



8 Back home, a red light from the tower warns: Delay your landing. Pilots buzz the field on returning.



9 A technician unloads the camera that recorded the raid. Enlargements will be ready in ninety minutes.



10 Tired by a whole day's flying, bomber crews are met as they arrive by a Red Cross girl with a big can of ice-cold lemonade. Mess is timed to the bombers' return.



A POST CAMERAMAN IN THE PACIFIC
MISSION OVER YAP

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LARRY KEIGHLEY

After the fortieth daily raid, the Japs wished the 13th Air Force would forget about Yap. Here is raid No. 41.

NUMBER FOUR OF SERIES

ONE of the longest bombing runs in the world is also the least known: more than 2000 miles out and back from a 13th Air Force base in the Admiralties to Yap, a Japanese island in the Pacific. When Photographer Keighley made the bombing run to get this full-color report, the 13th had struck Yap forty times in forty-three days. The round trip lasts twelve hours. Take-off must be at dawn, so the Liberators can get back by sunset. This schedule brings the B-24's over Yap at the stroke of noon each day, and the Jap gunners are primed and ready. However, each raid kills more gunners,

and the bombers have the edge. Zero interception is only a bad memory since the last runway was destroyed. It is now routine for the Japs to disperse their shipping before noon. Rafts full of Japanese soldiers are towed away from Yap each day; they are returned ashore a few hours after the raid has ended. Fliers of the 13th Air Force welcome assignment to other targets, because the Yap run can be a fatiguing bore. No crew makes it two days in a row. There is still enough flak to make the target run lively, and it's a long way home if you have engine trouble.

(The fifth of Mr. Keighley's full-color reports will appear next week.)



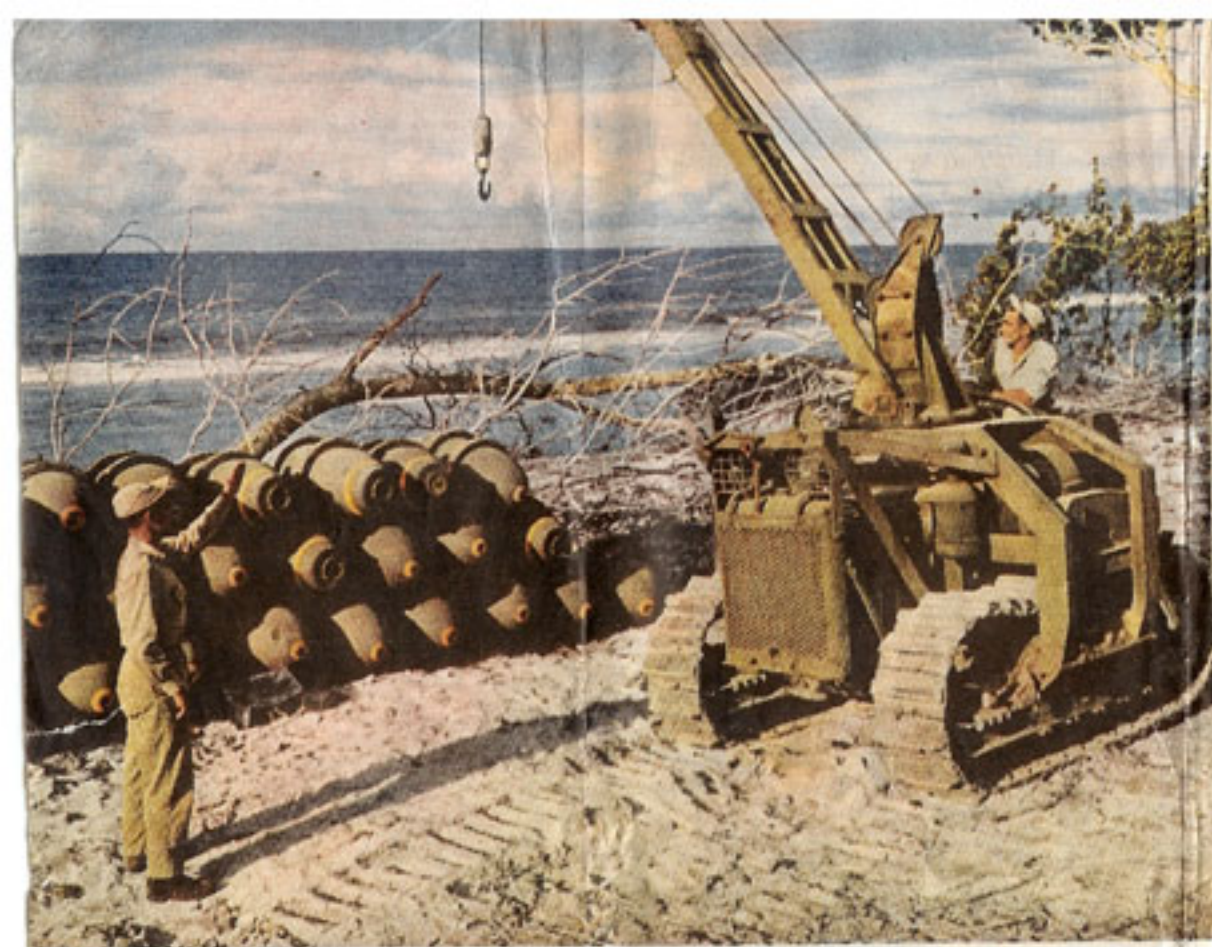
11 Twelve hours after take-off, the last Liberator drops her wheels to land. The sun, already set, illuminates an evening cloud. Everybody waits for the last plane in.

12 Intelligence cross-examines returned bomber crews to prepare for tomorrow's raid. So many Yap targets have been wiped out that all bombing must now be pin-pointed.



13 Keighley saw the regular pilot is Lieutenant Theisen (right), of Omaha. This time Theisen rode for Squadron Leader Lieutenant Grey, of Taft, California.





1 It starts in midafternoon, when a mobile crane hooks onto the big bombs, dispersed for safety in hundreds of small stockpiles. Motor trailers take them to planes marked for tomorrow's mission.



2 Fins are attached to the bombs just before they're stuffed into one of tomorrow's raiders. Bombing-up takes only twenty minutes. As it goes on, today's raiders are returning from a strike on Yap.



3 The sun comes up just as ground crews finish a night of gassing. Round trip to Yap is more than 2000 statute miles, so bombers must take off at dawn if they are to return and land before sunset.



4 Gunners break the monotony of the long outward flight by test-firing their .50 calibers. Here S/Sgt. Eddie Bell crawls out of his tail-gun position to signal an okay. This mission was his thirty-fifth.



5 Liberator flying formation with one in which Keighley rode drops bombs on Yap. Previous bombings had grounded the Zeros.



6 Repeated raids have made 13th Air Force bombardiers familiar with this view of Yap. Cumulus clouds are 10,000 feet below.



7 With air opposition now destroyed, crew members can take turns relaxing enroute home. Yellow bottles are oxygen containers.