same area, extending from the new (never used) 881st area on left to the 882nd EM Club on right. Quonset huts in foreground were for combat crewmen; the adjacent prefabricated buildings for ground personnel. Lower pictures on these two pages were taken after tentage had been cleaned up following the typhoon. Surfside theatre, flanked by Officers' Club on left and 882nd Club on the right is plainly visible just to right of cove. 500th hard stands were located at the near end of runway on the ledge above this area.





“Before and after” scenes of area just to right of that shown on preceding page. The Officers’ Club may be seen at far left in lower picture. 881st Squadron quarters are at extreme right. The beach cove and the thick grove of trees made the 500th’s area the best of those assigned to Groups in 73rd Wing. Close scrutiny near 881st and 882nd orderly room Quonsets will show tents built atop concrete structures that were once Japanese farm buildings. The secondary unsurfaced road to the right of main “line” road was once the only access down the hill to the bivouac area.

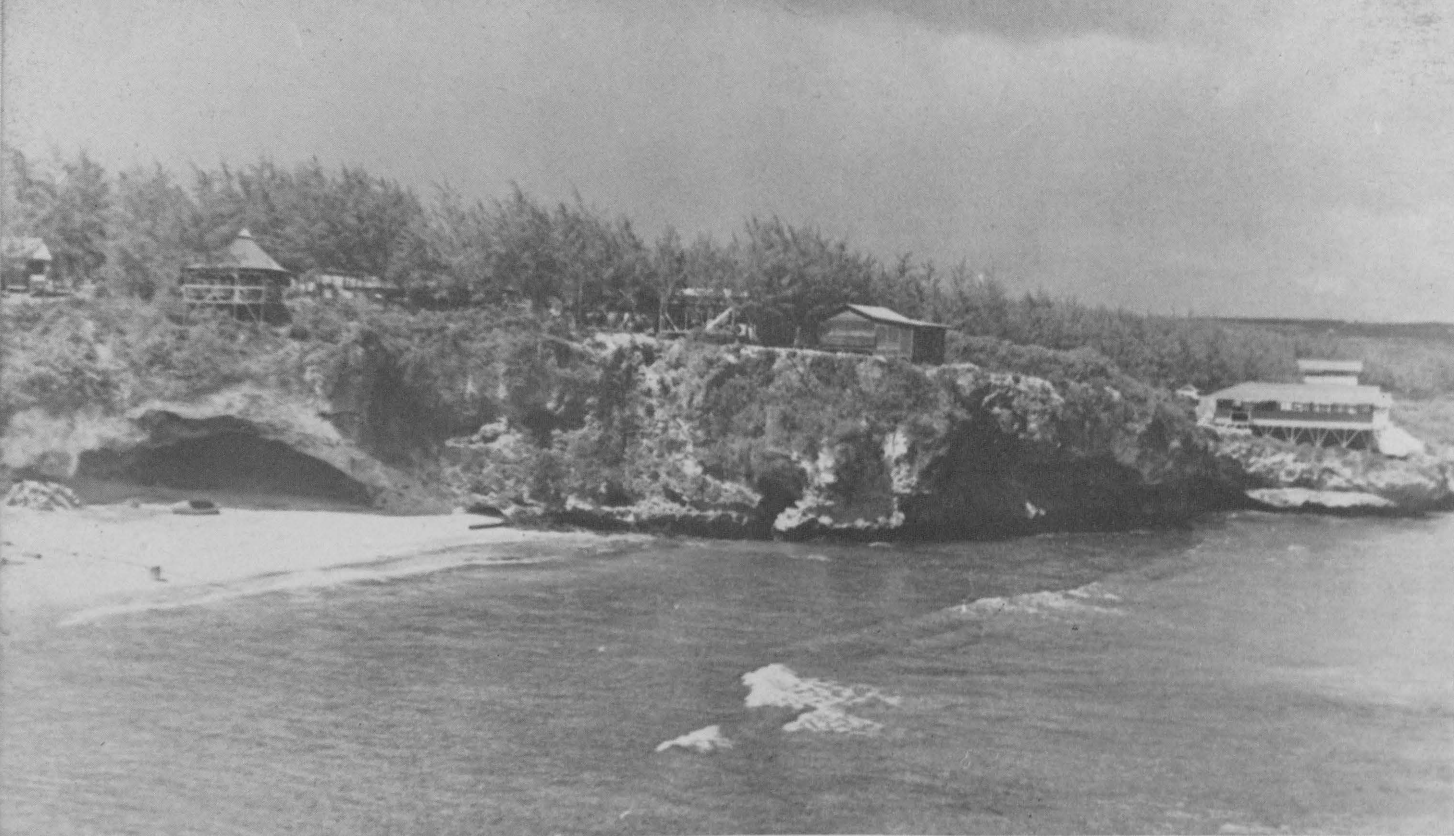






On opposite page are general views of 881st, 882nd and 883rd Squadron areas. Scene above shows the centrally located Post Exchange-Special Service Quonsets and the adjacent Library "prefab." Road toward sea leads to "Surfside," visible in clearing, and to Officers' Club. *Below*, Native civilians beautify Group Headquarters street.





Above, Officers' Club, *far right*, seen from across the cove. Below, The Club pavilion. This facility was built almost entirely by officers between missions and in off-duty time. Completed on 18 March 1945, it was a most welcome place for relaxation. In earlier days, a Quonset housing a table tennis table, card table, radio, phonograph and a



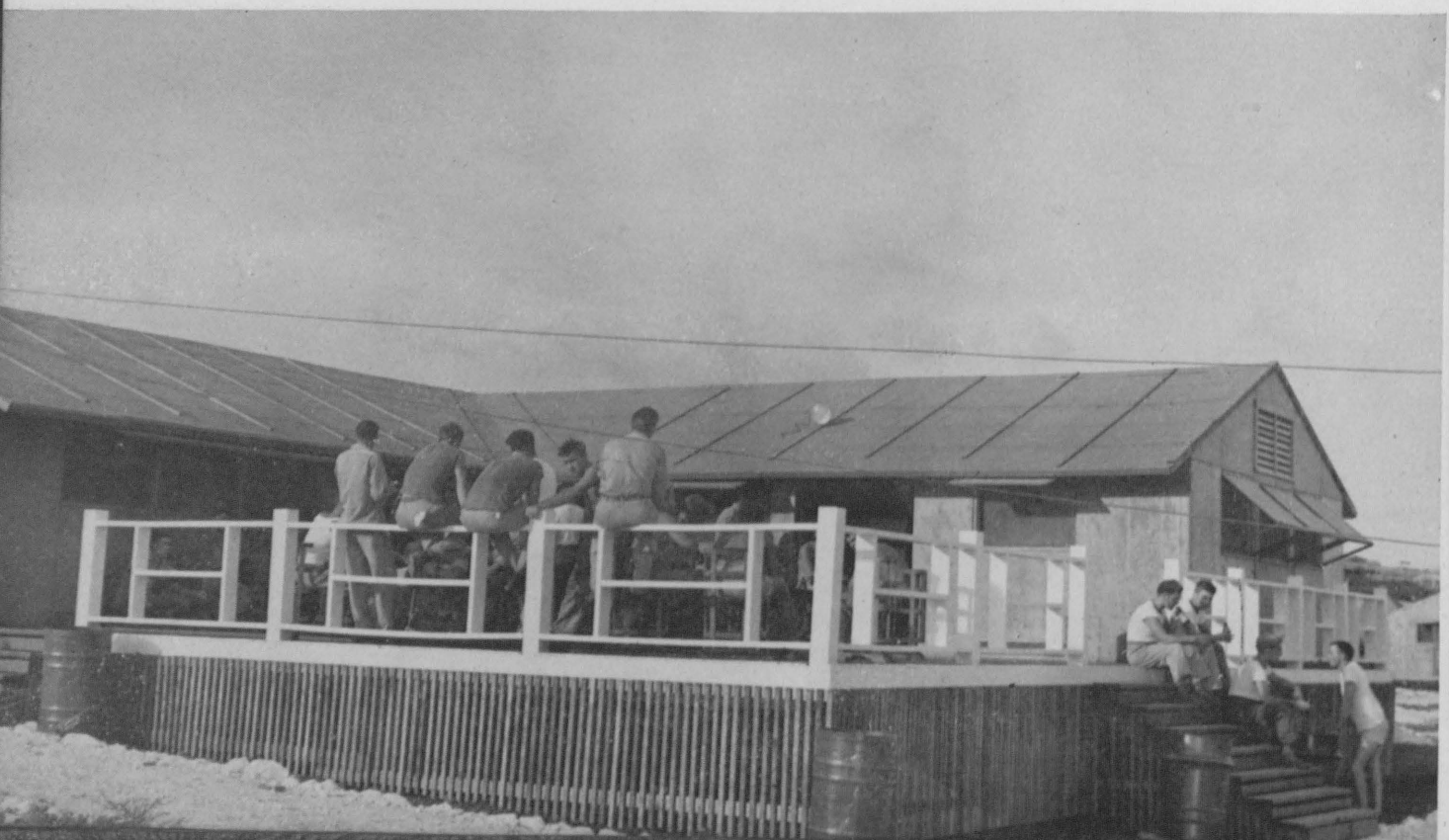


beer bar, had been "the Club." From right to left, Major Hansen, Chaplain Gasper, Major Curtis and Lt Robinson are seen being served by Joe Beckerle in above photo. The Special Service band, *below*, apparently meets with the approval of Capt Harry Lee Solomon. Despite the woman shortage on Saipan, the 500th usually managed to gather more than its pro rata share for Club "affairs."





Enlisted Men's Clubs for relaxation from the grueling schedule were a necessity. All were constructed by men who used them, largely in off-duty time. Squadron artists and craftsmen turned "issue" prefabs into swank day rooms that were the envy of





surrounding Groups. *Upper left*, 882nd. *Lower left*, 883rd. *Upper right*, 882nd Patio. Due to impending movement of 881st to new area, a temporary game tent and "pub," *lower right*, served as their recreational center.









Above, First Sgt Thompson helps out behind the 883rd bar. *Below*, Reading room of 882nd. A fairly large number of current magazines and paper-bound books was received as supply systems permitted. In addition, stateside relatives kept a steady flow of periodicals and books coming over, most of which were eventually left in Clubs or donated to Group Library.



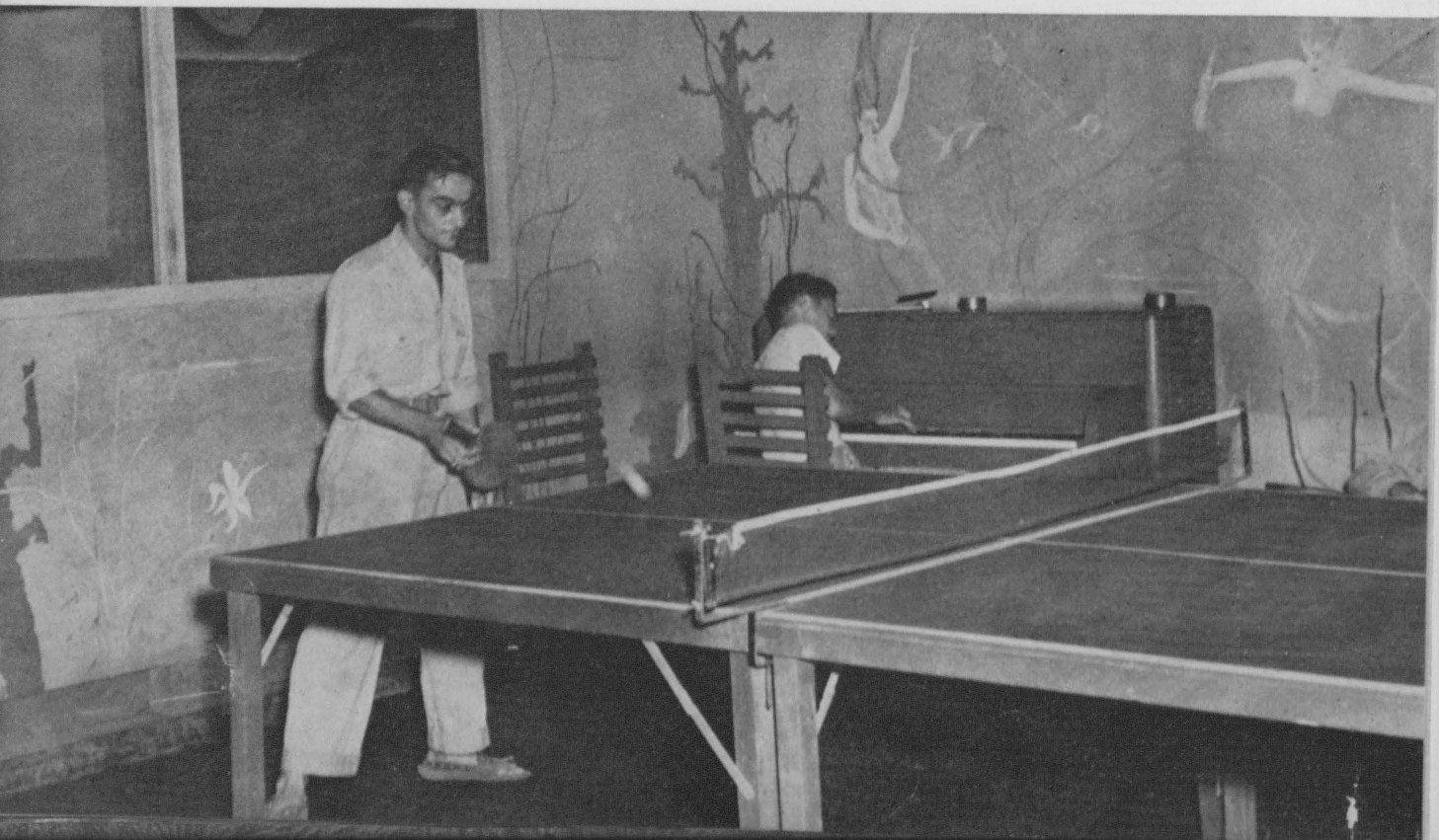


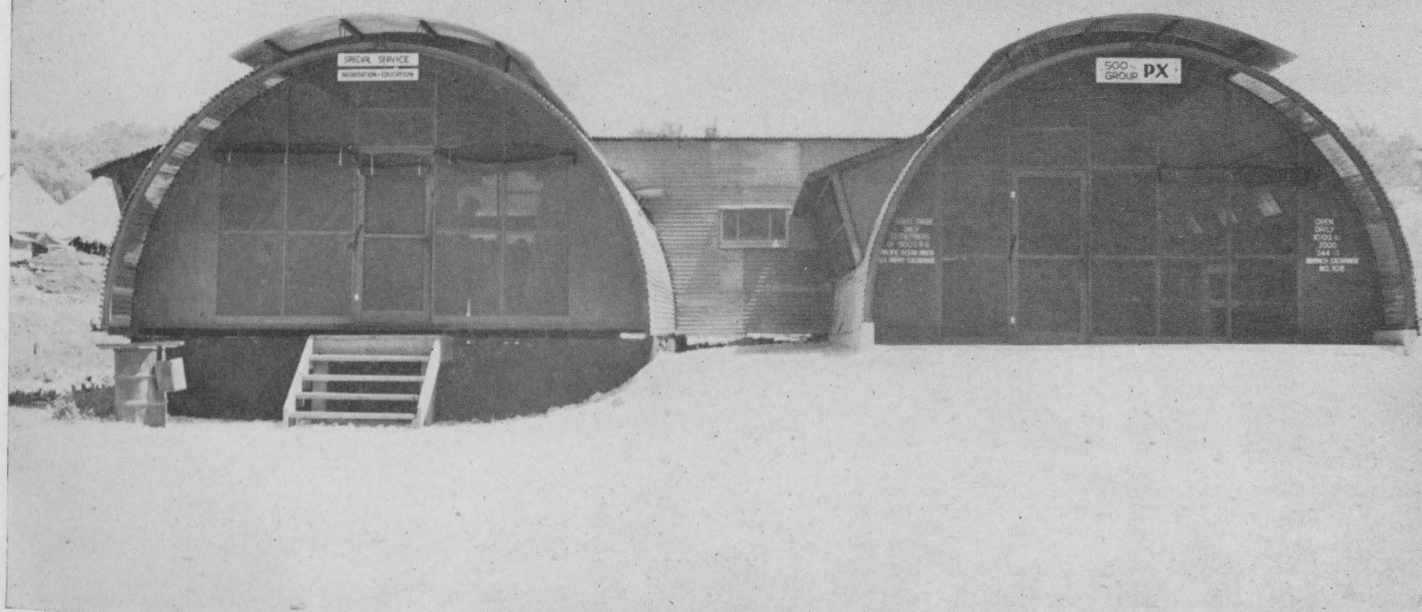
Above, Louie Costa, T W Hare, Robert Cooper, Jack Smedley, Roland Lemay and John J Jones gather around a Special Service Steinway for a little close harmony. Below, 882nd writing room. Practically all of club and office furniture was built from plywood or empty packing cases.





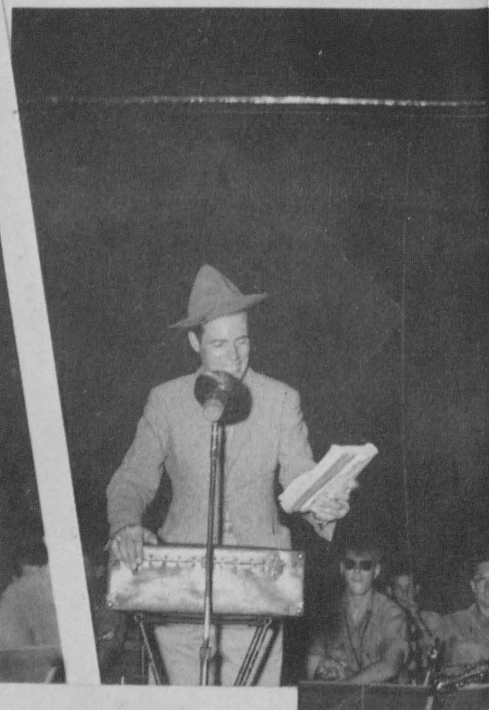
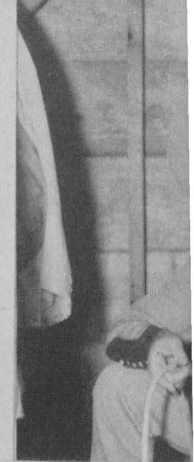
Above, 883rd reading room. Below, 882nd game room. Table tennis tables and much other recreational equipment, including an ice cream making machine bought at Russell, Kansas, were brought overseas with the Group.





The volume of PX sales was so great that the above Quonsets had to be erected to replace tents formerly used. Approximately \$30,000 worth of sales, mostly in 5-and-10¢ store size purchases, were made each month. Below, "Surfside," designed by Major Ralph Maust and constructed by him, Harold J Haley, Walter J Tankus and Joseph Ramos, was the first of the super outdoor theatres to appear on the island.





Due to excellence and early completion of "Surfside," Island Command awarded the 500th the premier of the first girl show to visit Saipan. Only a few of revues held are shown above, since pictures were not taken of all shows. Some that will be remembered are "Musical Interlude," "Winged Pigeons," "Musical Nomads," "Kanaka Dancers," "Magic Moments" and "Concert Group." Among "name" entertainers were Claude Thornhill, Dennis Day, Gene Autry, Tommy Riggs, Dickie Moore and Jackie Cooper.



Betty Hutton, Dick Jurgens, Joe E Brown, "This Is the Army" and other shows were seen at neighboring theatres.

If a particular stage attraction or movie was missed it could usually be seen later at either The Music Hall, Big Top, Wing, Rock Sea, Kandu, Ambassador, Goat Gulch. Pendleton Bowl or Bopahi, all in the B-29 circuit.



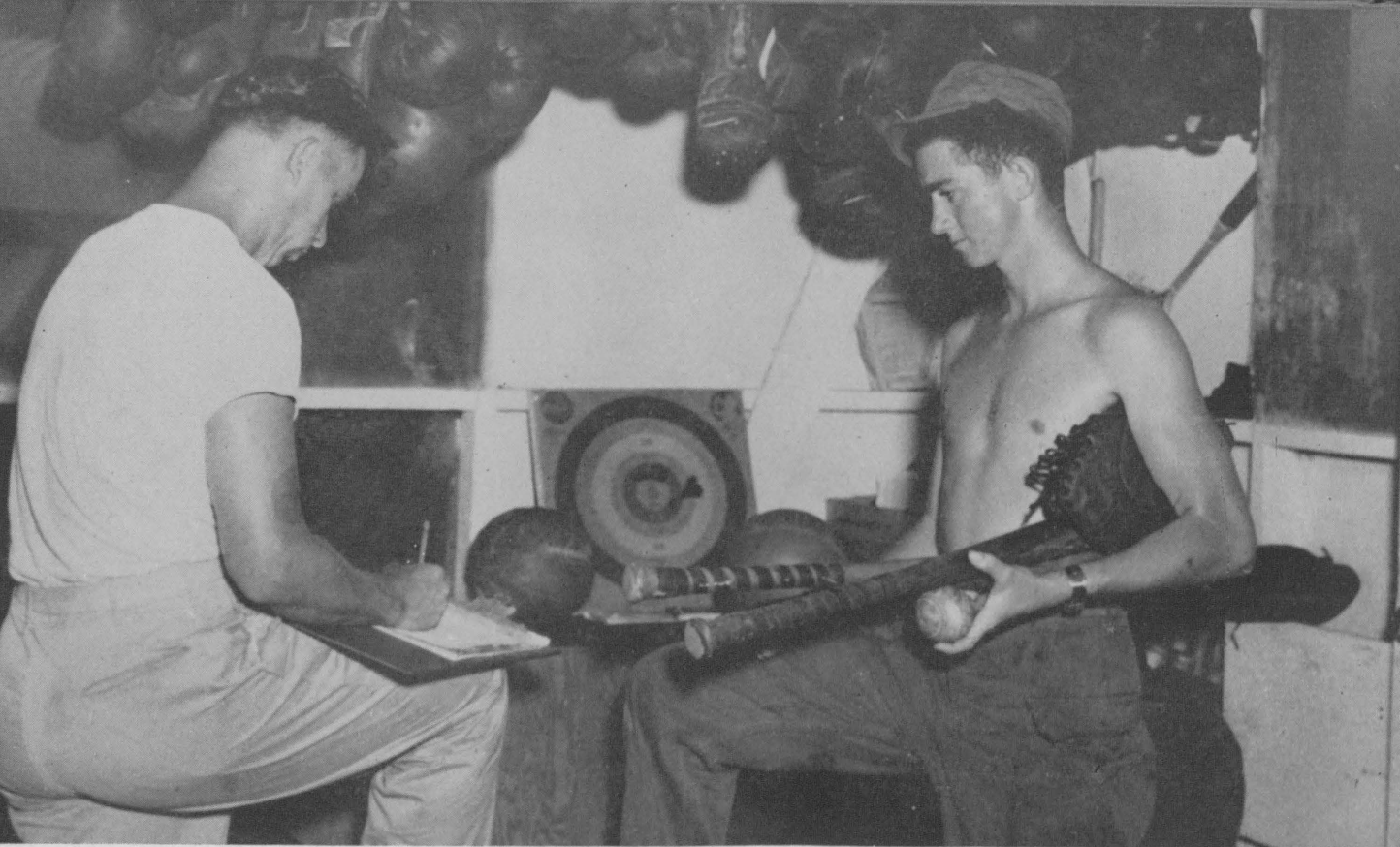
Although physical training was not required, the percentage of participants in athletics was very high. Leagues and contests highlighted the sports program which was conducted by additional duty combat personnel under the guidance of Lt Ed Gibbs, Group Athletic and Recreation Officer. Despite difficulties involved in getting material





and equipment, war's end found the 500th with several ball diamonds, punching bag stands, and courts for tennis, volley ball and hand ball. Ed Wallenstein was a member of a doubles team that won the Western Pacific Table Tennis Championship in July of 1944. *Below*, Col Dougherty and his headquarters softball team.





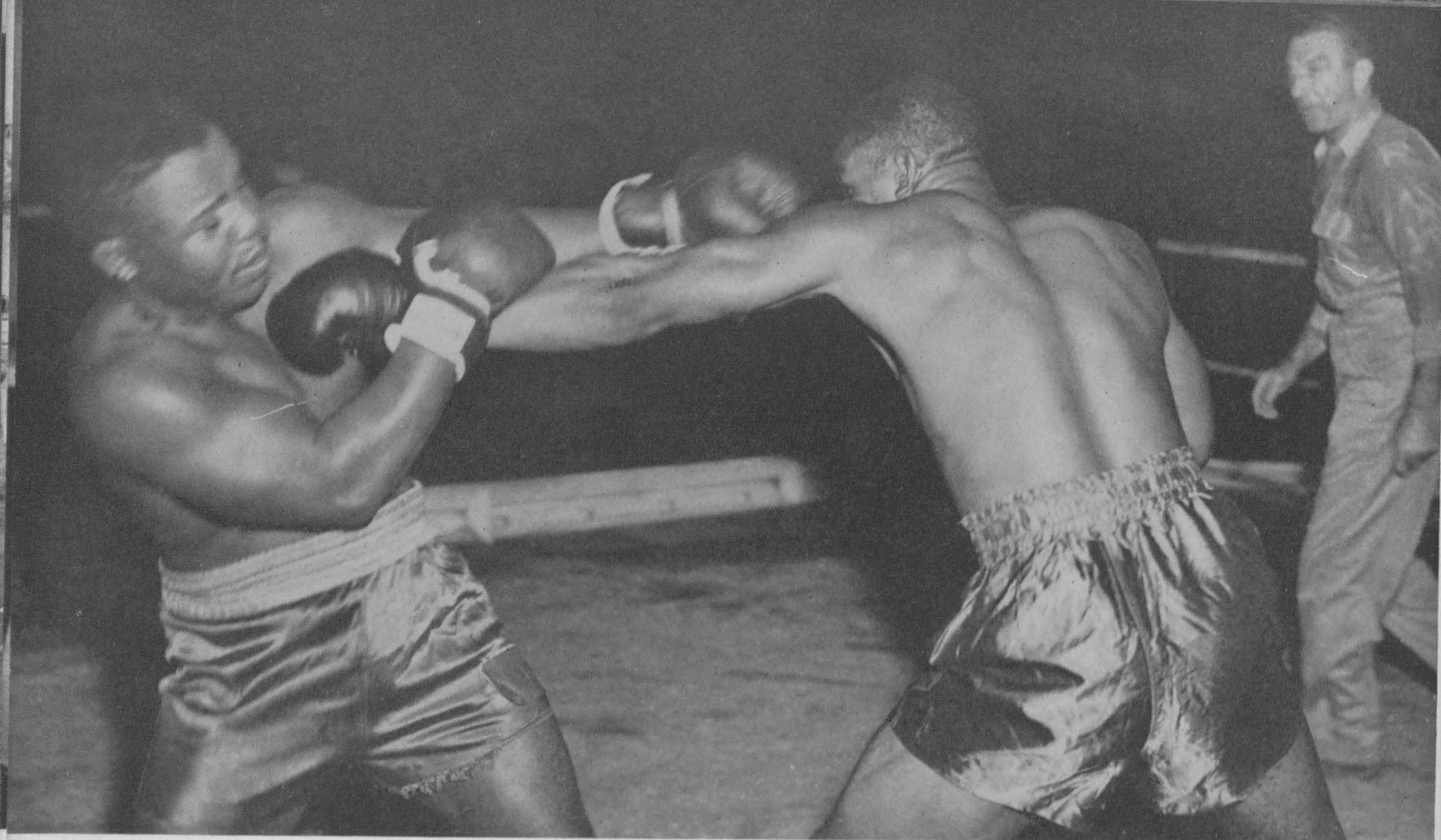
Above, Special Service equipment check room in rear of Library "prefab." Below, The skeet range in the cove. In addition to athletics and shooting, the sports program included fishing trips in small Navy launches.



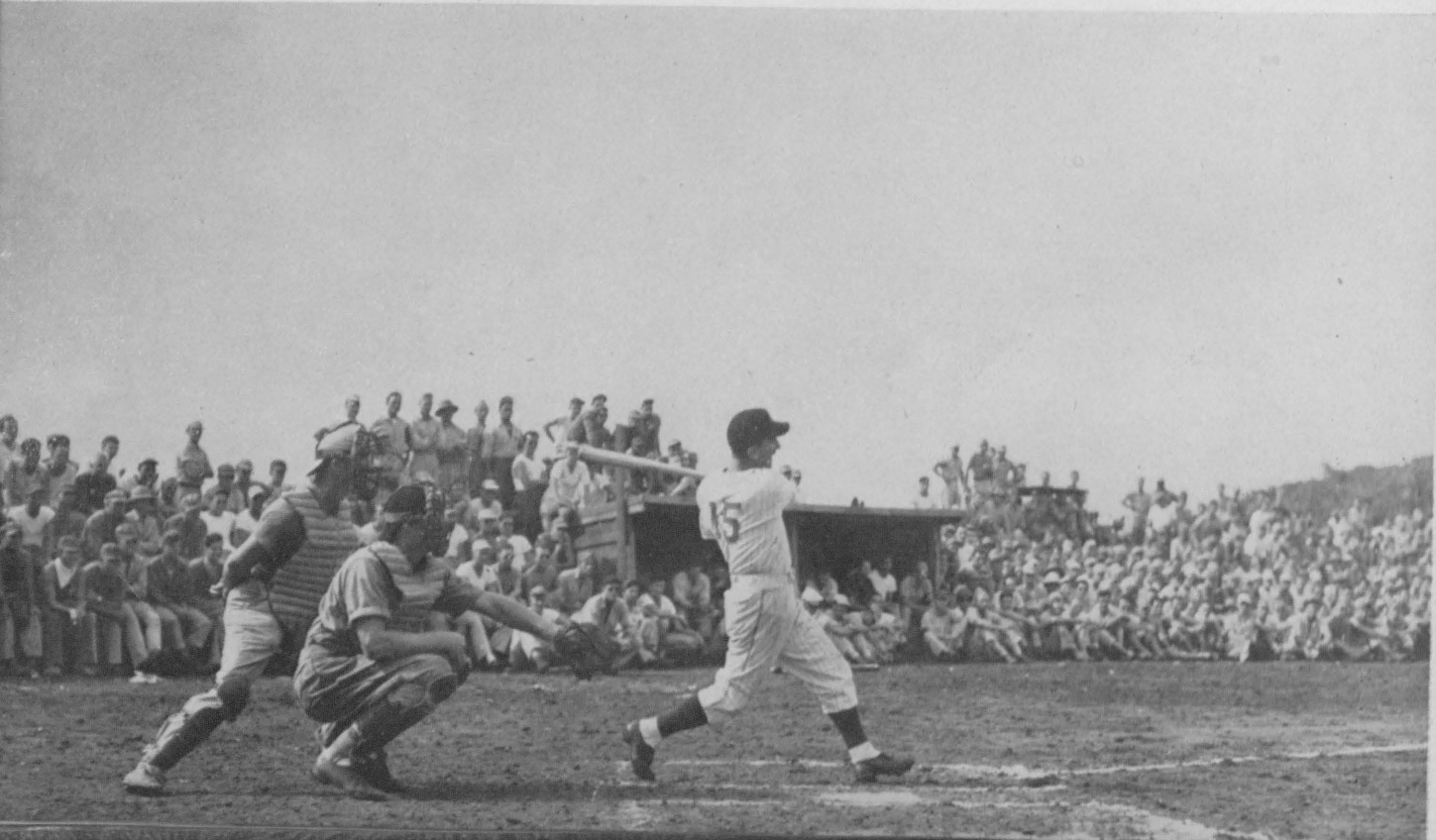


Saipan's beautiful beaches and tropical climate provided excellent facilities for bathing and swimming. *Below*, The "nurses'" beach where they, along with Red Cross girls and Army hostesses, made that particular spot look like home to the few fortunate men who visited there.





Above, One of boxing bouts held in nearby Pendleton Bowl. Below, Inter-island baseball game on 5 August 1945, between "Tinian Flyers" and "Saipan Bombers." These servicemen were nearly all ex-big league players assigned at that time to Army Air Forces in Pacific Ocean Area.





WXLD, which began broadcasting from a pyramidal tent, provided excellent radio fare. Reception was perfect. No advertisements or soap operas marred the steady flow of good music, news and entertainment. Here is a typical day's schedule:

FRIDAY

15 June 1945

Melody Roundup	0600	Music Canteen	1430
GI Jive	0615	News	1500
Relax and Listen	0630	Spotlight Bands	1515
News	0700	Blondie	1530
Yawn Patrol	0715	News	1600
News	0800	Cocktail Hour	1605
Symphonette	0815	Amos 'N Andy	1630
Yank Swing Session	0830	News & Sports Page	1700
News Sidelights	0900	Calico Jamboree	1715
At Ease	0915	Duffy's Tavern	1730
Andy Russell	0930	News	1800
Mystery Discs	1000	Hot Air	1805
Melody Hour	1030	GI Journal	1830
News	1100	News	1900
GI Jive	1115	Supper Club	1915
Personal Album	1130	Comedy Caravan	1930
Remember	1145	News	2000
News	1200	Musical Memories	2015
Noon Tunes	1205	Mystery Playhouse	2030
News & Sports Page	1300	Hometown News	2100
Odditorium	1315	Dance Orchestra	2115
Matinee at Marpi	1330	Words With Music	2145
War Dept Report	1415	Sign Off	2200



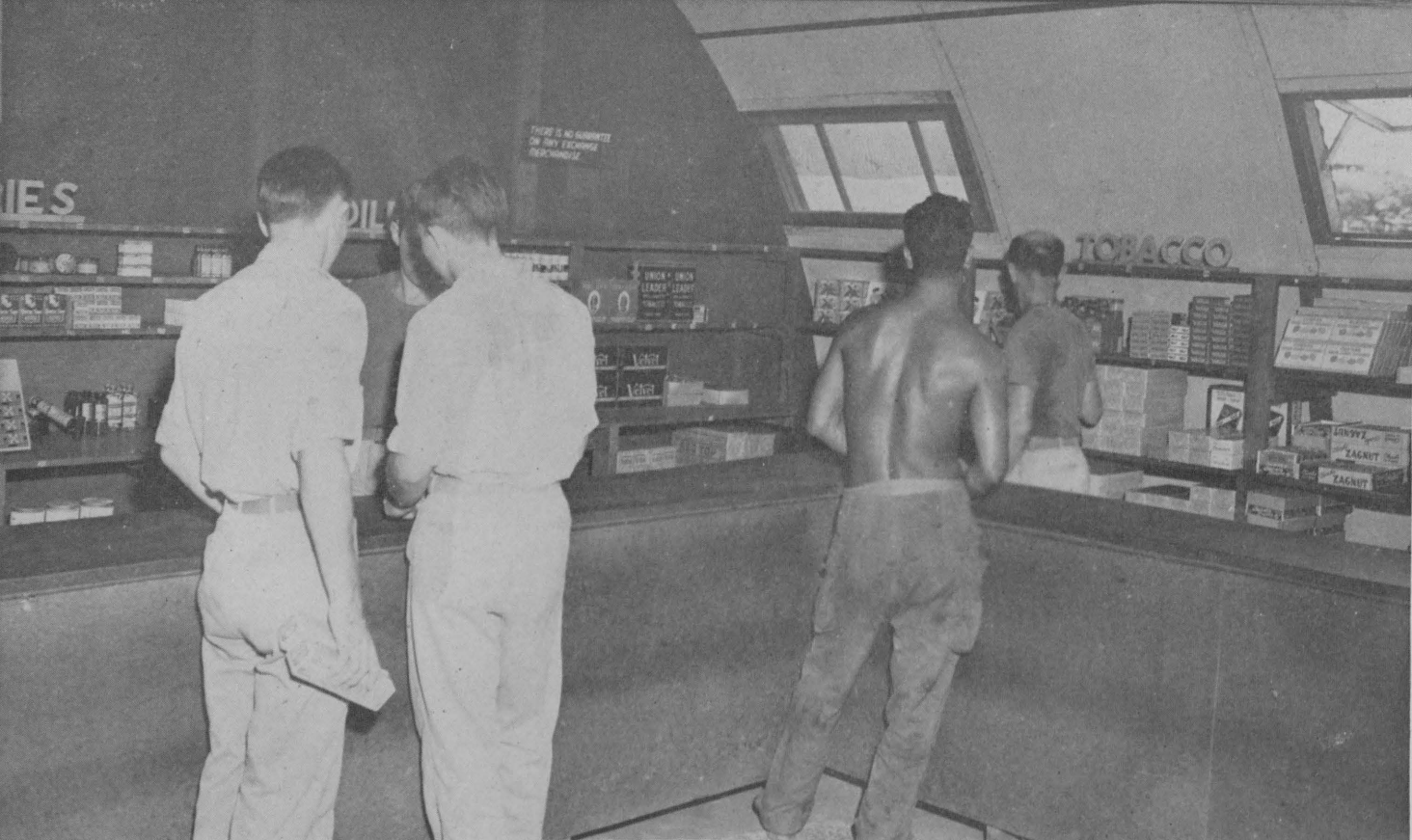
Writing home ranked second only to “sack time” in priority for the few opportunities to relax. First authorization to tell of being on Saipan came on 1 December 1944, followed within a few days by a rescinding order. The ban was again lifted on 8 June 1945. Although offices and clubs provided some facilities, the bunk was still the most popular spot for letter writing.



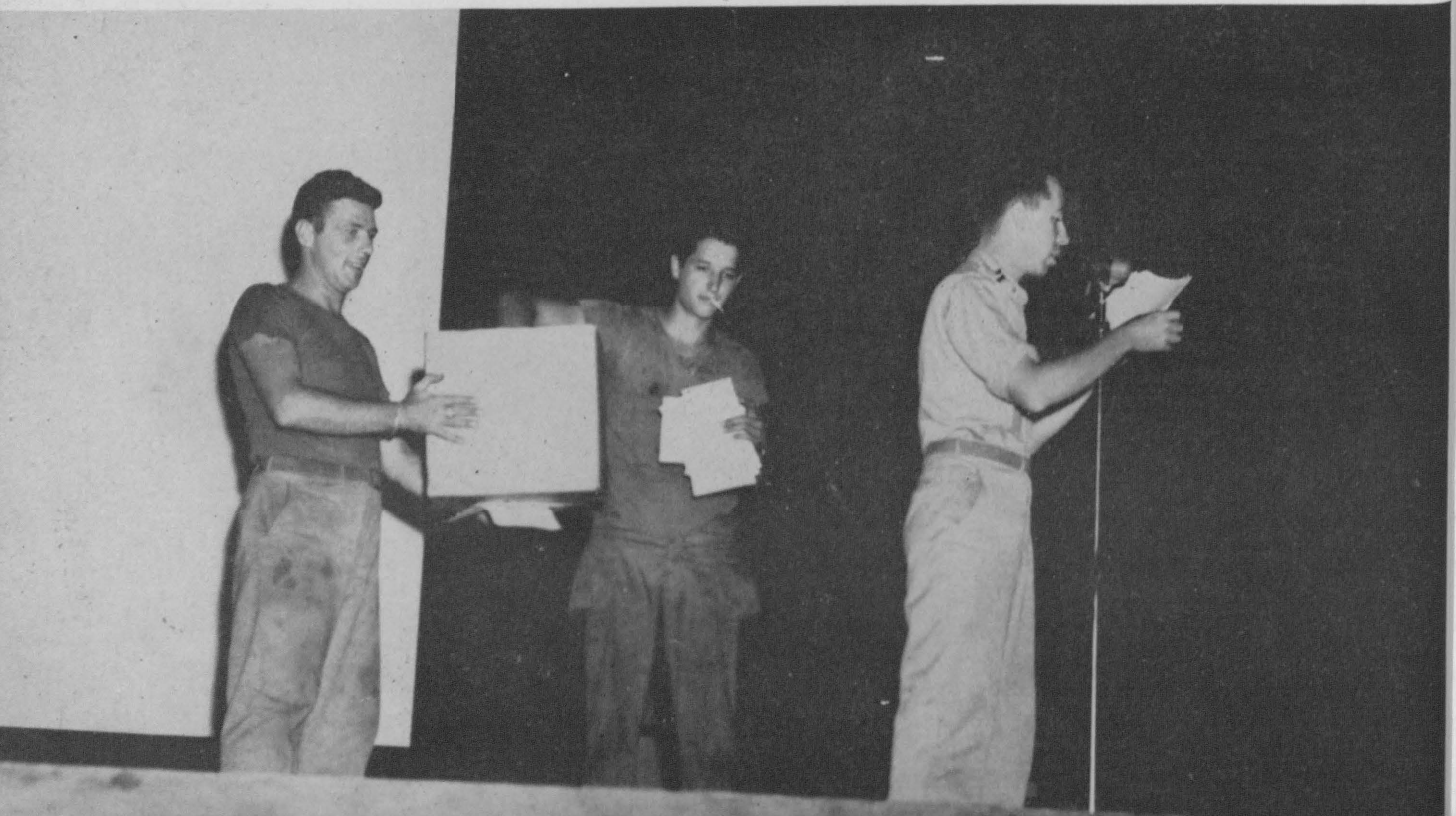


Above is shown a typical combat crew quarters Quonset. Many and varied were the porches, yards and flower gardens surrounding these "homes." Below, As months rolled by, the barber shops kept moving to better and fancier quarters, taking on, in the process, the same appearance as their stateside tonsorial contemporaries.





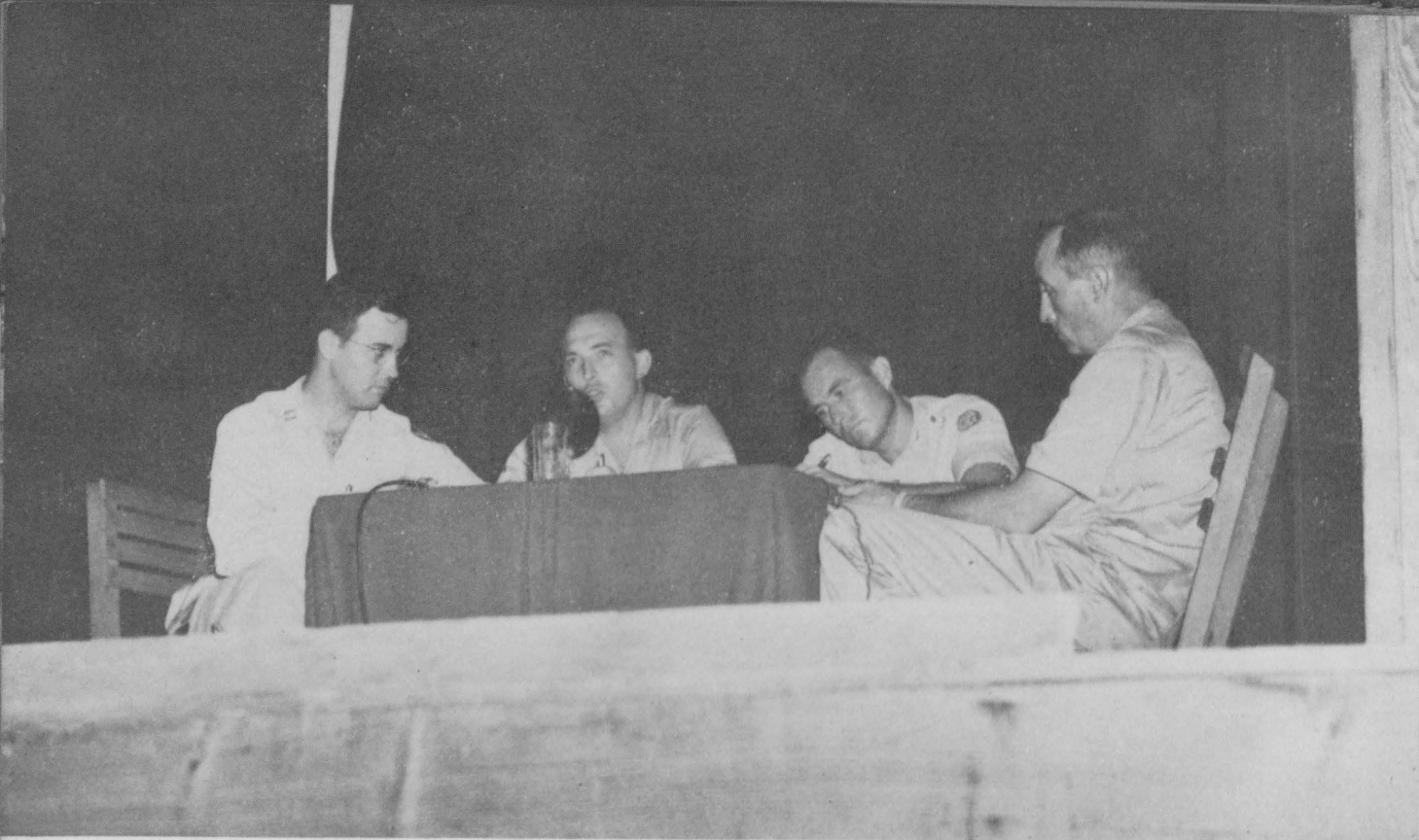
Sales limitations on cigarettes and candy were rare. Good chewing gum, non-existent in US, was available at rate of a pack per man per week. Watches, fountain pens and similar items were rationed in "drawings" held at Surfside. *Below*, Leonard W Dinby picks applications of lucky men from hundreds of slips held by PX clerk James Kelley. Captain McClure reads names of winners.





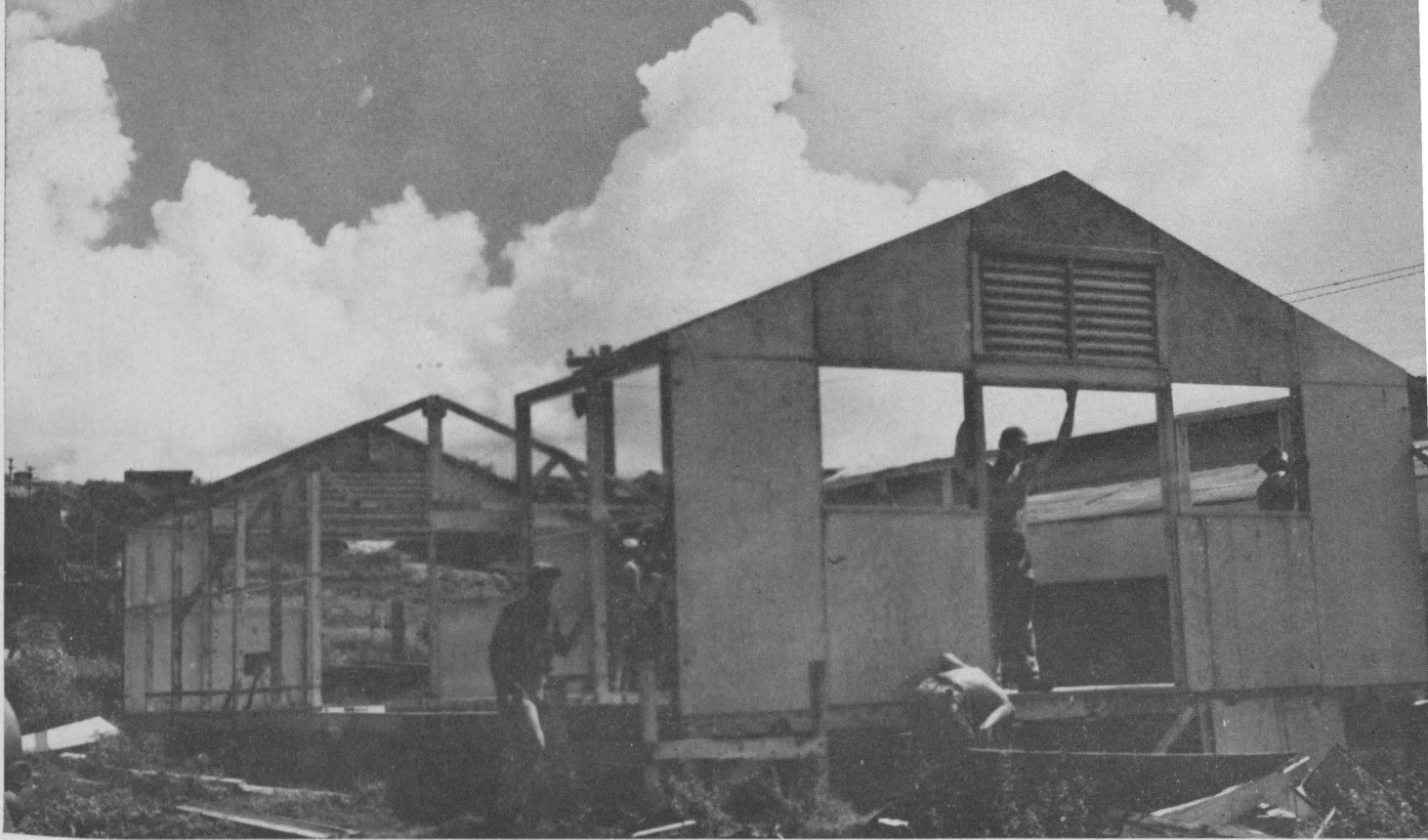
The "fountain," located between PX and Special Service Quonsets, served cold beer at rate of six cans per man per week and "coke" as the supply permitted. *Below*, Joseph B O'Bryant and Stanley Bara sign up for Armed Forces correspondence courses at Information-Education Office. Hundreds took advantage of this opportunity to advance their education while overseas.



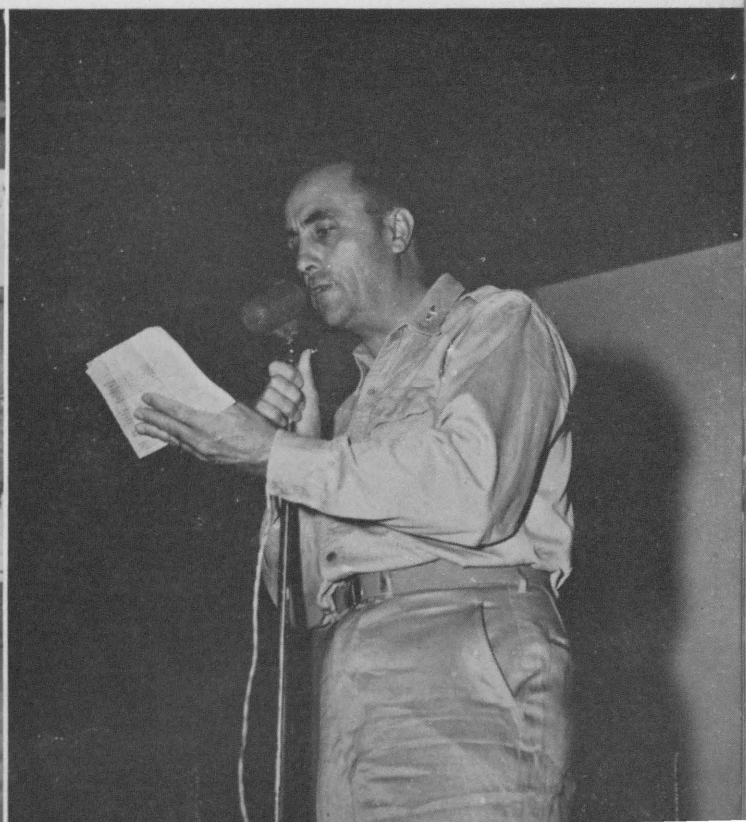
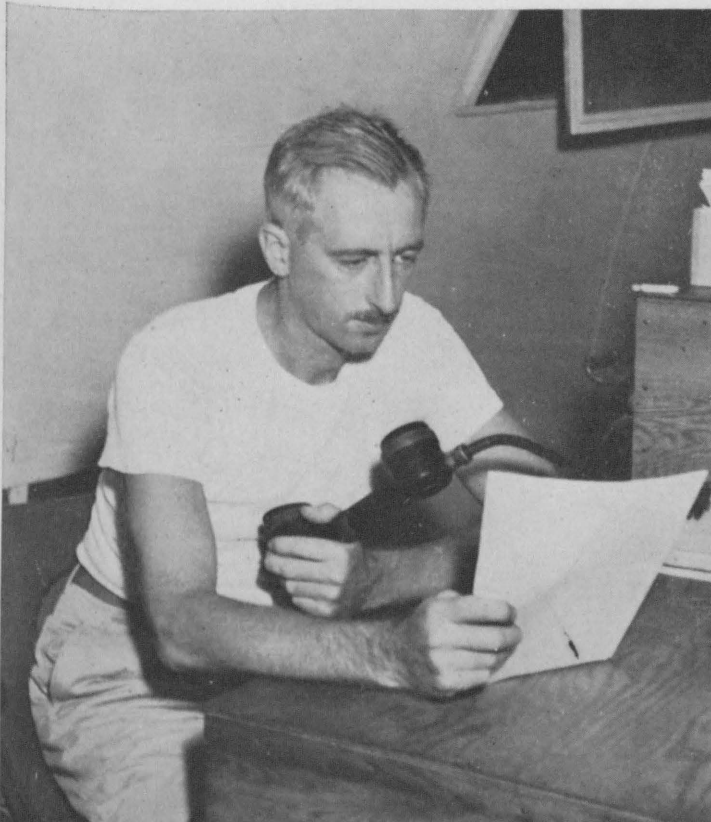


Weekly "Information Nights" at Surfside featured speakers from other branches of service and roundtable discussions by 500th people. *Above*, Major Hansen, Chaplain Hickey, Major Martin and Lt Colonel Adamson answer questions on "Why No Promotions." *Below*, John Harris, Ed Iwanowski, Ewell Manning, Thomas Green, James Garfield, Robert Kaspar and Harold Moselle discuss the San Francisco Peace Conference.



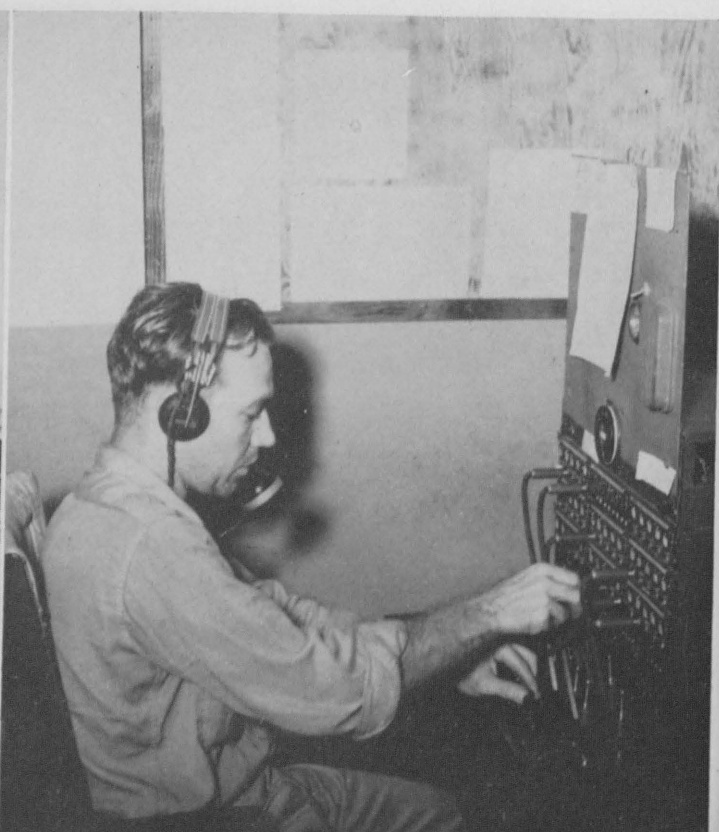


Above, Construction of the Group's Library was begun at 0730 and finished at 1430 (2:30 PM) the same day, complete to last strip of roofing. Location next to PX made this a much-used facility. *Lower left*, John Harris gives the latest news over area PA system. *Lower right*, Lt Colonel Herbert Adamson reads, to men gathered at Surfside for evening movies, the latest official word on return to the States.





Above, Unit personnel, in Group Headquarters Quonset. Lower left, Squadron S-2 men erect their own building. Left to right, Lt Leonard Anderson, Tony Purtell, William Maxwell and Capt Elmer Huhta. Lower right, Raymond Lauth at the Group's switchboard in communications office.





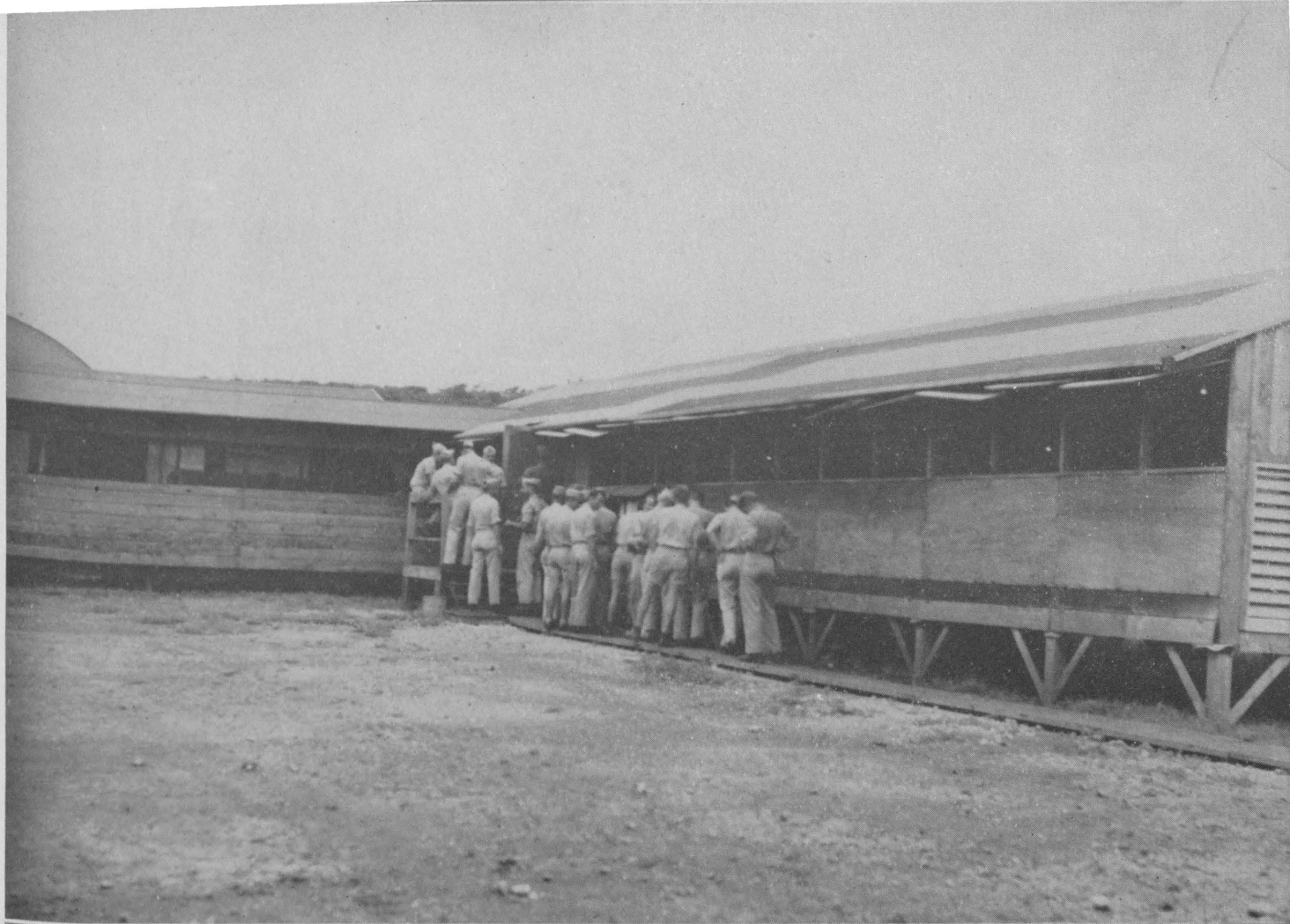
Mail call, *above*, was easily the outstanding event of the day's routine. Miniature post offices were opened in each Squadron and in Group Headquarters. Censorship duty was rotated among company grade officers. Island Quartermaster, after early days, handled a limited amount of laundry, *below*. Due to frequent showers, it was not unusual to pick up a "wet wash." Pressing, if any, was done by the individual.





Clothes washing was a continuing process. Machines brought overseas by ground echelon proved invaluable in the struggle to keep clean. Number of pieces allowed in each bundle to Quartermaster laundry was not enough to satisfy the demand. *Below*, Marcy A Manee takes down his clothes after their “quick dry” treatment by the tropical sun. If it rained while a wash was on the line the SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) was to let it alone and it would be dry again within a few minutes.

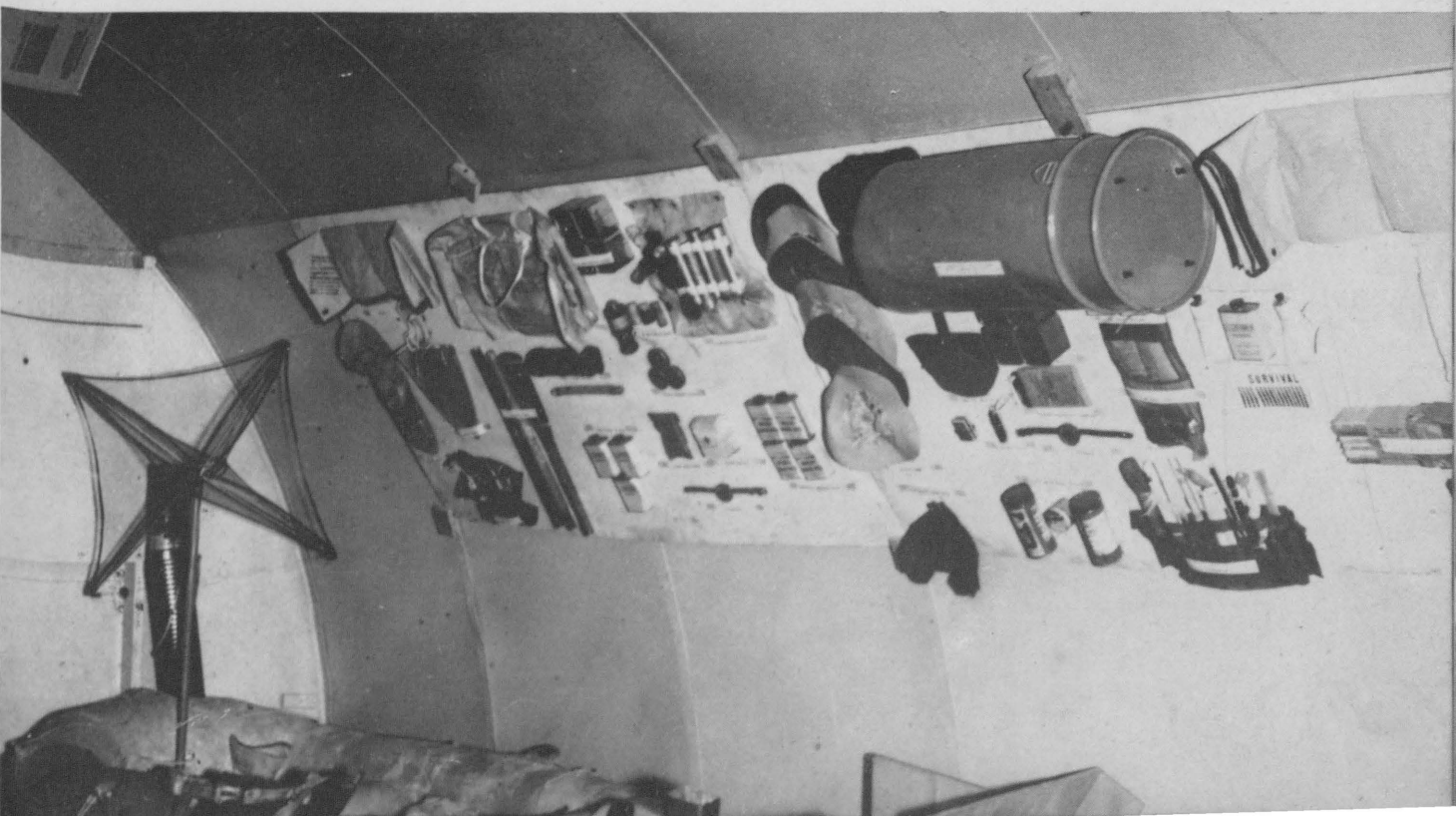








Electric power was never sufficient although the GI generators were supplemented with Japanese ones, *above*, taken from demolished sugar mill. *Below*, A part of the display in the Personal Equipment room where crewmen were thoroughly acquainted with the life-saving devices furnished for their safety.





An informal staff conference in 882nd Squadron orderly room. Although the organization was operated on a Group level, most of the routine living problems were handled by Squadrons. *Below*, The Briefing Room. Each Group was allocated one of these huge warehouse Quonsets for briefing and to house S-2 offices.





Above, "Docs" McConnell, Zimmerman, Trier, Jones and McLaughlin pose beside one of the 500th's ambulances. Below, "Sick call" in front of the dispensary. Bulk of minor cases were for treatment of abrasions and cuts from the sharp coral rock that jutted out all over the island.



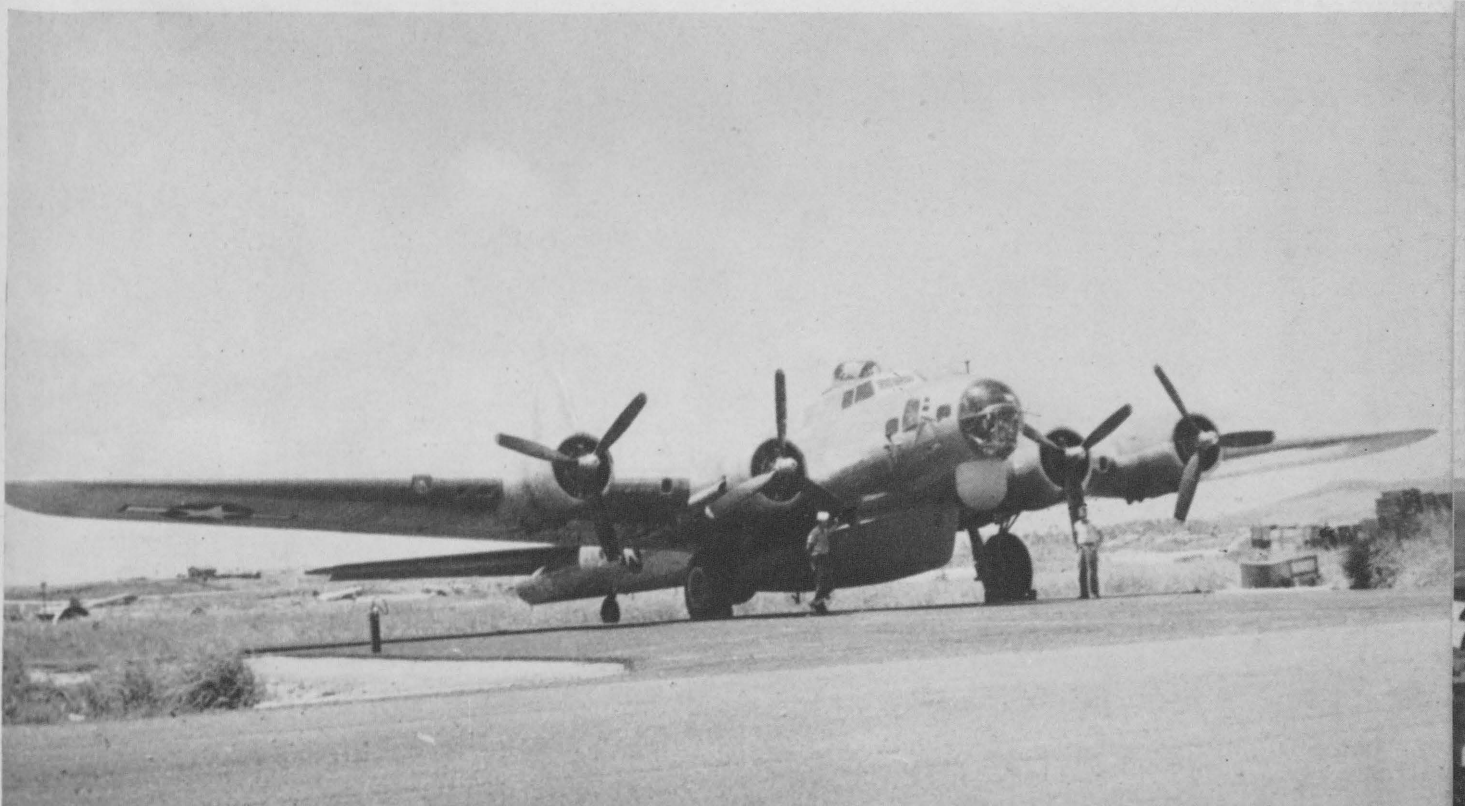


Ear infections were very common. *Above*, Medic John Tabbas washes out the "fungus" of one of many such patients. *Below*, Charles Nadwadnick awaits the dental ministrations of Captain "Doc" Jones while medic William Smyth looks on.





Above, Ambulance and medics at Tanapag Harbor prepare to pick up more combat casualties resulting from Iwo Jima invasion. Below, An air-sea rescue B-17 with its "belly boat." These planes cruised over the route to Japan and, where needed, dropped their power-driven life boats for ditched B-29 crewmen.





H D "Dixie" Carmichael, *upper right*, was first Red Cross Field Director assigned to the 500th. After his transfer to Guam, and a few weeks tenure by Earl Scarborough, Glenn Ferges, *upper left*, filled the position. 73rd Wing Red Cross girls are shown below at doughnut factory. Left to right, Betty Sullivan, Marjorie Edwards, Dorothy Way and Merlyn Lampe.





Overseas representatives, "Tech Reps," of stateside concerns. Left to right, Herbert E Skeels, Boeing; William R Decker, Jr, Wright; Earl R Wardell, General Electric; Charles L Curtis, Minneapolis-Honeywell; Mark A Sutterby, Boeing. David Gerrish, another civilian specialist, had returned stateside just prior to taking of this picture.

Although little will probably be said in history books of the thousands of civilian men and women who made possible the mass production of the weapons of war, their contribution was a basically important one.

The story of the aerial offensive of Japan really began with the foresight of General Arnold in planning a super long-range bomber. Much later, on the 18th of May 1941, the War Department authorized the Boeing Airplane Company, in advance of formal contracts, to expedite purchase of jigs, dies, fixtures and critical materials essential to the production of the B-29. Previously, a thousand civilian engineers, designers and draftsmen had created the plane on paper.

Throughout the production of the Superfort, civilian technicians at Wichita, Seattle, Marietta and Renton worked long hours to improve their creation. Wright Aeronautical toiled to perfect the engine. Boeing fireproofed nacelles, wings and gas tanks. Just prior to overseas departure of first B-29 Wing, 600 civilian experts worked outdoors in wintry Kansas gales to complete modifications demanded of them by the host of combat-wise generals expediting the project.

By the close of the war, one plant alone, Boeing-Wichita, was geared to produce 100 Superforts per month. Without this tremendous output by the men and women on the home front, the destruction of the Japanese Empire would have been delayed many months.



Above, Catholic Mission at Surfside Theatre. Below, Interior of 500th Chapel. During first few months, churchgoers attended services at either the 303rd Service Group or those held by the adjoining 499th Bomb Group. Later, a tent chapel, beautifully located in the grove near the sea, was erected in the 882nd area.





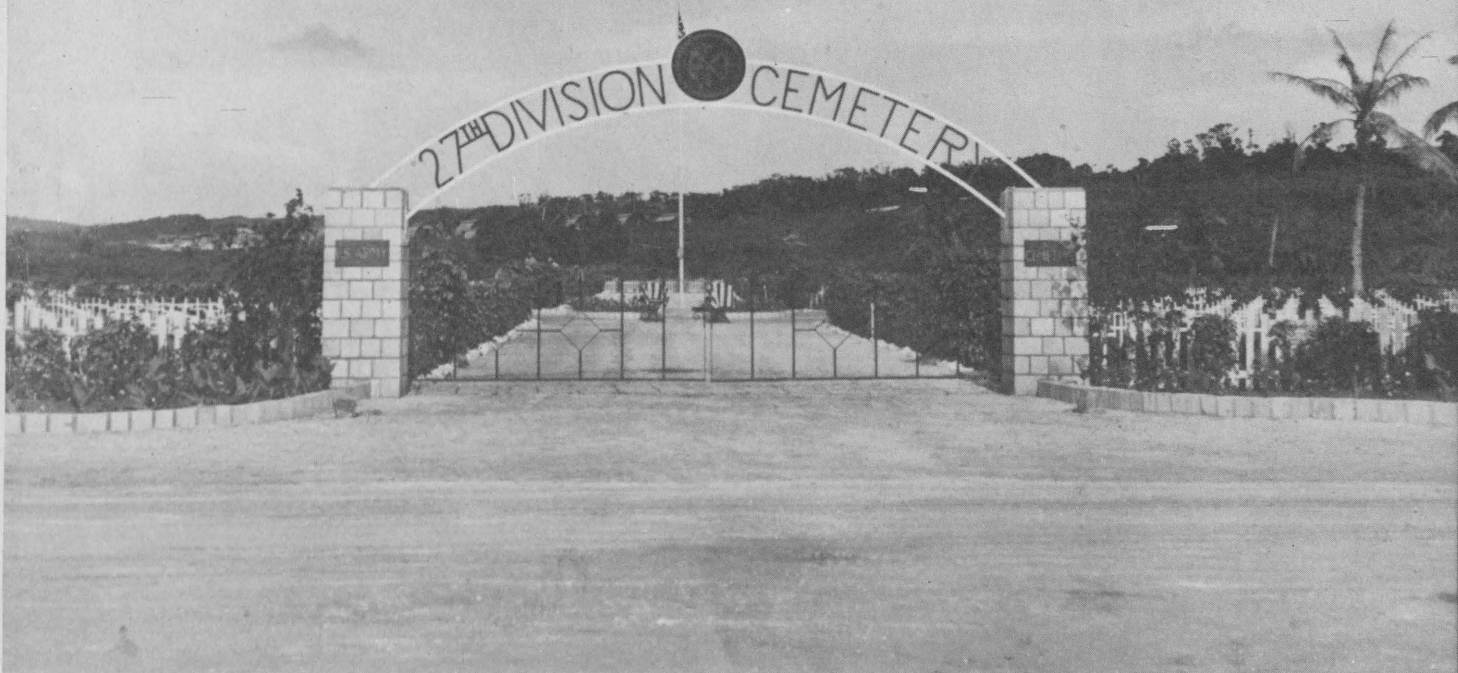
Other 500th Bomb Group members line up while Major Robert Fitzgerald, *above*, shakes hands with the 303rd's Chaplain Davis at Christmas service, 1944. *Below*, New York's Archbishop Francis J Spellman holds mass for 73rd Wing Catholics at Pendleton Bowl.



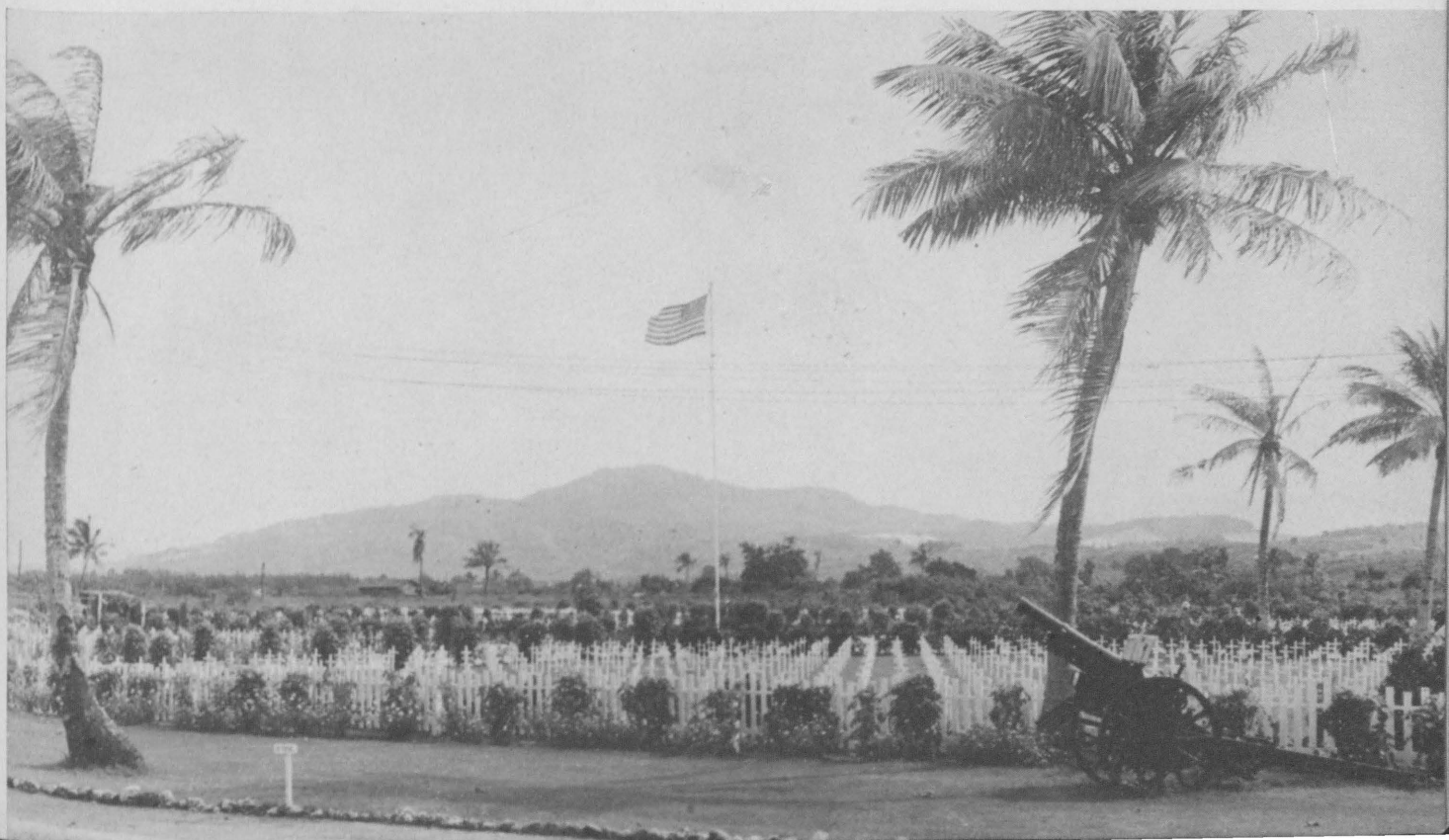


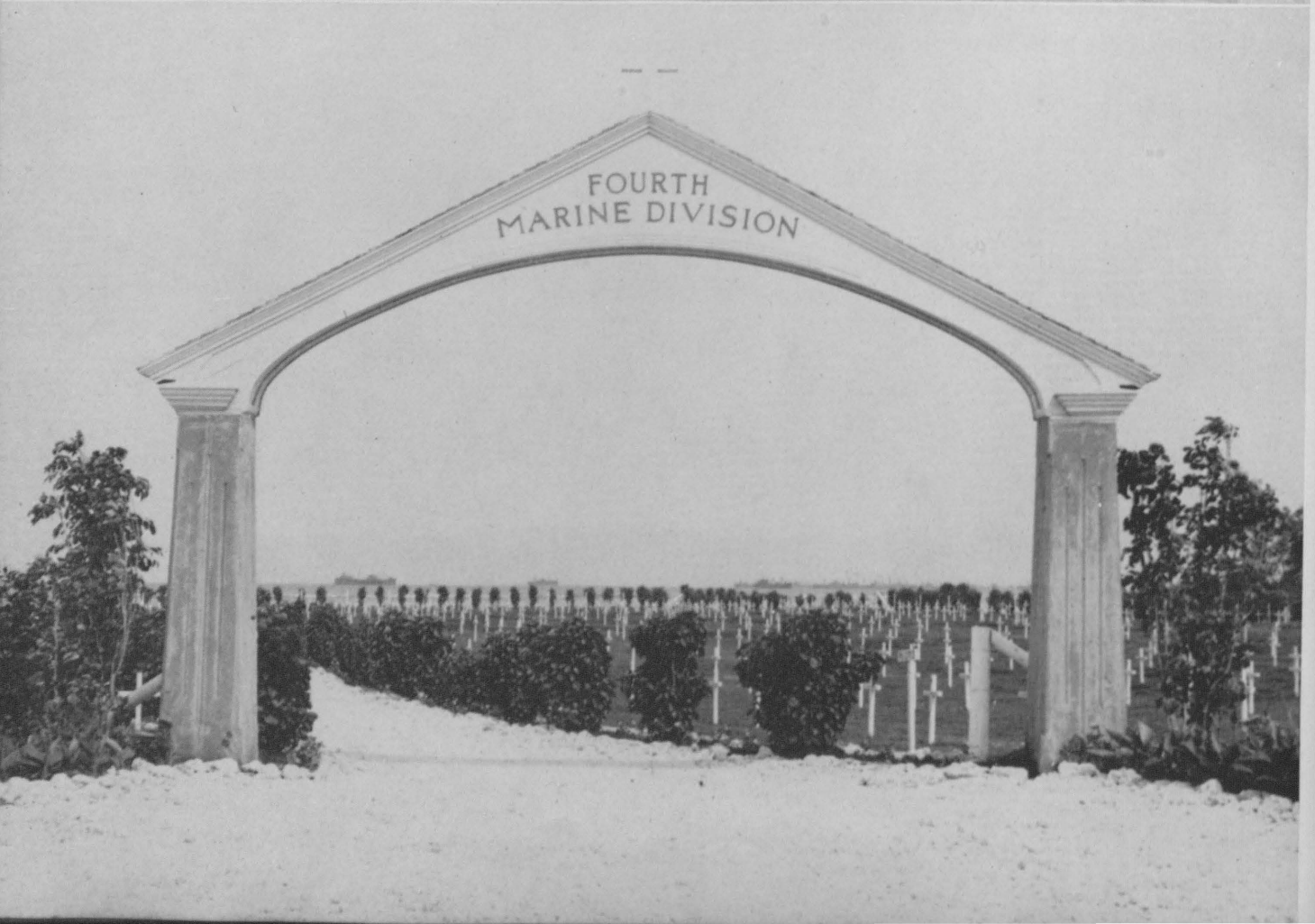
Above, Chaplain Gaspar at 1944 Thanksgiving services. Below, Funeral of Lt Colonel Harry Brandon, killed in a training crash on Guam shortly after his transfer from position as Deputy Group Commander of the 500th.



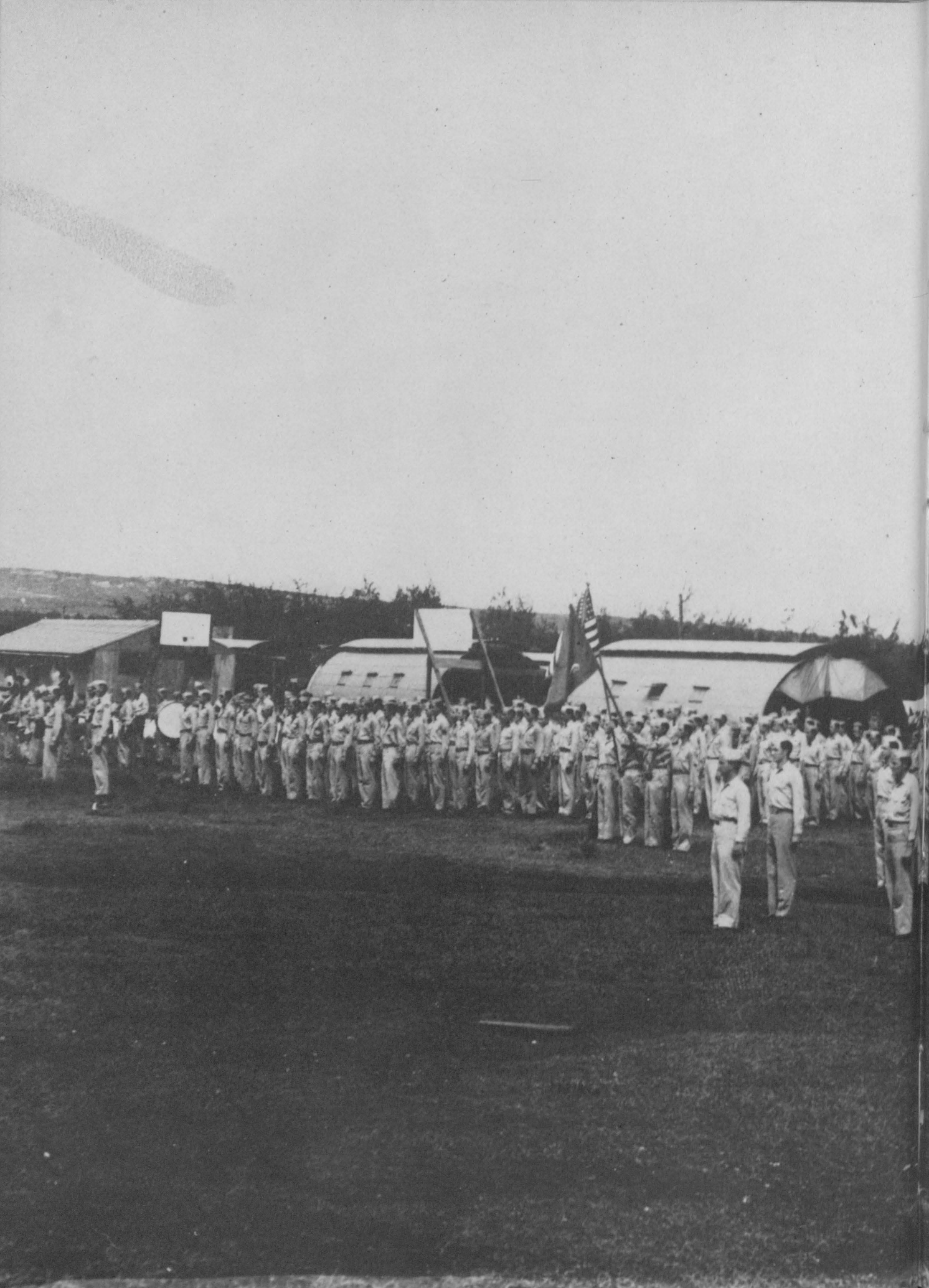


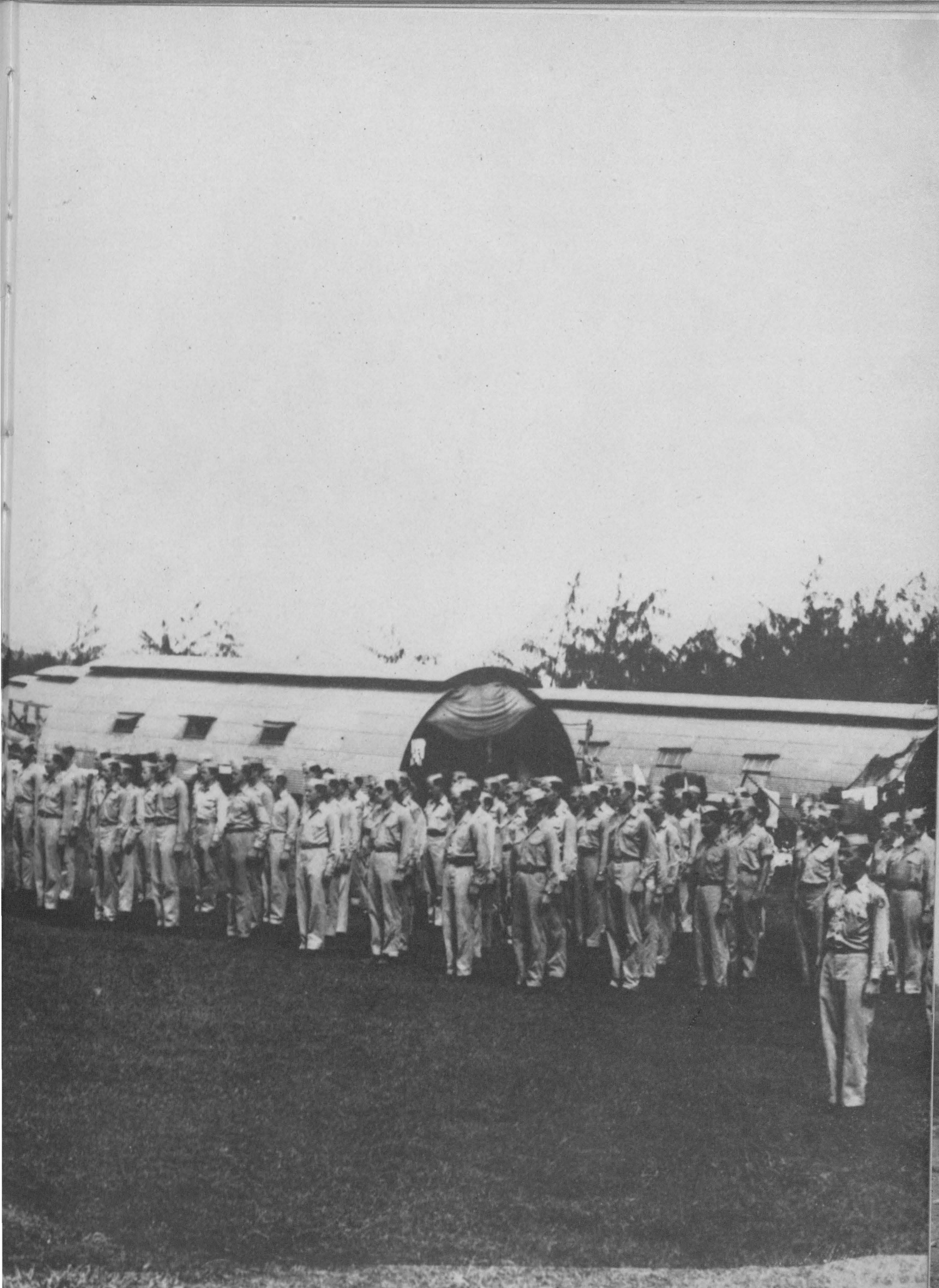
Saipan cemeteries, like other military burial grounds, were located in beautiful quiet spots; were meticulously tended and continuously guarded. Several 500th Bomb Group men, all buried with honors, rest here alongside men of the 27th Division who gave their lives to wrest Saipan from the Japanese.

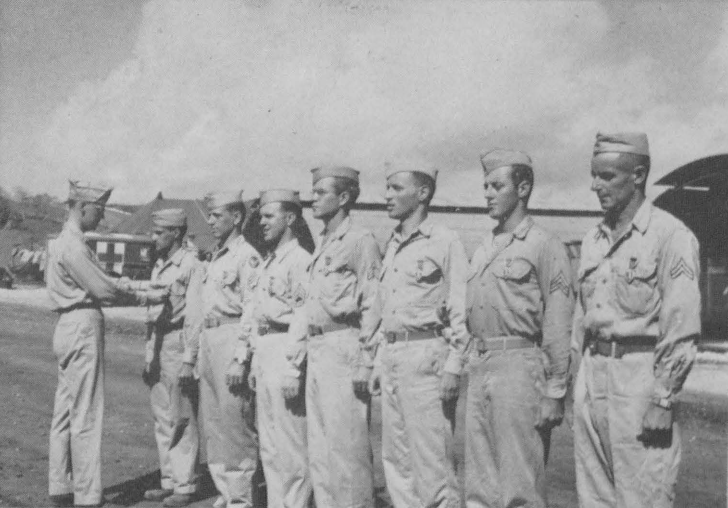




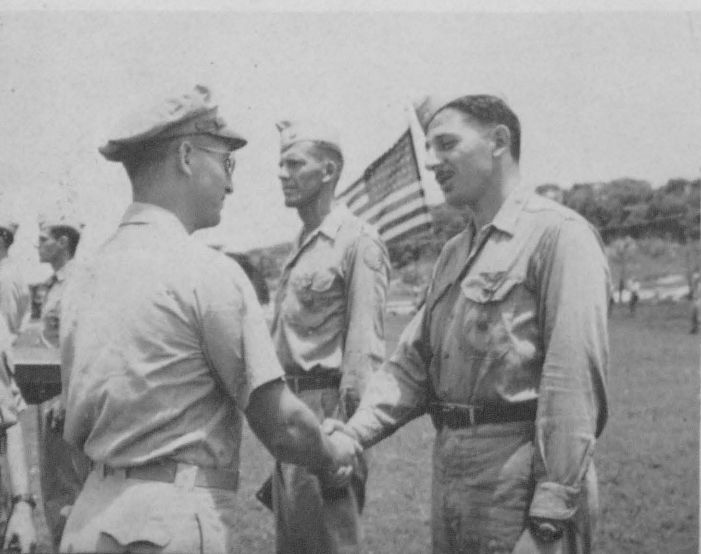


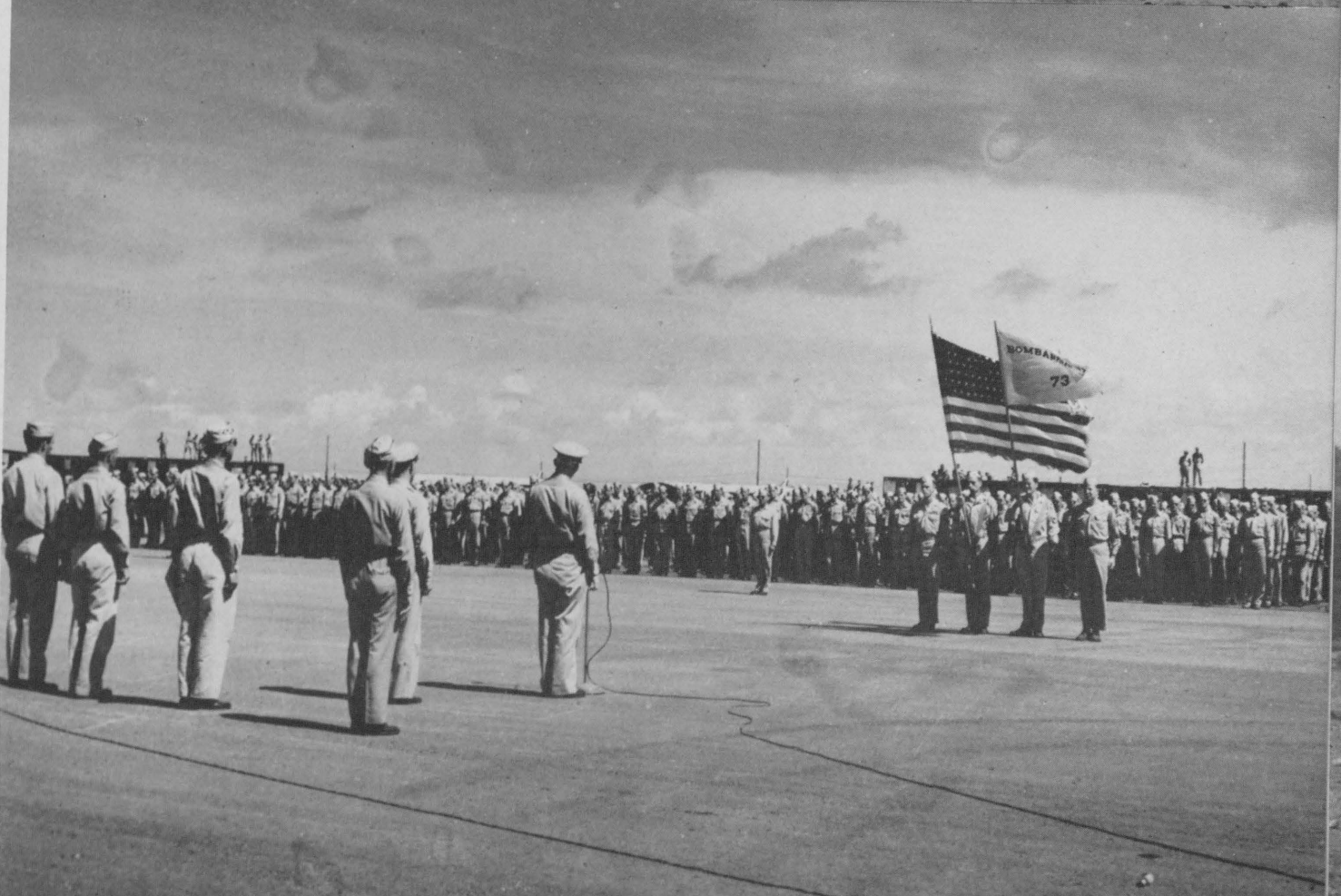
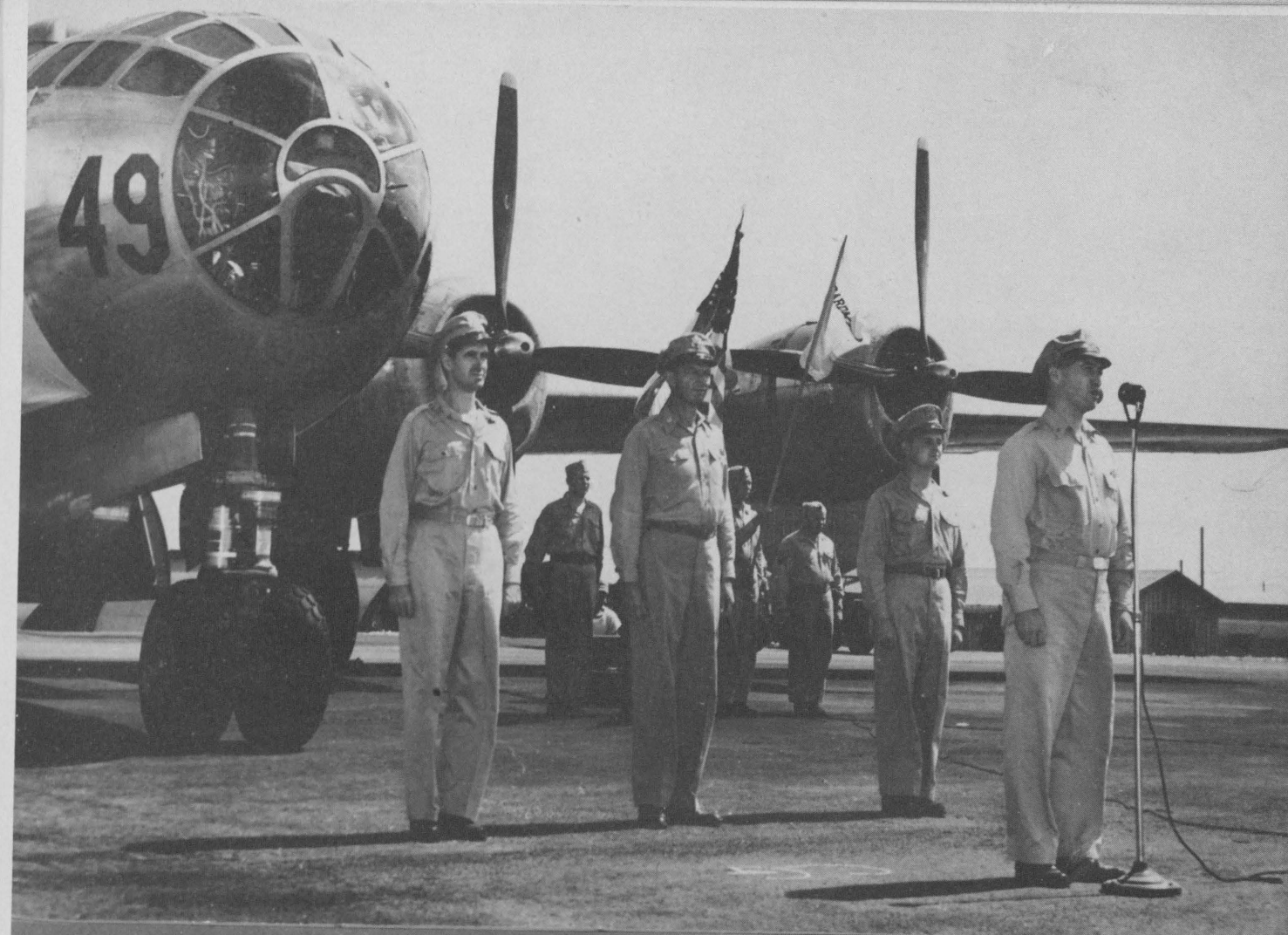






Above, Group Commander Colonel John E Dougherty awards Purple Heart medals. *Upper left*, Mercado, Smidt, Dorr, Cantrell, Marlin and Salmon. *Upper right*, Kamp, Pariano, Webb, and Hesselbach. *Center left*, Makio, Quinn, Abas and Talley. *Center right*, McNabb, Waggoner, Moffitt and Clark. Below, General Emmett O'Donnell presents John A Ciardi, *left*, with Air Medal, and Major Don Thompson, *right*, with a Distinguished Flying Cross.









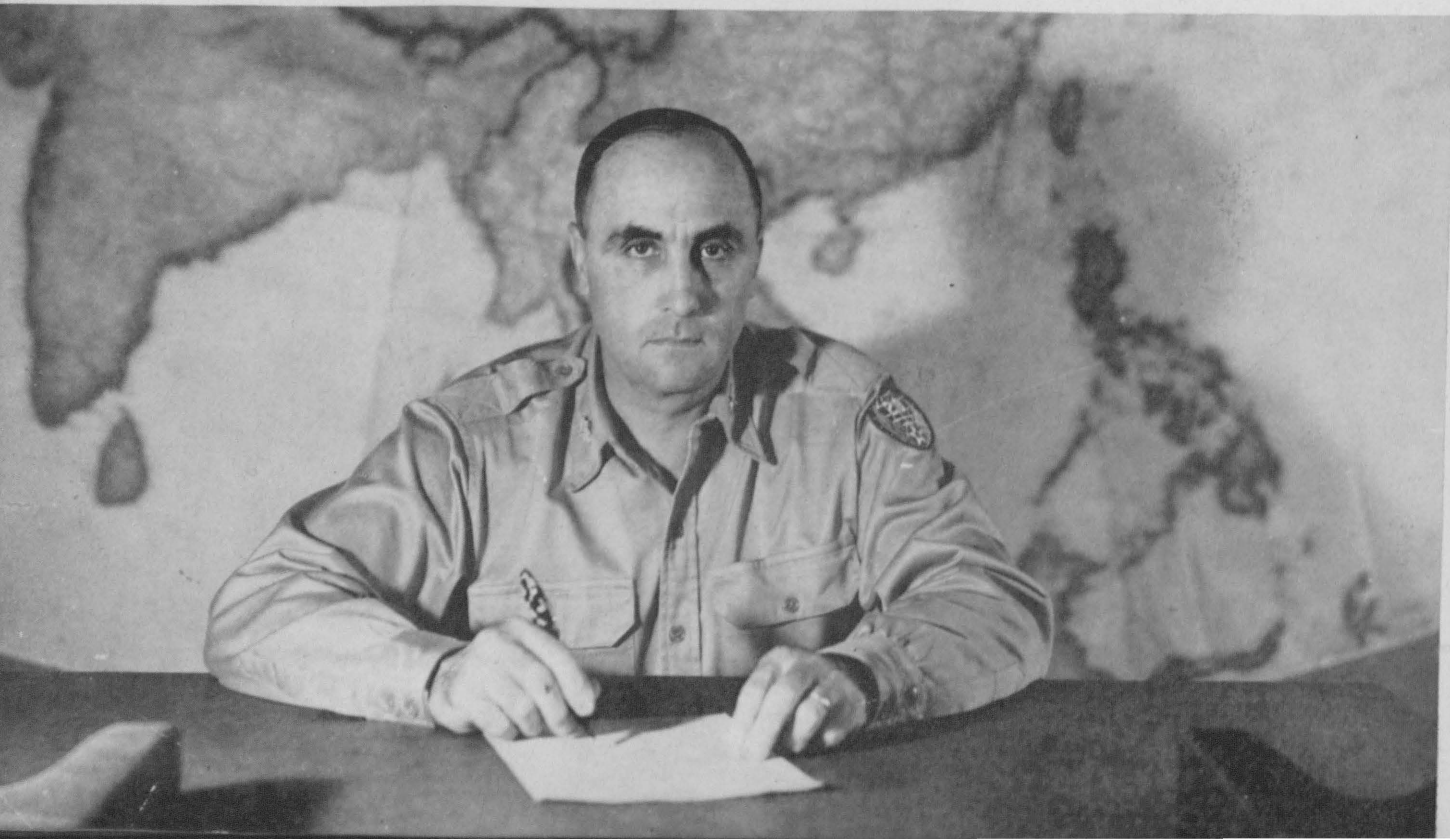
COLONEL JOHN E DOUGHERTY, *Group Commander*

Under the able guidance of Colonel Dougherty, youngest Group Commander in the Wing, the 500th Bombardment Group became an outstanding combat unit. It required an order from General O'Donnell to prevent him from personally leading more than his quota of combat missions. His Irish friendliness and fair policies made him one of the most popularly liked "COs" on the island.



LT COL HARRY S BRANDON, *Deputy Group Commander*

LT COL HERBERT A ADAMSON, *Group Executive Officer*





LT COL RALPH A "PETE" REEVES,
881st Squadron Commander



MAJOR RALPH B MAUST,
881st Executive Officer



LT COL JOSEPH F "TOBY" BRANNOCK,
882nd Squadron Commander



MAJOR ROBERT E WOLCOTT,
882nd Executive Officer

LT COL WILLIAM A "MAC" McDOWELL,
883rd Squadron Commander



MAJOR HAROLD I JOHNSTON,
883rd Executive Officer





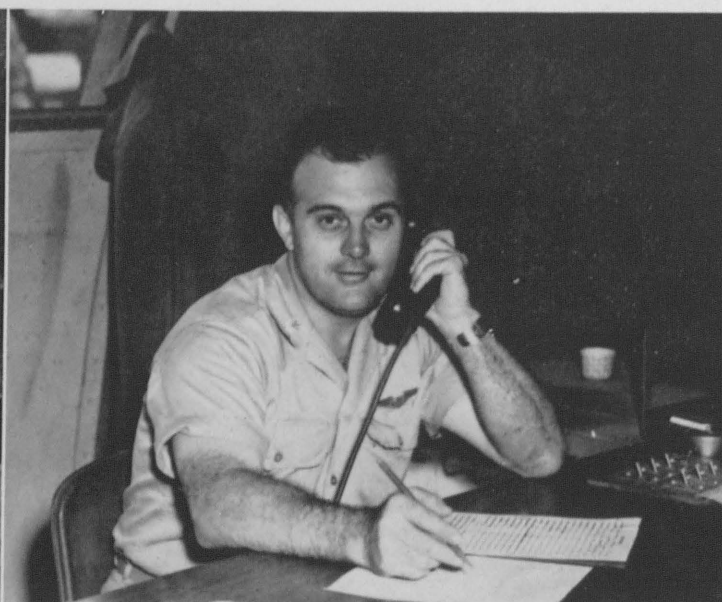
MAJOR DONALD M HANSEN,
Group Adjutant



CAPTAIN JOHN R "SMOKY" SMOLENSKI,
S-2



LT COL FREEMAN A PARSONS,
S-3



MAJOR RAYMOND ASHLEY,
S-4

MAJOR PRESCOTT L MARTIN,
Air Inspector



O'DONNELL AND LEMAY,
Commanding Generals



Seen Around Saipan

Saipan, pronounced SaEEpan by the local authorities, and called by the Americans, Si-pan, is the second largest of the Marianas, being about one-third the size of Guam and slightly larger than Tinian. It is 12 miles long, in a north-east-southwest direction, and has a minimum width of 5 miles. Mt Topatchau, near the south center of the island, is the outstanding physical feature.

Saipan has approximately 40 miles of shoreline. The north, east and south coasts are dominated by steep, rocky cliffs. The water is deep close inshore. Reefs exist only in the somewhat protected embayments, the greatest development being in Magicienne Bay where it averages 200 yards in width. Along the west coast there are sand beaches for most of the island's length. Behind these beaches the slopes are gentle for 500 to 5,000 yards.

Approximately 70 per cent of Saipan's 72 square miles was, until invaded, under sugar cultivation. This included nearly all of the relatively level areas except in the vicinity of Charon-Kanoa, a picturesque sugar mill town on the southwest coast, where some area is devoted to vegetable farming.

Coral limestone is readily available nearly everywhere on Saipan. It was used by the Japs and, more extensively, by us, for road and airfield surfacing.

The climate is typically tropic. The dry season lasts from December to June, the wet season from July to November. The rainfall averages 86 inches a year. Average temperature varies from 76 degrees in January and February to 80 degrees in June. The maximum temperature was 95, the minimum 61 degrees.

In general, there is little man-produced food on Saipan. There are quantities of coconuts, breadfruit, limes, peanuts, maize, bananas, pineapple, oranges, mangoes and melons. The main source of water was, and still is, for the remaining natives who live on the island, rainwater. It is collected from roofs and stored in tanks of various sizes and types.

Before American occupation, sanitation on the island was generally poor. Wagons removed garbage and refuse but the service was inadequate. There was no sewage system. Human excreta was used as fertilizer. Flies, bugs, fleas and mosquitos were everywhere. Pigs were kept in all the native houses.

Magellen was first white man to visit the Marianas. Saipan had been under Spanish rule until 1899, under the Germans from then until World War I, and under Japanese rule after the 1920 League of Nations' mandate.

Unofficial tabulation on native population at close of war was as follows: 13,512 Japanese; 2,656 Chamorros; 1,486 Koreans; 836 Polynesians and Caroline Kanakas and 6 Chinese.



Above, Mount Topatchau is seen from under the nose of a 500th Superfort and, below, from across Lake Susupe. Towering 1554 feet above sea level this peak commanded both a visual coverage of the entire island and a radar range that usually allowed a 45-minute warning to be given when "Bogeys" were picked up.





The farmland, *shown above*, was tilled by natives who returned to Camp Susupe each evening. "Holdout" Japs in the hills foraged in this area at night until Army searchlights and sharpshooters put a stop to their depredations. Lower photo is of a section of the "inland" road to Island Command.

















Despite continuous hunts and cleanup drives by Marine and Army Ground Forces all the "holdout" Japs were never captured or killed. Many an unwary souvenir hunter lost his life because he failed to heed the warning notices, *above*. Even on well-traveled roads, bold Nips occasionally sniped at occupants of passing vehicles.





Banana trees, *above*, and other tropical fruits grew wild on the island. Only a very small portion of land was under cultivation for anything but sugar cane. Primitive native methods for tilling and transporting produce, *below*, have apparently never changed or improved throughout the years.





There were approximately 400 children in the Navy-operated Camp Susupe school system. The headmaster was a priest. The pupils were instructed by recognized Japanese, Chamorro or Korean teachers. Classes began at dawn with calisthenics and singing of songs. Afternoons were spent at play or in helping adults in the fields.





NATIVE BEAUTY

Girl at upper left is Japanese, others on this page are Chamorros, all nurses.





Lyle McQuoid, J O Belletete and Robert J Rudelt visit Camp Susupe for a closeup of native life. Washing of both clothes and bodies was done outdoors on huge concrete slabs. In early days, before changed by US authorities, men and women bathed together.

Life Photo by George Silk





Above, Natives make Geisha dolls for the American souvenir trade. These and other objects of handicraft were mass-produced and sold through Post Exchanges and Ships Stores. Despite strict rules preventing such sales, many transactions were made directly between natives and Americans, usually for cigarettes or candy instead of money.

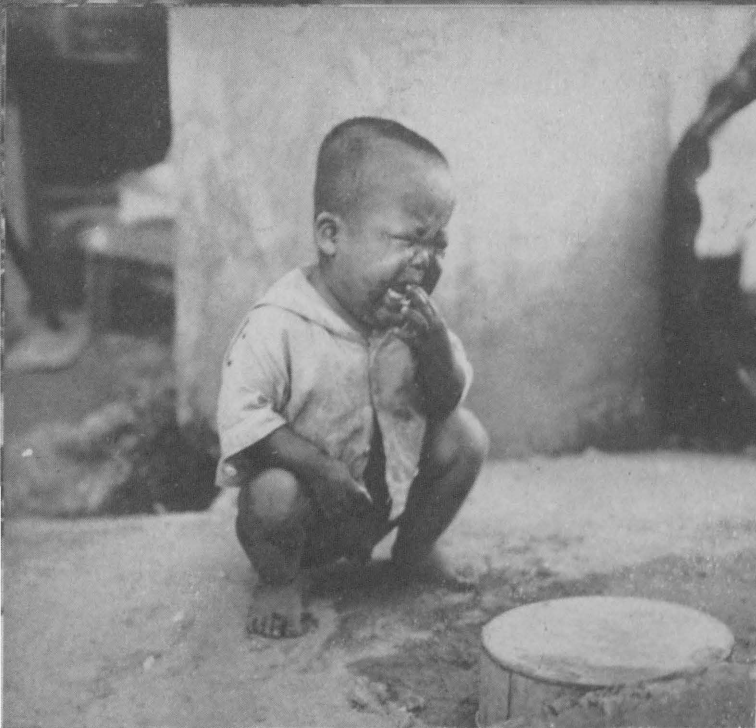




Above, Typical "head carry" used by almost all native girls. Most of the clothing worn by women came from stateside donations made through the American Red Cross. *Below*, The Orphanage, supervised by a former madame and her geisha girls who did such a good job caring for the 75 children at the time they were orphaned by the invasion that they were retained by US Military Government authorities.







Since the mission of US forces on Saipan was to prosecute the war against Japan, little could be done in early days to assist the natives whose homes had been virtually obliterated by our invasion. Consequently they had to construct shacks from the debris and generally look after their own welfare.

There were many among this civilian population who had formerly had electric lights, washing machines, refrigerators and other modern aids to comfortable living in their city homes. When the Japanese government told them to evacuate their cities they also instructed them to "leave their belongings there, as they would be coming back as soon as the Americans were driven away." As a consequence of their implicit faith in the Jap military leadership, these refugees who had hidden in the hills were without even the necessities of civilized living when they later poured into Camp Susupe.

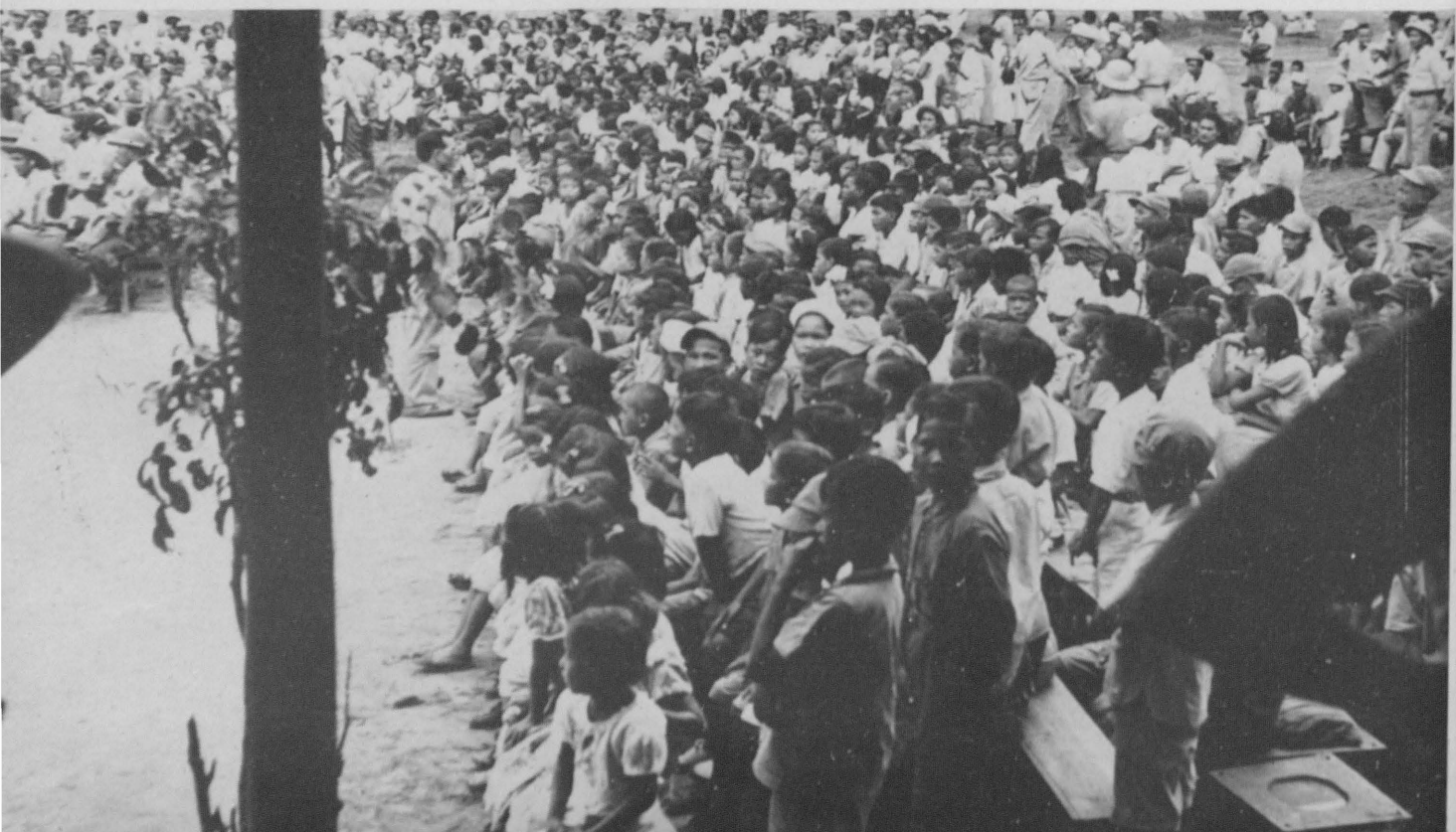


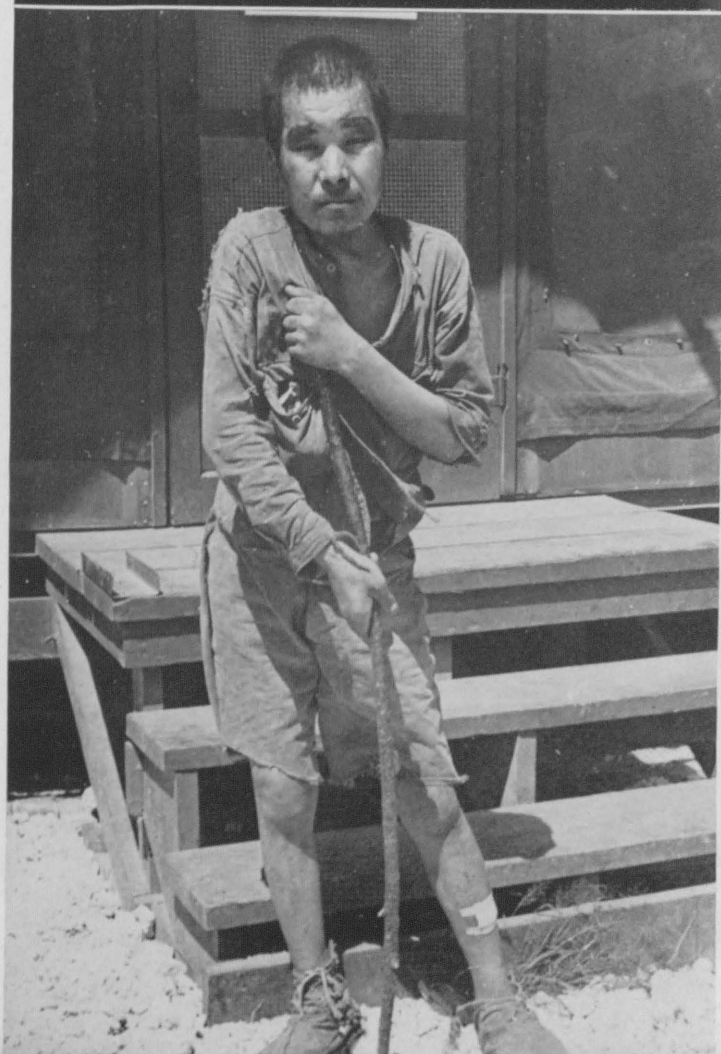
Japanese workers returning to camp, *above*, are searched by Chamorro guards at one of the many gates. In later months, American farm equipment reached Saipan and was put to work to aid in the task of making natives self-sufficient. Laborers were paid 35 cents per day, semi-skilled craftsmen 50 cents and professional people 75 cents.





Elias Sablon, 40, who speaks Japanese, Spanish, Chamorro, Korean and English, is inaugurated as chief of the native village of Charon Kanoa, with the blessing of US Military Government officials. This beautiful native town received relatively little damage and was used as US headquarters during early months.





Surrender . . .

Many methods were used to induce "holdout" Japs to surrender. Sound trucks travelled roads in jungle areas, stopping periodically to enable those who had already given up to try to persuade their friends to do likewise.

Those who did not surrender were rarely ever captured alive, as was the son of Nippon shown at left.



Aerial view of Camp Susupe, *above*, shows orderly layout of native quarters and location of the encampment in relation to swimming beaches. The compound was divided into 13 *dantai* (community units) with a *suiji* (kitchen) for each and a special *suiji* for night workers. Each kitchen prepared food for from 600 to 1000 natives. Distribution was made in bulk to the various *hans* (living groups) composed of 60 to 100 persons.

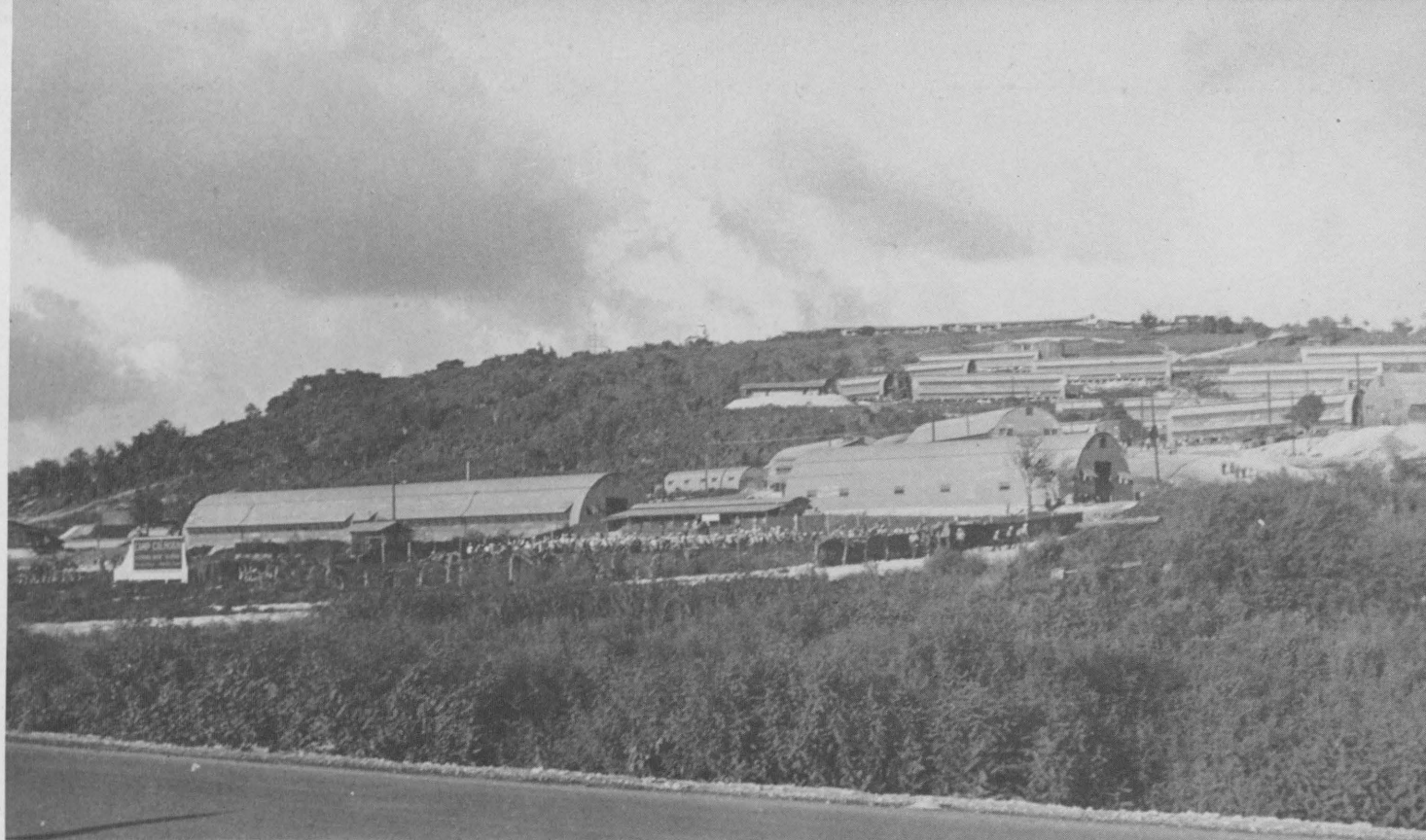






Headquarters buildings of Western Pacific Base Command were located on the crest of the backbone of the mountain range. One of Saipan's most beautiful views was from this summit looking down on busy Tanapag Harbor. *Below*, McMickel Springs on the inland highway.





The Navy's Camp Calhoun, *above*, was located on slope of a hill overlooking the coast highway and Garapan anchorage. Tanapag Harbor, *below*, worked on a 24-hour schedule unloading supplies to feed the war needs of a hundred-thousand men.





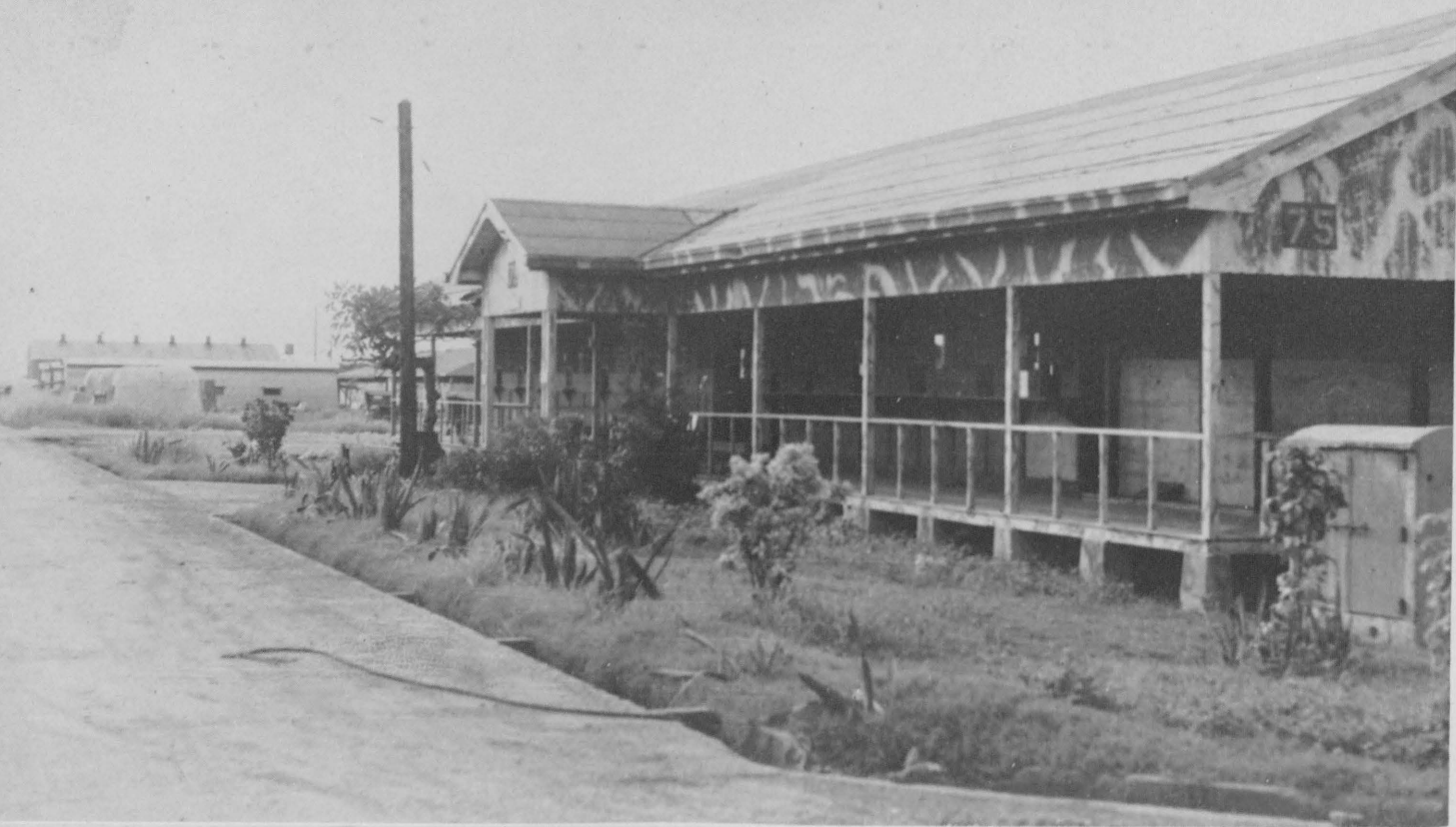
*Above, Seemingly endless stacks of fifty-gallon drums were laid out in orderly rows at the dozens of oil “dumps” along main roads. Battered tanks and Amtracs were gathered in from island battlefields and piled in an old stone quarry, *below*.*





Road to 39th Hospital, at far end of island from B-29 strip, is shown above. *Below,* The asphalt plant, located midway between coral pit and the strip. Stateside highway engineers would be amazed at the speed with which landing strips and roads were constructed and blacktopped under the 24-hour a day pressure that was necessitated by war.





Some of the buildings used by Japanese garrison at Aslito (now Isley) Air Field were converted for use as offices and warehouses for B-29 units. *Upper photo*, Finance building. Air Corps supply, *lower photo*, occupies old Japanese Operations Building.



Upper photo shows Lt Col, then Major, Dolan filling his jeep's gas tank at one of the many self-service stations. Bomb service trucks, *lower photo*, are lined up on ramp after cessation of hostilities.



Above, PX personnel load weekly quota from Saipan Coca Cola Bottling Works on a 500th truck. This plant produced such huge quantities that it was unnecessary to ration the much valued "coke" during later months of war. Below, One of the GI farms operated under US Department of Agriculture.



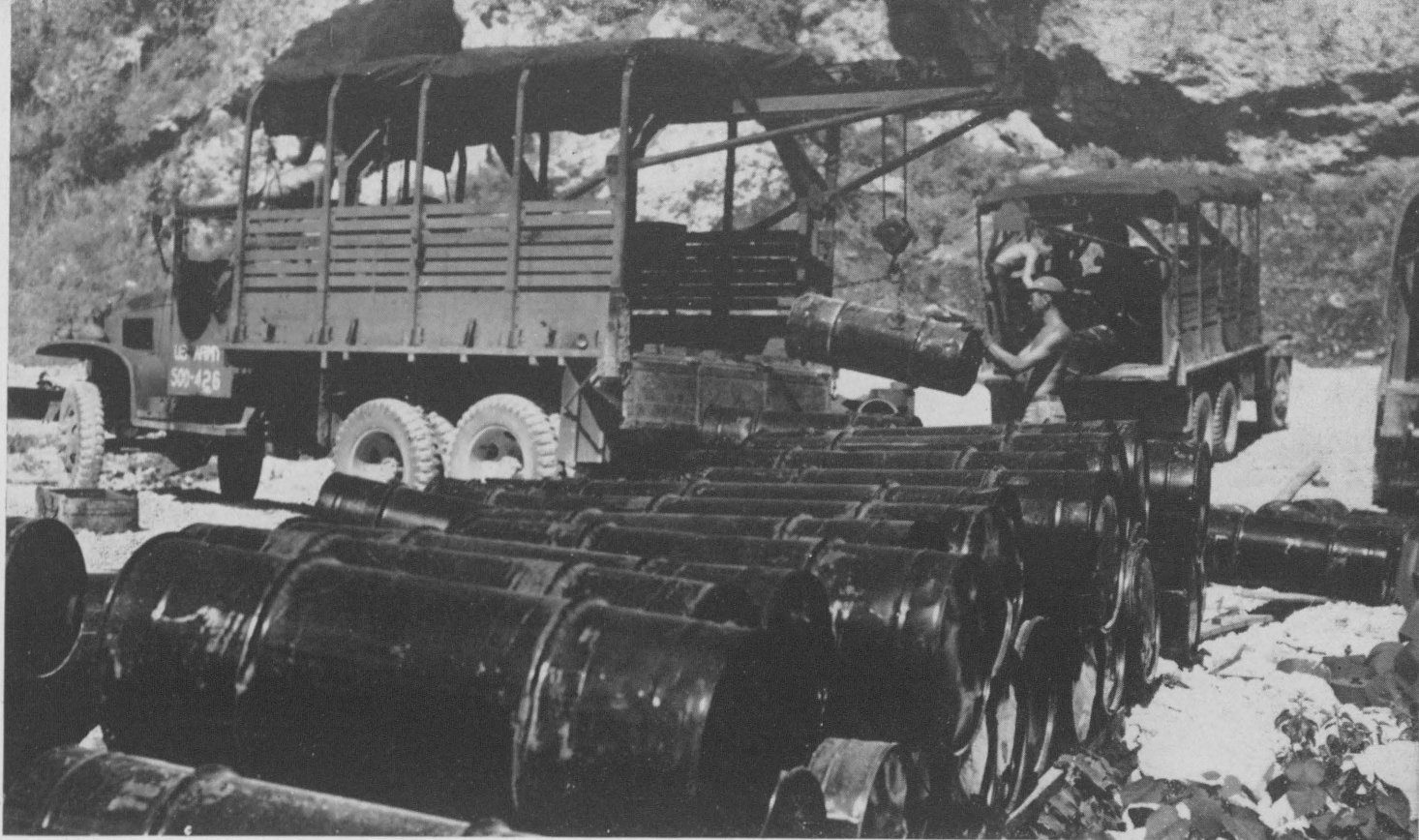


Photo above shows 500th men picking up M-69 jelly fire bombs at one of the numerous dumps. This type bomb came in clusters, packed for shipping in sealed cans. *Below*, One of the many Japanese pill boxes that lined the Isley Field perimeter road.





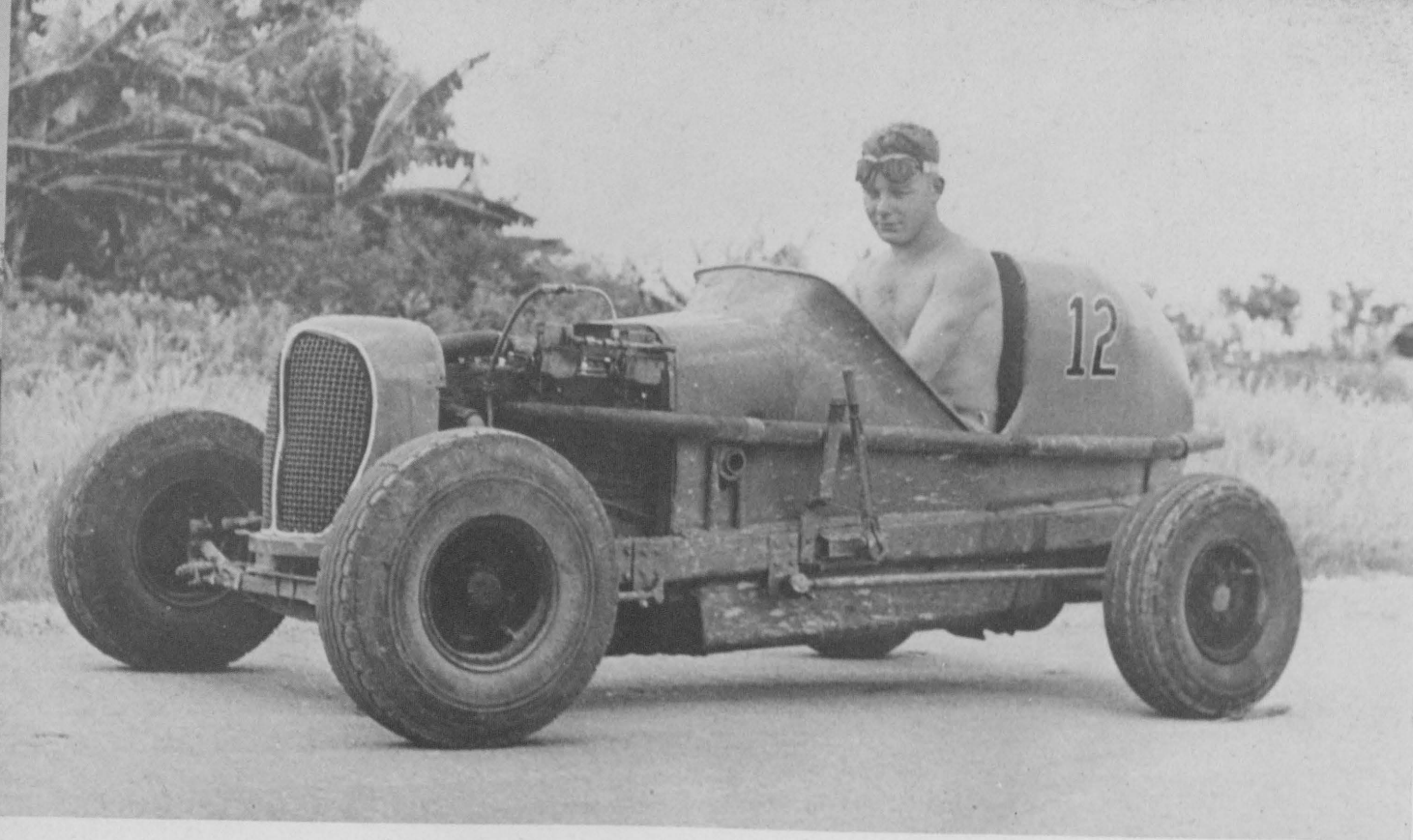
A few of the hundreds of ships destined to take part in the Okinawa invasion may be seen, *above*, lying offshore in Garapan anchorage. The storage area in foreground was once the central part of Garapan, a modern city of 10,000 population. *Below*, Old Jap signal building near Charon Kanoa.





Headquarters and supply warehouses of "USAFI" were visited by many 500th men for self-teaching textbooks and for advice on educational problems. *Below*, The Island Commander's bungalow near Western Pacific Base Command Headquarters located on the top of the mountain ridge that dominated the entire island.



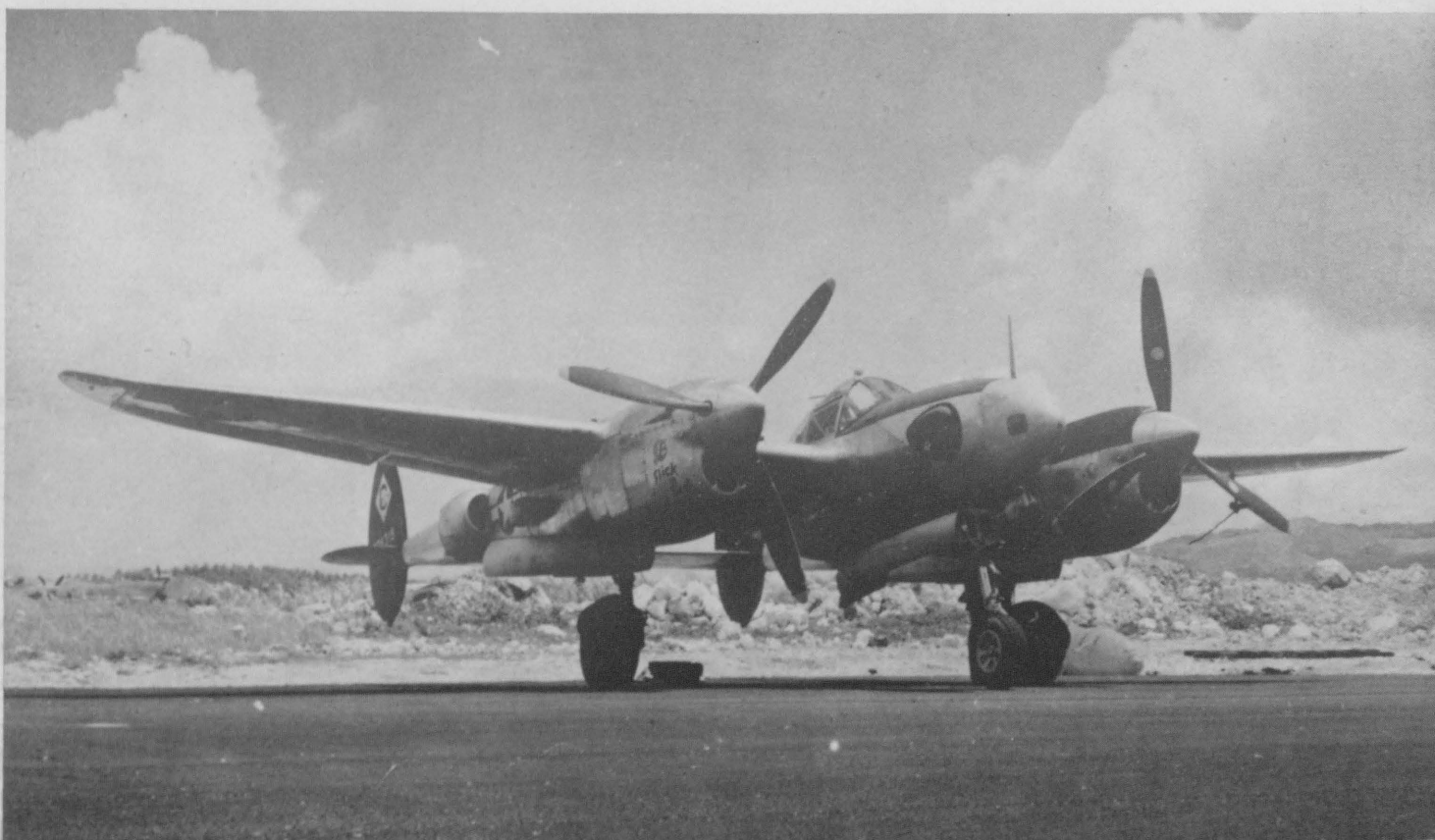


Upper photo shows one of the numerous automobiles constructed from salvage parts by mechanics in off-duty time. After V-J day, thousands who previously had not had time to spare were enabled to tour Saipan. Sundays found roads congested with GI vehicles of all kinds.





Above, P-61 "Black Widow." Below, P-38 "Lightning." These and other Army and Navy fighters were the ones which "scrambled" to the attack when Japs made their bombing and strafing forays on Saipan. Many were the interesting conversations heard by radio listeners as the control officer "vectored in" these deadly craft on the marauding "Zeros," "Zekes," "Bettys" and other enemy aircraft.





*Above, Lieutenant Smith gives Dolly Reckless, *right*, and another beautiful USO entertainer a closeup view of one of the 2,200 horsepower engines of a 500th Superfort. Below, Lts Leonard A Pipkin, Charles Suttles and T E Saunders fix a flat on their jeep.*



Calling Our Shots

Shortly before midnight on 26th July 1945 a flight of B-29s showered 60,000 copies of leaflet shown here on each of eleven cities.

The names of the doomed towns, MITO, HACHIOJI, HAKODATE, NISHINOMIYA, NAGANO, NAGOAKA, KURUME, FUKUYAMA, TOYAMA, MAISURU, OTSU, and MAEBASHI were overprinted in Japanese on the famous "Bombs Away" picture, upper right, taken by Sgt Howard J Clos.

The Japanese characters on the reverse side, lower half, say:

"ATTENTION JAPANESE PEOPLE

Read this carefully as it may save your life or the life of a relative or friend. In the next few days the military installations in **SOME OR ALL** of the cities named on the reverse side will be destroyed by American bombs. These cities contain military installations and workshops or factories which produce military goods. We are determined to destroy all of the tools of the military clique which they are using to prolong this useless war. But unfortunately, bombs have no eyes. So, in accordance with America's well-known humanitarian policies, the American Air Force which does not wish to injure innocent people, now gives you warning to evacuate the cities named and save your lives.

America is not fighting the Japanese people, but is fighting the military clique which has enslaved the Japanese people. The peace which America will bring will free the people from the oppression of the military clique and mean the emergence of a new and better Japan.

You can restore peace by demanding new and good leaders who will end the war.

We cannot promise that only these cities will be among those attacked, but **SOME OR ALL** will be, so heed this warning and evacuate these cities immediately."

Two weeks later, for all practical purposes, the war was over.





The Japs' suit for peace on night of 10th of August marked the first time in history that a major power had fallen without the traditional storming of its citadel by land or sea. Unlike the wild celebration in the States and on some other Pacific islands, peace came quietly to the men of the 500th. *Below*, Band furnishes only note of formality by parading in Wing Headquarters area.





Above, General O'Donnell's V-J Day party. Below, Last 500th crew to bomb Japan: Capt Richard A Gerrity, Lt Norman R Kohn, Lt James M White, Lt Robert J Ramsey, Lt Charles J Smith, Kenneth L Heron, Harry L Pittser, Oscar L Lee, Manuel R Mercado, Marvin Rosenblum and William Mihalko.



Prisoner of War Missions

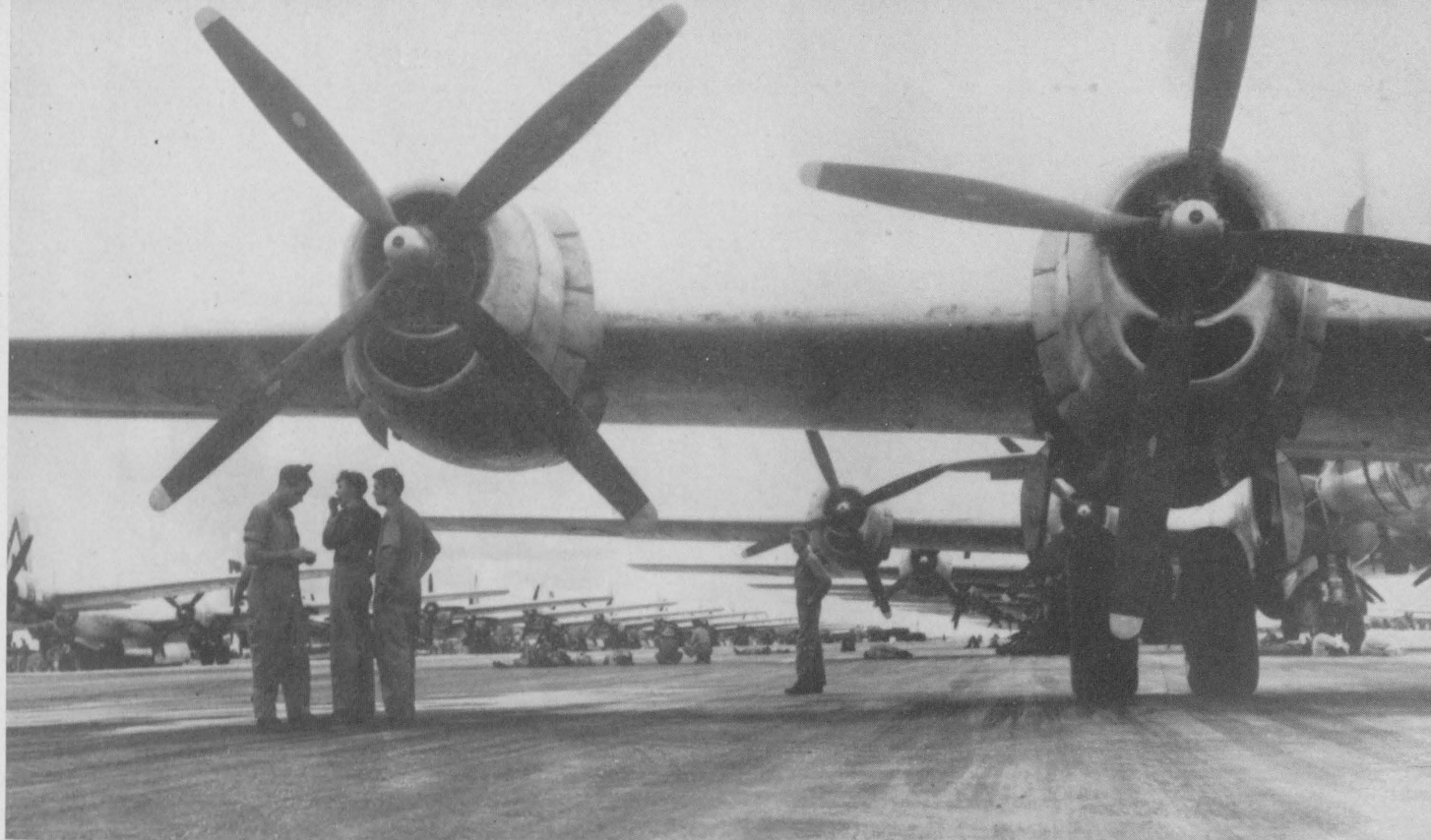
With cessation of hostilities, everyone breathed a collective sigh of relief and relaxed for the first time in many months.

Only a matter of hours elapsed, however, until supplies were being packaged and prepared for transport by B-29 to our prisoners of war.

Medicines, food, clothing, books and newspapers were some of the articles included in the packs which were dropped by cargo chutes from bomb bays of the Superforts.

Maintenance and other ground personnel were allowed to go along on these missions to enable them to see closeup the nation whose defeat their long hours of work had helped make possible.





B-29s from Guam and Tinian swarmed in on Isley Field to assist the 73rd Wing on these missions of mercy. Photos on this page show the seemingly endless rows of Superforts parked over night awaiting their first peacetime trip to Japan.







Life Photo by W Eugene Smith

Left, Japanese prison camps. Above, Closeup view of devastated Tokyo industrial area as seen by low-flying POW mission crewmen. Shortly after their release from Japanese camp, Col Richard Carmichael, Lt Col Robert Goldsworthy and Col Richard T King, below, smile for photographers on board a hospital ship.





COL RICHARD T KING, JR

Prisoners of War

Of the 215 men the 500th lost during overseas tour, only six were reported to the editor as having been found alive and returned to the United States: Col Richard T King, Jr, former Group Commander, Lt Col Robert F Goldsworthy, Harry E McGrath, Harold T Hedges, Robert P Evans and Harold O Schroeder.

When Col King returned to the 500th area on 8th of September and appeared at Surfside before the Group he formerly commanded, he received a standing ovation that spoke volumes as to the respect in which he was held. Although physically fatigued from his recent ordeal, he talked at length and replied to all questions asked.

In the following paragraphs, Col King relates his experiences which were typical of those of other B-29 crewmen who were shot down in Japan and eventually rescued:

"Now that several months have passed since my release from the Japanese prison camps, my outstanding thought about that experience is that the human body has wonderful recuperative ability. Although I lost 69 pounds—from 195 to 126 pounds—my body is now so thoroughly recovered that I feel almost no ill effects. Time has

dimmed both the mental anguish and the physical suffering from lack of food, privation and the few beatings I received.

To go back to the beginning—it was on 3 December 1944 that I was flying as Flight Commander of a twelve ship formation with Lt Col (then Major) Robert Goldsworthy, one of the flight leaders in the 500th Bomb Group which I then commanded. Our mission was an aircraft engine plant in the Tokyo area. We had dropped our bombs from approximately 32,000 feet when we were attacked by fighters. Although we shot down some of the fighters, they hit our left inboard gas tank so seriously that it sprayed gasoline all over the aircraft and the entire ship began to burn. Slugs from the fighters had apparently also destroyed the electrical system, making the intercom inoperative and damaging the nose wheel support so that it came down. By the time the ship had lost altitude to 29,000 feet, I bailed out. At that time I did not realize that I was injured in any way. Immediately after leaving the ship I counted at least eight and possibly nine other chutes as I floated earthward.

Landing in an open field, I immediately cut my shroud lines and found that I had been burned on one leg and on my face. Since Japanese fighters were diving down directly over the field and it seemed they might be looking for me, I walked over under the trees at one side of the field and waited there a few moments. Meanwhile I looked myself over more thoroughly and found that I had landed unarmed since my '45' had been lost on the way down. I was wearing suntan shirt and trousers and regular GI shoes, socks and underwear, with no other equipment.

Shortly, some Japanese civilians found me and not only handcuffed but also bound me with my own shroud lines. They delivered me to the local police station where I waited for two hours until two Japanese soldiers came to pick me

up. As I started down the road in their custody, I met Colonel Byron Brugge, from Wing headquarters, and asked him how he was. He was able to say 'Okay' before the guard ordered 'No speak.' After blindfolding us the soldiers loaded Col Brugge, Col Goldsworthy and myself into a truck that carried us into Tokyo where we arrived about 2 A.M. From the speed of the truck and the time consumed I would guess that I had landed about forty miles out of the city.

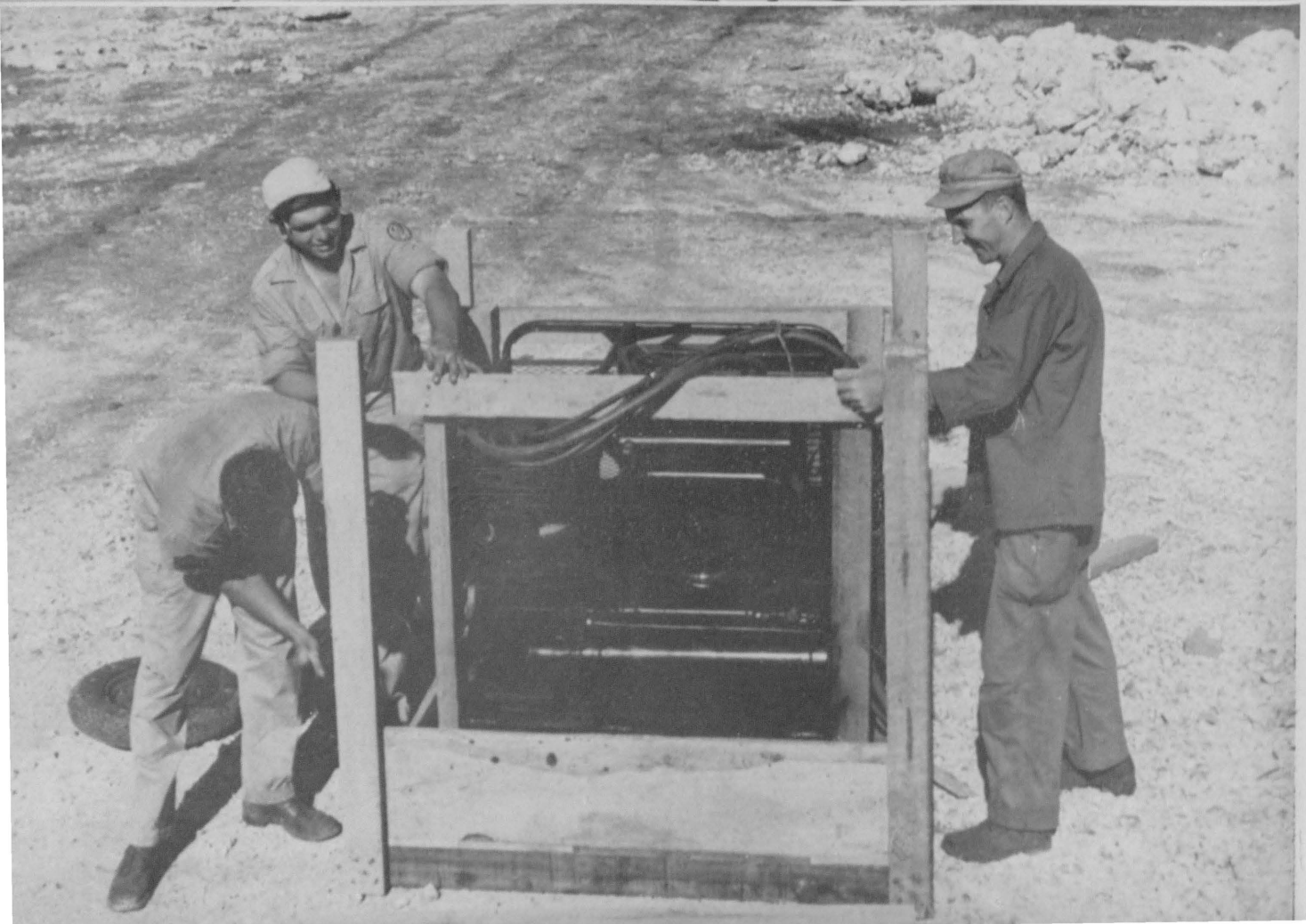
Immediately Japanese intelligence officers interrogated us as to our name, rank and serial number. Although this was all the Geneva Convention allows, they went on to request our home addresses and other information. When I asked why they wanted this information, they said they needed it so they could notify our families. This, of course, was never done. Then they asked me to sign a paper which was written in Japanese. I signed, inasmuch as it was obvious I did not know what it said. Next they stripped me and returned to me my shirt, trousers, shoes and socks. This was to be my entire clothing twenty-four hours a day for the next four months. Except when we were taken out for interrogation, we were not allowed to wear our shoes or socks. Before daylight I was subjected to a further severe interrogation about everything on Saipan. When I truthfully answered many of their questions, stating that I did not know, they attempted to force me to answer by slapping my face and by other minor abuse.

I was put in solitary confinement at the Kempei Tai (MP headquarters) in a block of cells along with Col Brugge, Col Goldsworthy, Sgt Thomas M Goffery and Cpl Harold O Schroeder. Four dirty blankets comprised my total furnishings. Our food consisted of three meals a day of mixed rice and barley, with an occasional small fish and infrequent watery soup for breakfast. Nothing was ever heard by us regarding Sgt Goffery after his removal from his cell on 28th of January. On 3rd of February, Col Goldsworthy and Cpl Schroeder were moved to another Tokyo prison. I stayed in my solitary cell without ever going out for exercise or any other purpose except almost daily interrogation until the 19th of February, on which date Col Brugge and I were transferred to a local police station where we were put in different cell blocks. I stayed in this second prison until the 3rd of April. There was one period, from the 4th to the 14th of March, when I was placed in a Japanese military hospital where I had slightly more of the same type of food and a little exercise. This hospitalization was the result of my being so weak that I could not do even the little that was required of me in solitary.

The next move was to the Omori prison camp. This was the headquarters for some thirty prisoners of war camps in the Tokyo-Yokohama area and was located halfway between the two cities on a sand spit projecting into Tokyo Bay. At this camp we were listed as prisoners of war (special) and segregated into two-thirds of a barracks with a separate compound. Col Goldsworthy and Cpl Schroeder moved into Omori on the same date. All but four of the thirty-six in the group were B-29 crewmen. The other third of our barracks contained eighteen other "special" prisoners under charge of Lt Col Gregory Boyington, Marine ace.

We were kept inside our special compound until the 15th of August and then for the next two weeks we were allowed an increased amount of food and medical supplies, including blood plasma and the privilege of mixing with the other 600 prisoners in our camp. On the 29th, Navy Commander Harold E Stassen took Col Goldsworthy, Cpl Schroeder, S/Sgt Harry E McGrath, Sgt Harold T Hedges, S/Sgt Robert P Evans and myself off in 'LCIs' to the hospital ship 'Benevolence.' After eight days I was allowed to go out to Atsugi Air Field where I 'bummed' a ride to Okinawa and then to Guam and back to Saipan, where I arrived on the 8th of September. On the 12th of September, I was in San Francisco and on the 14th in Tampa, Florida, with my family.

There are two other noteworthy items of my experience. On the 7th of May we were allowed to start a small garden at Omori. This gave us something to do and some light exercise. The most exciting moment of my entire captivity was on the 9th of March when we were able to see the first night incendiary attack of the B-29s on Tokyo. The flames from the burning city made it as light as day and gave us all confidence that our liberation was not far off."



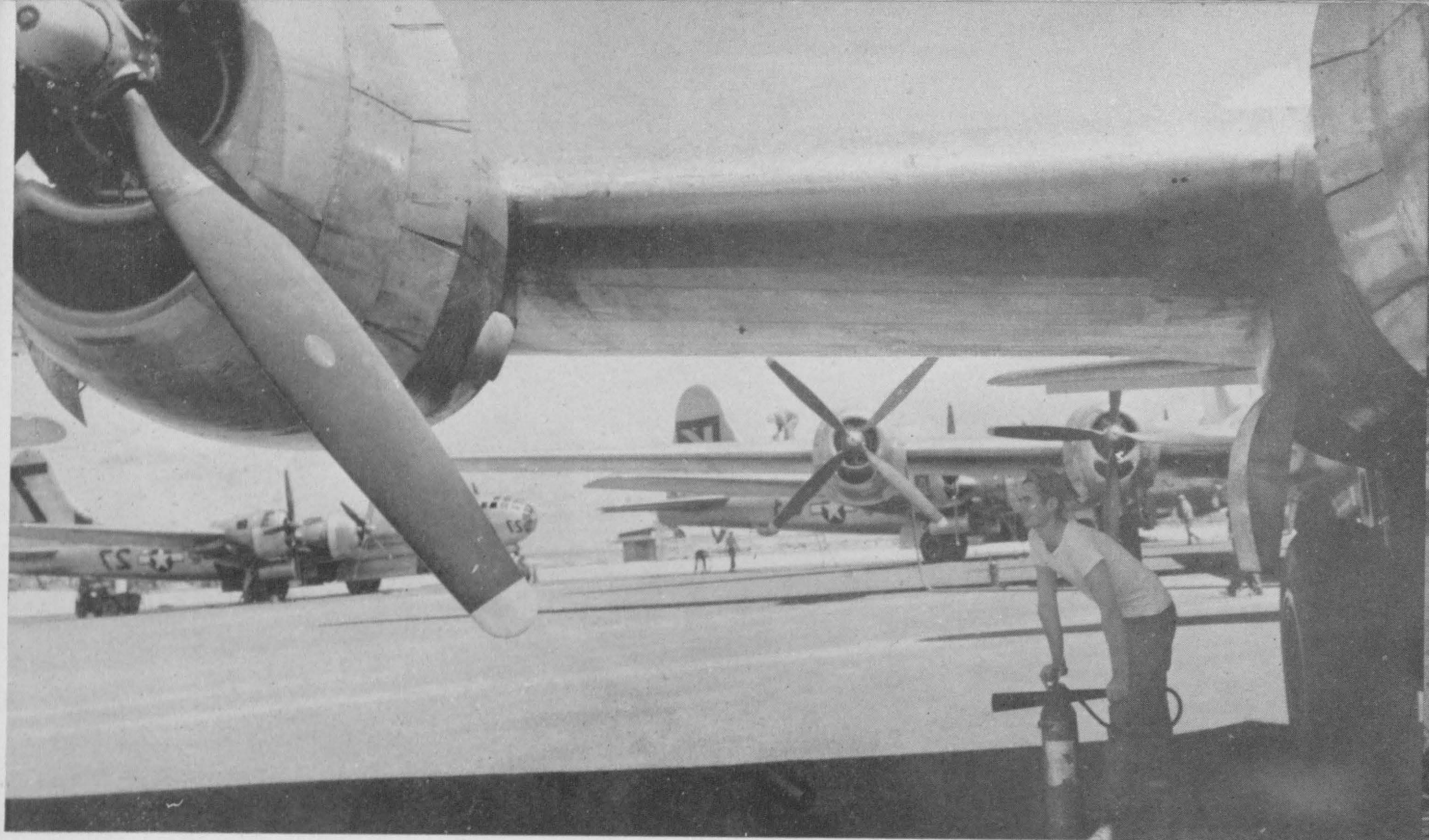


Upper photo, opposite page, Lt O'Mahoney's processing mill in Group S-2 building. All high-point enlisted men were cleared from the group within 48 hours after receipt of authority for their transfer. Lower photo, opposite page, Scene outside of the box factory where dismantled supplies were crated and prepared for shipment either to other Bomb Groups or for turn in to higher authority. Above, Lt Harold Bierma and Joe Collins board a 497th plane, bound for the US and a Separation Center. Only men with very high discharge point scores were given necessary priority to use this fast return route to the States. Below, Isley Field as it looked at time of Group's departure.





On the night of 4th October 1945 a tropical typhoon tore across the Western Pacific. As can be seen above, 500th tentage was completely wrecked. Men who had been living in this type housing took refuge in office Quonsets and in "prefabs." There were no casualties and no damage to "Z" Superforts. This was the tail-end of the storm that did such great damage at Okinawa.



500th aircraft were the last to leave Saipan in the "Sunset Project" which returned the 73rd Wing to the States. *Above*, Engine start at Kwajalein, first stopover. *Below*, Major Hansen, Group Adjutant, calls the roll of Headquarters personnel returning on Col Dougherty's Flagship, Z-49, as they prepare to take off from Oahu on third and final leg of flight which ended at Mather Field, near Sacramento, California.





Ground echelon boards ship at Tanapag Harbor. Personal bags were considerably lighter than when the trip to the Marianas had begun at Walker, Kansas nearly a year and a half earlier. Lt Col Herbert Adamson, Group Executive Officer, was in charge of movement of these last 500th Bomb Group men to leave Saipan.





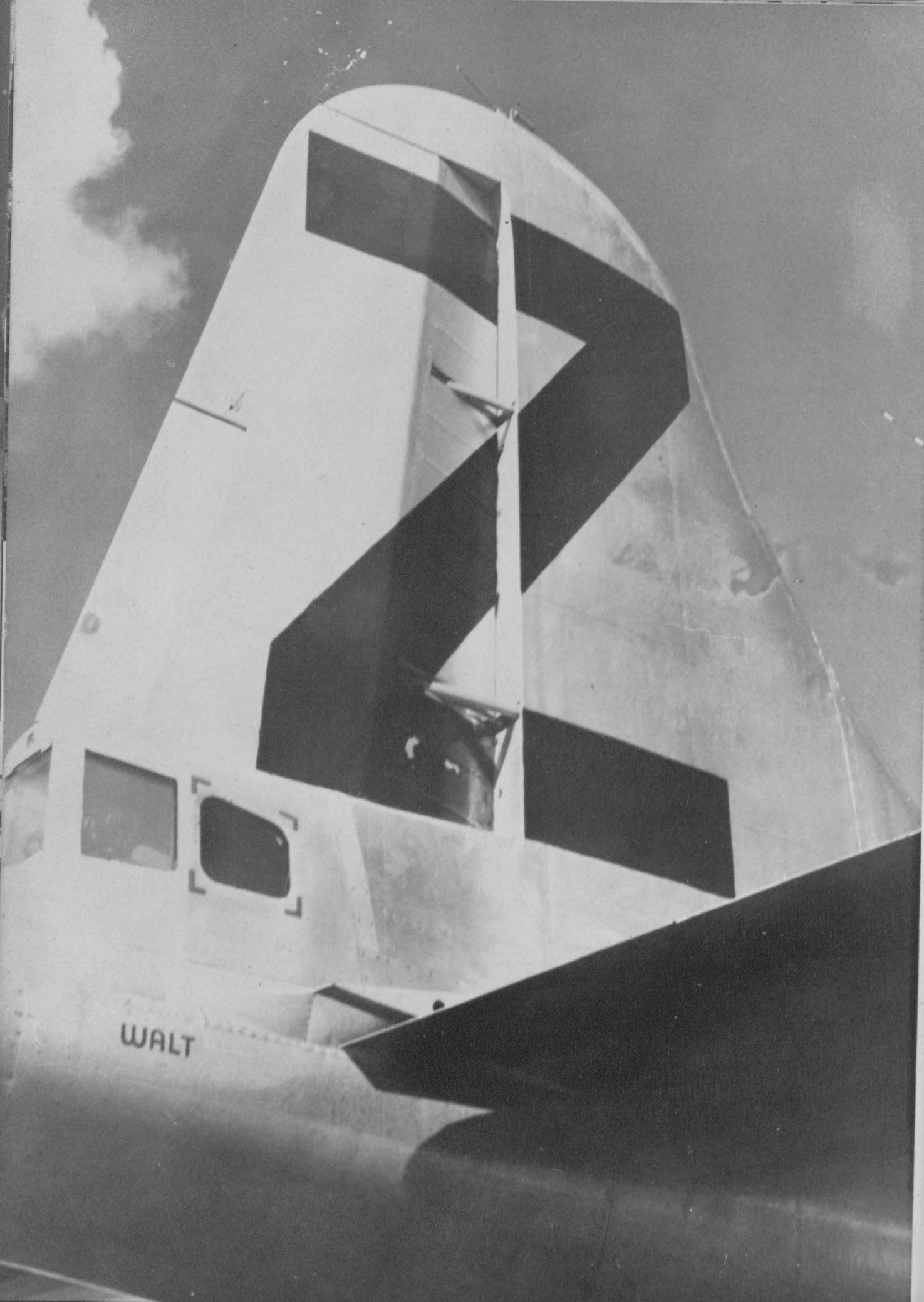
Finis . . .

While its remaining personnel were scattered throughout the US on "Temporary Duty for Rest and Recuperation," Headquarters of the 500th stood by at March Field, *seen above*, located near Riverside, California.

On 17 January 1946 in compliance with Fourth Air Force General Order #160, dated 11 November 1946, the Base Commander declared the 500th inactivated and transferred the handful of men left to the 420th AAF BU on March Field.

Official Group and Squadron records were forwarded to the Organization Records Branch, Building #102, Records Administration Center, AGO, 4300 Goodfellow Blvd, St Louis 20, Missouri.

Thus, two years and two months after date of activation, the life of the 500th Bombardment Group came to an official undramatic close. In the minds of the men who served in it, however, the memories of that association will undoubtedly live on for many years.



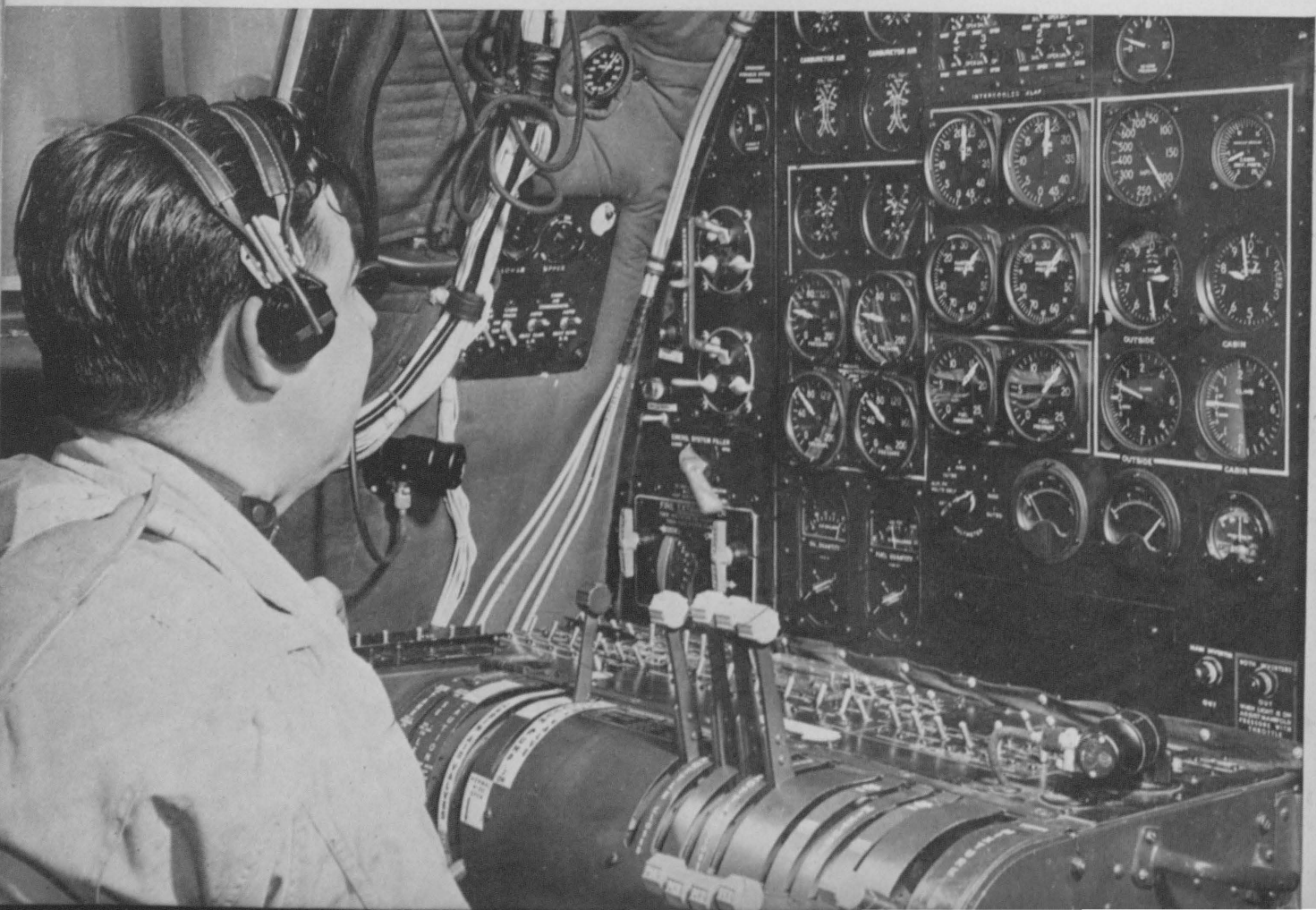
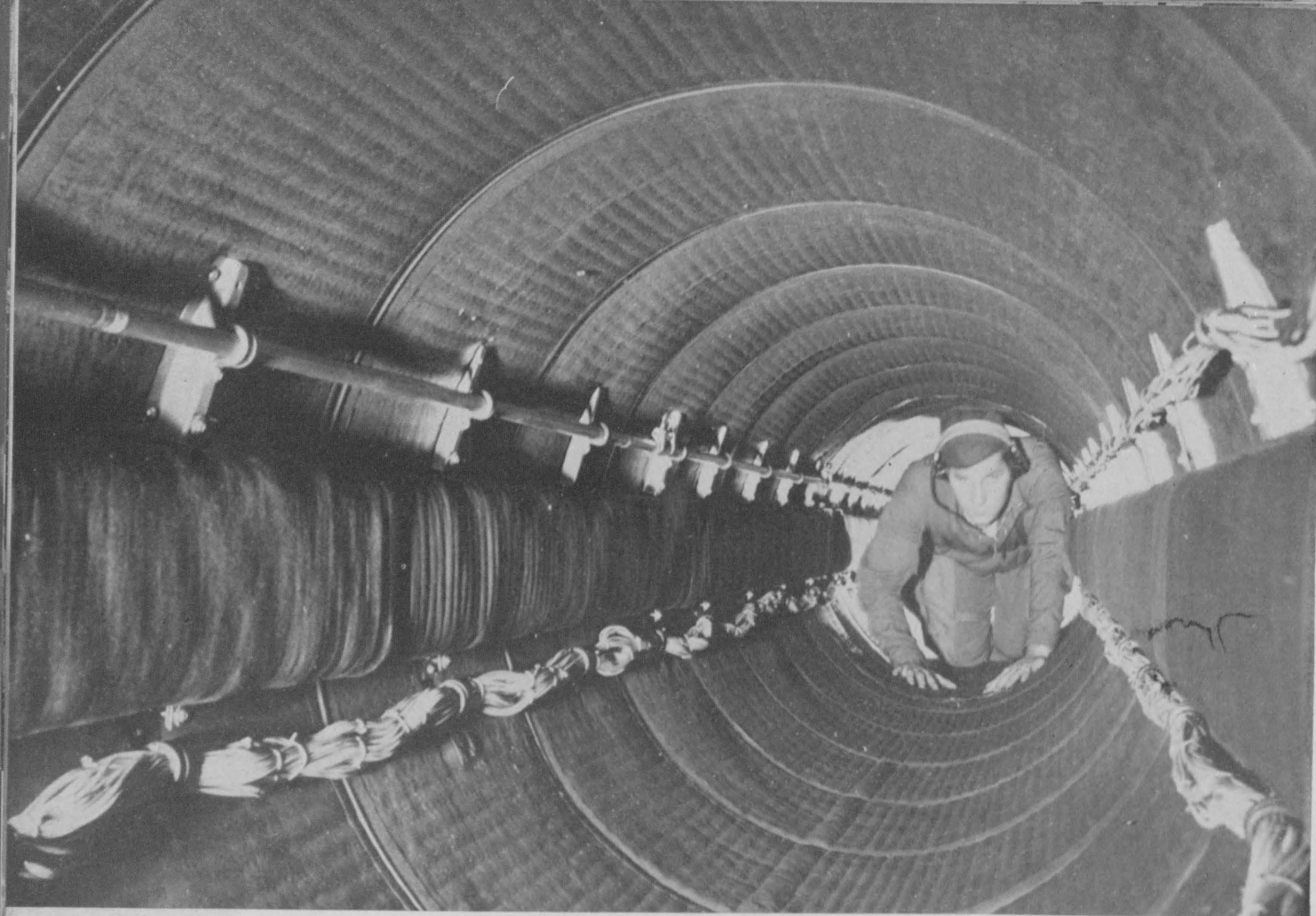
WALT

INTERIOR VIEWS OF A SUPERFORT

The B-29 has double bombbays, five electrically controlled and remotely operated gun turrets with a total of twelve 50 calibre machine guns. It is approximately 100 feet long with a wing spread of 142 feet. The top of the tail stands over 28 feet high. Four powerful 2,200 horsepower engines turn huge four-bladed propellers that have a diameter of nearly 17 feet. Pressurized cabins enable crew members to maintain top efficiency without encumbrance of heavy clothing and oxygen equipment.

—Photos courtesy of Boeing-Wichita









Get a **WIGGLE ON**
BUT—
 Tighten your body
 bolts first

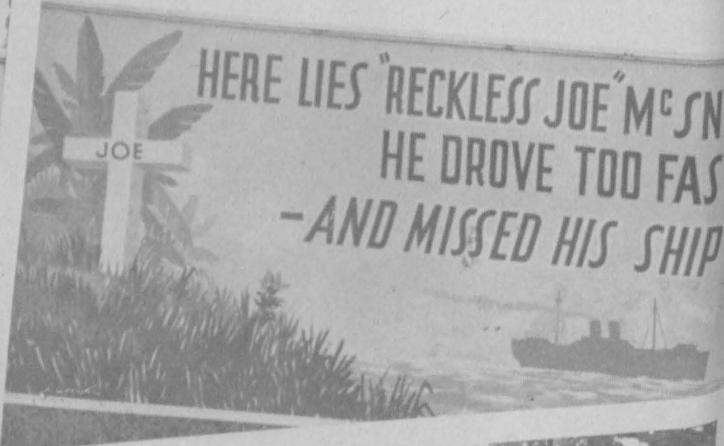


My
HOBBY
 DRIVE CAREFULLY
 and
SAVE TIRES

'OVER' *or* **'UNDER'**
 I'M OVER I'M UNDER
INFLATION
CAUSES MOST TIRE FAILURES



HERE LIES "RECKLESS JOE" McSNIP
 HE DROVE TOO FAST
 -AND MISSED HIS SHIP



CURVES ON ME MAY
 LOOK SWELL.....
 BUT ON THIS ROAD,
 THEY CAN BE HELL—
DRIVE CAREFULLY—



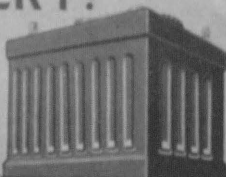
Don't take
CHANCES!
 GET HOME
 SAFELY

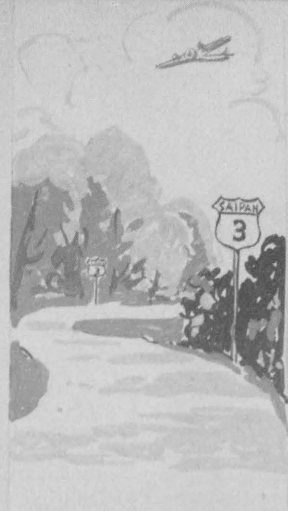


Get the **"OVERALL"**
 picture, boys!
 MAINTENANCE ✓'s WILL
 GET YOU HOME SOONER



KEEP AN  ON
YOUR BATTERY!
 FOR ADDED LIFE—
 • CLEAN TERMINALS
 • ADD WATER



Major Strikes of 500th Bomb Group

Mission Number			Date	Target Bombed	Number of B-29s Bombing	Type of Raid	Enemy Aircraft Claimed		
Group	Wing	Bom Com					Dest'd	Pro'ble	Dmg'd
6	6		11 Nov 44	Dublon Island, Truk	8	Demolition	0	0	1
7	7		24 Nov 44	#357 & Tokyo Docks	16	Demolition	0	1	0
8	8		27 Nov 44	Tokyo Industrial	15	Demolition	0	0	0
9	9		29-30 Nov 44	Tokyo Industrial	6	Incendiary	0	0	0
10	10		3 Dec 44	#357 & Tokyo Docks	19	Demolition	3	5	9
11	11		8 Dec 44	Iwo Jima	18	Demolition	0	0	0
12	12		13 Dec 44	#193 Nagoya	21	Demolition	0	0	0
13	13		18 Dec 44	#194 Nagoya	14	Demolition	1	0	1
14	14		22 Dec 44	#193 Nagoya	6	Demolition	1	2	4
15	15		24 Dec 44	Iwo Jima	9	Demolition	0	0	0
16	16		27 Dec 44	Tokyo Docks	5	Demolition	3	0	0
17	17		3 Jan 45	Nagoya	19	Incendiary	5	5	3
18	18		9 Jan 45	#357 Tokyo					
				Target of Opportunity	10	Demolition	1	2	8
			13 Jan 45	Akashi, Osaka & Nagoya	3	Photo Recon	0	0	0
19	19		14 Jan 45	#194 Nagoya	8	Demolition	0	1	2
20	20		19 Jan 45	#1547 Akashi	16	Demolition	1	2	3
21	21		23 Jan 45	#193 Nagoya	13	Demolition	14	8	6
22	22		27 Jan 45	Tokyo Docks	10	Demolition	7	3	5
23	23		4 Feb 45	Matsuzaka (Kobe)	15	Incendiary	0	0	0
24	24		10 Feb 45	#1544 Ota	18	Demolition	1	1	3
25	25		15 Feb 45	#193 Nagoya	7	Demolition	2	0	2
26	26		19 Feb 45	Tokyo Industrial	17	Demolition	10	6	8
27	27	38	25 Feb 45	Tokyo Urban	27	Demolition & Incendiary	0	0	0
28	28	39	4 Mar 45	Tokyo Urban	19	Demolition	0	0	0
29	29	40	9-10 Mar 45	Tokyo	31	Incendiary	0	0	0
30	30	41	11-12 Mar 45	Nagoya	36	Incendiary	0	0	0
31	31	42	13-14 Mar 45	Osaka	32	Incendiary	0	0	0
32	32	43	16-17 Mar 45	Kobe	37	Incendiary	0	0	0
33	33	44	18-19 Mar 45	Nagoya	29	Incendiary	0	0	0
34	34	45	24-25 Mar 45	#193 Nagoya	25	Demolition & Incendiary	0	0	0
35	35	46	27 Mar 45	Oita Airfield	30	Demolition	5	3	0
36	36	50	31 Mar 45	Tachiarai Machine Wks	24	Demolition	0	0	0
37	37	51	1-2 Apr 45	#357	34	Demolition	0	0	0
38	38	52	3-4 Apr 45	#792 Tachikawa Aircraft Co & Kawasaki Urban	30	Demolition & Incendiary	0	0	0
39	39	58	7 Apr 45	#357	9	Demolition	13	2	13
40	40	59	8 Apr 45	Kagoshima	28	Demolition	0	0	0
41	41	63	12 Apr 45	#357	29	Demolition	2	1	3
42	42	67	13-14 Apr 45	Tokyo Urban	28	Demolition & Incendiary	0	0	0
43	43	69	15-16 Apr 45	Kawasaki	30	Incendiary	1	0	0
44	44	70	17 Apr 45	Izumi Airfield	11	Fragmentation	0	0	0
45	46	79	18 Apr 45	Izumi Airfield	11	Fragmentation & Demolition	0	0	0
46	48	82	21 Apr 45	Oita Airfield	9	Demolition (Delayed)	0	0	0
47	49	85	21 Apr 45	USA Airfield	9	Demolition (Delayed)	0	0	0
48	51	91	22 Apr 45	Izumi Airfield	10	Demolition (Delayed)	0	2	1
49	53	96	24 Apr 45	#2009 Hitachi Aircraft Co Tachikawa Plant	9	Demolition	3	4	0
50	56	99	26 Apr 45	Saeki Airfield	19	Demolition (Delayed)	0	0	0
51	58	108	27 Apr 45	Izumi Airfield	11	Demolition (Delayed)	0	0	1
52	60	114	28 Apr 45	Izumi Airfield	23	Demolition (Delayed)	0	0	0
53	64	126	30 Apr 45	Hamamatsu	20	Demolition	0	0	0
54	65	146	5 May 45	Hiro Naval Aircraft Co, Kure	32	Demolition	0	0	0
55	67	164	10 May 45	#673-#674 Tokuyama Fueling Station	28	Demolition	0	0	0
56	68	172	11 May 45	#1702 Kawanishi Aircraft Co Kobe	10	Demolition	3	4	1

Mission Number			Date	Target Bombed	Number of B-29s Bombing	Type of Raid	Enemy Aircraft Claimed		
Group	Wing	Bom Com					Dest'd	Pro'ble	Dmg'd
57	69	174	14 May 45	Nagoya Urban	41	Incendiary	2	2	3
58	70	176	16-17 May 45	South Nagoya	40	Incendiary	0	0	0
59	71	178	19 May 45	Hamamatsu	23	Demolition	0	0	0
60	72	181	23-24 May 45	South Tokyo	42	Incendiary	0	0	0
61	73	183	25-26 May 45	Tokyo	40	Incendiary	2	0	0
62	74	186	29 May 45	Yokohama	42	Incendiary	0	1	0
63	75	187	1 June 45	Osaka	35	Incendiary	1	0	0
64	76	188	5 June 45	Kobe	41	Incendiary	2	0	2
65	77	189	7 June 45	Osaka	35	Incendiary	0	0	0
66	78	197	10 June 45	#1476 Hitachi Engine Works	33	Demolition	0	0	1
67	79	203	15 June 45	Osaka	32	Incendiary	0	0	0
68	80	208	17-18 June 45	Hamamatsu	33	Incendiary	0	0	0
69	81	211	20-21 June 45	Fukuoka	32	Incendiary	0	0	0
70	82	215	22 June 45	Kure Naval Arsenal	26	Demolition	0	0	0
71	83	224	26 June 45	Osaka Arsenal	29	Demolition	0	0	0
72	84	235	28-29 June 45	Sasebo Urban	34	Incendiary	0	0	0
73	85	241	1-2 July 45	Kumamoto Urban	41	Incendiary	0	0	0
74	86	248	3-4 July 45	Kochi Urban	32	Incendiary	0	0	0
75	87	252	6-7 July 45	Akashi Urban	3	Incendiary	0	0	0
76	88	258	9-10 July 45	Sakai Urban	30	Incendiary	0	0	0
77	89	264	12-13 July 45	Ichinomiya Urban	31	Incendiary	0	0	0
78	90	272	16-17 July 45	Oita Urban	32	Incendiary	0	0	0
79	91	278	19-20 July 45	Hitachi Urban	32	Incendiary	0	0	0
80	92	286	24 July 45	Osaka Arsenal, Kuwana Urban	42	Demolition	0	0	0
				Osaka Urban	1	Demolition	0	0	0
81	93	293	26-27 July 45	Matsuyama	32	Incendiary	0	0	0
82	94	299	28-29 July 45	Ichinomiya	33	Incendiary	0	0	0
83	95	307	1-2 Aug 45	Toyama	41	Incendiary	0	0	0
84	96	314	5-6 Aug 45	Nishinomiya	35	Incendiary	0	0	0
85	97	317	7 Aug 45	Toyokawa Naval Arsenal	8	Demolition	0	0	0
86	98	319	8 Aug 45	Yawata Urban	26	Incendiary	0	0	0
87	99	326	14 Aug 45	Osaka Army Arsenal	36	Demolition	0	0	0
PW Order	5	28-29 Aug 45	24 PW Camps	42	Supplies				
PW Order	6	31 Aug 45	5 PW Camps	14	Supplies				
PW Order	7	2 Sept 45	5 PW Camps	8	Supplies				
PW Order	8	4 Sept 45	7 PW Camps	6	Supplies				
PW Order	9	5 Sept 45	4 PW Camps	9	Supplies				
PW Order	12	6 Sept 45	2PW Camps	3	Supplies				
PW Order	14	7 Sept 45	2 PW Camps	10	Supplies				
PW Order	15	8 Sept 45	1 PW Camp	1	Supplies				
PW Order	16	9-10 Sept 45	2 PW Camps	3	Supplies				
PW Order	17	11 Sept 45	2 PW Camps	5	Supplies				
PW Order	18	12 Sept 45	3 PW Camps	4	Supplies				
PW Order	20	14 Sept 45	1 PW Camp	5	Supplies				

The initial strike of the 500th Bomb Group was made on 11 November 1944 when nine aircraft attacked Dublon Island Submarine Base at Truk. On 24 November, twenty-six aircraft participated in the first strike on Tokyo.

On 14 February 1945 the Group changed from squadron to group combat maintenance. From that date there was a great increase in number of aircraft ready to participate in missions.

High altitude daylight precision bombing and night incendiary attacks continued until 9 March 1945. On early raids, wind velocities of over 200 miles per hour were not uncommon. Operational losses at this time were heavy, due to lack of any emergency landing fields and inadequate air-sea rescue facilities.

The Group participated from 9th to 19th March in five low level incendiary strikes that resulted in the destruction of approximately 32 square miles of Japanese cities. Most subsequent strikes were made at medium or low altitudes. This changeover increased the bombing accuracy, raised bomb loads by reducing gasoline requirements, and, by eliminating the strain on the aircraft of climbing to high altitudes, assisted in achieving the fine maintenance record. The Group deviated from its primary mission during the month of April to fly sorties against Kyushu Airfields in support of the Okinawa campaign, but resumed attacks on industrial plants and centers 30 April, continuing until 14 August, when Japan agreed to surrender.

From 15 August until V-J Day 77 sorties were flown transporting Prisoner of War supplies to camps on Japan, Korea, and Formosa.

Presidential Citation

The 500th Bombardment Group (VH) is cited for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict with the enemy. Notified to prepare maximum aircraft for a mission against the highly important and heavily defended Mitsubishi Aircraft Engine Plant, Nagoya, the ground crews worked steadily and untiringly throughout the day and night to have their B-29s in perfect operating condition for this important strike. At the time of the attack, this plant was estimated to be producing from 30 to 40 per cent of all Japanese airplane engines.

On 23 January 1945, 17 Superfortresses of this group, heavily loaded with high explosive bombs, took off on their hazardous 1,500-mile flight over enemy-controlled open sea to the target. The crews manning the relatively untested aircraft were in constant danger of mechanical failure and consequent ditching many miles at sea, with no adequate rescue patrol as yet established. No emergency base was available for battle-damaged or distressed airplanes anywhere along the 1,500 miles return to bases past numerous enemy island garrisons of unknown strength.

The mission was flown at an altitude of 26,000 feet where severe frosting was a constant threat to formation flying, and battle damage often resulted in depressurization and consequent frostbite in temperatures averaging minus 55 degrees centigrade. Winds in excess of 200 miles per hour further complicated the many difficulties of navigation over open sea. Inadequate maps and charts for target recognition, and nonavailability of accurate weather forecasts in the face of the most adverse and rapidly changing weather encountered in any theater presented almost insurmountable difficulties to the pioneering crews. In addition, no fighter escort was available at this early period.

As their formation approached the target area, it was engaged by 160 aggressive enemy fighters which made a total of 253 determined attacks on the intrepid crews. At the same time, the formation was rocked by heavy and accurate anti-aircraft fire. Despite the long and tiring flight to the target, the heavy flak, and the fierce fighter opposition, the gallant crews continued grimly and steadfastly on their assigned course and released their powerful load of high explosives on the target with excellent results.

Although one B-29 was lost and 10 of the bombers seriously damaged, the formation destroyed 15 enemy airplanes, probably destroyed 8, and seriously damaged 6. The heroic determination and combat efficiency of the airplane crews, together with the professional skill and intense devotion to duty of the ground personnel of the 500th Bombardment Group (VH) reflected great credit on themselves and the Army Air Forces.

(General Orders 106, Headquarters, Twentieth Air Force, 13 November 1945, confirmed by Section II, Par 5, WD Gen'l Order No. 3, dtd 7 January 1946.)

Mission Complete

BY ARTHUR MILLER

"You'll see the damndest show you ever saw in your life; it will be just like a big Fourth of July with Roman candles and all the fireworks." Colonel Dougherty paused a bit and grinned. His audience, all of the available combat crews of the 500th Group, laughed uncertainly and somewhat nervously.

It was 9 March 1945, the place: Group Briefing Room, the time: mid-afternoon, the scene: briefing for the first fire raid on Tokyo.

Everyone in the big Quonset, tightly packed with perspiring young men, listened closely as Major Parsons mounted the rostrum and gave the details of the mission. It was to be a maximum effort of the entire Bomber Command, going in as individual ships at night, carrying full loads of incendiaries, at 5000 feet bombing altitude. A gasp went up from the audience as the altitude was announced—the crew members looked around at each other and shook their heads wordlessly. Then a little buzz of conversation went up, punctuated with profanity.

S-2 followed Operations and gave all the available dope on the target, the expected flak and fighter opposition and the Air-Sea Rescue facilities. Weather was next and then the Flight Surgeon. After that, the meeting broke up for specialized briefing where the individual crew members received the necessary technical data.

It was a sober group of combat crews who walked slowly back to their Quonsets after the briefing. "Over Tokyo at 5000 feet"—it was inconceivable, beyond comprehension. "What would they think of next?" mused more than one as he got his gear together and prepared to entruck for the flying line. Minds slowly reviewed the previous three months, December, January, and February when the 73rd Wing was fighting the Battle Over Japan alone, when enemy fighters were thick as flies in an uncovered latrine, when flak was black and accurate, when crew after crew heartbreakingly ditched hundreds of miles from home with little hope of rescue. Crew members recalled December 3rd when Colonel King, Major Goldsworthy and their crew had been shot out of the sky over Tokyo, when Barney Hurlbutt and Big Frank Roberts had plunged in over Nagoya, when Chico Carrico had come all the way home on two engines on January 27th. They remembered when General "Ironpants" Lemay had come over from India to take over the Bomber Command and immediately started lowering the bombing altitude. They remembered the barracks charts drawn up to show the life expectancy of a combat crew—and that expectancy was mighty low—some said that 17 missions were all a man could hope for before boarding the barge on the River Styx.

Trucks came by the bivouac area while it was still broad daylight. The planes were fit, Maintenance having worked night and day to get them into commission. The bombs were aboard—both bombbays crammed full of incendiaries. A red sun was fast going down into the horizon as each crew gathered to put on their flying gear and then to climb into the planes. Already the other groups were taking off, using both runways. Each 50 seconds another pilot pushed forward the throttles and fought his plane into the air.

Then it was time for the 500th and slowly the big "Z" ships jockeyed into position, lined up, and roared off, leaving behind a strangely empty airfield and a quiet group of stay-at-homes.

Straight out over the choppy Pacific they went, dipping down out of sight when leaving landsend—then rising slowly and turning gradually to Marpi Point and distant Tokyo. Inside the Superforts, the crews settled down to their routine tasks. Especially busy were the navigators, many of whom for the first time had to find their way to the target and back without help from accompanying ships in a formation. With the exception of the man in the tail, most gunners had been left behind because orders were to carry ammunition in the rear turret only.

To the uninitiated, it may be stated without equivocation that it is a mighty long road from Saipan to Tokyo over a mighty wide and deep ocean. Cruising along, all alone except for occasional glimpses of running lights from other planes, the crews felt lonely and a million

miles from nowhere. The flight plan called for each plane to go by way of Iwo Jima, for by this time the Marines had the situation in hand on that little bit of Purgatory, and it furnished an excellent checkpoint.

The planes roared along, heavily laden with gasoline, bombs and combat crews "sweating it out." Past Iwo and all was "copacetic," up along the chain of Jap-held islands they went, the radar operators busily engaged in getting their sets into maximum operating efficiency. This was an all radar mission, the bombs were to be dropped when the navigator gave the signal, he getting his information from the radar scope.

Landfall! The tip of the Chofu peninsula—about thirty-five miles away—was showing on the radar screen. Quickly the crew gets into flak suits, quickly the pilot advances the throttles and climbs the plane up from the 1000-foot cruising altitude to the 5000-foot bombing altitude. All is tense aboard the ship now, everyone keyed up with a queasy little feeling in the pit of his stomach. Everyone strains his eyes forward, trying to see land, trying to see fires, trying to see anything but the all-pervading darkness. Over the interphone comes the clipped call: "Pilot from navigator, over land, turn 30 degrees right." The plane responds to the hand on the wheel and drones up the Jap coastline. Another call from the navigator—another turn in one minute. The pilot advances throttles, the airspeed picks up. 210, 215, 220, 230, 235, and then settles down on 230 as the turn at the Initial Point is made and the bomb run started. Quickly adjusting anti-glare goggles, the men on the flight deck try to pierce the gloom ahead. "Fires over to the right," calls the bombardier. "Forget them," snaps back the navigator, "that's some rumdumbs dropping on Chosi Point."

Across the peninsula and still no fires visible. "What the hell?" thinks the pilot, "where's the fires?" Then a faint glow appears, looking like the very beginning of a sunrise, quickly expanding into a bright orange reflection on the sky. "Target straight ahead. I've got it," calls the navigator. No evasive action now, no turning until bomb release. The hell with the flak coming up around from rapid-fire anti-aircraft guns.

"Over the bay, get ready to drop bombs." The bombardier opens the doors and at the same time the plane plunges headlong into a huge column of acrid, black smoke. It is tossed around like a leaf, the turbulence is worse than a West Texas thunder storm. Suddenly they are out of the smoke and there below lies a panorama out of Dante's Inferno, a huge, gushing, roaring fire licking its irresistible way through the heart of proud Tokyo. The crew is stunned momentarily, then is snapped back into action by the navigator with his "Ready to drop bombs! 1-2-3-MARK!" The plane springs up after loosing its tons of burning gel, the bomb-bay doors snap shut, the pilot flips the wheel over, and it's "Let's get the hell out of here." The Roman candles are really coming up now as into the unpressurized plane seeps the bitter, harsh smell of burning wood all mixed up with a hundred other odors.

The city is left behind and it's on to landfall with a sharp lookout for fighters. None. Good. Past Chosi Point and a few pungent remarks were made about planes dropping on other than the assigned targets.

And then the long way home. But it is a jubilant crew which breaks open the food-box and sits around discussing the mission while cruising south. Down past Iwo again and then it's daylight and they are scudding along in and out of a few vagrant cumulus humilis.

Finally, after seemingly flying for an entire lifetime, Saipan is sighted, a sigh is heaved, and the pilot bounces onto the runway.

Many are the tales of wonderment and excitement being bandied about as crews climb into trucks and head for Group S-2 to give their story.

Then to the medics for a wee drop of the cup that cheers and back to the Quonsets, feeling tired but exhilarated. The crews flop into bed after a quick shower and a rather slow, thoughtful breakfast.

The next day Nagoya, then Kobe, then Osaka and then the lesser cities until more than 160 square miles of Japan's cities are pulverized into ashes.

Result of this mission: 17.2 square miles of Tokyo up in smoke, a reported 100,000 dead Nips; 500th Group losses on mission, none.

Mission complete.



22 July 1945

SAIPAN, M. I.

Page 1

WALLENSTEIN TABLE-TENNIS CHAMP

WINS WESTERN PACIFIC CROWN

Col Ed Wallenstein, of Maj Van Trigt's Squadron, returned Wednesday from a tour of the forward areas, bringing with him the Table Tennis Doubles Championship of the Western Pacific

Teamed with Pfc Dave Grube of Col Johnson's Group, the two representatives of the Wing met and defeated teams from all branches of the service.

Wallenstein reported a fairly pleasant island hopping trip and many new acquaintances. He also reported that his and Grube's matches were won in a breeze, indicating great potentialities for the pair.

DROP OPENER IN WING BASEBALL

Having been rained out of Sunday's scheduled opener, the Group Baseball team lost its first game in the Wing Section Tuesday afternoon, 6 to 1.

S/Sgt Williams, of Group Spec Service, is now managing the club and expects to have the diamond ready for use before long. Any member of the Group is eligible for this team and all who are interested should contact S/Sgt Williams

ENLISTED MEN'S MORALE COUNCIL HOLDS MEETING

The latest meeting of the Group Enlisted Men's Morale Council was held last Tuesday evening in the Special Ser Office with Capt McClure, Off I C of the PX, present as a Guest. Members discussed problems of the Exchange operation and acquainted themselves with distribution policies.

Members present were M / Sgt Lucas, S / Sgt Newberry, S / Sgt Bruner, S / Sgt Monger, Sgt Harris T / Sgt Holland and S / Sgt Manning

BRONZE STAR AWARDED GROUP

The long expected "Battle Star" was officially credited to Officer and Enlisted personnel of the Grp last week with the publication of General Orders containing the names of all men who served honorably in the organization between 15 June 1944 and 18 Feb 1945.

Need we add that it means five more points on your ASR rating?

FISHING EXCURSIONS CONTINUE

Every second Friday, the Group is authorized to send 25 men on

(Continued on next page)

Col JOHN E DOUGHERTY, Group Commander

Editor Pvt James W Manning
Ass't Ed S/Sgt George C Murray
Art Cpl Tony Purtell
 Sgt William Lange

Published under supervision of Group
Information - Education Officer, Capt
GLENN E McCLURE.

SERVICE CLUB OPENS

The Enl Men's Service Club of Maj Van Trigt's Squadron opened last week with a gala affair in which ice cold beer, pretzels, sandwiches and coffee were served "on the house"

The popularity of the club is attested by the fact that it has enjoyed capacity crowds every night. Already plans are under way to improve and enlarge the set up.

First Sgt Thompson, in behalf of all men in the Squadron, asked Breeze to express their appreciation to Cpls Bishop and Pope, Pfc's Ramos and Cloar and all others who helped in the construction and decoration of the Club

TENNIS RACQUETS EXPECTED AT PX

Exchange Manager Cecil Zumwalt has announced that a limited number of Ken Wel tennis racquets at \$13 and \$7 are expected in next few weeks.

Individuals may apply for racquets and presses in same manner as for any other critical items by filling in the application form supplied at PX.

FISHING (Cont) - a fishing trip on a Navy small craft. Interested persons should contact Sdn Operations.

USAFI COMMANDANT TO SPEAK AT SURFSIDE FRIDAY NIGHT

Next Friday's "Information Night" will feature a 30 minute presentation on the United States Armed Forces Institute by Capt Donald D Hickman, commandant of the Western Pacific Branch of that organization.

Captain Hickman will explain fully the operation of this "GI SCHOOL" and will answer most commonly asked questions concerning it.

This program, originally scheduled for Monday, was postponed until this date so that all personnel will have an opportunity to attend.

NEW MICROPHONES AND AMPLIFIER ORDERED

A new sound system has been placed on order to improve the presently inadequate set up at Surfside.

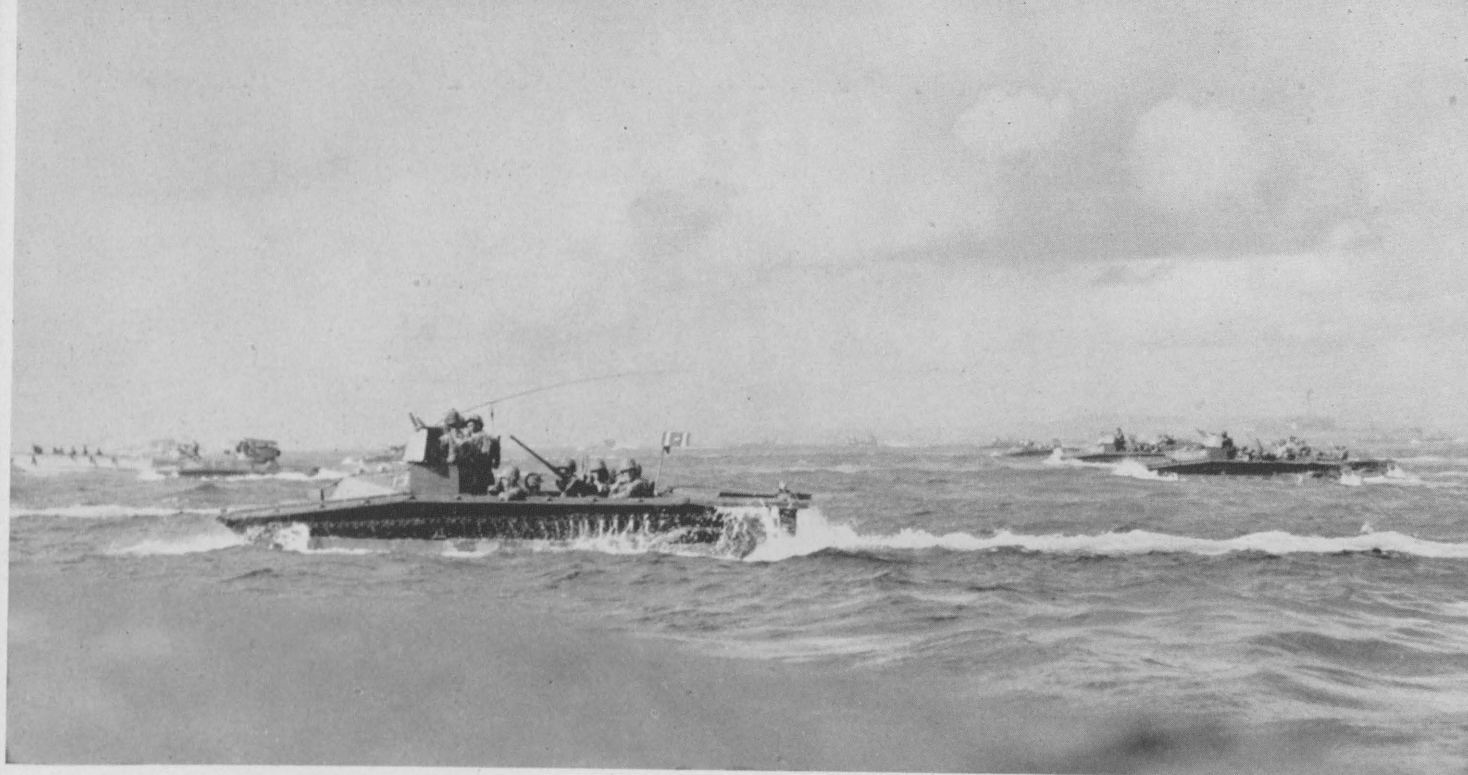
The Officers' Club financed slightly more than half the cost while Sdn funds paid equal shares of the rest.

USAFI REMOVES CHARGES FOR OFFICER ENROLLMENTS

An announcement this week by WPBC states that, in the future, Officers will no longer pay the full cost of courses from USAFI but will be serviced on the same basis as EM, who pay only two dollars for first course and nothing for additional ones.

GENE AUTRY AND RUFÉ DAVIS APPEAR AT SURFSIDE

Gene Autry, Rufe Davis, Will Ahern Sandra Shaw and Marjorie Alden drew a large crowd last Tuesday evening when they played for Surfside fans.



Official Marine Corps Photo

The story of the 500th would not be complete without a tribute to the 2nd and 4th Marines and the 27th Infantry who stormed ashore at Saipan on 15 June 1944 under cover of naval and air bombardment. These photos show first assault waves to hit the beach.

In the 24-day battle that followed, approximately 25,000 Japanese were killed. US forces suffered over 15,000 casualties, 3500 of whom were dead or missing. This was five times the cost of Tarawa. The loss of Saipan was so great a shock to Japan that the entire cabinet of General Tojo resigned.

TO THE MEMORY OF OUR BRAVE COMRADES
WHO GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR OUR COUNTRY,
THIS VOLUME IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.



Honor Roll

Unofficial List of Missing in Action and Killed Personnel

With Name and Address of Next of Kin

Abel, Robt R	Marguerite Abel, 214 F Street, Taft, Calif
Abernathy, Everette L	Callie Whitener Abernathy, Hildenbran, N C
Aitken, Glandon M	Harold M Aitken, 28 Archbald St, Carbondale, Pa
Allison, Jas P	Annie E Allison, 34442 Michigan Ave, Wayne, Mich
Amos, Joe S	Laura C Amos, Aileen, S C
Anderson, Norman B	Jennie Anderson, 506 Archer St, Freeport, N Y
Armstrong, Richard C	Marcella L Armstrong, 342 Walton Ave, San Antonio, Texas
Augunas, Algy S	Stella Augunas, 36 Belford Ave, Bay Shore, N Y
Bailey, Jas A	Julia Bailey, 17 McGruder Hts, Williamsburg, Va
Barry, John T	Mabel Barry, 7724 S Aberdeen St, Chicago, Ill
Bassett, Norman B	Robert S Bassett, 260 Depew Ave, Buffalo, N Y
Battell, Robt T	Patricia C Battell, 5327 Mohawk Lane, Kansas City, Mo
Bell, Ray M	Grace M Bell, Griggsville, Ill
Bergren, Wm E	Helen Bergren, Willow Creek, Mont
Berry, Marion E	Margaret Caroline Rockwell, Rt 1, Tieton, Wash
Bjerva, Myron C	Marcus A Bjerva, Kenyon, Minn
Blakely, Alton E	Versie O Blakely, Rt 1, Snyder, Tex
Bond, Jas C	Vera M Bond, 716 West Lewis Place, Tulsa, Okla
Bonelli, Gerald H	Mary Bonelli, 107 University Rd, Brookline, Mass
Boren, Admer N C	Mrs Standiford Boren, 316 El Rio Ave, Modesto, Calif
Bradford, Sam H	Robt Bradford, Albany, Tex
Braziel, Homer C	Sibyl J Braziel, Pearl, Texas
Brittain, Chas E	Lillian M Brittain, 411 N Washington St, Eldorado, Kans
Brousek, Erwin A	Lillian R Brousek, 3608 W 26th St, Chicago, Ill
Brown, Sherman E	Lucile Fost, Cedar Lake, Ind
Brown, Verdel	Ellna Brown, Guntersville, Ala
Buller, Walter P	Nettie Buller, 2027 Jefferson St, Eugene, Ore
Burns, Thos J	Catherine V Burns, 4333 N 17th St, Phila, Pa
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Chaffin, Geo N, Jr	Geo N Chaffin, Sr, Rt 2, La Rue, Tex
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Clore, Robt B	Blanche Clore, 830 N Union St, Fostoria, O
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Corrigan, James P	Rose Corrigan, 320 Ridge St, Freeland, Pa
Crane, Robt N	Dorothy A Crane, 4321 56th St, Woodside LI, N Y
Cusick, Jas B	Gladys D Delzell, Laurenceville, Ind
Cutler, John L	Iva H Cutler, Jasper, O
Dreyer, Paul E	Geneva P Dreyer, Braddock Rd, Cumberland, Md
Danielson, Glen E	Alforetta Danielson, 132½ W 8th St, Russell, Kans
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Demers, Geo A	Lillian Demers, 82 Hall St, Lynn, Mass
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Edwards, Benjamin F	Erleene G Edwards, Box 4 Rt 4, Bastrop, La
Eaton, Merle S	Marilyn Eaton, 936 19th St, Merced, Calif
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Gendelman, Irwin
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 Giddings, Gerould L
 Gilbreath, Eugene E
 Glacken, Francis L
 Goffery, Thos M
 *Goldsworthy, Robt F
 Gouloze, John J
 Granger, Robt
 Grise, Chas G
 Grow, Lynn N
 Hain, Wm H
 Hansen, Harold M
 Hardy, Donald E
 Hargrove, Forrest M
 Headley, Wm C
 *Hedges, Harold T
 Hicks, Chas F
 Hocker, Beverly A
 Hodson, Kenneth F
 Holley, David W
 Holmes, Theodore B
 Hopper, Ray F
 Hughes, Leonard I
 Hunt, Geo W
 Hunt, Karl
 Hurlbutt, Wilbur E
 Irvin, Joseph R
 Irvine, Jessie J
 Isza, Albert D
 Janecek, Robt
 Johnson, Jas E
 Johnson, Richard C
 Johnson, Wm R
 Johnston, Melvin L
 Jones, Morris S
 Judd, Ausbon
 Kaufman, Russell L
 Kehrer, Joseph A
 Kerschner, Elmer R
 *King, Richard T, Jr
 King, Robt E
 Kingsley, Charles R
 Komocar, Maurice R
 Kottke, Wm F
 Kramer, Albert T
 Kutchera, Jack A
 Lane, Elijah G
 Law, Ed G
 Limp, John M
 Lindgram, Lawrence F
 Luman, Robt D
 Mahar, Thos G
 Maiorana, Tony J
 Marshall, Jas A
 Martinson, Jack S
 McBride, Howard E
 McClure, Wm H
 McEvoy, Thos E
 *McGrath, Harry E
 McGuire, T H
 McMillen, Harry E
 McNeill, Leonard T
 Mears, Harry L
 Meuller, Jack O
 Miller, Dillon G
 Miller, Russell A
 Mitchell, Arthur W
 Mitchell, Bishop K
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 Moores, Wm L, Jr
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 Clark Musil, 5130 Fowler Ave, Cleveland, O
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Patukula, Walter J	Anna P Patukula, 720 Ohio Ave, Trenton, N J
Pavey, Glen E	Lulu M Pavey, 1140 N 5th St, Salem, Ore
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Pringle, H P	Dawna Pringle, Afton, Wyoming
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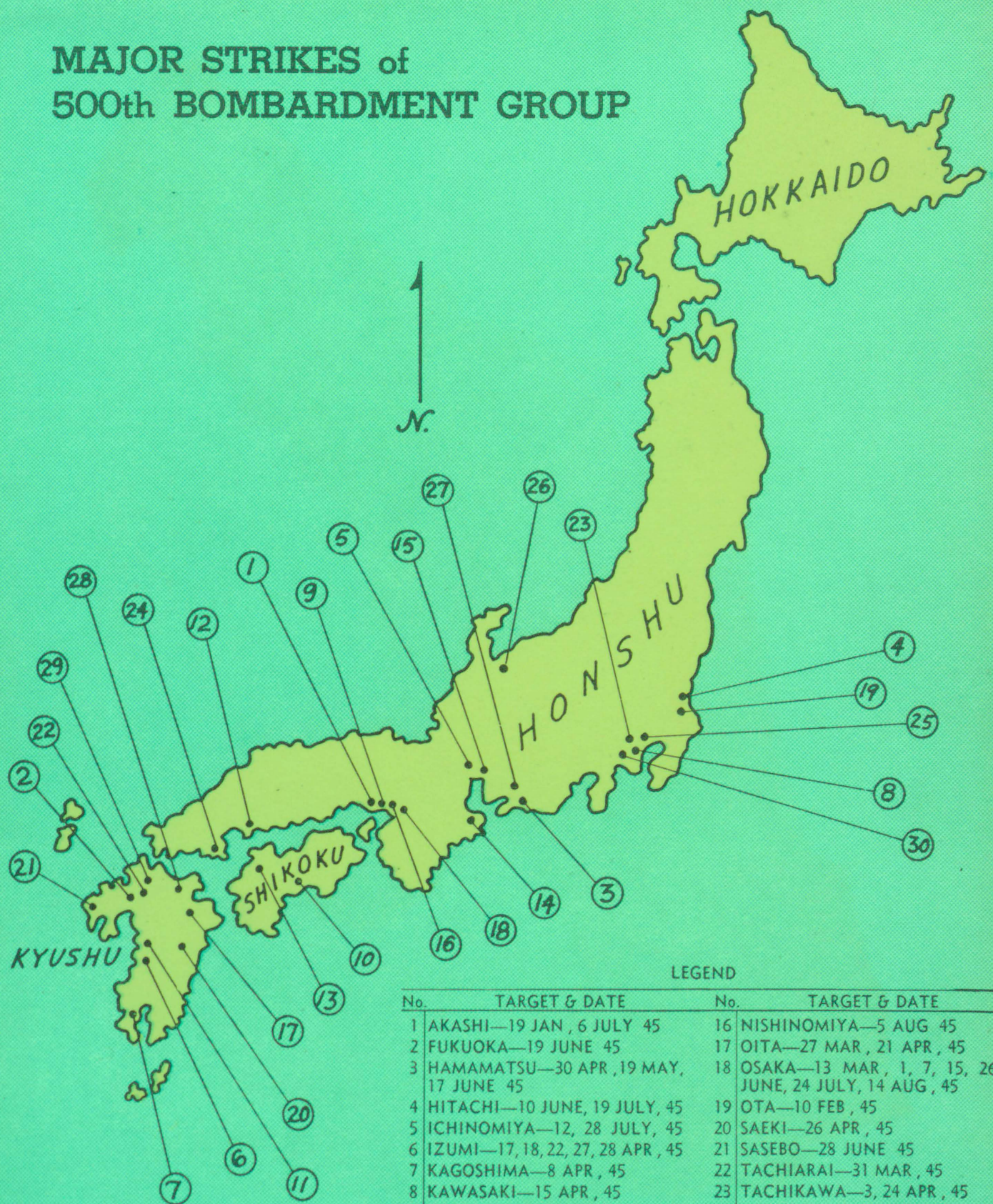
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SAIPAN

MAJOR STRIKES of 500th BOMBARDMENT GROUP



LEGEND

No.	TARGET & DATE	No.	TARGET & DATE
1	AKASHI—19 JAN, 6 JULY 45	16	NISHINOMIYA—5 AUG 45
2	FUKUOKA—19 JUNE 45	17	OITA—27 MAR, 21 APR, 45
3	HAMAMATSU—30 APR, 19 MAY, 17 JUNE 45	18	OSAKA—13 MAR, 1, 7, 15, 26 JUNE, 24 JULY, 14 AUG, 45
4	HITACHI—10 JUNE, 19 JULY, 45	19	OTA—10 FEB, 45
5	ICHINOMIYA—12, 28 JULY, 45	20	SAEKI—26 APR, 45
6	IZUMI—17, 18, 22, 27, 28 APR, 45	21	SASEBO—28 JUNE 45
7	KAGOSHIMA—8 APR, 45	22	TACHIARA—31 MAR, 45
8	KAWASAKI—15 APR, 45	23	TACHIKAWA—3, 24 APR, 45
9	KOBE—16 MAR, 11 MAY, 5 JUNE, 45	24	TOKUYAMA—10 MAY 45
10	KOCHI—3 JULY 45	25	TOKYO—24, 27, 29 NOV, 3, 27 DEC, 44, 9, 27 JAN, 19, 25 FEB, 4, 9 MAR, 1, 7, 12, 13 APR, 23, 25, MAY 45
11	KUMAMOTO—1 JULY 45	26	TOYAMA—1 AUG, 45
12	KURE—5 MAY, 22 JUNE 45	27	TOYOKAWA—7 AUG, 45
13	MATSUYAMA—26 JULY 45	28	USA—21 APR, 45
14	MATSUZAKA—4 FEB, 45	29	YAWATA—8 AUG, 45
15	NAGOYA—13, 18, 22 DEC, 44, 3, 14, 23 JAN, 15 FEB, 11, 18, 24 MAR, 14, 16 MAY 45	30	YOKOHAMA—29 MAY 45

