

KEESLER FIELD

mississippi





Lt. Samuel R. Keesler

From the very beginning, only one thing was expected of Keesler Field. That was a steady flow of highly trained airplane mechanics, men qualified for the important task of keeping this nation's warplanes in first-rate fighting condition.

Today, as one of the great schools in the Army Air Force's Technical Training Command, Keesler Field has lived up to that expectation and established itself as a fitting memorial to the late Second Lieutenant Samuel R. Keesler of Greenwood, Miss., who died a hero in World War I, and for whom the field was named.

Keesler Field grew from an old golf course, ball park, airport, Naval Reserve Park and swampy woodland on the outskirts of Biloxi, Mississippi. Ground was first broken June 13, 1941, before war clouds burst over the Pacific. In February, less than eight months later, it made its first direct reply to the bombing of Pearl Harbor with the graduation of several hundred mechanics, the first to complete the intensive 19-week course in the AAFTS.

Keesler's work did not end there, however. In addition to supplying thousands of mechanics, it teaches new men the basic fundamentals of warfare in its Basic Training Center.

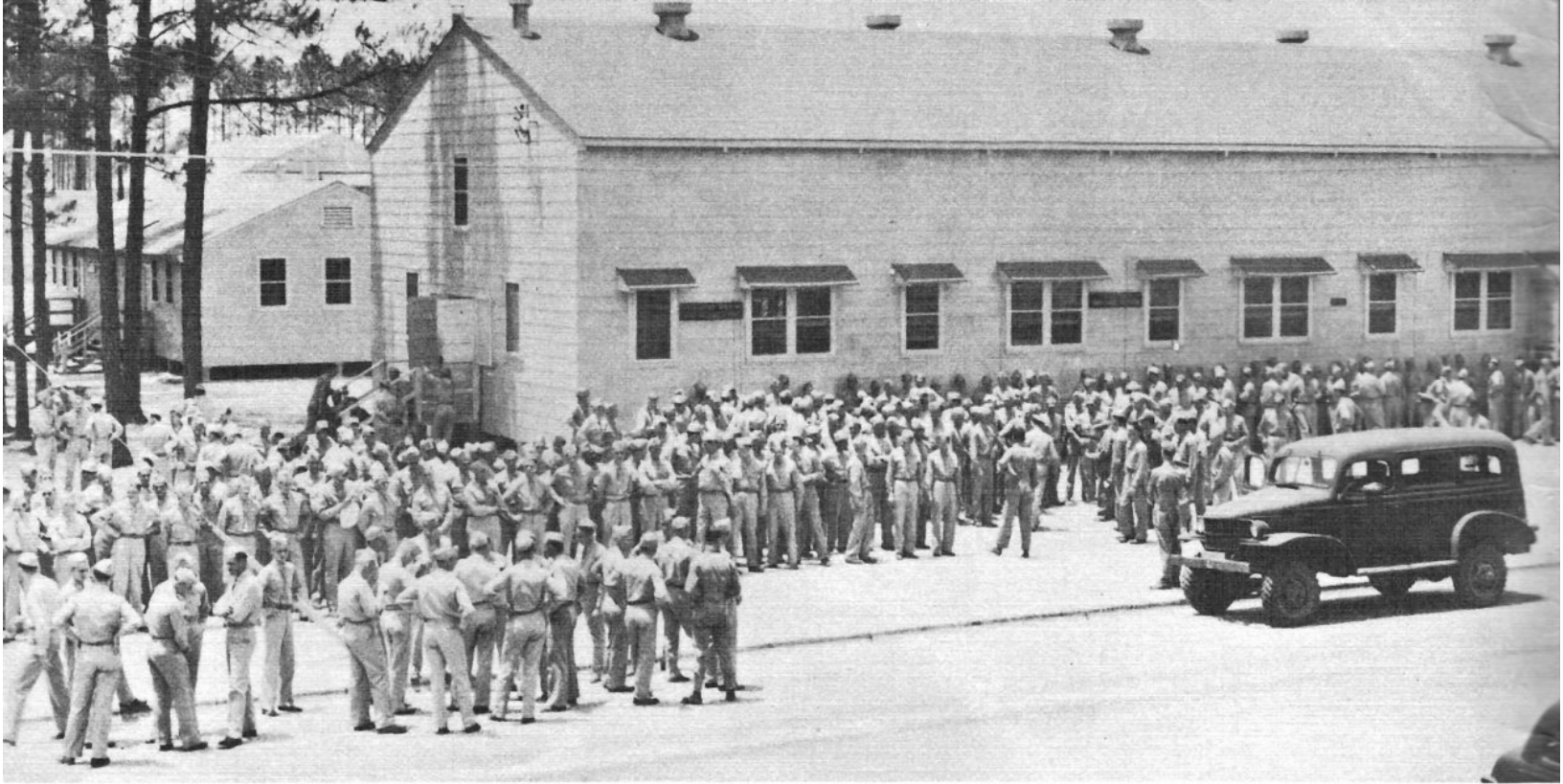
Regardless of their duties here or overseas, the men of Keesler Field have the same goal in mind—they intend to "Keep 'Em Flying!"

All Photos by Air Force's Technical Training Command



CLASSWORK, AAFTS INSPECTION BRANCH



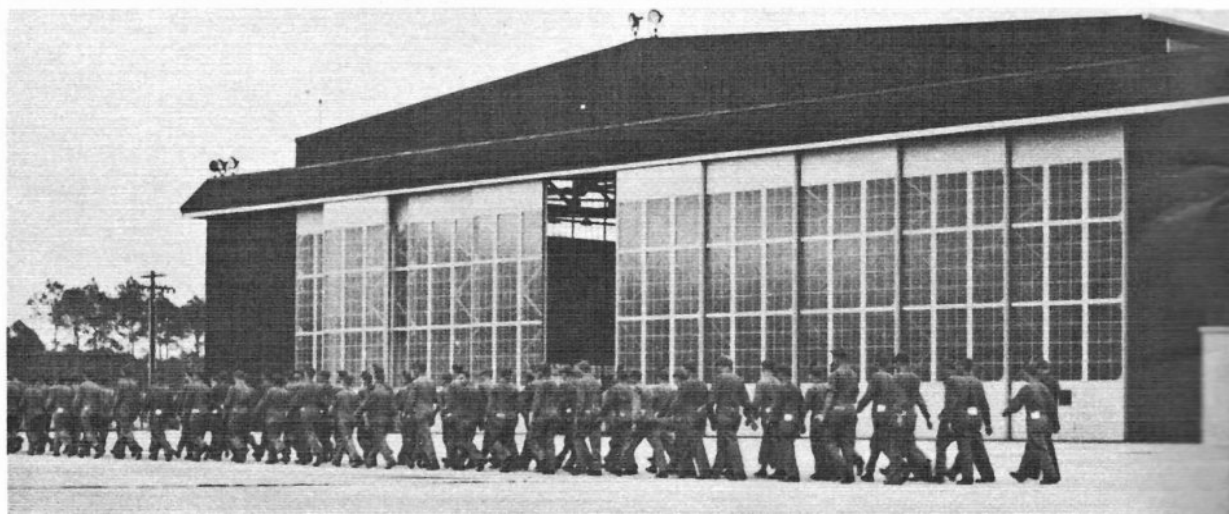


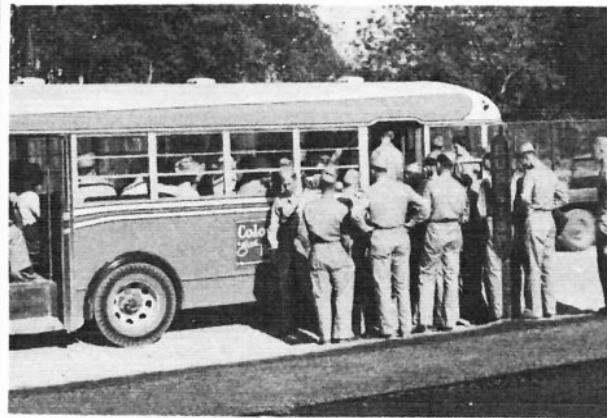
NEW RECRUITS ARRIVE



ASSIGNMENT
TO BARRACKS

OFF TO CLASS



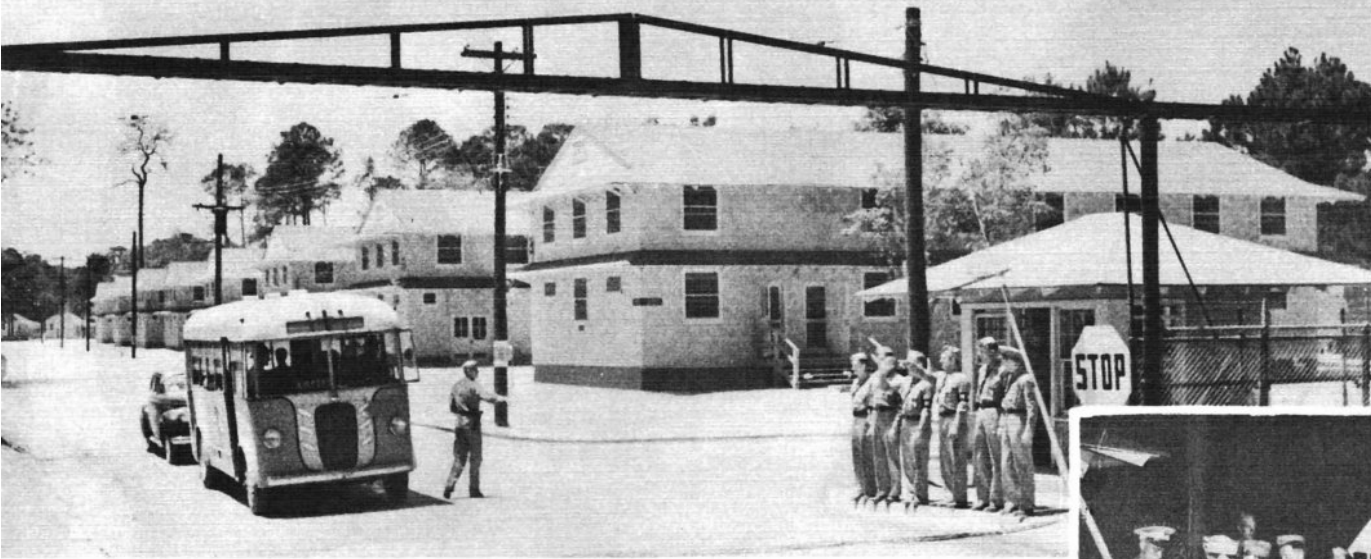


BILOXI BOUND

DOWNTOWN BILOXI

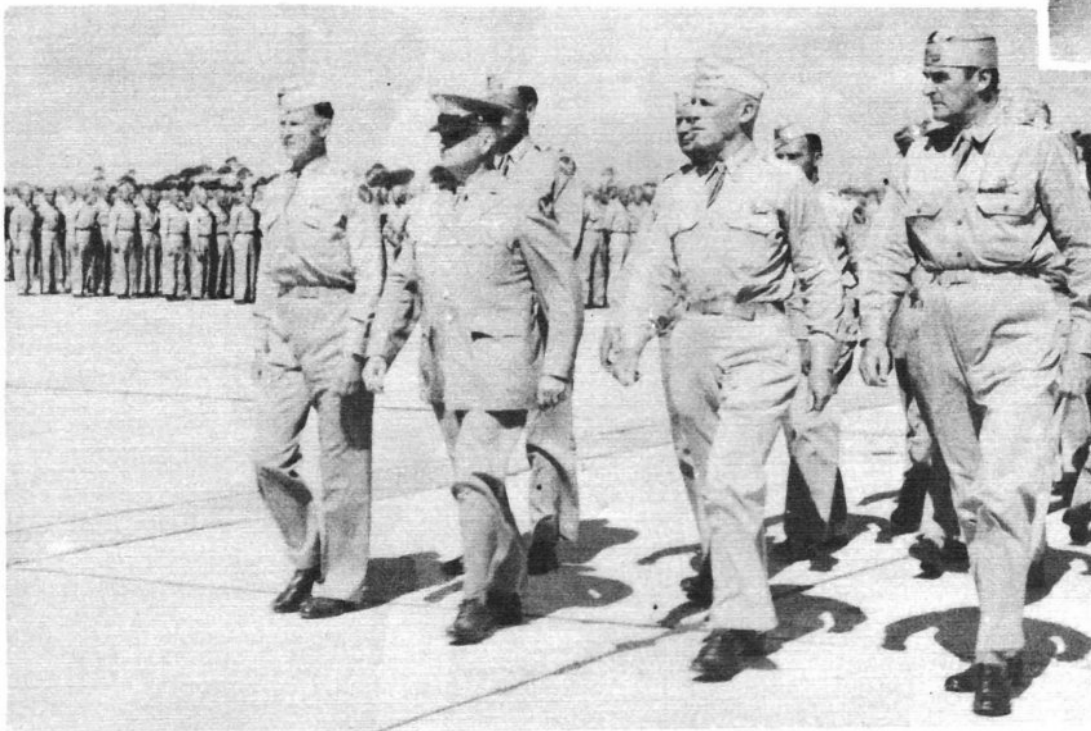
ENLISTED MEN'S PIER — BACK BAY



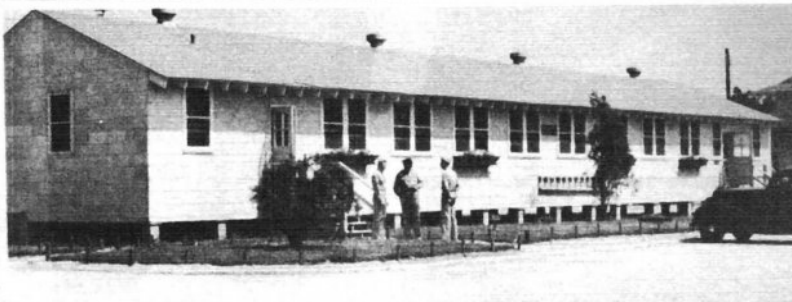


"SHOW YOUR PASS"

MPs CHECKING PASSES



INSPECTION



SQUADRON ORDERLY ROOM



ENTRANCE WING, OFFICERS' CLUB



TENT AREA



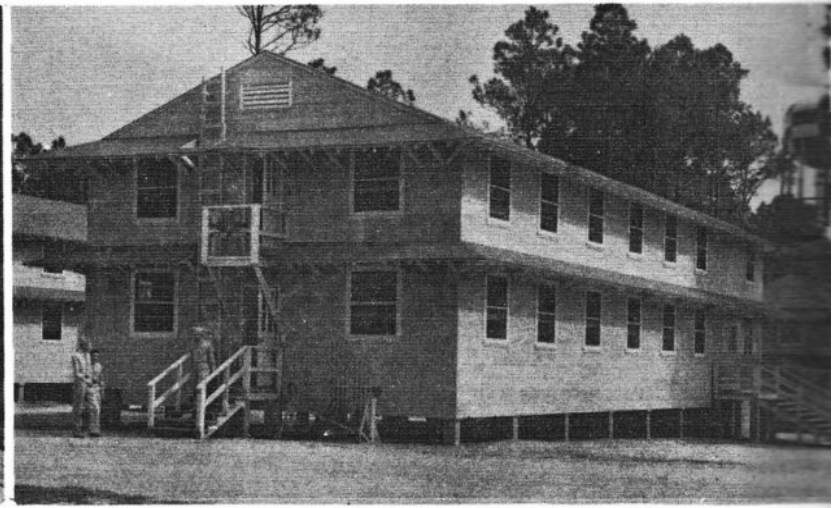
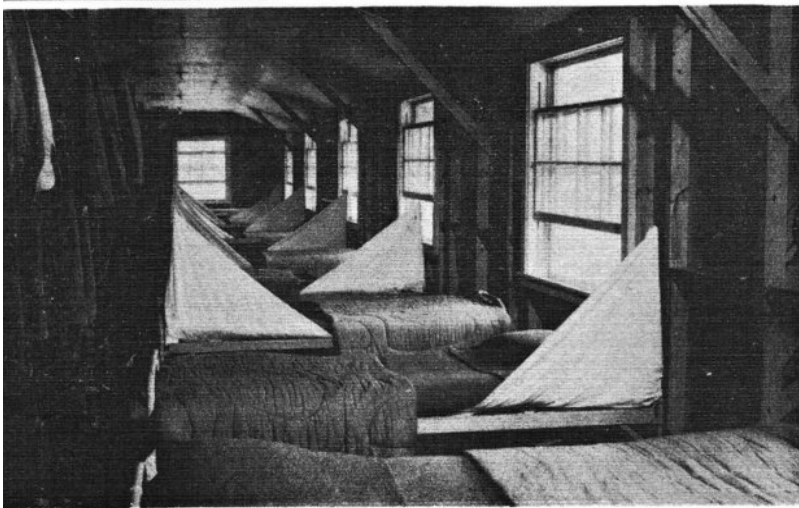
For the men who spend their spare time at camp, the squadron day rooms are favorite hangouts. This group has just received its copies of *The Keesler Field News*, the Field's weekly publication.



HOSTESS HOUSE



FIELD POST OFFICE



INTERIOR OF BARRACK

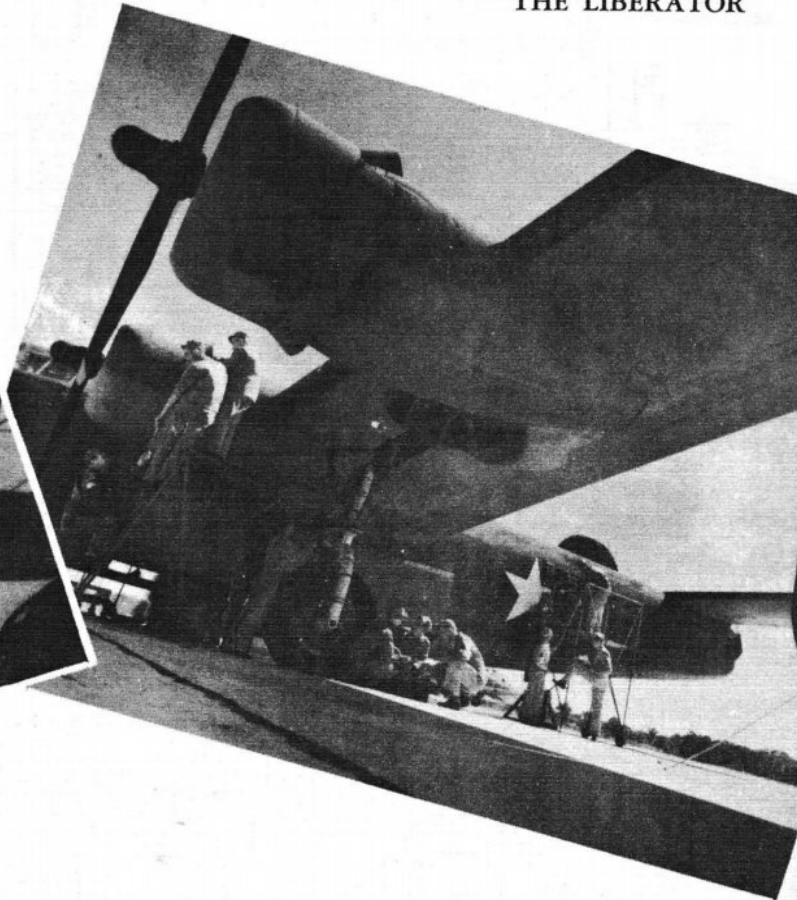
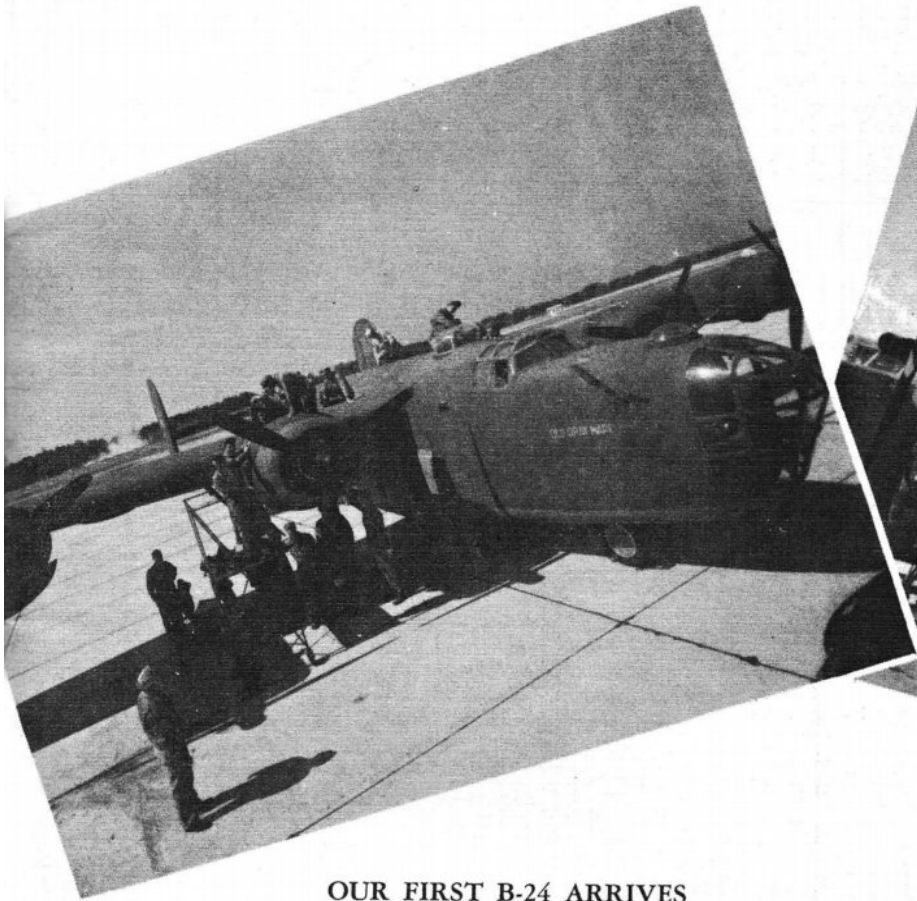
BACHELOR OFFICERS' QUARTERS

BARRACK FOR ENLISTED MEN

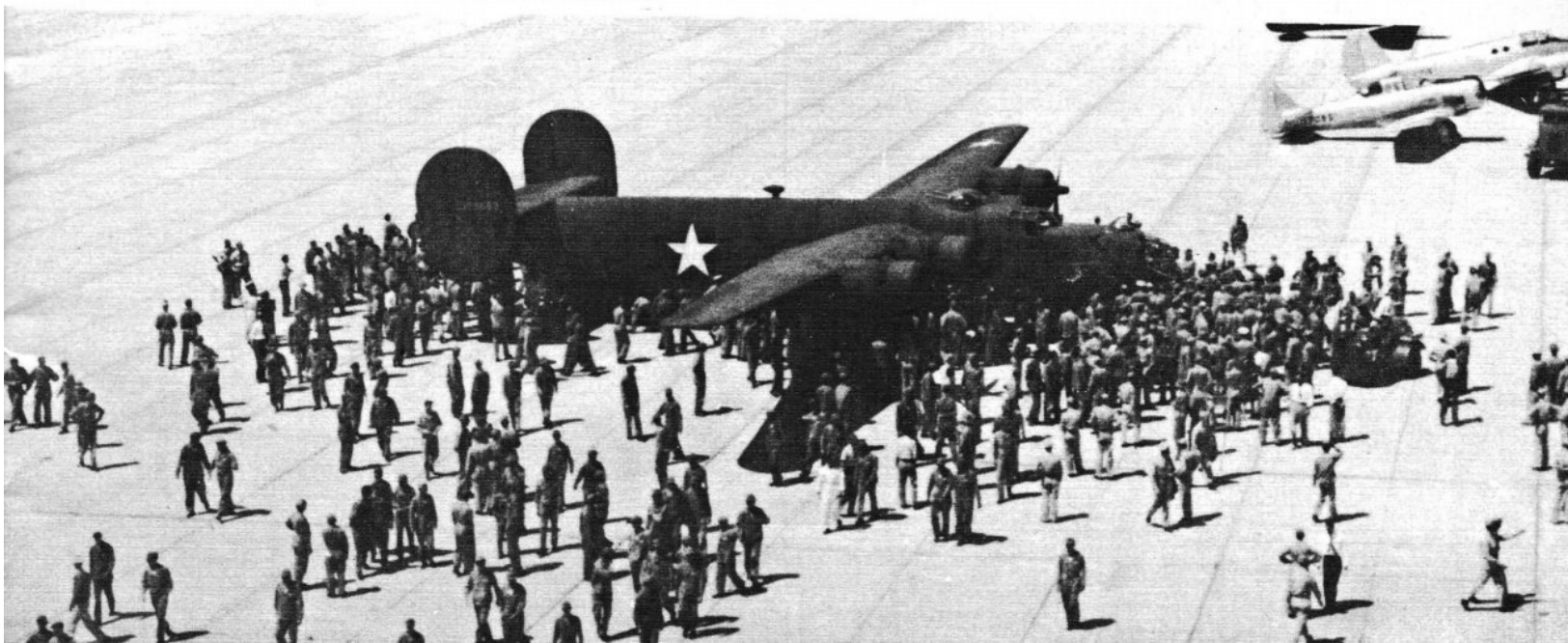




THE LIBERATOR



OUR FIRST B-24 ARRIVES



UNIFORMS SEEN AT KEESLER FIELD



SUMMER KHAKI



OD CLASS A



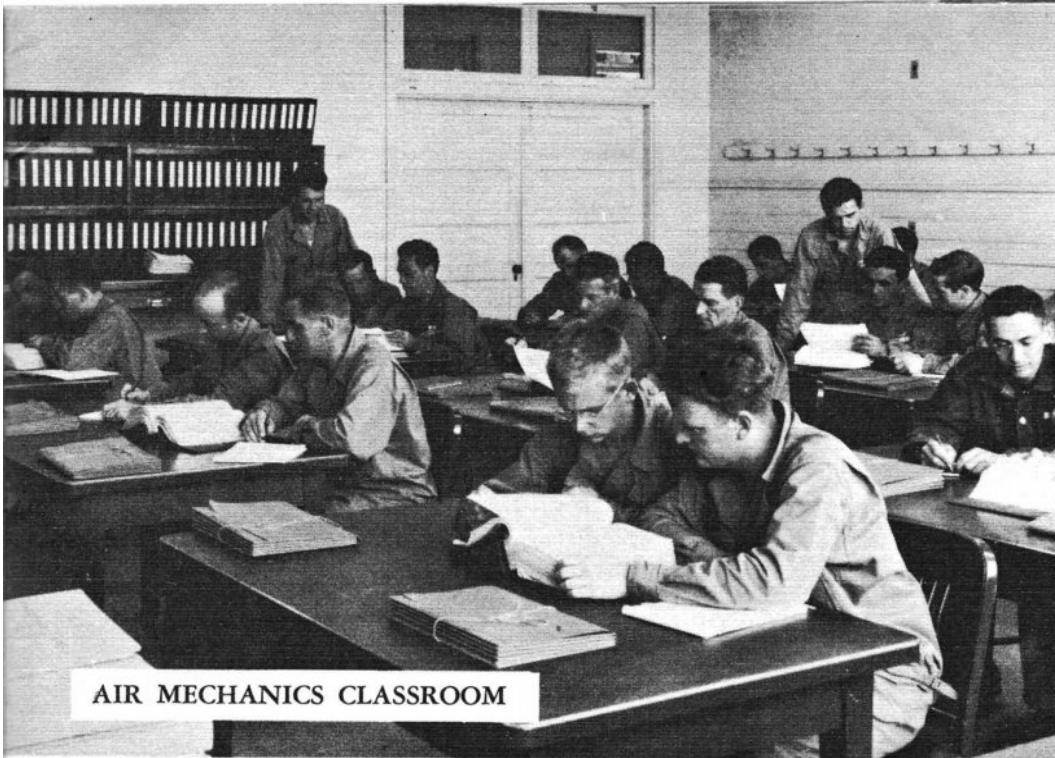
WINTER OD



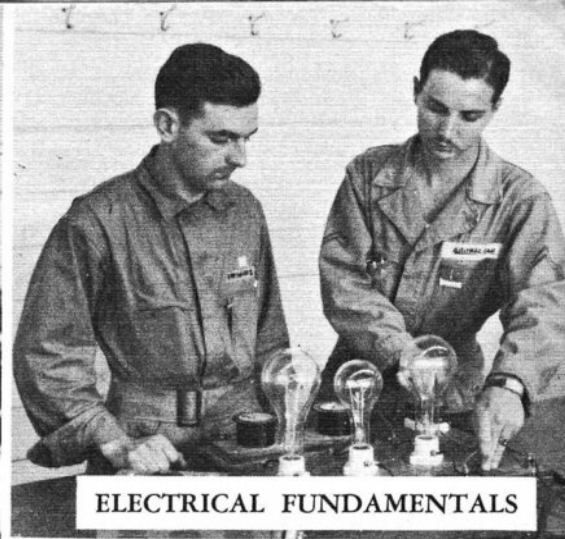
STUDENT MECHANIC



FATIGUE



AIR MECHANICS CLASSROOM



ELECTRICAL FUNDAMENTALS

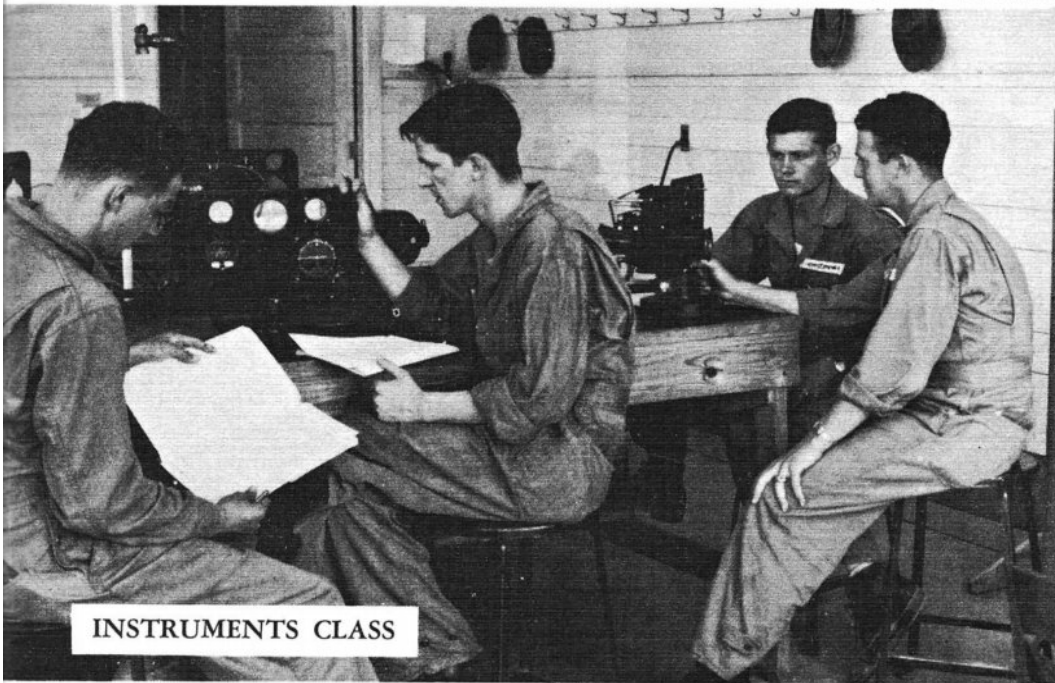
Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, the Army Air Force's Technical School at Keesler Field turns out skilled airplane mechanics to service and maintain the huge four-engined B-24's (Liberators) used by the United Nations for heavy bombardment.

For 96 days these student-soldiers of the Army Air Force's Technical Training Command march to and from the hangars and classrooms in which they learn the fundamentals and fine points of mechanical precision. Then, most of them go out "on the line" to become one of the score of men on the ground who keep each B-24 in the air.

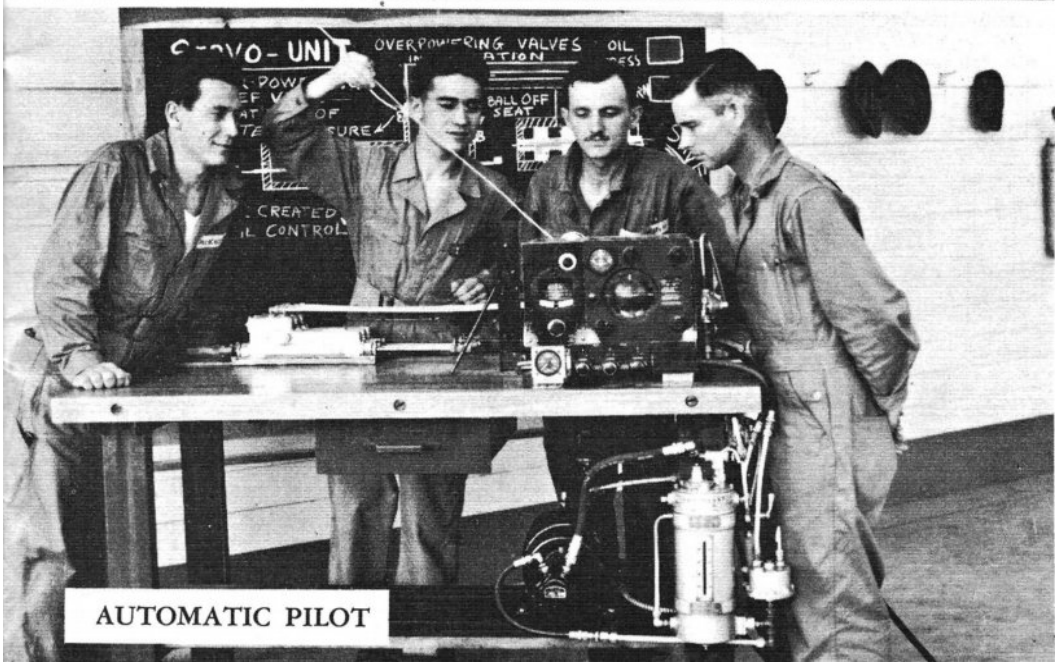
From every walk of life, and in most instances without previous interest or experience in things mechanical, come these air mechanics students; from all parts of the United States. They qualify for this training only after passing a mechanical aptitude test, a precaution which keeps the number of failures at a low percentage.

For the first eight days the student learns about aircraft maintenance fundamentals of the B-24. Then he goes into the specialized branches, broken down into successive eight-day study periods of airplane structures, hydraulic systems, electrical systems, instruments, engines, fuel systems, propellers and engine operation, and finally into the important 24-day period of engine inspection.

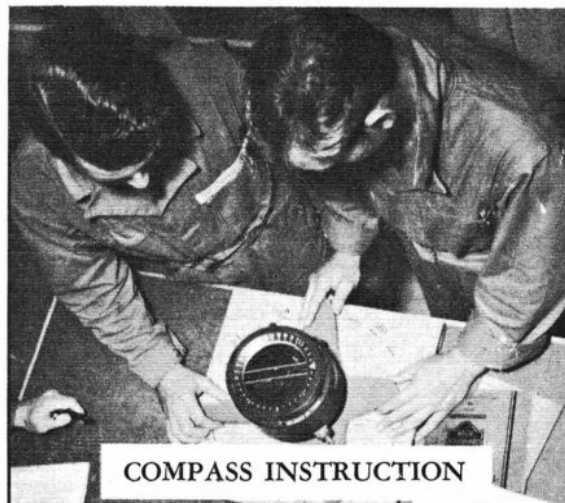
Long before the course is finished he knows what his job will be. With the course completed, he's ready to do it!



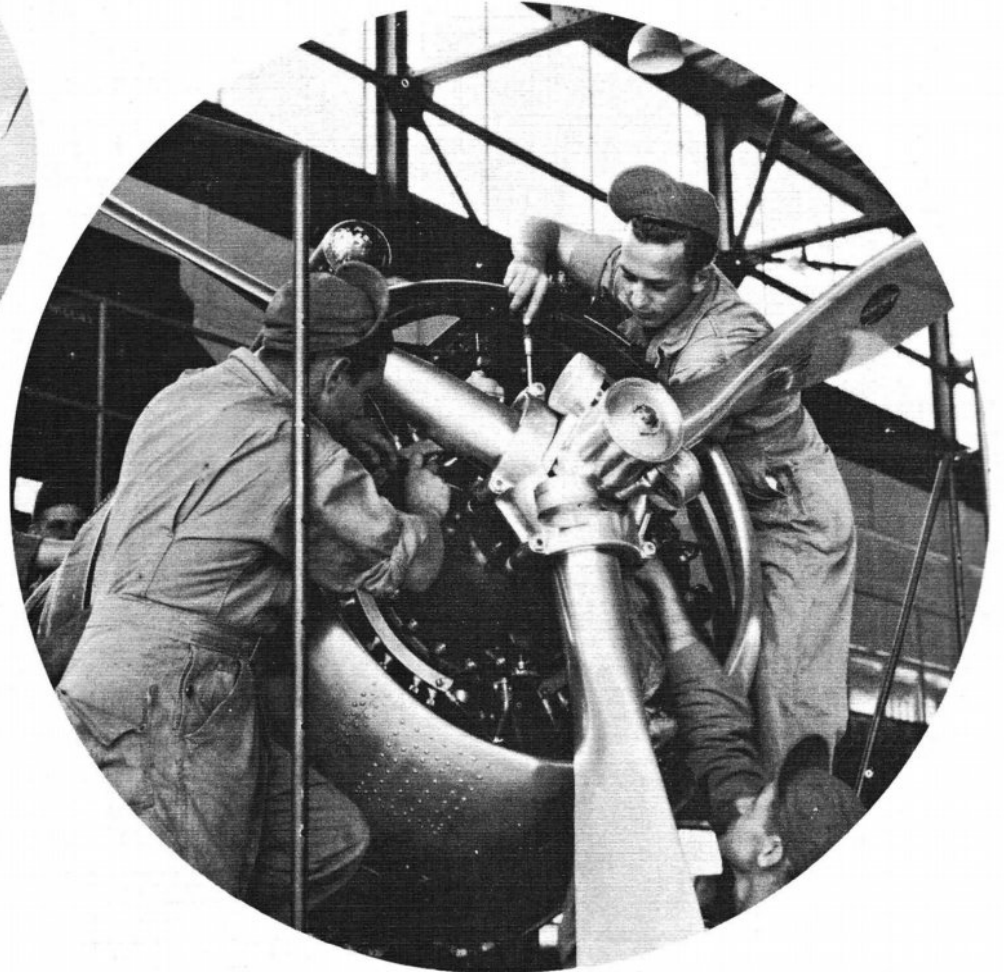
INSTRUMENTS CLASS



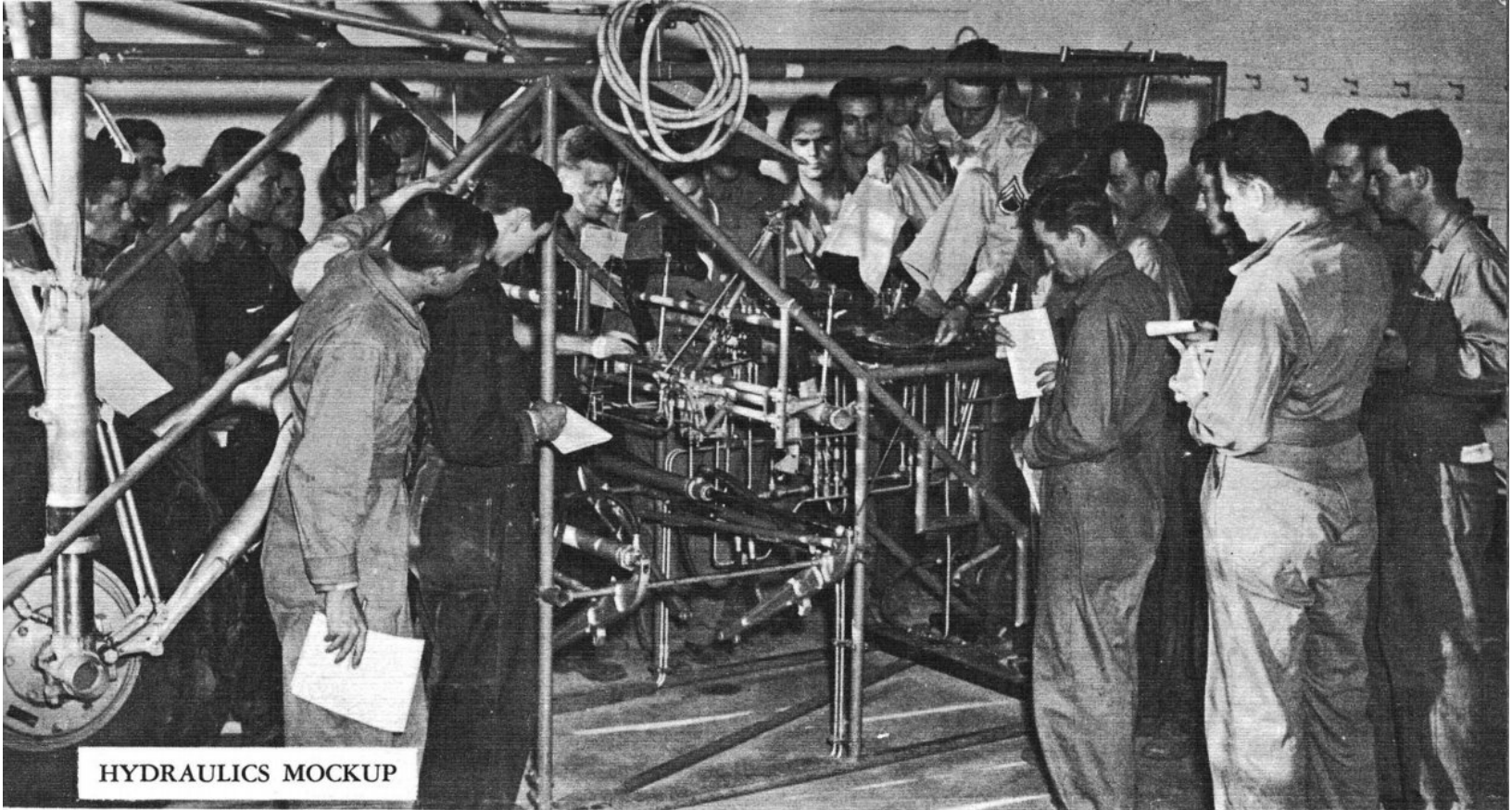
AUTOMATIC PILOT



COMPASS INSTRUCTION



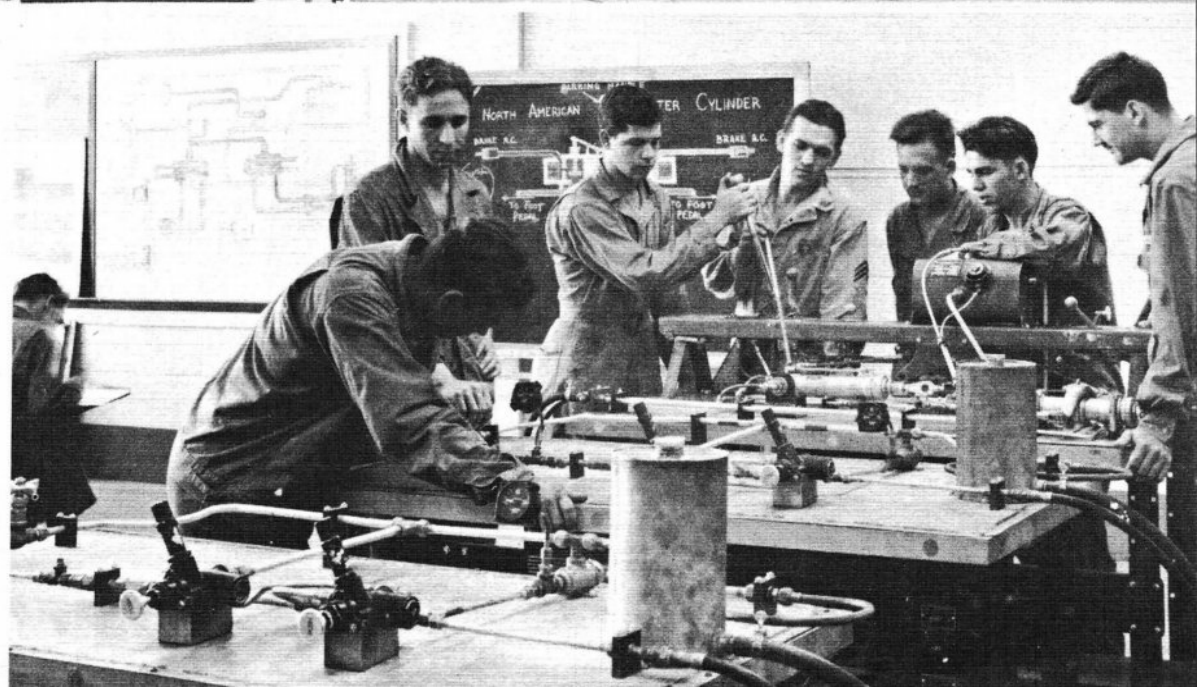
PROPELLER BRANCH



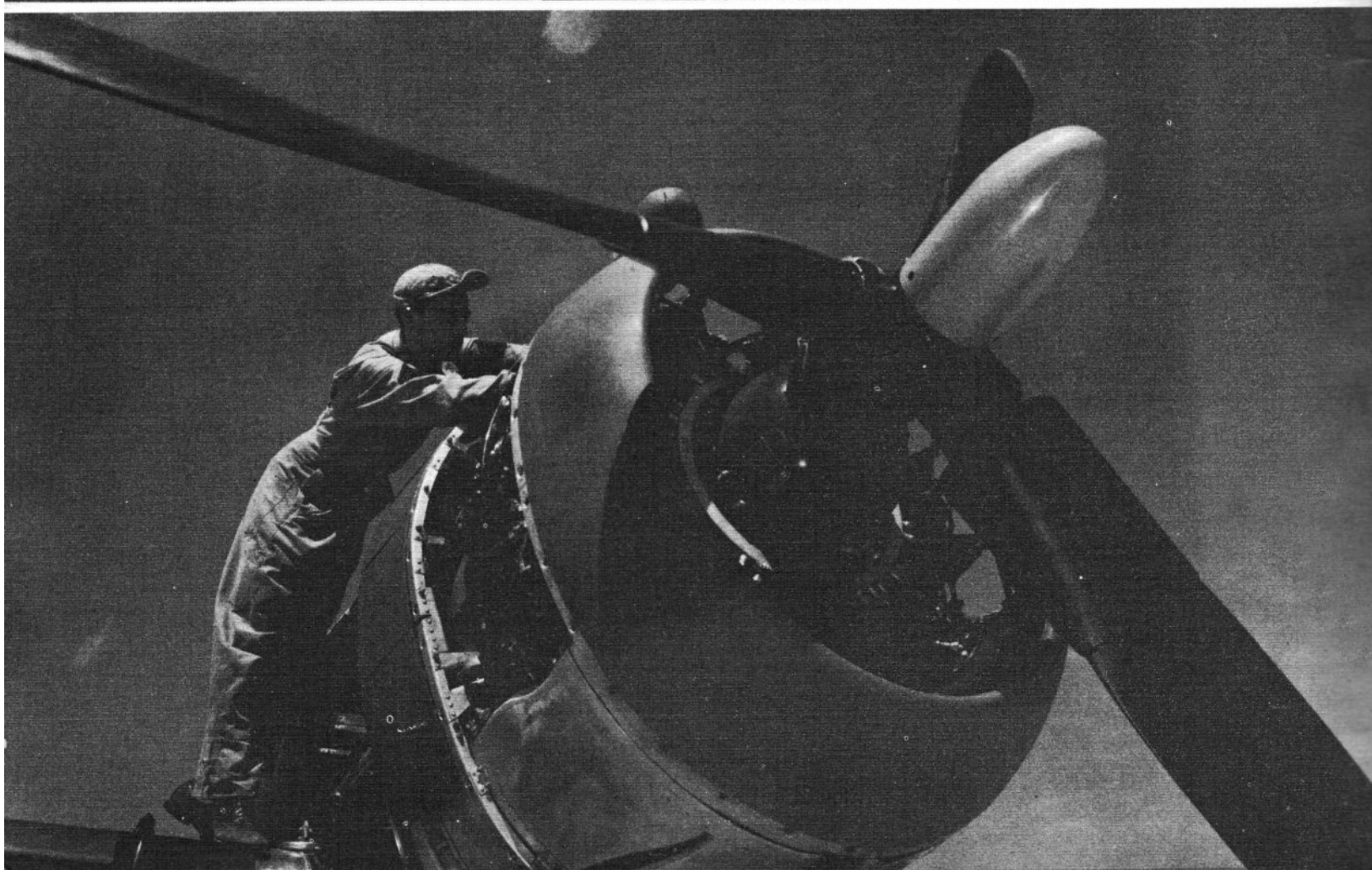
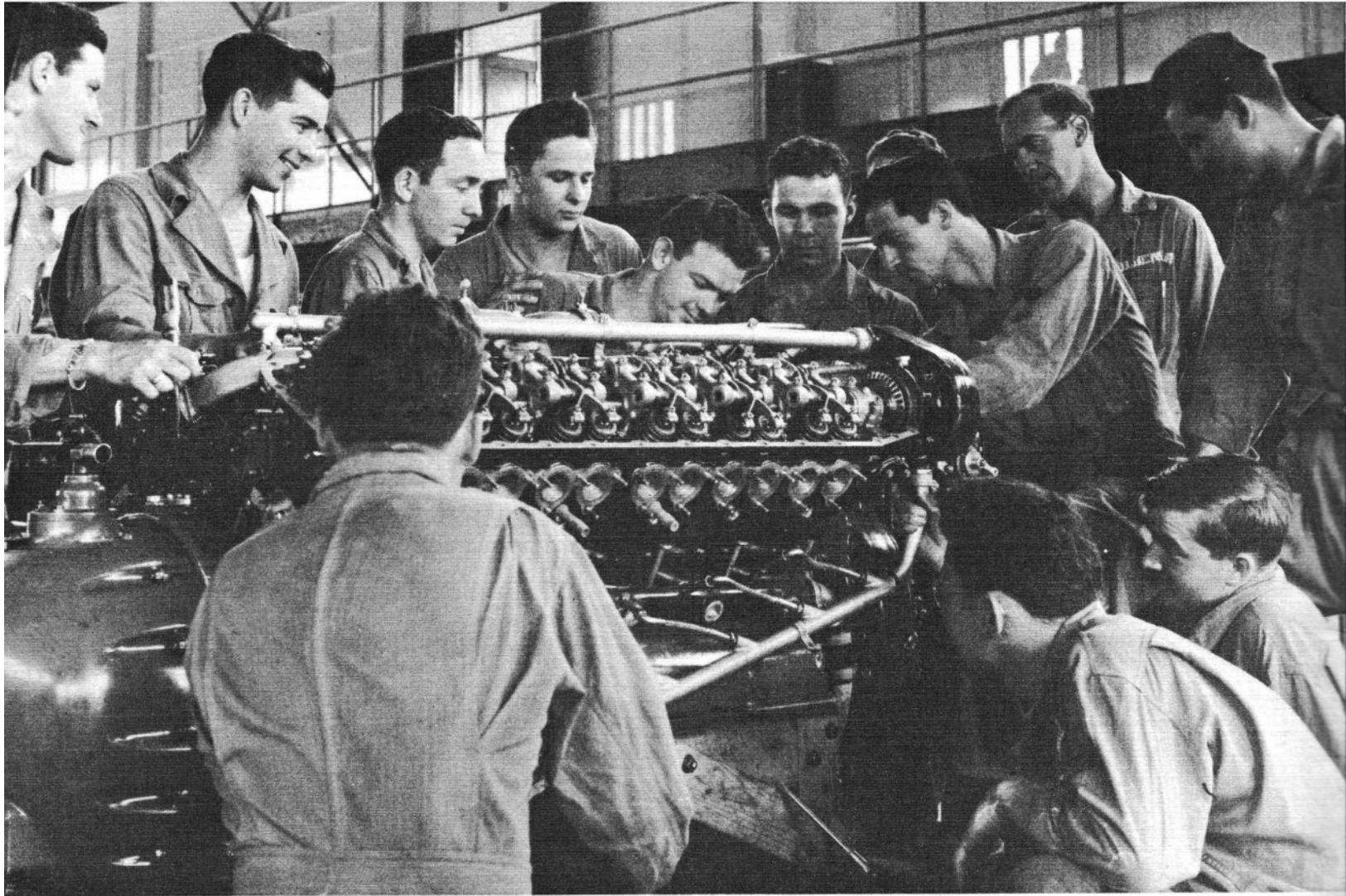
HYDRAULICS MOCKUP

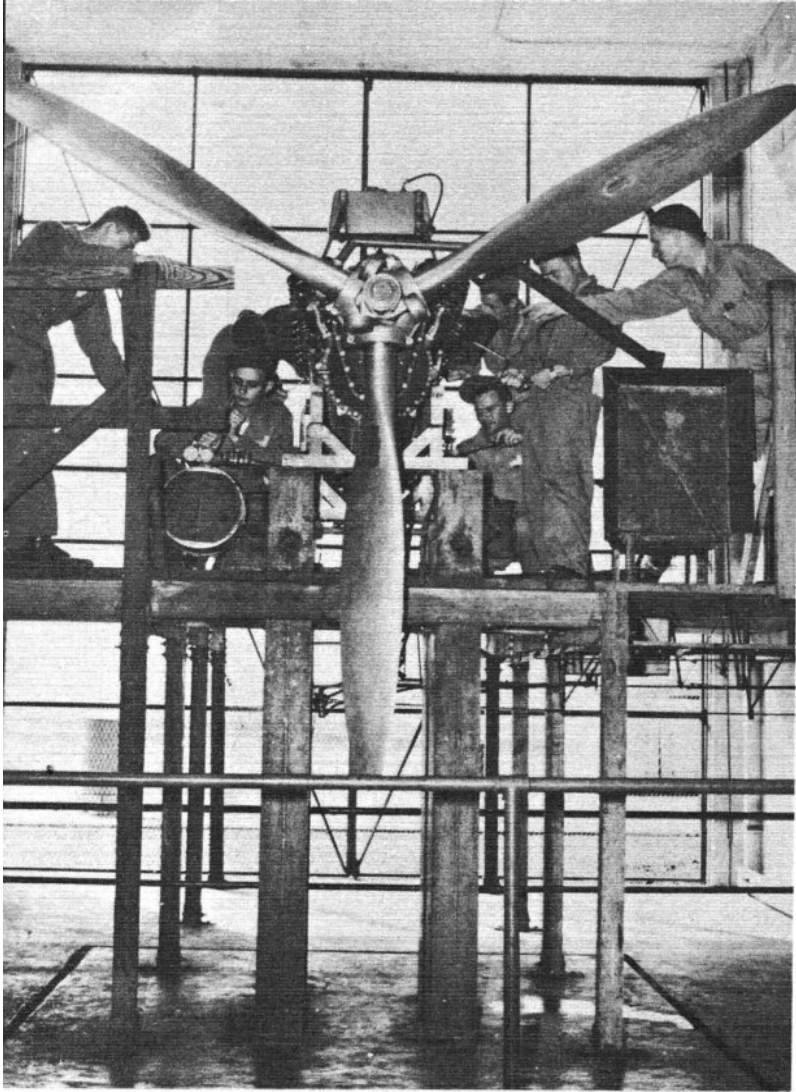


RETRACTABLE LANDING GEAR

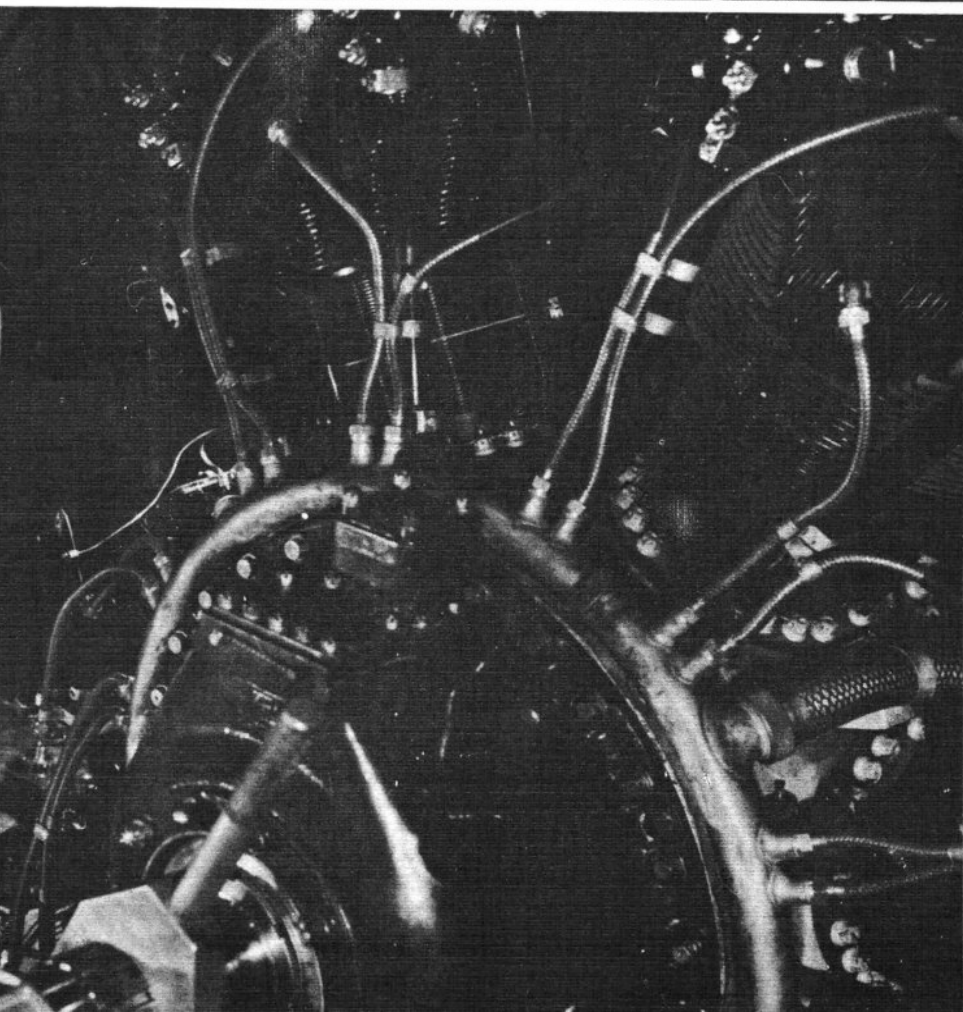
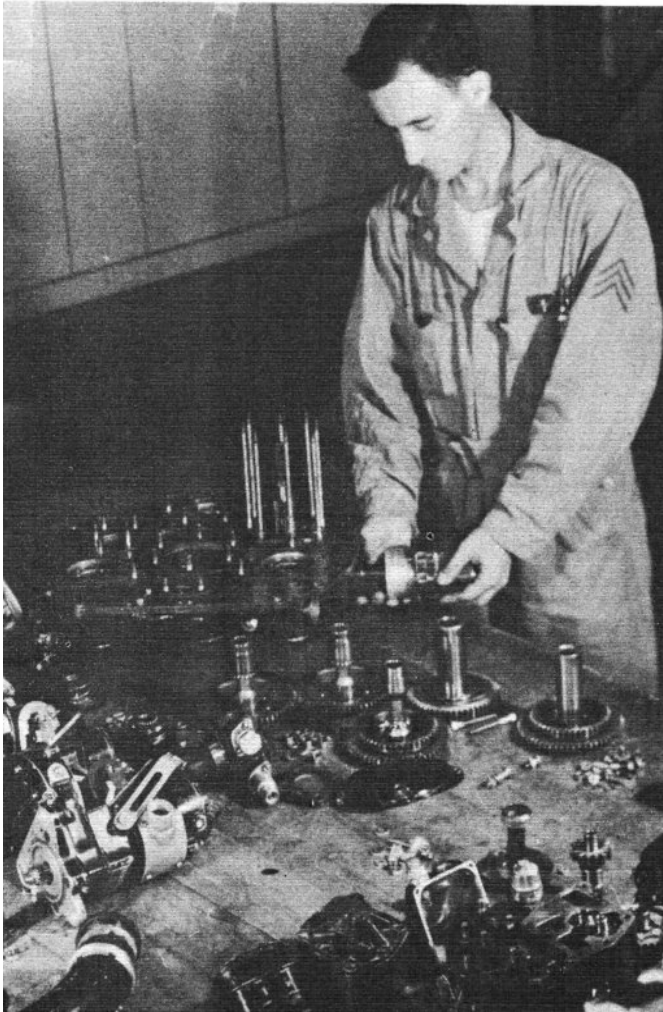
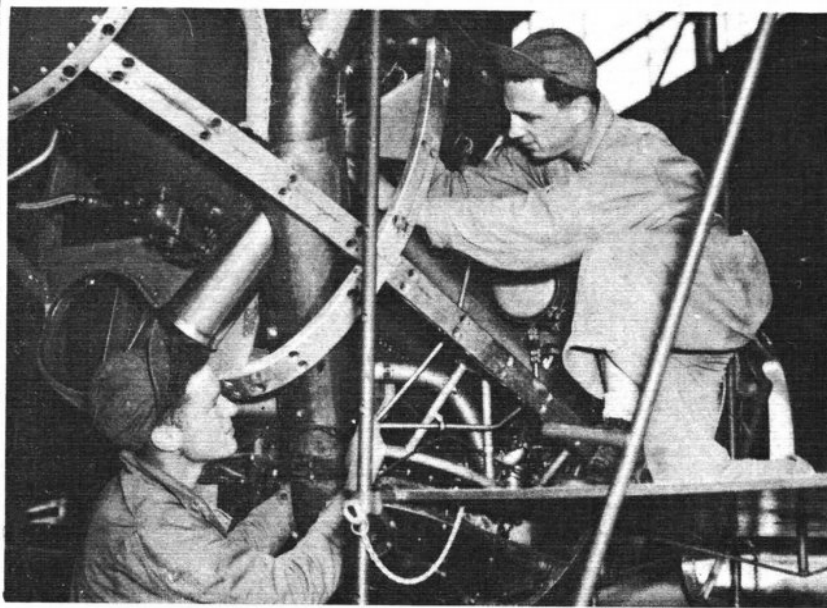


HYDRAULICS CLASS





ENGINE OPERATION BLOCK



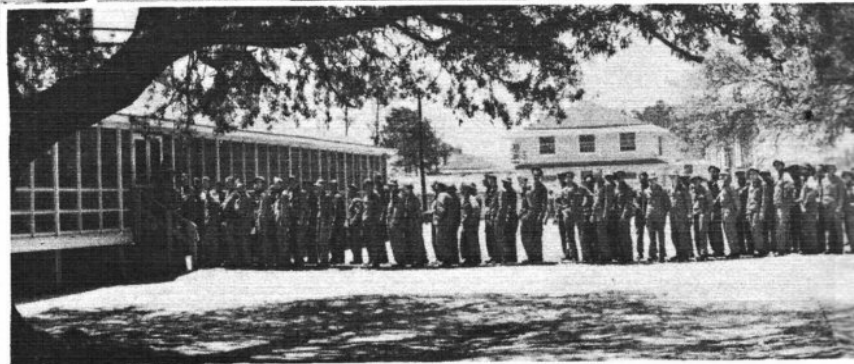


FRESH MEAT

Hardy beef, fruit juices, fresh vegetables and fruit predominate Mess Hall menus. Arranged in a well planned, varied diet for the semi-tropical climate, Keesler Field soldiers gain weight despite the rigorous physical training program that melts away surplus avoirdupois.



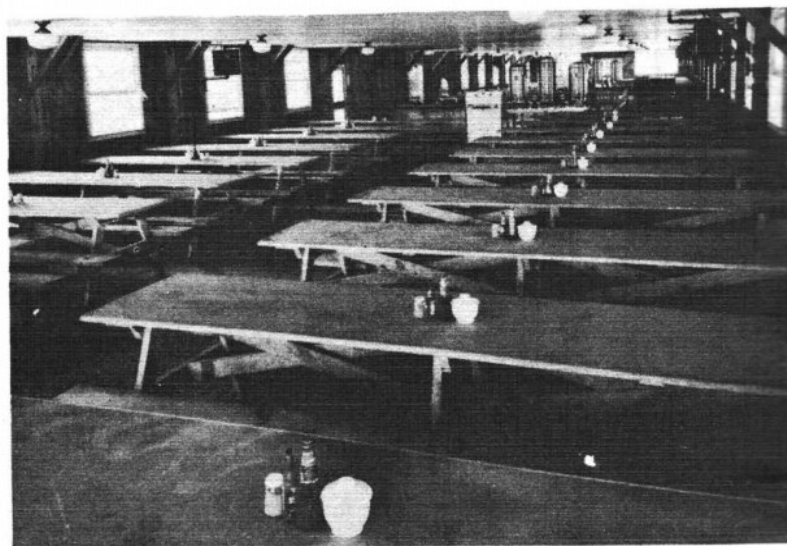
ON THE LINE



CHOW LINE



FRESH BREAD EVERY DAY

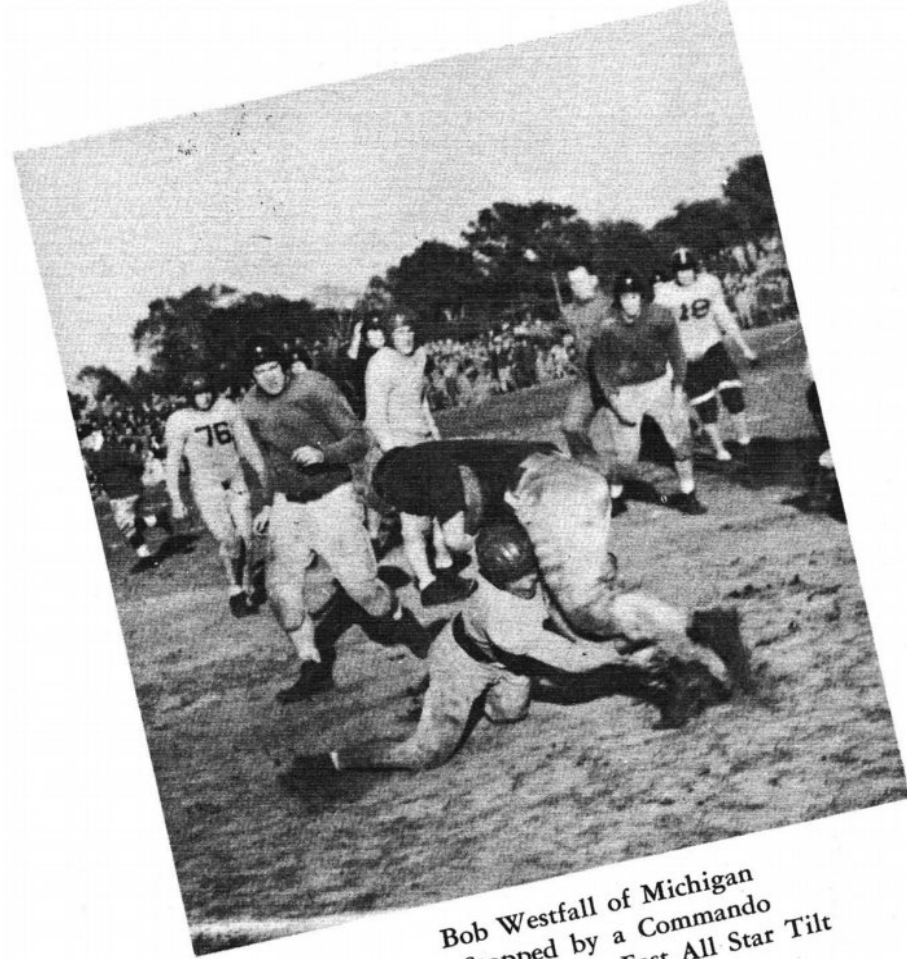


INTERIOR OF MESS HALL



CALISTHENICS





Bob Westfall of Michigan
is Stopped by a Commando
Tackler in Keesler-East All Star Tilt

"Commandos," the name of all Keesler Field athletic teams, typifies the aggressive sports program which operates seven days a week on the Post, winter and summer.

Keesler soldiers participate in many intramural sports, including touch football, baseball, softball, outdoor basketball, volleyball, soccer, boxing, swimming, boating, fishing, track, wrestling, gymnastics, tennis and many minor athletic games.

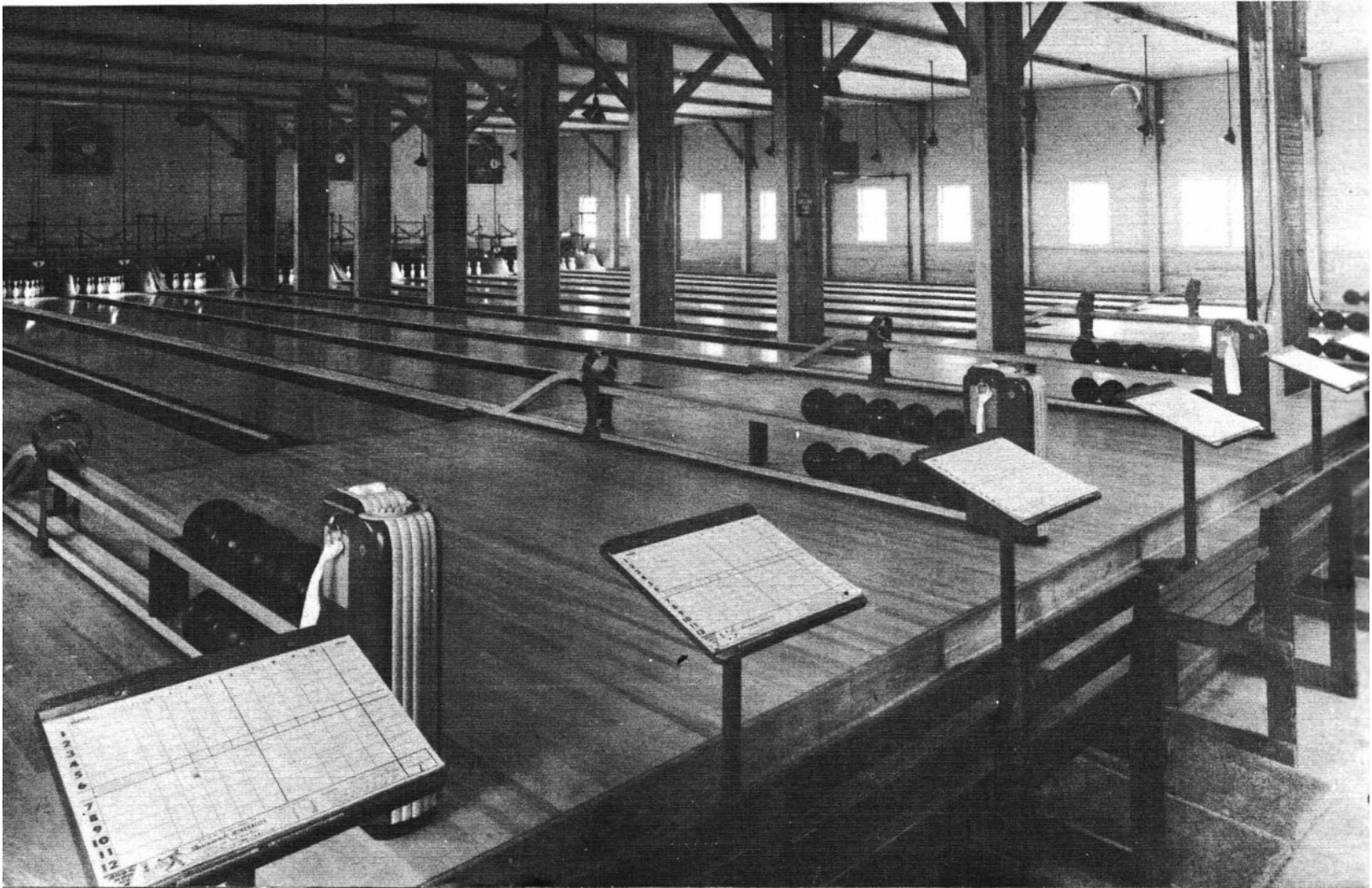
The all-inclusive physical education training program includes regular calisthenics for all enlisted personnel and officers. In addition, an obstacle gym and an obstacle course challenges and develops the recruits and students at the Air Force's Technical School here.

Many nationally-known athletes have participated for Keesler teams. Famed gridders, diamond stars, boxers, among others, have shown their wares for the men of the post. British sailors have competed in the ring, on the soccer field and on the softball diamond with American soldiers.

A huge athletic area has been developed where soldiers may compete in track, soccer and many other sports. The biggest regular sporting activity is the weekly boxing show which frequently is held before crowds of several thousand.

Above all, sports provide healthful recreation for soldiers devoted to another job.

KEESLER BOWLING ALLEYS

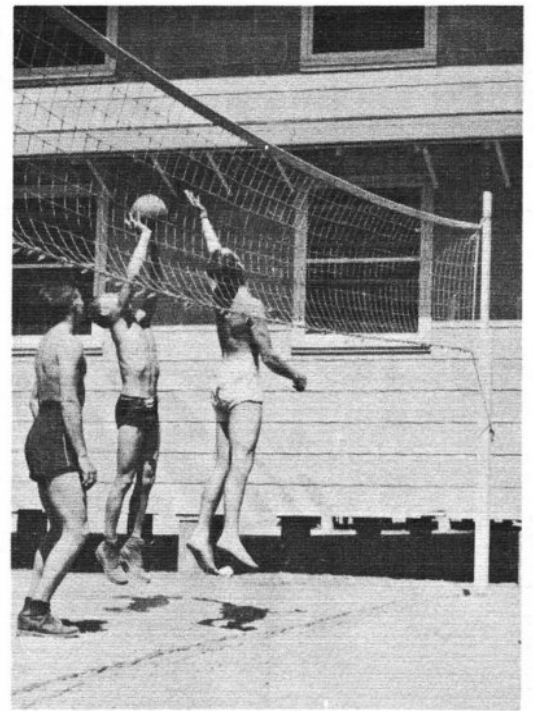




SOCCER



BASEBALL



VOLLEY BALL

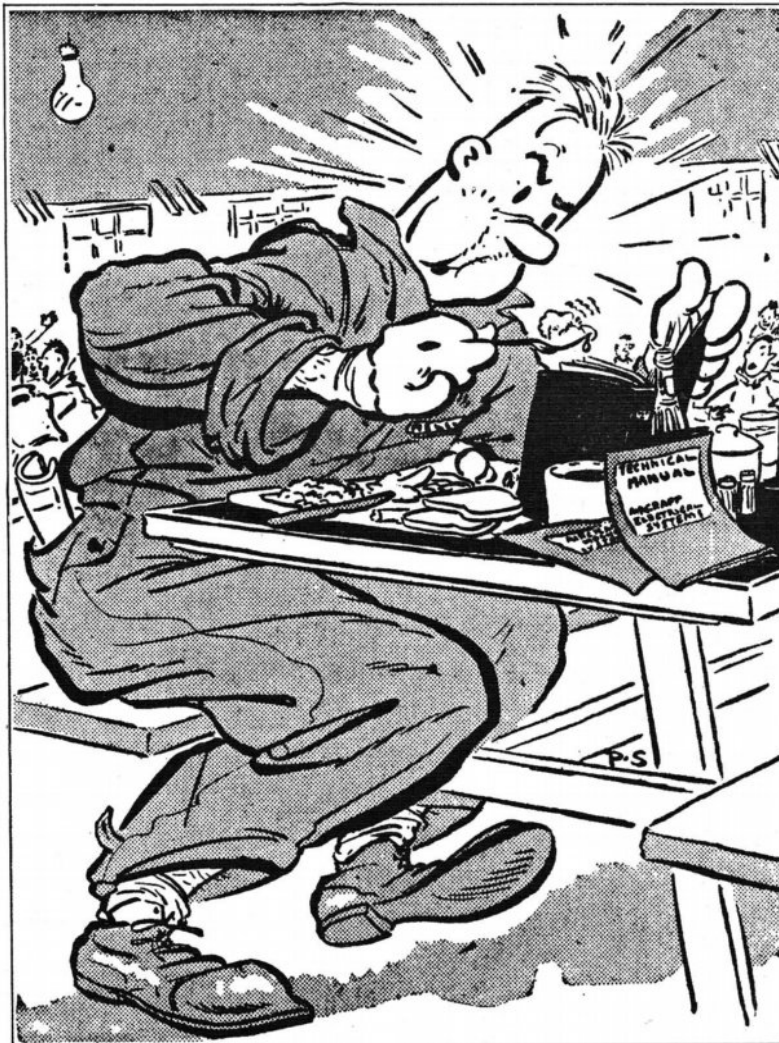


SWIMMING

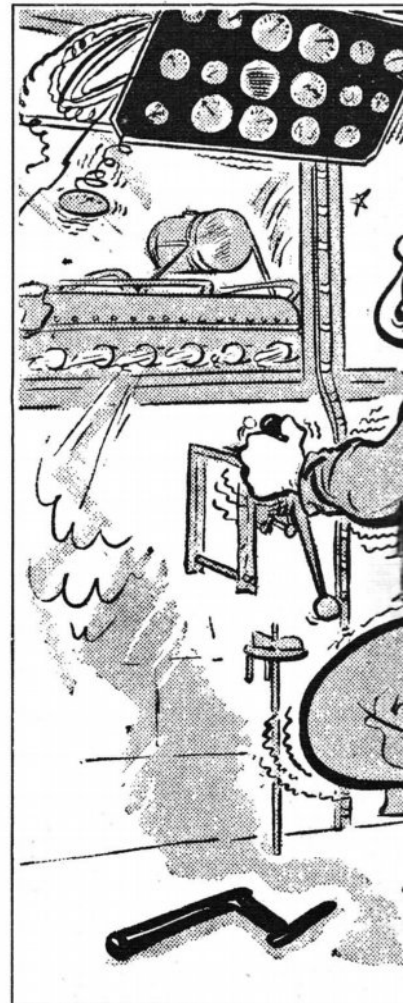
FROM BARBER TO AIRFORCE MECHANIC



The drawings of the man were made by Sgt. [Name], a former New York City fireman, as it appears in field drawings of various poster campaigns. The man is familiar to all the men in the Field.

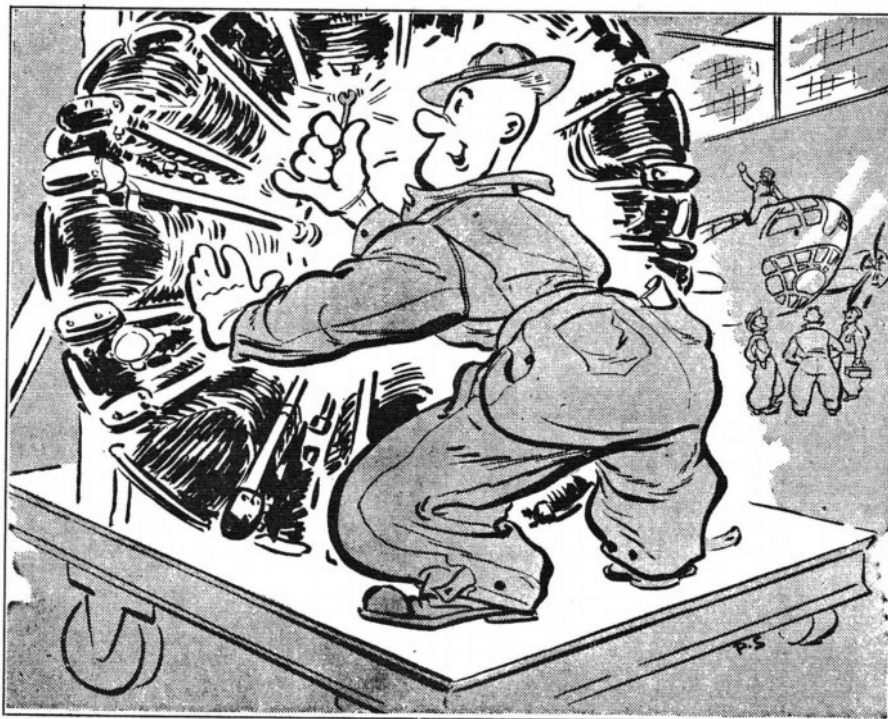


"CRAMMING"



"THE TESTING BLOCK TH"

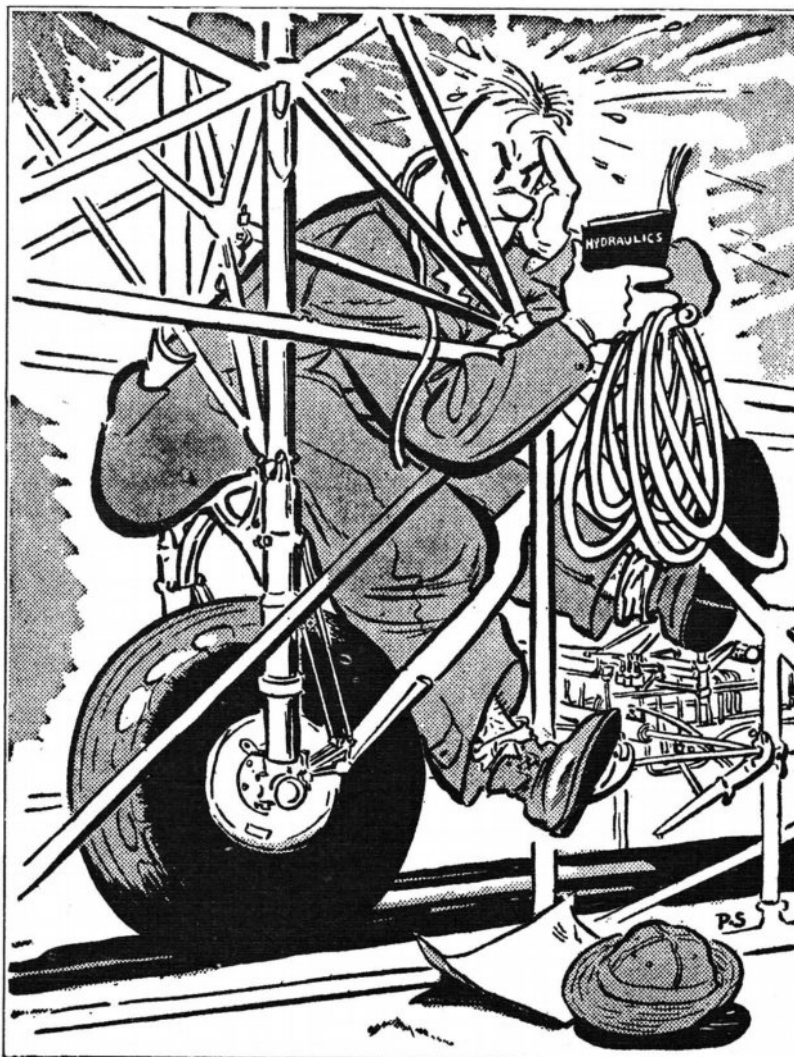
on these two pages
t. Paul S. Snyder,
artist, whose work
ld publications and
ampaigns has become
le men of Keesler



"THE OPTIMIST"



"STAYS MORE THAN MOTORS"

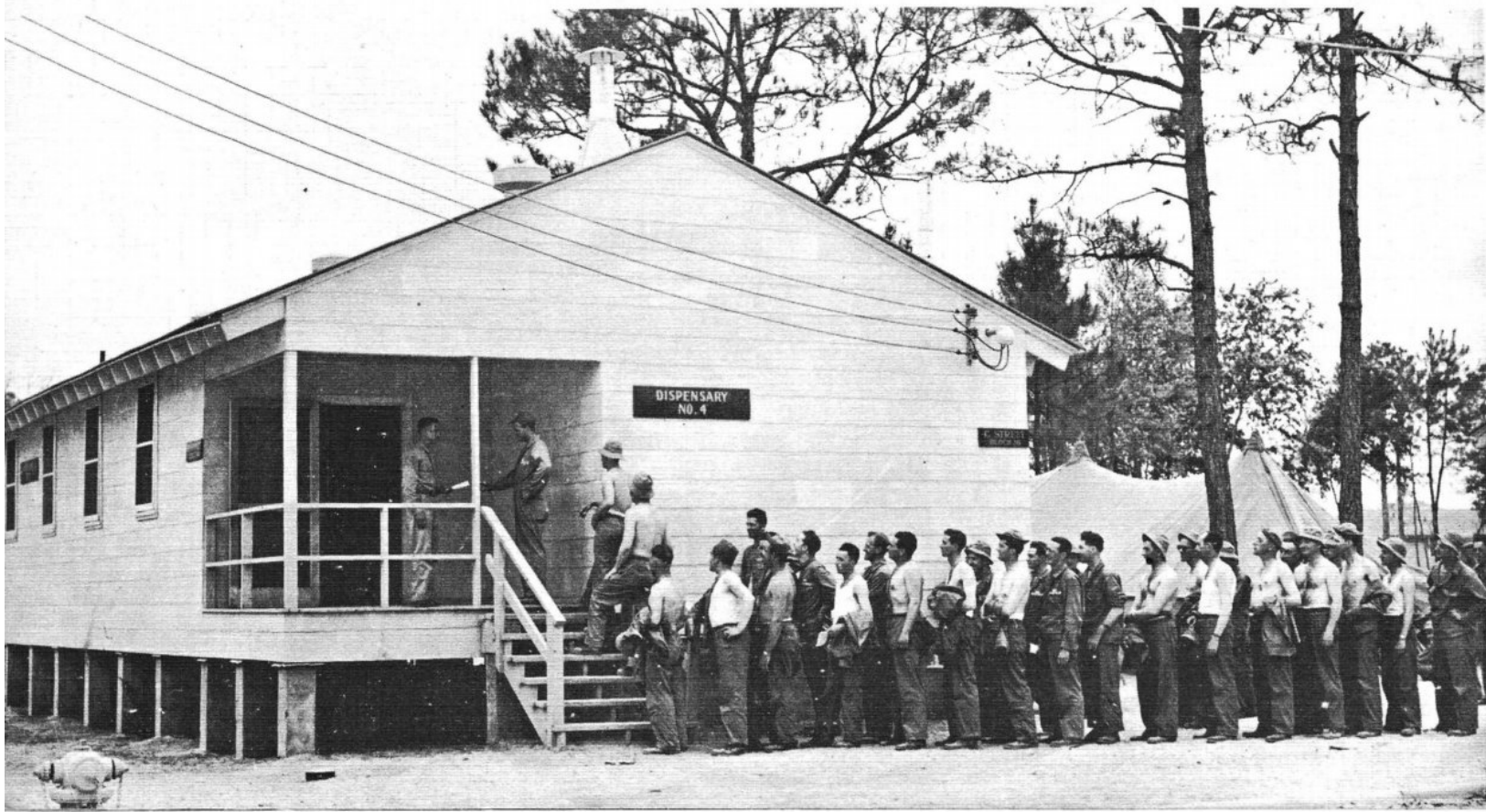


"HYDRAULICS MOCK-UP—ONE OF THE MOST SIMPLE
PHASES OF SCHOOL"



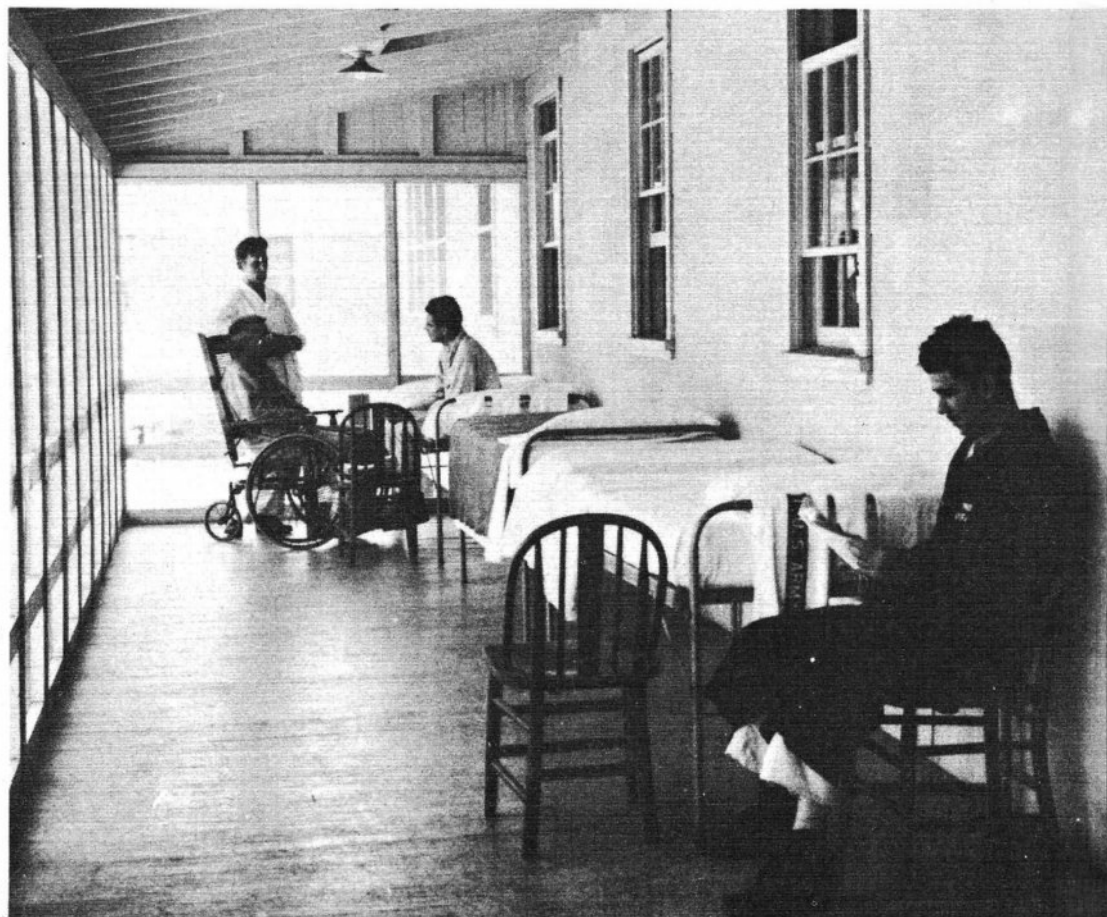
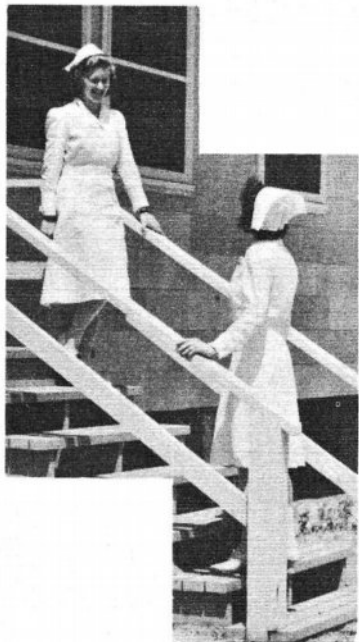
STATION HOSPITAL HEADQUARTERS

SICK CALL



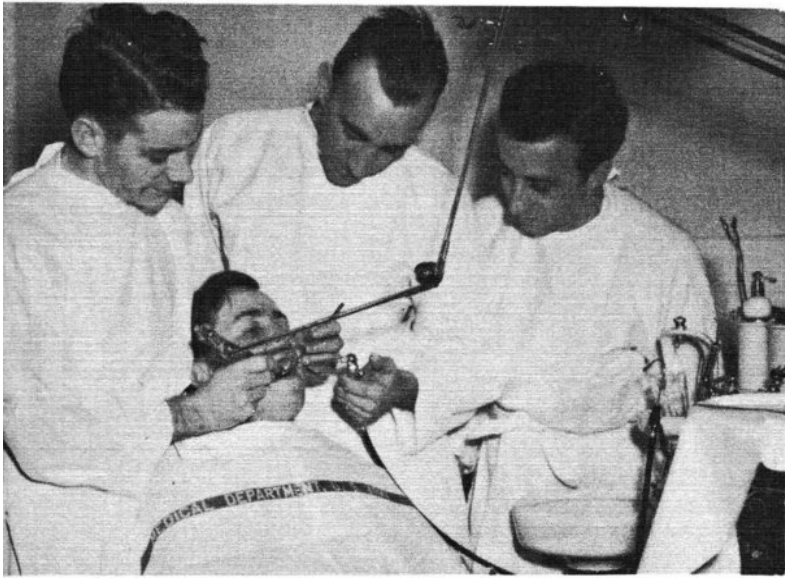


HOSPITAL WARD

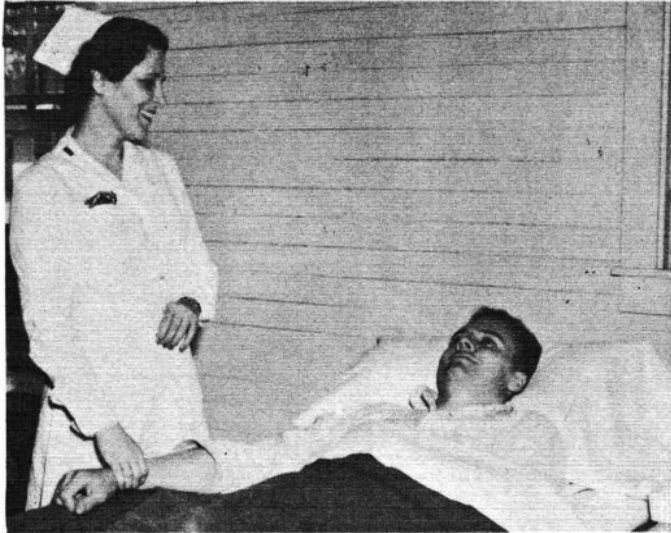


CONVALESCING

"AH-H-H!"

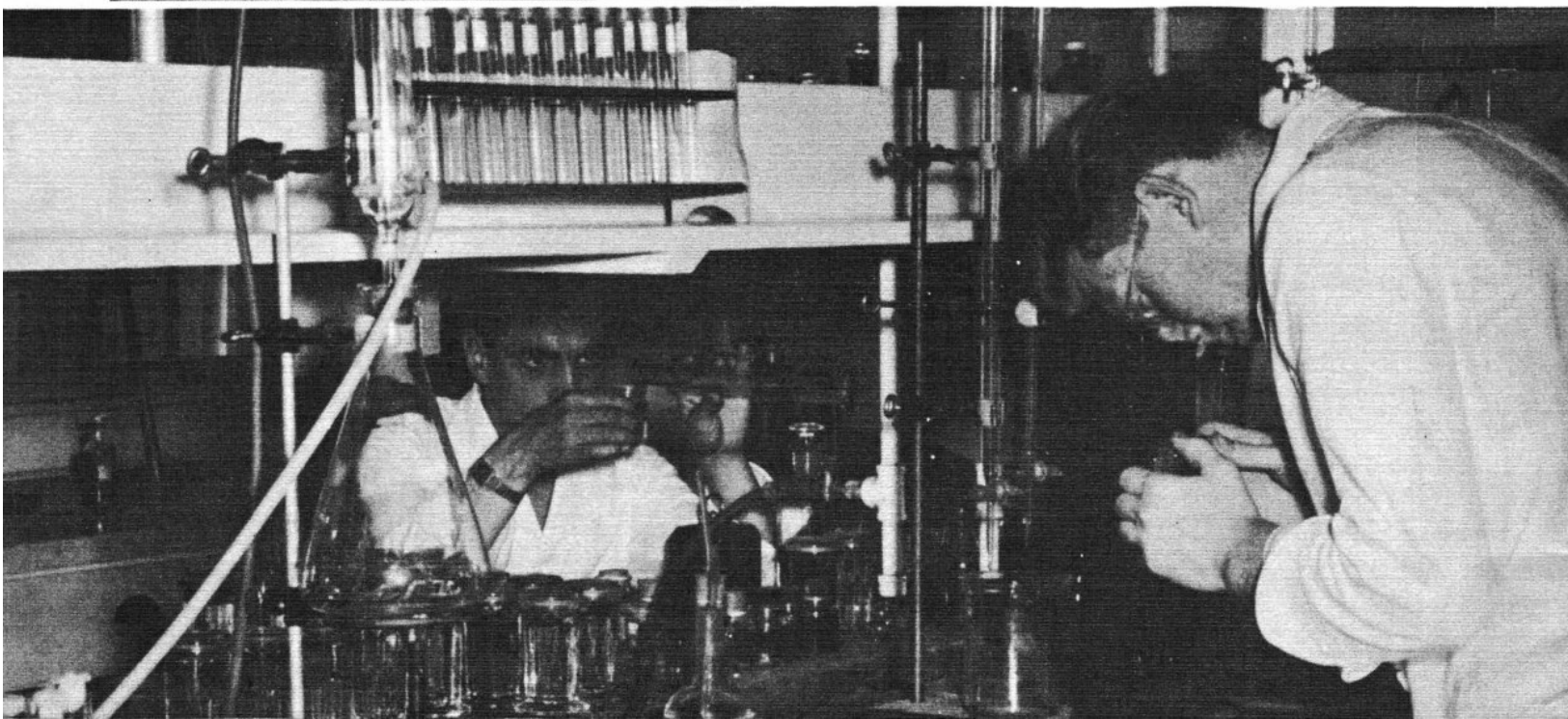


SHOTS



PULSE?

IN THE LAB





MAIN POST EXCHANGE

INTERIOR—MAIN PX





"GI" HAIRCUT



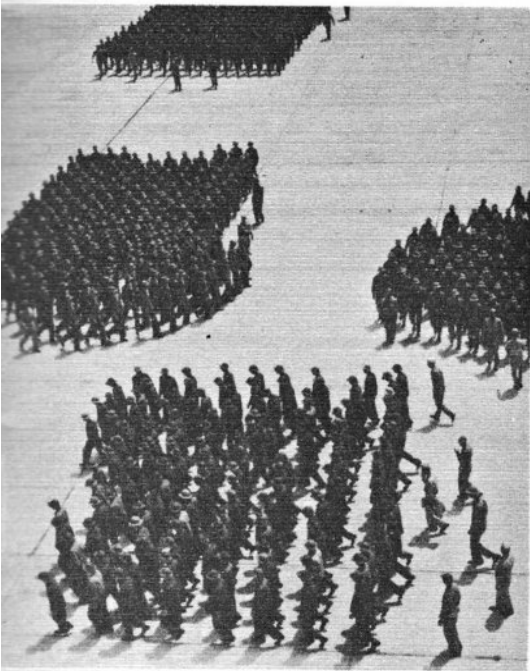
OUTDOOR PX



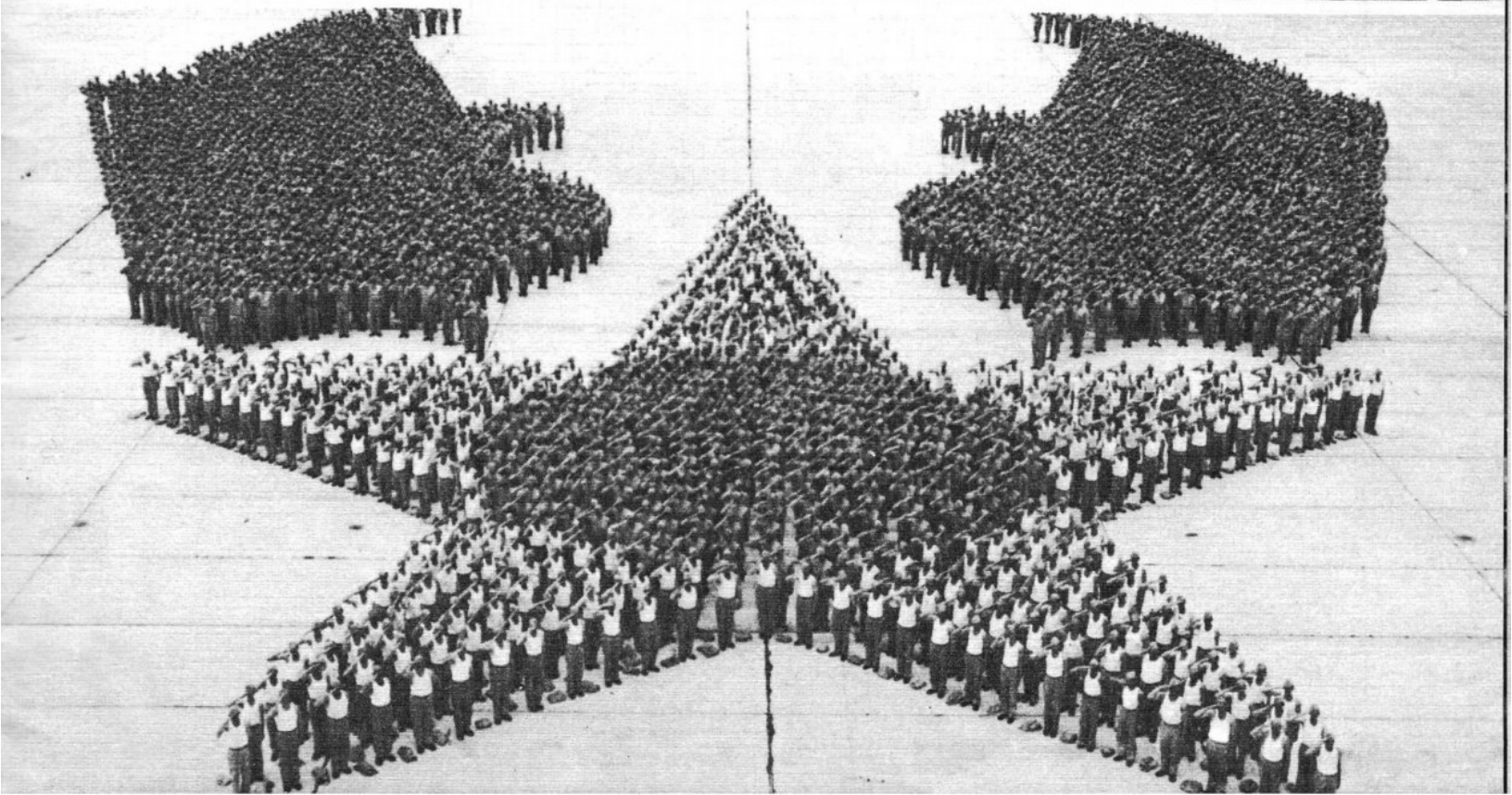
PX RESTAURANT

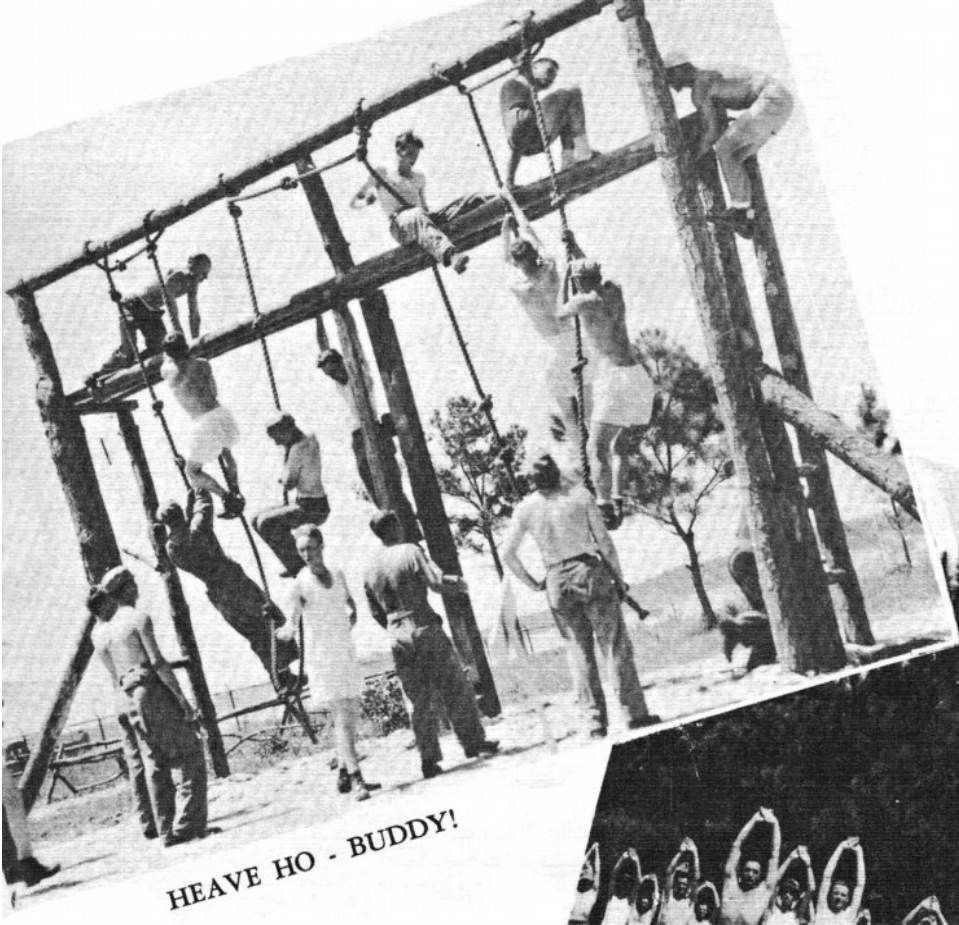


PX JEWELRY DEPARTMENT

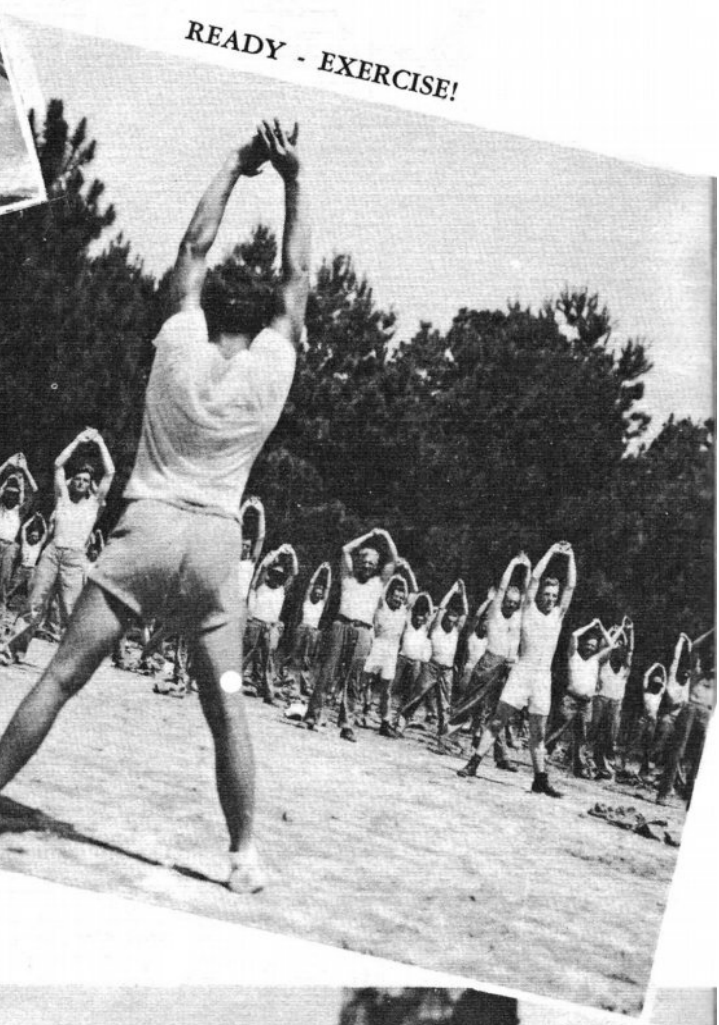


RECRUIT
DRILL
—
BASIC
TRAINING
CENTER



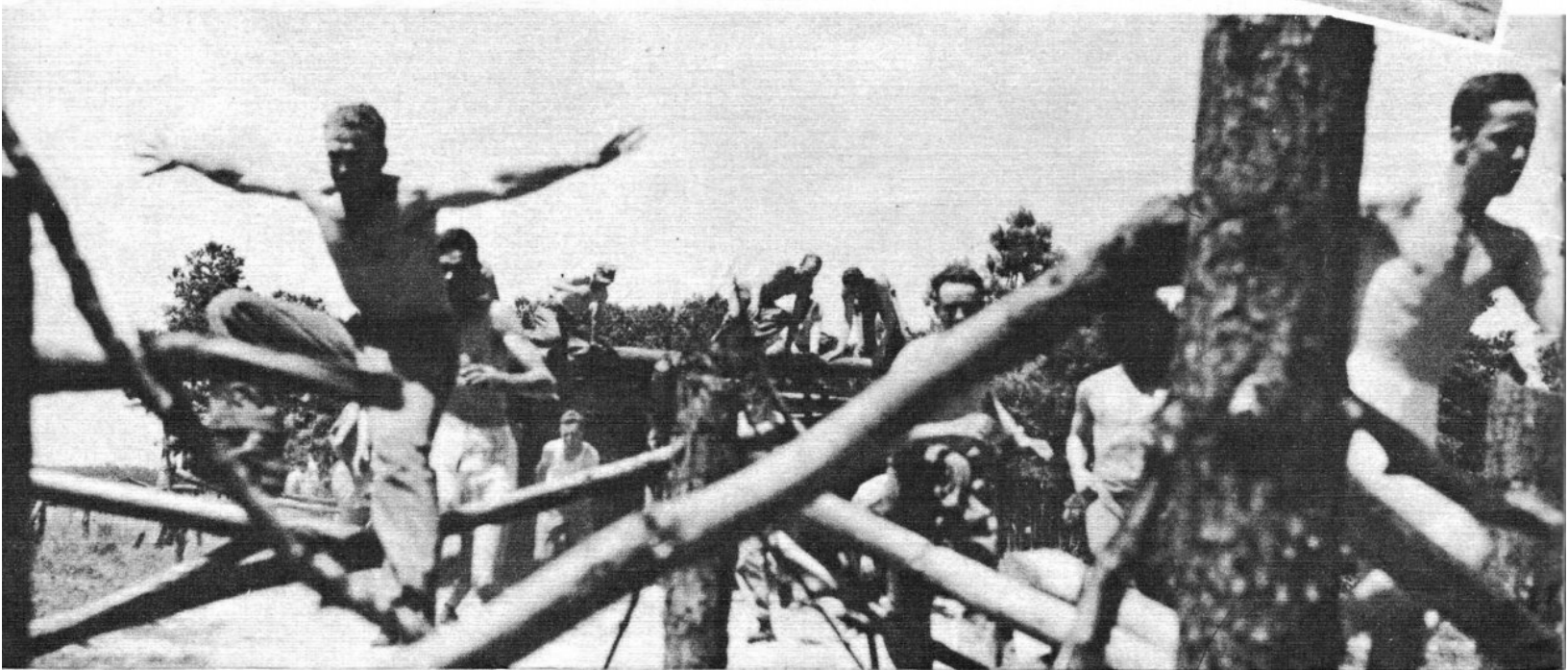


HEAVE HO - BUDDY!



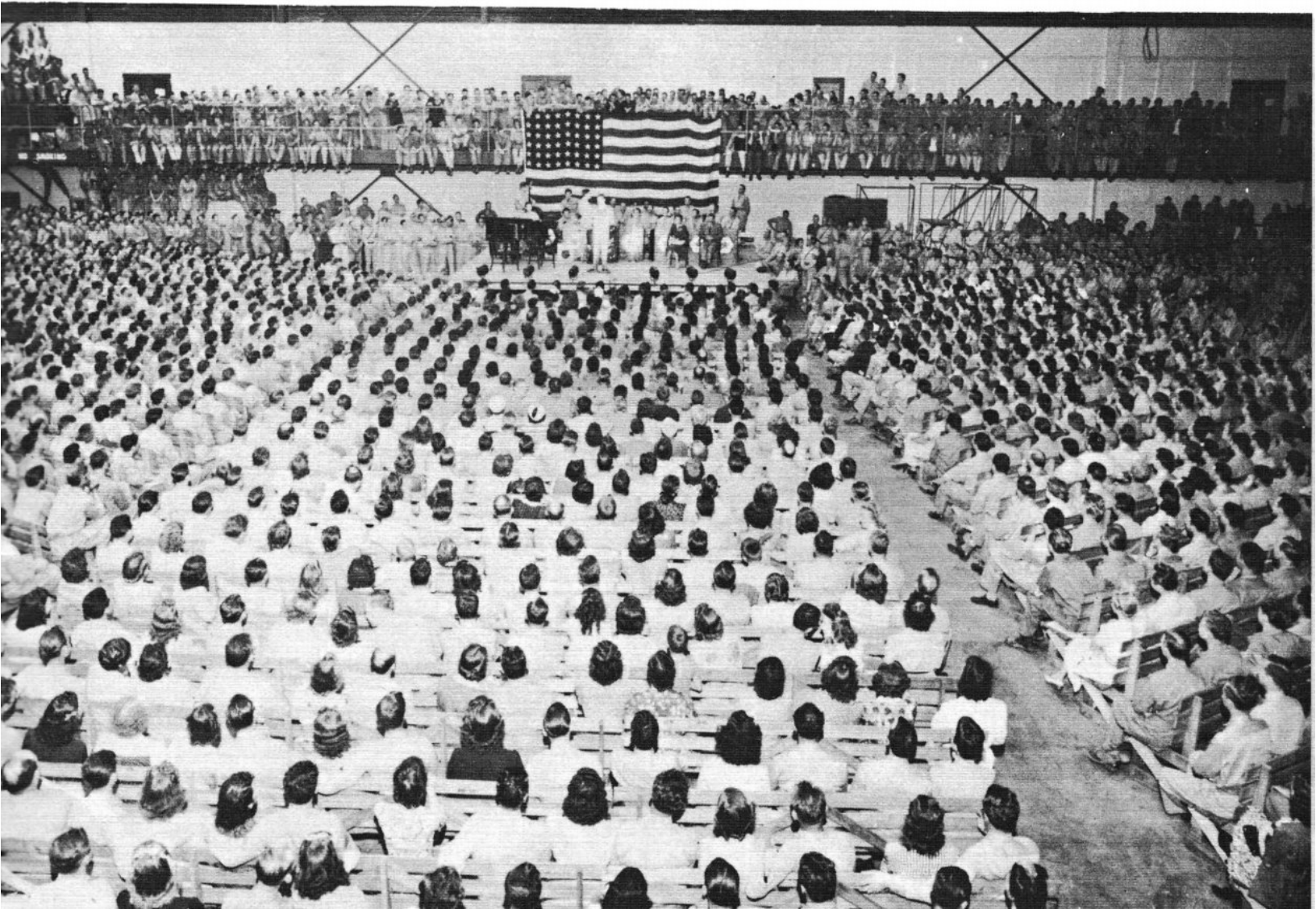
READY - EXERCISE!

TIMBER TOPPERS





BOB HOPE, JERRY COLONA, FRANCES LANGFORD GIVE A SHOW
BEFORE 10,000 MEN IN A HANGAR





ANN MILLER VISITS KEESLER FIELD WITH USO SHOW



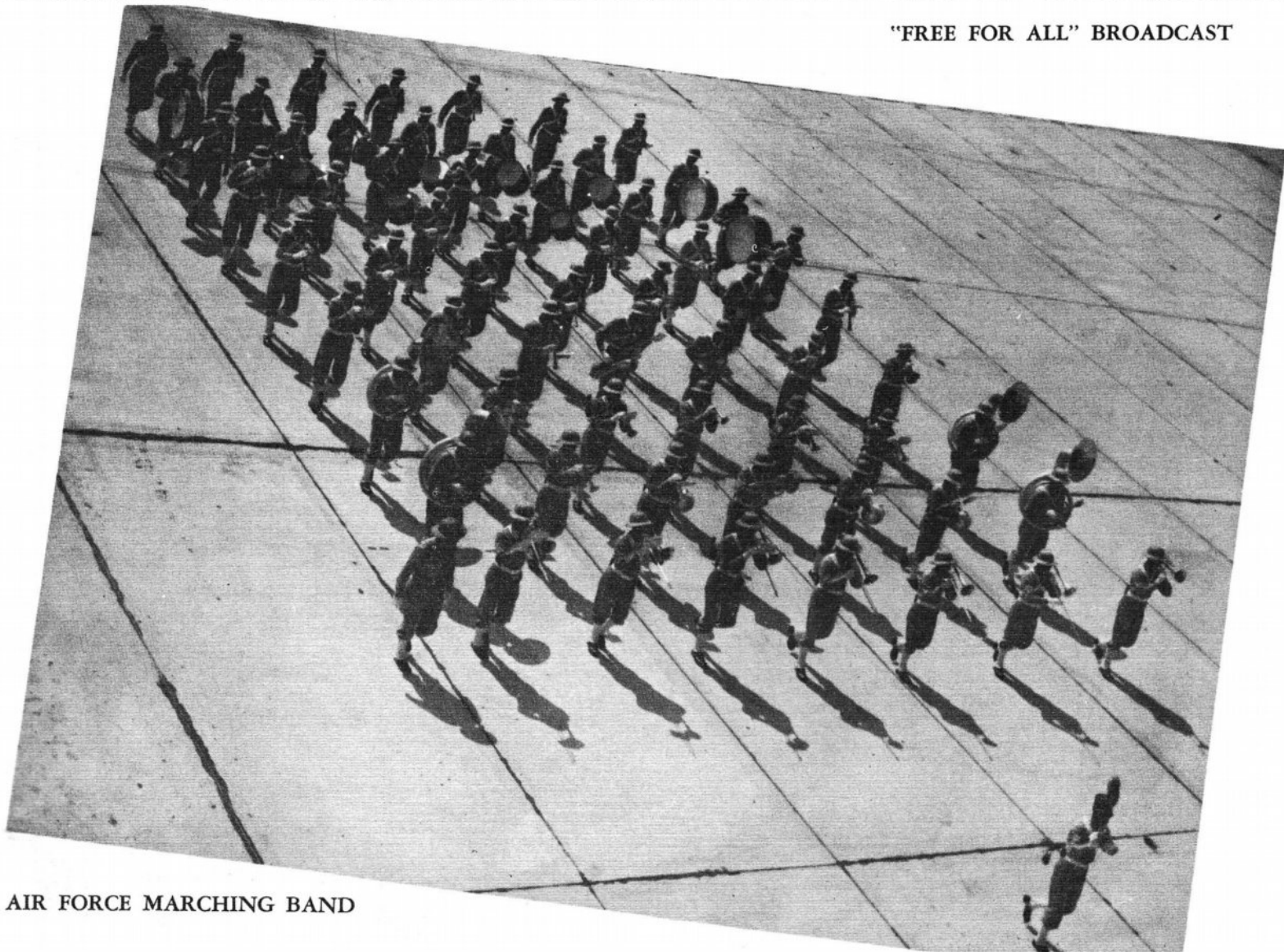
AN INTERVIEW OVER WWL

WAR DEPARTMENT THEATRE

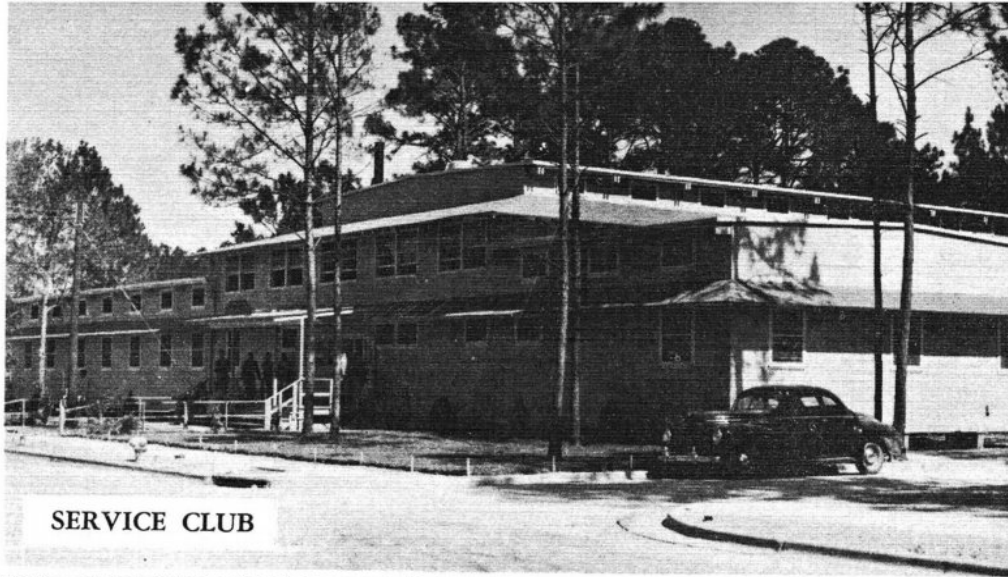




"FREE FOR ALL" BROADCAST



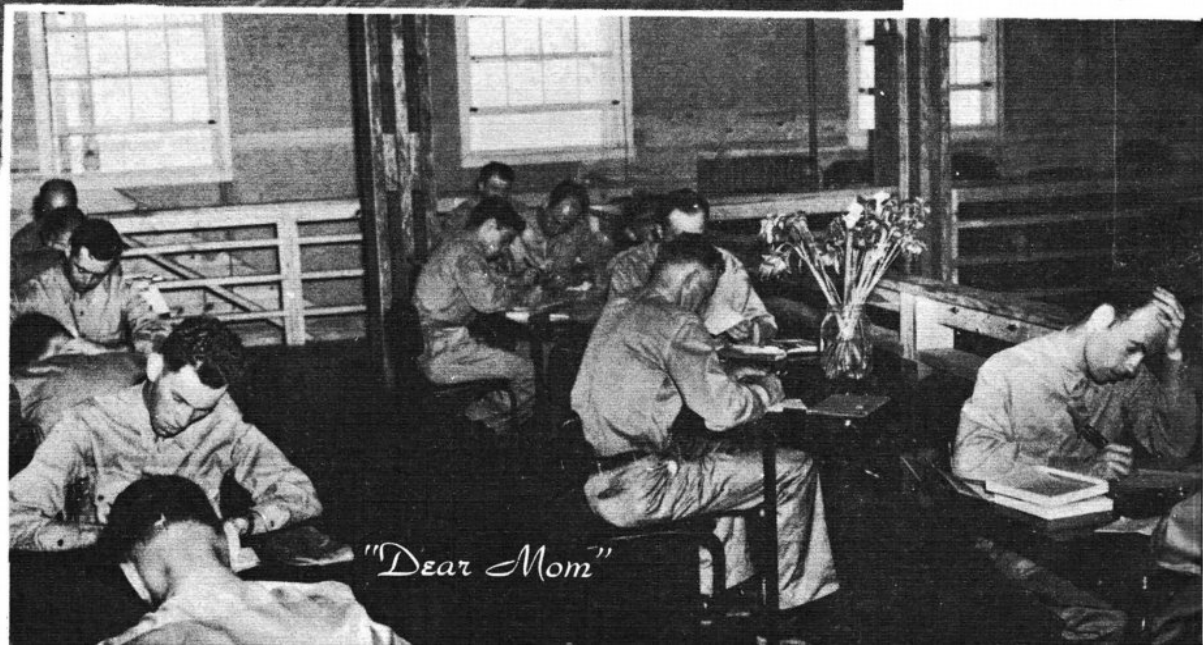
AIR FORCE MARCHING BAND



SERVICE CLUB



SERVICE CLUB
INTERIOR



"Dear Mom"

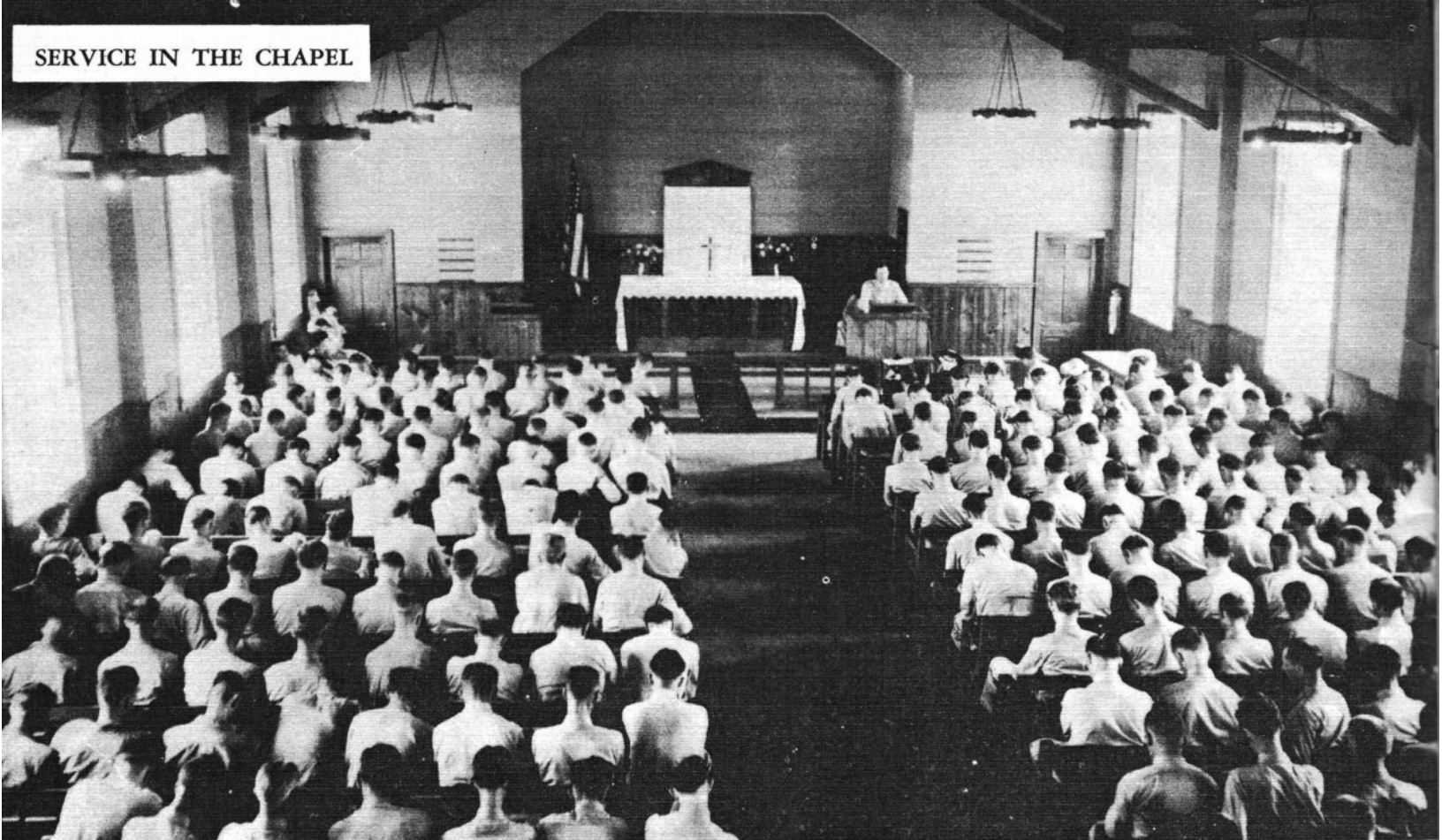
LIBRARY



TIME OUT



SERVICE IN THE CHAPEL



OPEN AIR SERVICE



Even the rigorous training schedules for mechanics and recruits can't keep Keesler soldiers of all faiths from crowding their services every week in the William Mitchell Memorial Chapel.

A WEDDING IN THE CHAPEL





WEATHER OBSERVATION



RAF CADETS VISIT KEESLER

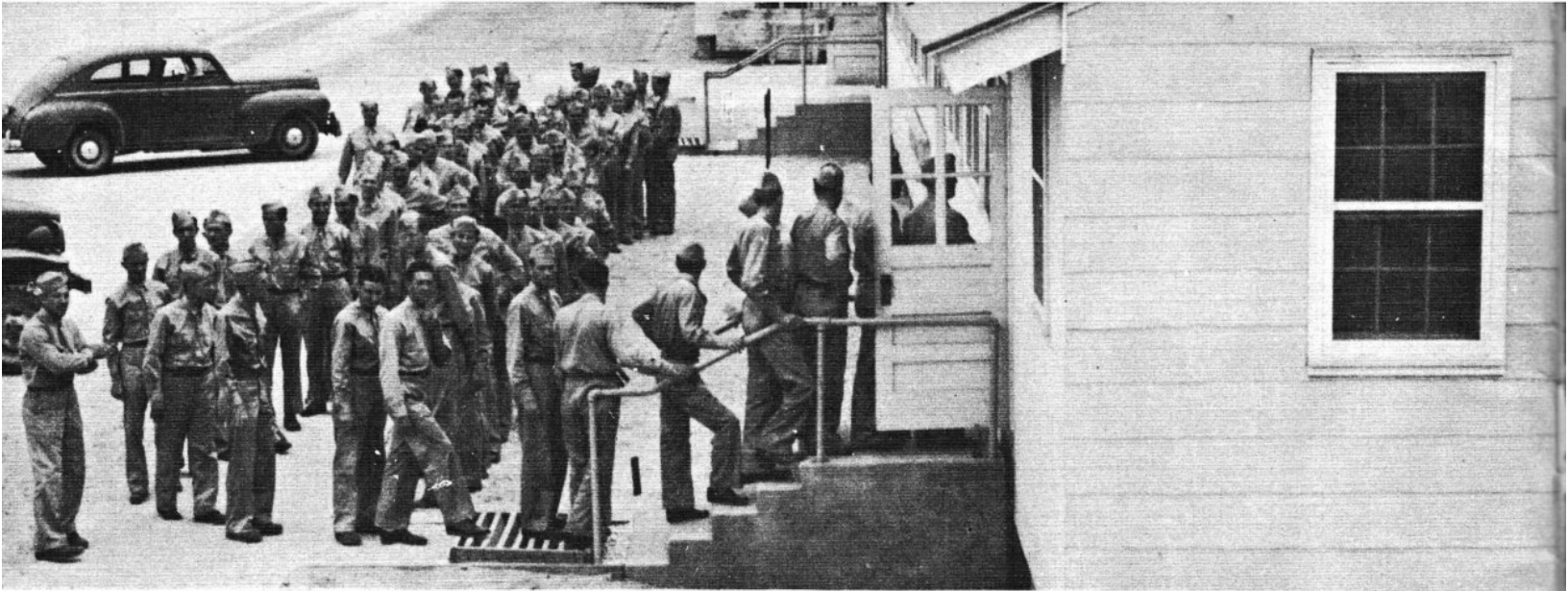


MOTOR POOL



CRASH BOAT





PAY DAY



MAIL CALL



"AND NOW—DUTY ON THE LINE TO KEEP 'EM FLYING!"

