

## SPECIAL SERVICES BULLETIN



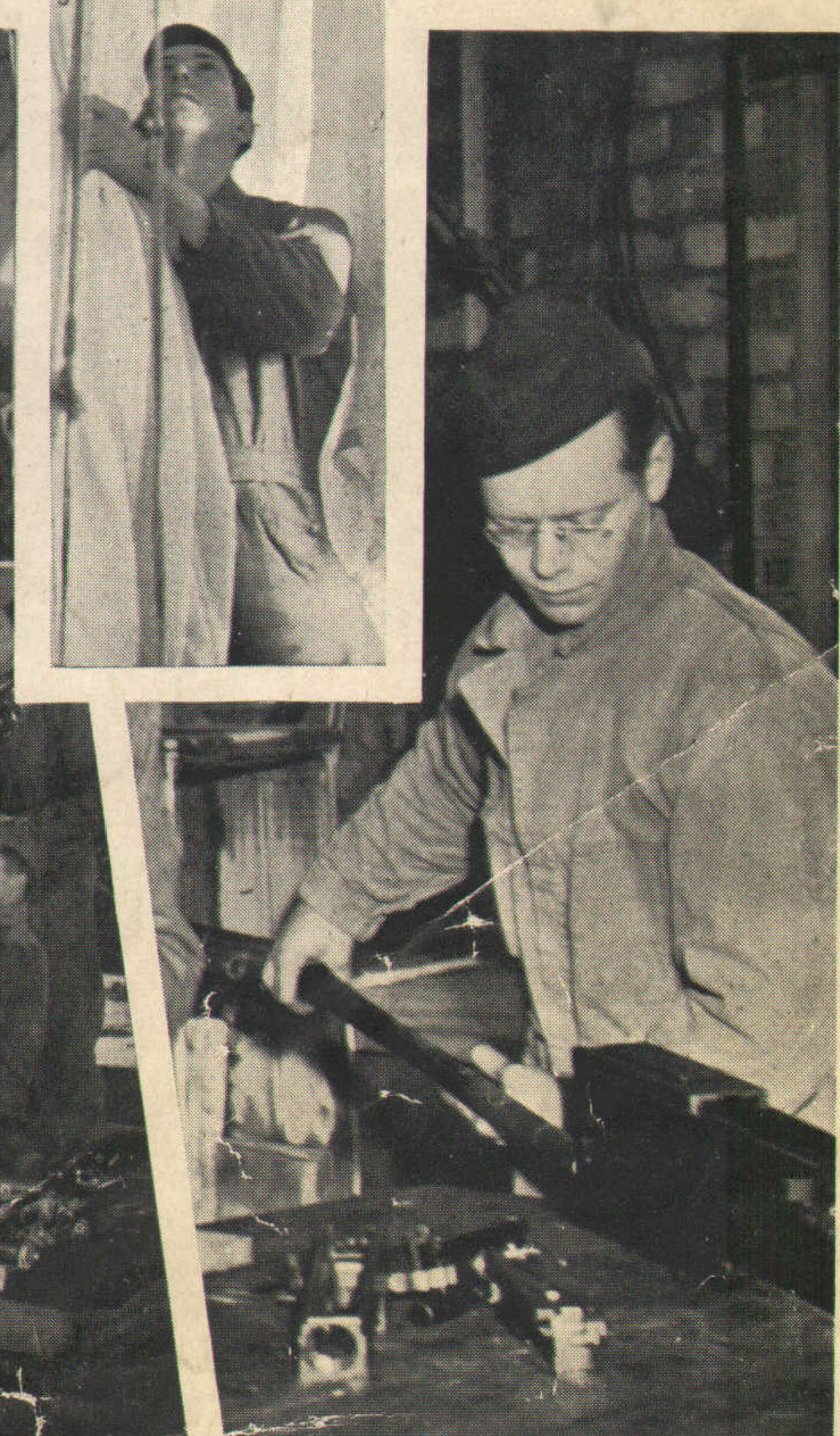
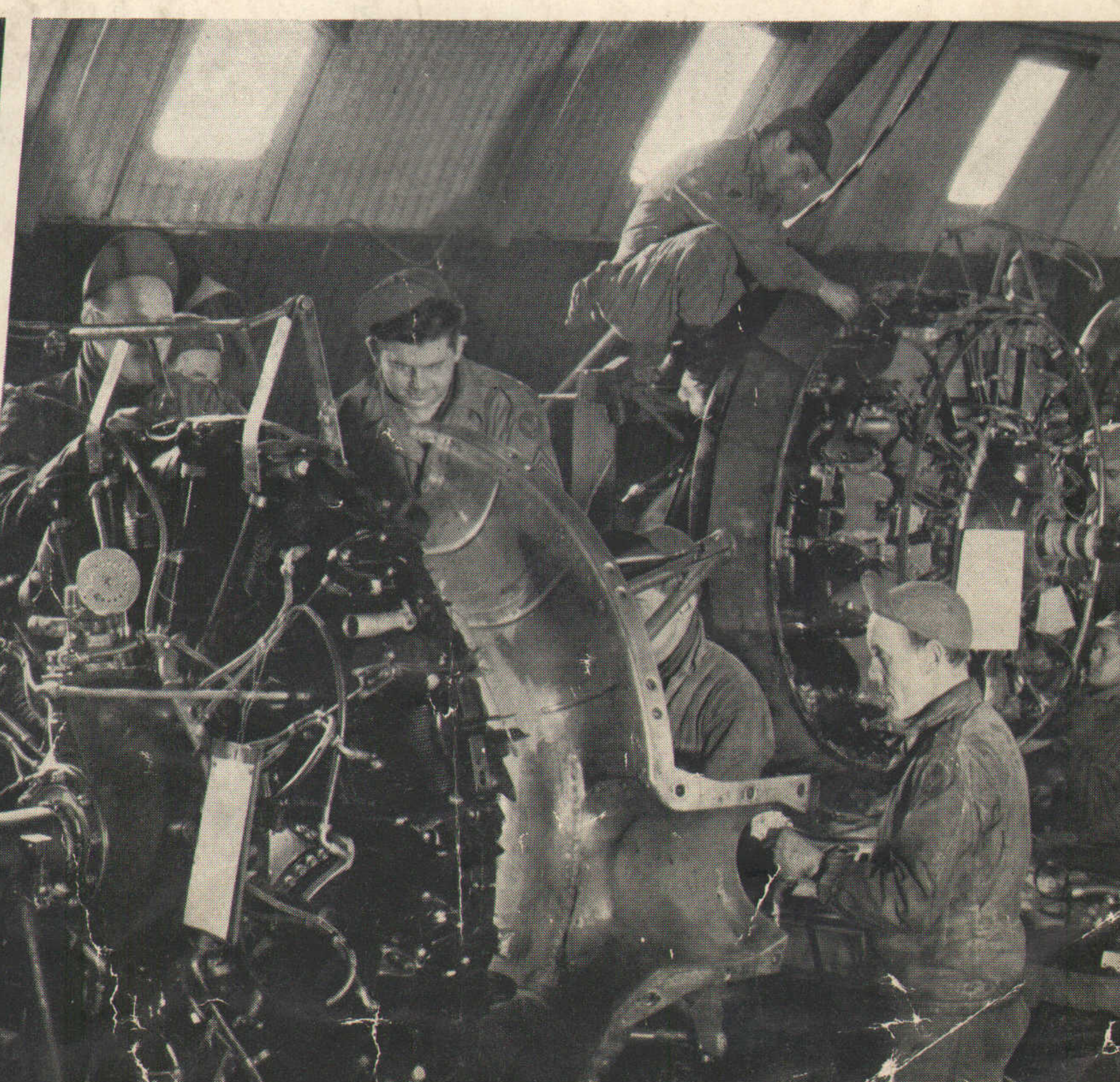
OUT of the warm evening sun the heavy bombers come home again . . . home from another target hundreds of miles away. For the airmen that means food, relaxation, sleep. But to many who are fighting this aerial war from the ground, the return of a formation spells hours of intense activity, long night hours of sweat and grease and hastily-gulped food.

The success of the men who fly depends upon those who don't. A life may hinge on the careful fingers of a "nylon mechanic" who adjusts the shrouds of a parachute (right). A life may hinge on the quick ear of a "grease monkey" who detects a faulty note in the throb of an engine. A life may hinge on the sharp eyes of a propeller man watching the blur of the blades as the engine is run up.

These are the seconds who patch up the cut lips and wipe the sweat from the eyes and rub the aching shoulder muscles between rounds. As soon as the big bombers pull into their "corners" the fight is taken up by these trainers and managers and rubbers. Mechanics swarm over the aircraft. Unserviceable parts are yanked off and replaced by new ones, the old ones being sent to sub-depot for overhaul. There a propeller is made serviceable again (left below); damaged engines are repaired (center); guns are serviced (right). Everything must be done at breakneck speed, so that idle engines and propellers and instruments will not slow down the drive against the enemy.



THIS is a salute to the men on the ground . . . to the carpenters, clerks, cooks, draftsmen, electricians, machinists, inspectors, metal workers, stenographers, typists, welders, fire-fighters, medics, armorers, hydraulic men, dope and fabric workers, radio mechanics, and so on . . . the men on the ground who "keep 'em flying."







**S**TAMPED indelibly on the minds of ground personnel are scenes such as that above . . . the goal of those hours of wrenches and grease and gasoline . . . the start of a bombardment mission. The bombers take off at quick intervals, seem to step-ladder into the sky until the last plane is air-borne.

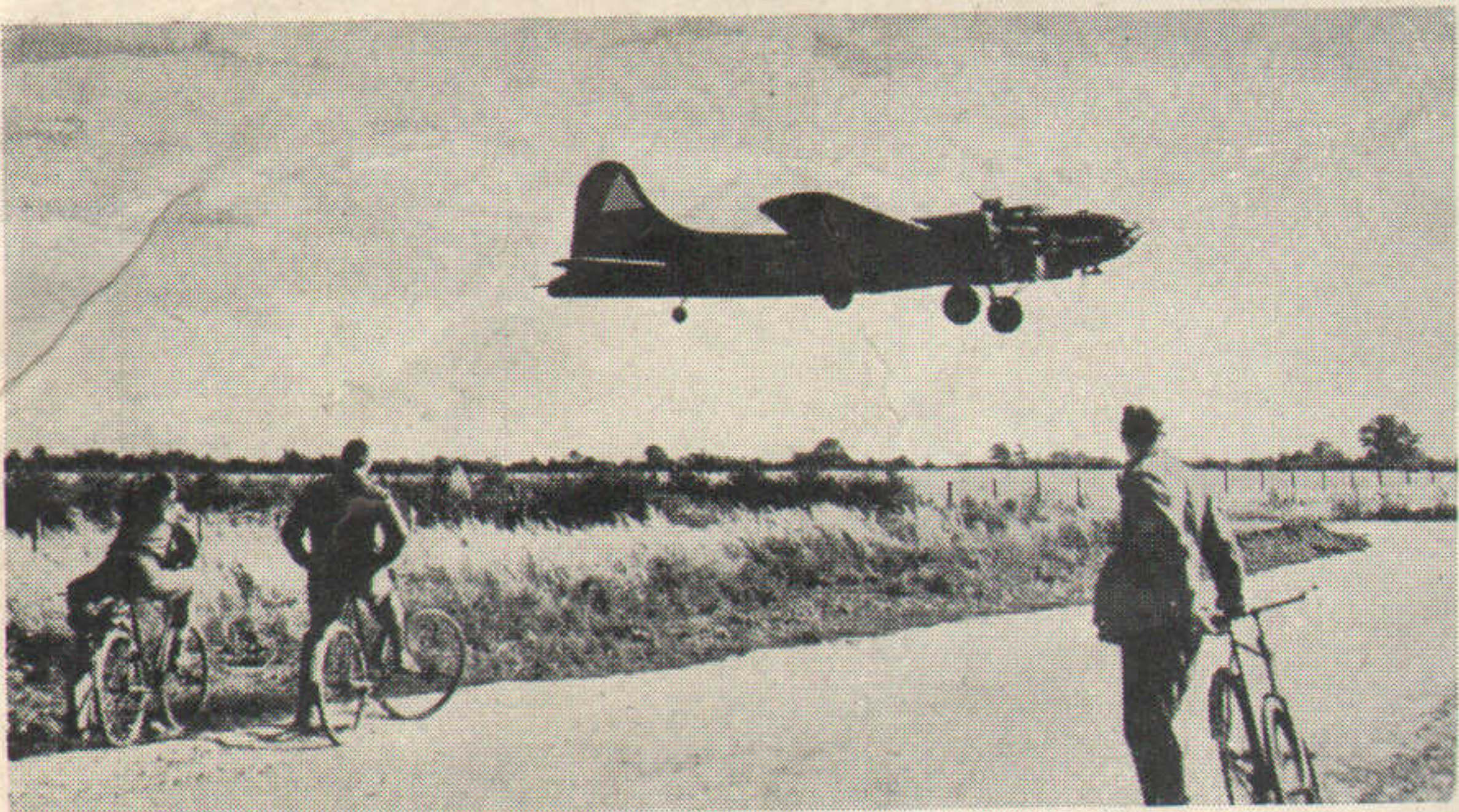
A few minutes earlier each crew met with the pilot for a final briefing (left). Now the mechanics and engineers can relax. But they were hard at work during the night when the teletype message came in (left), and they were hard at work when the combat crews were awakened (below). Now they wait . . . and wait . . . until a speck in the sky heralds the return of the formation. Big moment of the day comes when the planes put down again. For some crew men it spells the attainment of a special goal, expressed by lavish brush strokes on the seat of the pants (right). For fliers, the day is done. But for the ground man a new day is just beginning. Mechanics swarm over wings and fuselage to repair damage. The battle of wrenches and grease has started all over again.



**L**UCKY is the pilot in a foreign theater who has an American wife waiting to greet him upon his safe return. For most, the mission is simply one more mark on the back of a leather jacket, one more step toward the ultimate goal. Below: For a little job over Germany these airmen won a special salute from their squadron commander.





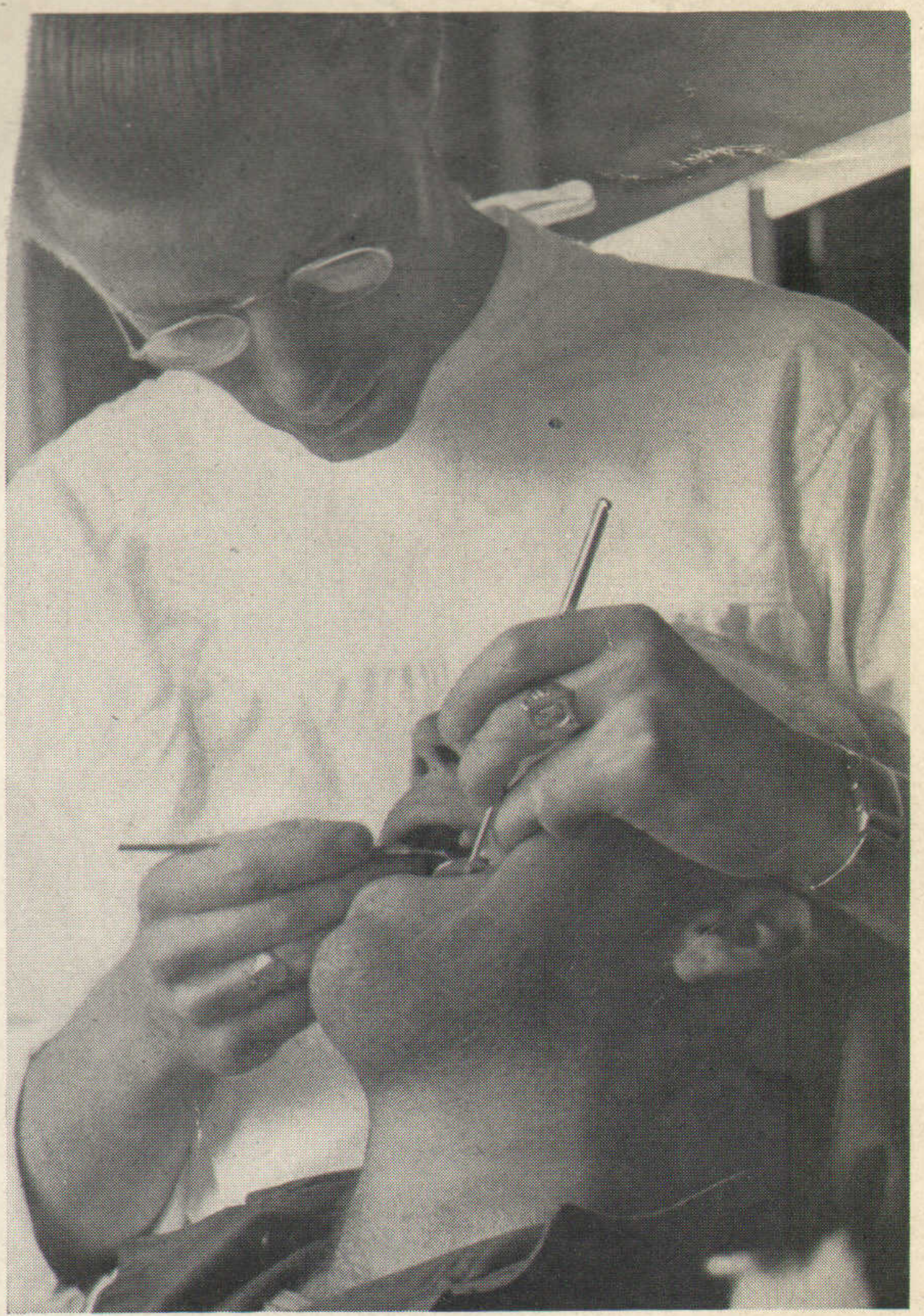


THE proof of the pudding lies in the pictures. From them, Intelligence can tell how many bombs went into the target, can measure the extent of the damage. Following a mission, the photo section mass-produces strike prints which are rushed forward for analysis and interpretation. Ground photos, too, are a part of the job. Upon the return of a mission the ground photographer swings around the field for battle damage and PRO pictures, an important part of the historical record of the war. Above: The laboratory. Below: Three of the recently-promoted.

BUT there's more to the ground job than fixing and supplying aircraft (above). Four weeks out of every month the Finance Section is mulling over the additions and subtractions — mostly the latter — which lead up to pay day (left). Four weeks out of every month Special Services is figuring out ways to make a man laugh (right). While mechanics tinker and tune and tap, other ground men are attending to the important job of maintaining security (MP's below), others are cooking hot meals, building, filing, typing, distributing, planning, checking, classifying, patching, writing, shoveling, washing, studying, drawing, baking, sawing, lettering, crating, driving, stencilling, pushing, loading, cleaning, stamping, mending, sorting. A thousand and one ground tasks have to be done continuously to maintain the war in the air. While our combat men are making Hitler grind his teeth, the dentist is grinding theirs (below).



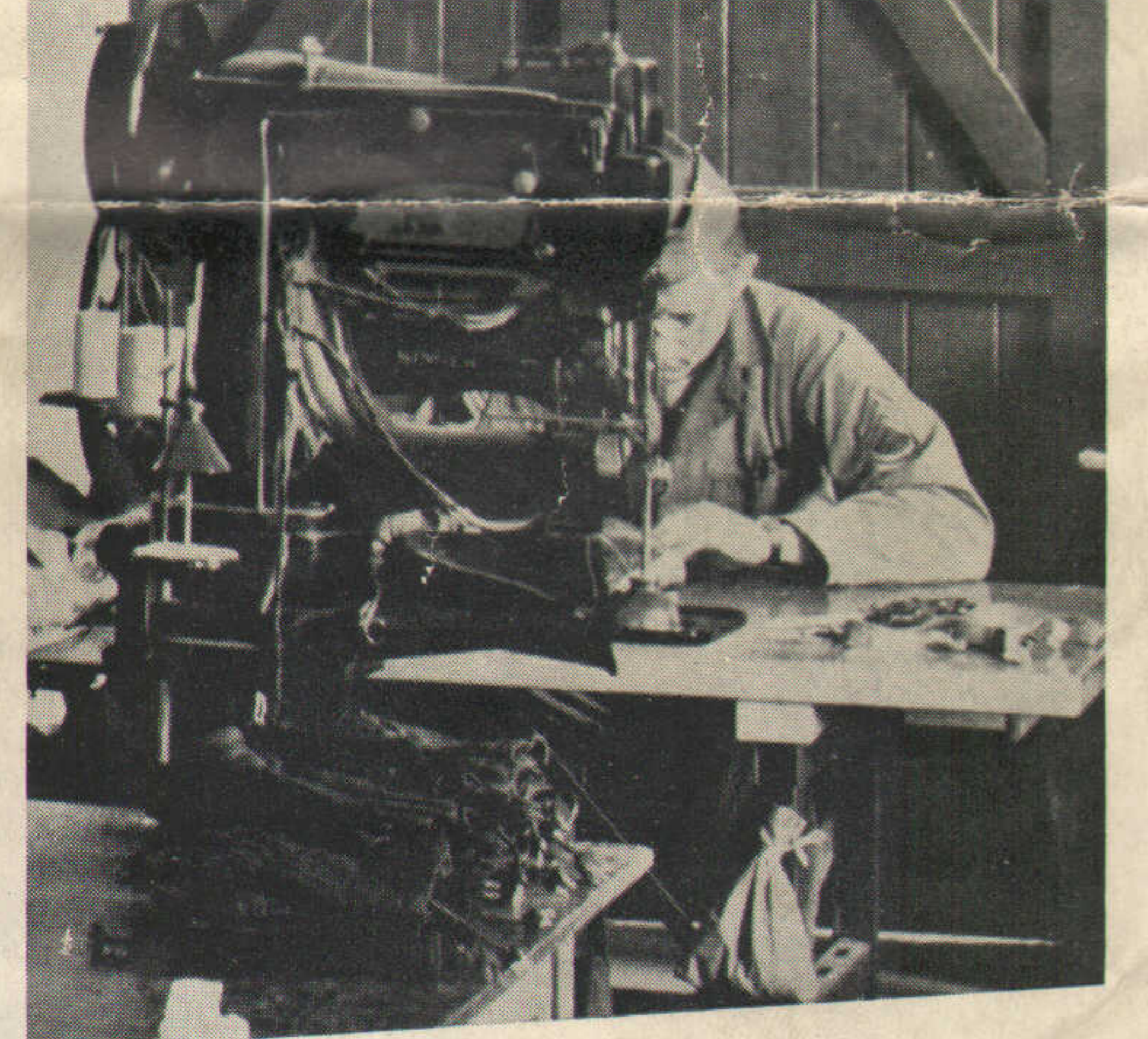
"WELL, Steve, I seen where they was turning the soldiers which was the least good to Uncle Sam, loose first, which means of course that you have been to home since the Armourtiss was signed." So wrote Gene Robinson from "Oo La La, France," for the *Plane News* of a quarter of a century ago. A yellowed fragment of the Jan. 11, 1919 issue is shown here with copies of two present-day editions, published under the supervision of Maj. W. E. Dolan, S-2.







THE work of repair never ends. Like tiny insects, mechanics swarm over the big bombers, adjusting, tuning, tapping, until the plane is ready to go again. In the parachute room there is sewing to be done, nylon to be aired, ropes to be tested. Here the engine that was twisted by a windmilling prop is replaced by another. There a damaged undercarriage is repaired and the hydraulic system checked. New supplies of oxygen are installed. Up to the last minute before take-off, ground crews are busy adjusting and tapping and tuning.



EVERYONE has his part to play and every part is important. Just as armies travel on their stomachs, so bombs are dropped on Berlin by the clerk and the carpenter, the electrician and the telephone operator. The aerial war is being fought with nails and mops and screwdrivers as much as with bullets and bombs.

