

WAR IS HARD WORK

WRITERS for newspapers, radio stations and press associations clustered in a room in Tokyo to hear the latest Korean war communique.

"Our planes made 200 sorties today, carrying out the Navy's job of interdiction against the Communists. Our pilots destroyed six bridges, cut railroad lines in 70 different places. They shot up three locomotives and napalmed a dozen warehouses."

The speaker was RAdm. John Perry, then commander of Task Force 77. After he finished talking, one newsman spoke up:

"This job of naval interdiction flying is nothing glamorous, is it?"

"No, definitely not. It's been a matter, day in and day out, of plain damned drudgery," the Admiral admitted.

Those words between the newsman and the Admiral sum up exactly the kind of war the Navy's task forces

have been fighting day after day in Korea. It usually does not make splash headlines. The people back home rarely hear more than a paragraph or two about what the carriers are doing every day, month in and month out, as Panmunjom peace talks drag on.

The Navy hasn't let up on its campaign of harassment, even though land fighting has slowed down, Carrier forces cruise up and down the east coast, keeping streams of jets, fighters and dive bombers pouring landward. Other carriers hammer the west coast.

As Admiral Perry said, it hasn't been glamorous fighting and pilots are getting killed frequently by increasingly strong antiaircraft fire. While they are hamstringing Communist rail lines and roads, knocking out combat centers and power plants, Navy pilots are polishing up new techniques of aerial warfare. Analysis of Red aerial activities indicate they are doing the same.

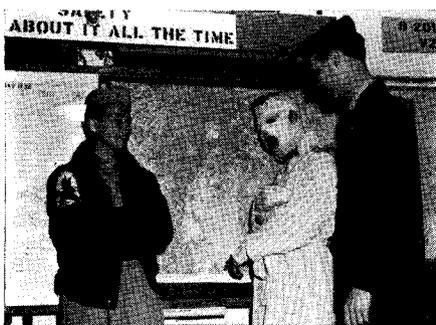


BOXER launches F9F against Red AA batteries as Calvin L. Larson, AF1, shoots movies for "Fighter Photo" being produced by Navy; Combat Camera Group filming Korean aerial action

BESIDES developing into what the admiral called "the finest aviation teams in history," pilots also have been able to develop in North Korea, as Adm. Perry put it, "the most wonderful 'section gangs' in the world." That refers to the old "I've been working on the railroad" deal.

The Navy is fighting a different kind of war off Korea from that of World War II. Much of the earlier conflict were hit-and-run strikes on islands. The KoWar, lacking enemy aircraft opposition, sees carriers lying a few score miles offshore for days on end, launching strike after strike, morning, afternoon and evening.

Since there have been no kamikaze's



THREE ships vied to save VF-63's Al Rice who tells Skipper Ward Miller of escape

to worry about, or submarine menace so far, they have been able to concentrate on blasting Communists wherever they can find them. Everyone who thinks of World War II as a pretty fair-sized scuffle is surprised to read that more tons of bombs have been dropped by the Navy on the Korean Communists in 18 months than on the Japs in the whole of World War II.

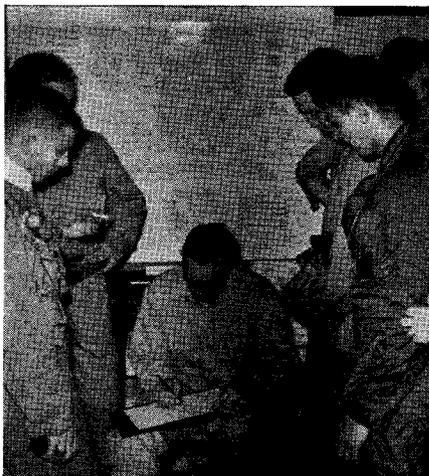
To get a picture of carrier operations off Korea in the "slack time" of peace negotiations, NAVAL AVIATION NEWS' editor went out to the *Boxer* to report what the Navy's air has been doing.

Back in the United States, the newspapers one day carried the following paragraph about air operations for one particular day:

"The Navy continued its interdiction warfare against Communist land targets, sending out 200 combat sorties. Pilots from the *Boxer* and *Princeton* reported they smashed antiaircraft emplacements around heavily-defended Hamhung, knocking out several batteries."

That paragraph tells in a few routine words the work of 6,000 men on the two flattops, joining up in a 19-hour "maximum effort" smash against the Communists.

Let's take a closer look at the



INTELLIGENCE Officer McTaggart quizzes VF-63's Weaver, Gentry, Cooper and Dewitt

sweat, sleepless hours, plain hard work, and brain work too, that it took to produce that lone paragraph of news in home town papers.

The *Boxer*, commanded by Capt. Dennis J. Sullivan, is "early carrier", so Air Group Two begins operations on that midsummer day at 0330, in the black of the morning.

Targets for the day had been selected by the Joint operations center ashore, which suggested to Task Force 77's commander, RAdm. Apollo Soucek, based aboard the *Boxer*, where to send the day's strikes.

Pre-strike briefings the night before warned pilots to watch for radar-controlled guns in bunches, from 20 mm's up to 75 mm cannon and larger. From hitting railroads and supply dumps, the



A FEW DAYS of strikes will use up these 100, 250-pound bombs lining hangar deck

Navy picks AA guns, barracks and bridges for the day's targets.

Catapult operators; flight deck crewmen, pilots, plane captains, and air officers rub the sleep out of their eyes as they launch two *Corsair* night fighters and two *Skyraiders* on heckler raids. Assigned to fly up certain roads or defended areas, the hecklers use their radar to locate larger targets, or drop flares to illuminate the countryside.

If they spot targets too large for their bombs or guns, they report back to the ship, and the daylight strike of fighters and attack planes will hit them.

At the same time the hecklers go out, antisubmarine guppy planes take off, accompanied by a VA(N) *Skyraider*, armed with depth charges and rockets—just in case they meet a sub. The job done by VC-11's guppy planes has been a monotonous, but necessary, part of the "hard work" described by Adm. Perry which makes few newspaper headlines.

As the sun begins to come up over the Pacific's blue waters, F9F *Panthers* are launched to form a combat air patrol protecting the carrier task force against possible air attack—no headlines there either, but it's work.

The cruiser *Helena* is plying offshore, so *Corsairs* are launched to direct her 8" gunfire against Hamhung and Hungnam targets. They carry bombs to use if targets are spotted on slopes of hills unreachable by the cruiser's fire trajectory.

From that time on the day is full of swift-moving operations. For the third day in a row, an all-out strike against gun emplacements is launched, with 26 F4U's and 16 AD's carrying rockets and bombs as greetings for the Red gunners.

Half an hour later a handful of jet *Panthers* is catapulted to join the pro-



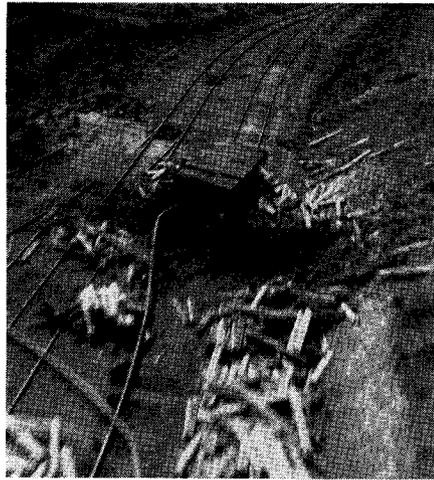
PHOTOGRAPHER stands ready in case Panther jet crashes in the water while taking off

pelled planes just before they arrive over the target. The jets work over the AA guns and distract their fire as the attack planes come in with their loads.

The jets which go up on patrol over the task force return a little later and more are launched to replace them. That means more work for the flight deck crews, catapult and arresting gear men, plus the air officers, Cdr. J. E. Shew and his assistant, LCdr. R. W. Jackson. The early-morning hecklers come home with the flak suppression jets and have to be landed.

Another antisubmarine *Skyraider* and its escort plane are launched to patrol over the carrier force and its destroyer screen. All this has taken place, mind you, before the average American has gotten up to shave and eat breakfast.

Carrier operations are no respecter of sleep. In time of such heavy strikes, men sleep when and where they can, on the flight deck, cradled on a couple of 1000-pound bombs on the hangar deck,



SPECTACULAR low-level photography shows what happens when Navy hammers railroads or in some noisy cranny of the ship.

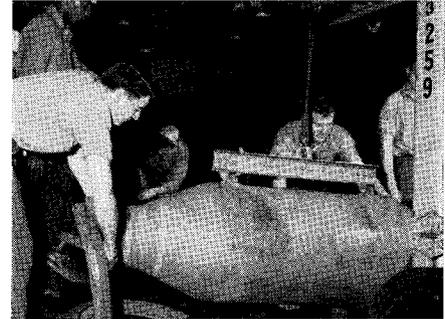
Then the big strike of the morning comes back home. As the 50-odd planes land aboard, the crewmen work on a dead run to speed up the recoveries. On the particular morning described there were long faces in the #3 ready room as word got around two of VA-65's pilots were shot down by antiaircraft fire while diving on their targets.

As the *Boxer's* planes come home from the beach, the *Princeton* launches its fighters and attack planes to carry on the concentrated attacks. The enemy is given no rest.

After a bite to eat, the *Boxer's* air operations start up again. Two more *Corsairs* fly off to do naval gunfire spotting

for the *Helena*. Two *Codfish* TBM's from VR-23's Itazuke detachment are sandwiched in and catapulted to fly back home with stateside mail and personnel from the ship.

Forty strike planes are launched in quick succession for the "matinee" calls on Korean Reds. A few minutes later six *Panthers* whistle off to join them over Hamhung targets. In their minds the pilots are remembering the two pilots who took two AA hits that morning and



FRANKS, SN, and **Peterman, FC2,** wrestling with 2000-pound bomb on fork lift truck

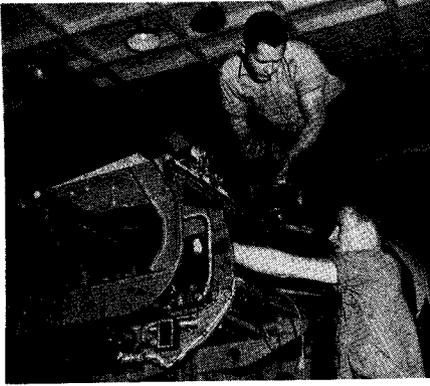
did not come back.

Following this horde of planes, several photographic *Panthers* go out to take aerial pictures of tomorrow's target up the coast. Pilots will study the pictures before taking off the next day. Several escort jets go along to protect them from enemy *Migs*.

As soon as the photo jets return, the aerial film is rushed to Warrant Officer V. J. Ingleright's photo lab for develop-



BLACK SMOKE pours out of transformer station at Chongjin, near Manchurian border, after *Boxer's* *Skyraid*ers and *Corsairs* deliver heavy bombloads to seacoast town's main "industry"

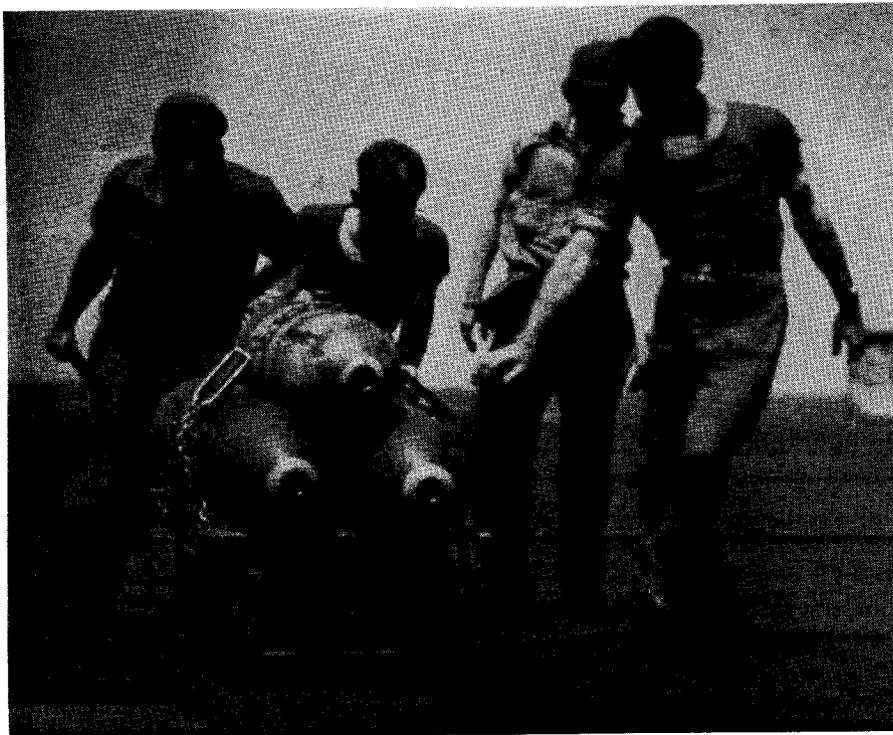


ORDNANCEMEN Winchester and Reilly adjust 20 mm. belted ammo on F9F between strikes

ment. Soon long rolls of prints are turned out. Sometimes his crews work far into the night to get them ready. Lt. W. B. Albright, the photo interpretation officer, makes up mosaics of the enemy target.

When pilots get their briefings next morning, copy photos of these mosaics, with targets ringed, are handed them. How valuable these pictures are can be seen from the comment of Lt. R. C. Rasmussen, air group intelligence officer, who said, "The success of our missions is almost in direct ratio to the photo coverage we get of the targets beforehand. If we can furnish pilots with good pictures of them, they usually are right on with their bomb loads."

The endless launching of planes goes on. Up goes another covey of combat air patrol jets, plus the ASW guppy plane and her armed escort.



PUFFING ordnancemen of the 'Busy Bee' wrestle three heavy bombs forward to load on planes; ordnance crews work far into night making napalm, loading rockets and bombs for next day

Hardly has the flight deck settled down before a dozen jets come back from the afternoon strike, followed by the 46 propellered planes. Word is flashed over the carrier scuttlebutt system that one *Corsair* was shot down in afternoon raids—three down for the day!

As the afternoon wanes, the jet CAP come back aboard; the antisub AD and escorting plane land. Pilots from the combat flights hurry to their ready rooms to report to air intelligence offi-



NAPALM-filled incendiary clusters loaded on an AD-4 by Riggins, Vash and Lindstrom

cers what they shot up and bombed. Being the "early carrier", the *Boxer's* air group is through for the day and the *Princeton's* continues after dark as the "night shift".

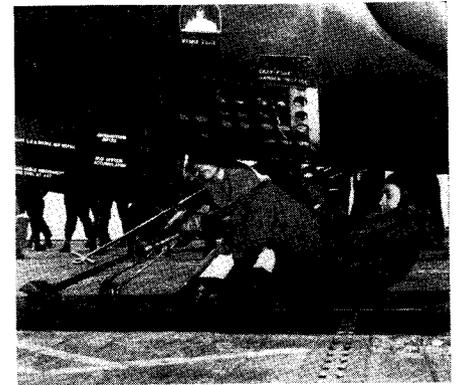
As soon as the box score is complete and squadron AI officers report in, Lt. Rasmussen compiles a battle report for the day. Over the ship's bullhorn system,

reaching every corner of the carrier, he tells the men what their planes had accomplished. The men listen with solemn eyes as he tells them three of their shipmates will never come back.

But the work isn't over on the *Boxer*. Several planes came back with anti-aircraft holes in their wings. One made an emergency landing with a bent wingtip. Pilot Ens. J. D. Turner reports his plane collided with the *Corsair* of Lt. (jg) John DeMasters as it was shot down by AA.

That means work for the squadron's maintenance men under Lt. S. B. Lewis. Ordnance teams, which had gotten up at 0230 to arm the planes for the early strikes and those on the afternoon strike, labor late in the night to prepare napalm, bombs, rockets and bullets for the next day's attacks. Not headlines, just plain work.

Mechanics check electrical circuits, inspect faulty hydraulic systems or take care of minor deficiencies on pilot's yellow sheets. Shot-up elevators and ailerons



FAST WORK in close quarters as Donald Frye, AB3, adjusts catapult bridle on a Panther

are replaced. Flak holes in the wings and fuselages are repaired. All this is going on while the pilots are telling their combat tales to the intelligence officers, eating or sleeping.

Down in ready room #3, Lt. (jg) R. E. Goyer, air information officer of VA-65, is asking his pilots what they strafed and where their bombs landed. "Did you hit these buildings, skipper?", he asked of Cdr. Gordon A. Sherwood.

"Yes, on the second run. Dropped four 250-pounders."

"What did you do to them?"

"Don't know. There was so much smoke and dust and the flak was so heavy we didn't have time to hang around and see after what happened this morning".

Another pilot tells the AI officer, "Flak was heavy but inaccurate. Some of it was bursting below us at 10,000 feet. They must have had 75 automatic weapons there, radar-controlled. When you

got 40 airplanes diving on a small area like 10 square miles you gotta watch where you are going. You can't do too much bomb damage assessing!"

Another pilot burst out, "Man, those were the biggest black bursts I ever saw, not those little white ones! One of our planes got a direct hit and blew up in midair. The wing and engine just fell off."

"We saw one pilot parachute out but nobody seems to have seen him land. The Commies probably shot him as he dangled in his parachute, before he hit the ground."

Another trick of the Reds, reported by *Princeton* pilots, is to shoot a pilot after he lands, then cover his body on the ground with the chute. Squadron mates overhead spot the chute and send in a rescue helicopter to pick him up.

One such rescue "chopper" lowered a crewman. He found the pilot's body. About that time the Communists opened fire on him and hit him in the leg as he was being hoisted rapidly back aboard.

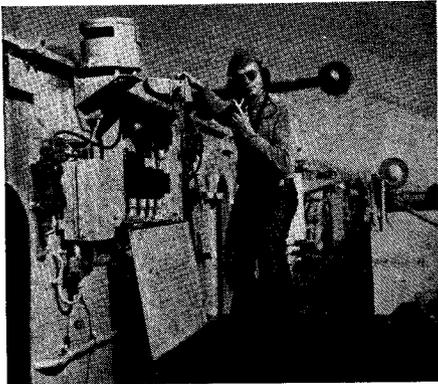
Over in another ready room, pilots from *Jernigan's Jets*, VF-24, tired but excited, all talk at once to "chew over" another strike they had made.

"The prop boys really raked those barracks," one pilot shouts. "Somebody put a napalm right here," indicating a building on the aerial photo in his hands. "Anybody sleeping in them is sure in hell now!"

A VC-3 *Corsair* pilot joined in with, "I got shook up when somebody said 'strangers at 12 o'clock high, . . . wonder what it was? . . . Boy, I really put my



LCDR. HAMBY, in charge of *Boxer's* single pinwheel, hovers over flight deck as planes prepare to take off on missions; helicopter pilots fly six hours a day during Korean operation



CATAPULT operator Richard Bonebrake, AB3, turns head from F9F's hot blast at takeoff

bombs on those barracks! I was pulling 62" and 2900 rpm about then!"

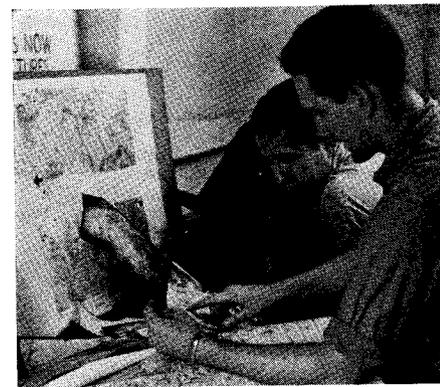
A plane captain walks up to the squadron commander, LCdr. William Jernigan. "Skipper, did you know your plane had a bullet hole in it?"

Surprise spread over the red-faced, balding leader's face. "Did I get hit? I'll be damned!"

Two of the hardest working pilots on the ship, day in and day out, are the heli-

copter men from HU-1, LCdr. W. M. Hamby, an old multi-engine and SBD man, and Lt. W. E. Stephens, ex-fighter pilot and crop duster.

Since the *Boxer* launches planes morning, afternoon and sometimes evenings, that means the "chopper" must be hovering off the bow or stern all that time.



VALDEZ, Ailport of *Boxer's* photo lab take look at aerial shots of next day's target

Flying helicopters is a meticulous and tiring job, so Hamby and Stephens divide up the flying. With the pinwheel in the air six hours a day, the pilots each fly 75 to 100 hours a month.

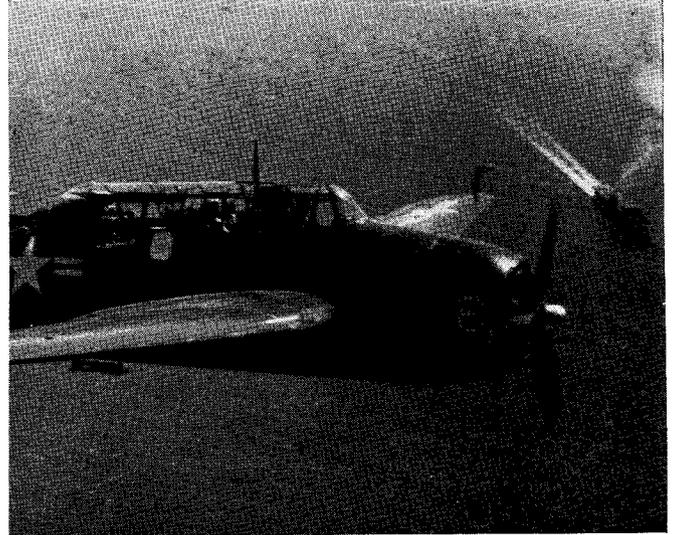
All routine maintenance on their single HO3S-1 helicopter has to be done at night since the plane is flying most of the day. Often mechanics have to wait until 1 or 2 a.m. to work because of blackouts on the hangar deck. Besides their regular plane guard duties, the helicopter pilots fly guard mail and passengers between ships of the task force.

The *Boxer* and her air group were on their third combat cruises of the Korean War when NAVAL AVIATION NEWS' editor was aboard in June. She had aboard all or parts of nine different squadrons. Her full-sized squadrons included VA-65, VF-63 under LCdr. Ward S. Miller, VF-64 under LCdr. L. R. Robinson and the jet outfit.

Besides these, the *Boxer* had "splinter



HANGAR deck crewmen shove F9F of Jernigan's Jets on deckside elevator, preparatory to raising it topside for day's strikes



CODFISH Airline TBM circles the Boxer awaiting signal to land aboard with its cargo of sardine-backed passengers and mail

units" from five other squadrons. VC-3 furnished *Corsair* night fighters under LCdr. Edwin G. Dankworth, antisubmarine AD's from VC-11 were under Lt. James Waddell, photo F9F's from VC-61 were led by Lt. Jack Harris, the HU-1 helicopter unit from VC-35, with Lt. Robert W. Taylor as officer in charge.

The *Boxer* claims the record of having made more carrier landings than any other flattop in the active U. S. Navy, passing the 55,000 mark in August. It also claims the Navy record for speedy transfer of ordnance from supply vessels. Three times in one year it set new loading records, taking aboard 185 tons an hour the first record month, following this with 203 and 225 tons of rockets, bombs and bullets from the USS *Rainier*.

The loading record, of course, was a cooperative one shared by the *Rainier's* crewmen and the *Boxer's* gunnery di-

vision under LCdr. Kenneth McAfee.

And third but not least of the records for which the *Busy Bee* is proud is its blood donations. During a three-day marathon collection last October, the *Boxer's* crew donated 2,377 pints of blood, the largest number of pints collected by any single unit in a single operation.

Down below decks, the unsung catapult gang under Lt. J. H. Morse has hung up a record of which it is also justly proud. With more than 12,000 catapultings since the ship was commissioned, a search of records showed not a single "cold shot" launching had been made.

Boxer pilots have had their share of sea stories to relate from their combat tour. There's the case of Ens. Stanley W. Henderson of VF-64, who acquired honorable and "dishonorable" wounds in the Navy. He got the former when a

Communist shell exploded in his cockpit peppering his throat and chin with shrapnel. Bleeding profusely, he ditched off Hungnam and was saved by a destroyer. His "dishonorable" wound occurred a year ago. Bailing out of a Navy Beechcraft in Connecticut, he landed in a tree. As he climbed down, a Chesapeake retriever bit him in a place which made sitting difficult for several days.

Then there was Ens. Delma D. Dunn of the VF-63 *Corsair* squadron, flying plane #113, who no longer scoffs at the "13" jinx. Over Wonsan he got some bucket-size flak holes in his wings but made it back safely. A few days later he was flying along "fat, dumb and happy", when Cdr. Arthur L. Downing, CAG-2, advised him his plane was on fire.

Dunn found his oil pressure down to 10 pounds from a flak hit and ditched the unlucky #113 for good and all. The next day he flew another number.



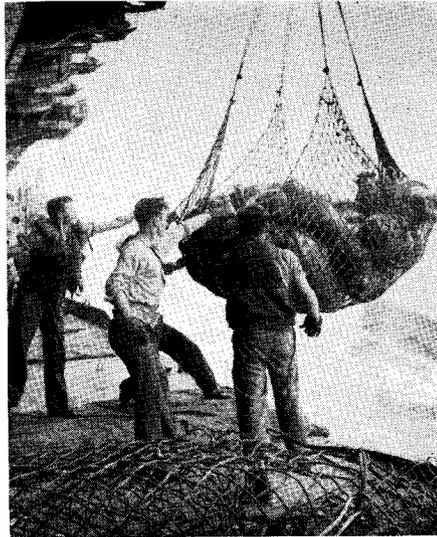
AS SOON as mailbags come aboard from oiler during replenishment day, distribution crew hops to job of sorting it by divisions



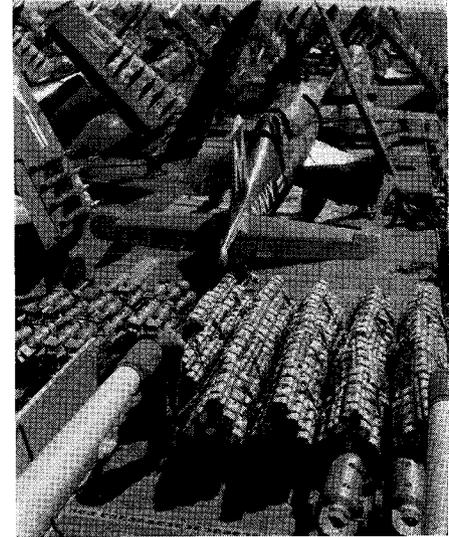
HELICOPTER piloted by LCdr. Hamby hovers off *Boxer's* starboard bow during launching; *Princeton*, sister ship, seen in distance



ENS. CROSBY, Lt. Kingston wash Princeton jibes off plane after landing on wrong CV



PLENTY of muscle and sweat required when Boxer sets new rearming speed mark at sea



DOLLIES loaded with napalm-oil incendiary bombs soon will be searing Korean targets

Close shaves are the order of the day for fighter pilots and few have closer ones than Lt. E. L. Melton of VC-3. Flying an F4U-5N on an early morning hop along the coast near Sanso-Ri, he had the misfortune to fly beneath a flare which made a sitting duck of him for AA. A 12.5 mm bullet crashed through the belly of his *Corsair*, going through the rubber gasket on the stick.

The bullet hit Melton's thumb, knocking his hand off the stick, lodged in the instrument panel and knocked out all of his instruments. He had to fly contact back to the *Boxer*. Inspection showed he had 18 flak holes in his plane, one creasing the main gasoline line and another going between the gasoline and napalm tanks which were hung on the plane's belly.

Few pilots have had as many "angels" trying to save them as Lt. (jg) Al Rice of VF-63. His face badly burned from a

gasoline flash fire in the cockpit following a flak hit, he ditched off Wonsan.

His plane landed five feet from the shore. Inflating his life raft, he paddled as fast as he could away from land to keep out of Red hands—the fastest 400 yards ever paddled by man", as he put it. His speed was slowed by Communist bullets that punctured his raft.

Meanwhile three ships, the battleship *Iowa*, the DD *Maddox* and an LST started to race to his rescue. The *Iowa* and LST launched helicopters and the *Maddox* a boat and the race was on. The LST's "chopper" won and saved Rice.

The *Boxer's* leading authority on bullet holes is Ens. William R. Videto of VA-65. Flying his AD-4 on a rail strike near Wonsan, he took a 37 mm shell explosion inside his fuselage, three feet behind the pilot's seat. It knocked off his radio mast, which was found inside the plane when he landed on the *Boxer*

later. Mechanics counted 117 holes in his plane from the size of a basketball on down.

"That shell had my name on it, but they had it misspelled," Videto said as he surveyed the damage.

The *Boxer* has two white-haired LSO's as a result of a surprise night landing by Lt. Don Ramsey, a VC-3 night heckler. He had an electrical failure and found himself hunting for the carrier with no radio or cockpit and landing lights.

Using a small flashlight hung around his neck, he was able to watch his instrument panel. Lt. W. F. Tobin, Jr., and Lt. (jg) J. E. Hyde, the LSO's, were standing in the middle of the flight deck when Ramsey's plane suddenly appeared out of the blackness.

After giving him a frantic, instinctive waveoff which he ignored, the two LSO's scrambled to safety while the *Corsair* landed without benefit of paddles.



AIR INTELLIGENCE Officer Rasmussen shows Mig model to Air Officer J. E. Shew and LCdr. G. I. Johnson of public information



ORDNANCE crews labor day and night to put bombs, rockets, napalm on planes, catching sleep whenever they can snatch time