

JEEP OF ALL TRADES

BY RALPH WALLACE

Military history is being written by America's jeep—the tough little warrior which can do everything but cook



A little thing like an exploding shell doesn't faze this jeep while on reconnaissance duty in North Africa. The soldier shown at the left is laying communication wire

With a boat hull around it and a propeller in back, the jeep takes to water like a duck—which explains why soldiers call this new-type amphibian a Quack



ONE night just before last October's battle for Egypt exploded in all its fury, a fleet of rough, tough little four-wheeled vehicles growled quietly out of British headquarters at El Alamein. Traveling only by dark and hiding by day, the motorized caravan swung in a wide westward arc which finally brought it to a point far back of the German lines.

Here, concealed in the night shadows of a friendly hilltop, the invaders lurked until they heard the sound for which they were waiting—the panting of a score of tank trucks, lumbering up to refuel German Mark IVs still engaged at the front. Not a moment was wasted. Down on the Nazis now dispersing on the valley floor, the marauders raced crazily in a mile-a-minute attack. Heavy machine guns spat incendiaries into every truck before the drivers could even leap from their seats; many of them failed to see the raiders at all.

When the battle-scarred Mark IVs clanked into the valley at dawn, gas tanks virtually empty, their crews suddenly prickled with cold fear, for every drop of fuel they needed to continue their fight against the onrushing British—even to withdraw and save themselves—had gone up in flames.

Behind this daring and destructive raid lies the impudent shadow of what General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff, has called America's main contribution to modern war—the hell-roaring, hair-raising ubiquitous jeep. How many of the scores of German tanks captured undamaged in Rommel's retreat toward Tunisia were left stranded by such jeep attacks, only Military Intelligence knows. But the number is impressive—so impressive, in fact, that United Nations commanders have been consistently crying: "Send us more jeeps!" And they'll get them.

Last year, some 100,000 of these blitz buggies rolled out of our factories; this year that figure will probably reach the quarter-million mark.

Little Warrior in Combat

One of the jeep's most sensational uses, both in Russia and in our own campaign against the Germans in Tunisia, has been to tow antitank guns into position to smash tank attacks. Another important role for the jeep has been to mop up Nazi parachutists in Africa and Russia, often on terrain which no other vehicle could traverse. Its latest adaptation is the most startling of all. By building a boat hull around the jeep's frame and adding a propeller, the jeep has been transformed into an amphibian, equally at home on water or on land.

The jeep has proved as indestructible as it is bull-terrier belligerent. In India last fall, a liaison officer of the Highland Division and his driver, racing across the hills, were unfortunate enough to be spotted by a Jap plane circling overhead. Seconds later, a 500-pound bomb exploded ten yards away. The driver was killed, the officer blasted into a ditch, and their jeep knocked windshield over wheels. Yet when near-by troops picked up the Highlander and righted the jeep, its engine grunted tentatively, coughed aggressively, and then roared into full throttle as the officer leaped behind the steering wheel and shot on his way!

Actually, the jeep looks—and acts—like no machine created anywhere, for any war. It is only eleven feet long, around five feet wide, and a little more than three feet high; half the height of your conventional motorcar and a full yard shorter. With more than 60 horsepower surging under its hood, it can do 73 miles per hour. Its 2,200-pound frame makes it the lightest of all Army vehicles except the motorcycle—light enough to be flown in Army transport planes even in amphibian

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JUST ELEVEN HOURS ON EARTH . . . WITH HITLER!

When Hitler launched his merciless air-blitz on England, 42,000 civilians were killed. The youngest was only 11 hours old . . . only 11 hours of life on the same earth with Adolf Hitler.

America bows her head in horror and sorrow for that child . . . *and then goes forth to fight.*

We fight with all the strength of our youth . . . our sons and brothers who are crossing the seas to get within range of the axis gangsters.

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Our Workers Are Not Slackers

By Frank Gervasi

There have been hot words on absenteeism from employers and employees. But the heat-treatment phase is over. Both sides have discovered that absenteeism is a human problem which will yield only to intelligence and understanding

At a shipyard near Seattle, this kangaroo court "tries" absentees. "Convicts" may be fined cash or a round of cigars

EVERY night, usually between eight-thirty and nine o'clock, somewhere in the hold of an incompleting ship at the Lake Washington shipyards near Seattle, a kangaroo court sits.

It's probably the only court of its kind in the nation, but if there were more of them, it might be possible materially to reduce the dimensions of one of our biggest manpower problems: absenteeism. This is the name of a disease as old as industrial man: absence of workers for any one of about 250 reasons, from unavoidable illness down to thoroughly avoidable hangovers.

The judge of the shipyard court is a former storekeeper from near-by Bothell. The clerk is an ex-bank teller from Omaha. The members of the jury are some 20 Americans who left good jobs in gold mines, the feed and grain business, law firms and lumberyards, and went to Seattle to see what they could do to win the war. Few had ever seen a ship bigger than a Mississippi River flat-bottomed boat or had smelled salt water, and about all they knew about electricity was that it was used in light bulbs. But they're all electricians now.

They learned all they know about electricity from Jack Scott, who is 49 years old, a power-transmission expert from North Dakota and about as American as apple pie with cheese. Jack had never seen the sea either, until two years ago. He is boss of the gang and prosecutor of our kangaroo court. He opens each session with praise for work well done.

Then he looks around and says, "All right, you fellows, who pulled a Brodie tonight? Okay, you birds, confess your

crimes or I'll call on witnesses to indict you."

It's a rule of the court that if a man refuses to admit his poor splice of a cable, his failure to solder a joint properly or his error in reading a blueprint, he may be exposed. If indictment by someone else is necessary, the punishment might be twice or three times worse than if he had confessed. He might have to buy three rounds of cigars or candy bars instead of one, or he might be called upon to pay a sizable cash fine—especially if his crime was lateness or absenteeism. And if he can't take it all good-naturedly or shows congenital disinterest in his job, he is welcome to quit and try to find work elsewhere. There's no place for him in Jack Scott's gang.

The shipyards throughout the nation have the worst absentee record in the country. Absenteeism in the Lake Washington shipyards area averaged about 11 per cent, an almost irreducible minimum. This record has helped to bring down the company's average to well below the national average of approximately 6 per cent for all industries.

Absenteeism isn't new. Industry has always suffered from it. In the last war, according to the Journal of Political Economy for May 1919, the absentee average in the steel shipbuilding industry was 18 per cent, much higher than now; but absenteeism isn't peculiar to shipbuilding or wartime. In peacetime, there has always been some, due to accident, illness, death and just plain laziness. Some employers estimate that the national average due to those and related causes was about four per cent.

In wartime, absenteeism produces matériel loss, which might mean the difference

between a short war and a long one, perhaps between victory and defeat. If absenteeism continues at the present rate of about 6 per cent (assuming that 1,200,000 of the twenty million Americans employed on war jobs continue to be habitual truants) 2,800 million hours of work will be lost by the end of 1943. With those man-hours you could build fifty battleships or about 8,000 freighters, and astronomical equivalents in tanks and guns and planes. Absenteeism must, obviously, be reduced.

Yellow Slips Discarded

It's one disease, however, that sulfa drugs won't cure. It won't yield to nostrums and panaceas and it won't budge with bullying. That has been tried. In one Middle Western plant, an employer tried to reduce absenteeism by putting little yellow slips in absentees' pay envelopes, identifying the recipients as slackers and conveying the thanks of Hitler, Mussolini and Hirohito for lying down on the job. Too many slackers had good reasons for their absences. One of them, who'd been away from work for several days, had just buried a wife and child, dead from pneumonia. The yellow-slip method was abandoned.

The best minds say that absenteeism can't be cured. It can be arrested and remedied, but it can't be entirely eliminated from industry's blood stream. When absenteeism burgeoned in epidemics all over the country, Captain Eddie Rickenbacker and irate congressmen decided there ought to be a law. They concluded that all absenteeism was basically due to lack of patriotism, to selfishness and to wage ava-

rice. They blamed organized labor's insistence on high wages and the union shop. Congress moved to legislate the absentee phenomenon out of existence.

The labor unions retaliated with charges that Rickenbacker and the congressmen were using absenteeism as an excuse to abrogate the Wagner Act. They saw hard-won social gains of the past eleven years endangered by what they called, in the shopworn language of the labor movement, a minority of "vested interests." They reminded Congress, among other things, that absenteeism in the House and Senate is seven times as bad as in industry. Neither side at first bothered to determine the real causes.

Then investigations and researches and surveys began. With the same energy with which they had previously denounced one another, government agencies, labor unions, the industrialists themselves, Congressional committees and independent agencies hurled themselves into the job of finding out what causes absenteeism. Labor admitted that there was considerable gold-bricking and leaf-raking among its members. Industry confessed it had made mistakes which contributed to absenteeism, such as failing to provide sufficient housing. Both sides discovered that there were not two or fifty but at least two hundred and fifty direct and indirect causes. On one thing all parties seem to have agreed: American workers aren't slackers and traitors.

It wasn't lack of patriotism, for instance, which had kept a Detroit woman at her workbench seven days a week every week since April 1942. She was often sick but

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