

IN JUNGLE MUD on Rendova Island in the Solomons a palm grove is cut down to make logs for a corduroy road.



MEN OF A NAVY Construction Battalion on Guadalcanal deliver logs to their own sawmill.



IN THIS PHOTO done by a bomb

HEWING AIRFIELDS FROM THE JUNGLE

(By courtesy of the American Legation, Wellington)

IN jungles and deserts and on arid plateaux, U.S. soldiers, marines, Navy construction battalions and civilians have hewn out fields for United Nations fighting planes, transports and bombers. The history of some of the major campaigns of this war conceivably could be told in terms of advance airfields and the men who build them, and maintain them.

Combat forces move in first, perhaps with the aid of planes, then the airfield builders come to prepare for aircraft which, operating from their newly-acquired bases, strike ever deeper into enemy territory.

In the early days of the war, U.S. civilians rode the bulldozers and built the airfields in such remote places as Wake Island, Iraq, and Eritrea. To-day it is the job of Army and Navy construction crews and engineers, who have already established a vast and vital chain of airports across the jungles of South America, Africa, and India,

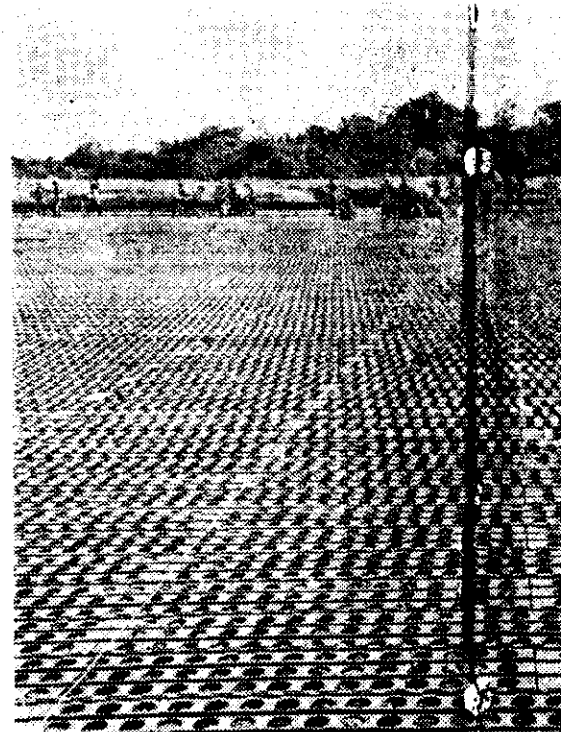
and who are now moving step by step through the islands of the South-west Pacific toward the Philippines and the ultimate objective, Japan.

An Airfield in 13 Days

A battalion of U.S. Navy Seabees (so called from the initials C.B.—Construction Battalions) made possible one of the springboards of the New Guinea offensive by constructing an airfield in a dense jungle under torrential rains in only 13 days.

On Rendova Island, in the Solomons, Seabees had to construct roadways across ground too mucky to bear tractors and trucks. After heavy equipment had bogged down, Army and Marine units asked the Seabees to solve the problem. The construction workers turned to a grove of coconut palms to get logs which they laid side by side to form a corduroy road across the top of the marshland.

While Japanese were racing against time in the construction of their airfield on Guadalcanal (later captured in



THE STEEL RUNWAY, used with equal speed and Aleutians, is shown here



WORK ON THIS FIELD in the Solomons went on 24 hours a day, despite enemy bombing and mud and rain.



U.S. NAVAL CONSTRUCTION MEN building a landing field. Much of the work has been done under fire.



THE BEGINNING laying