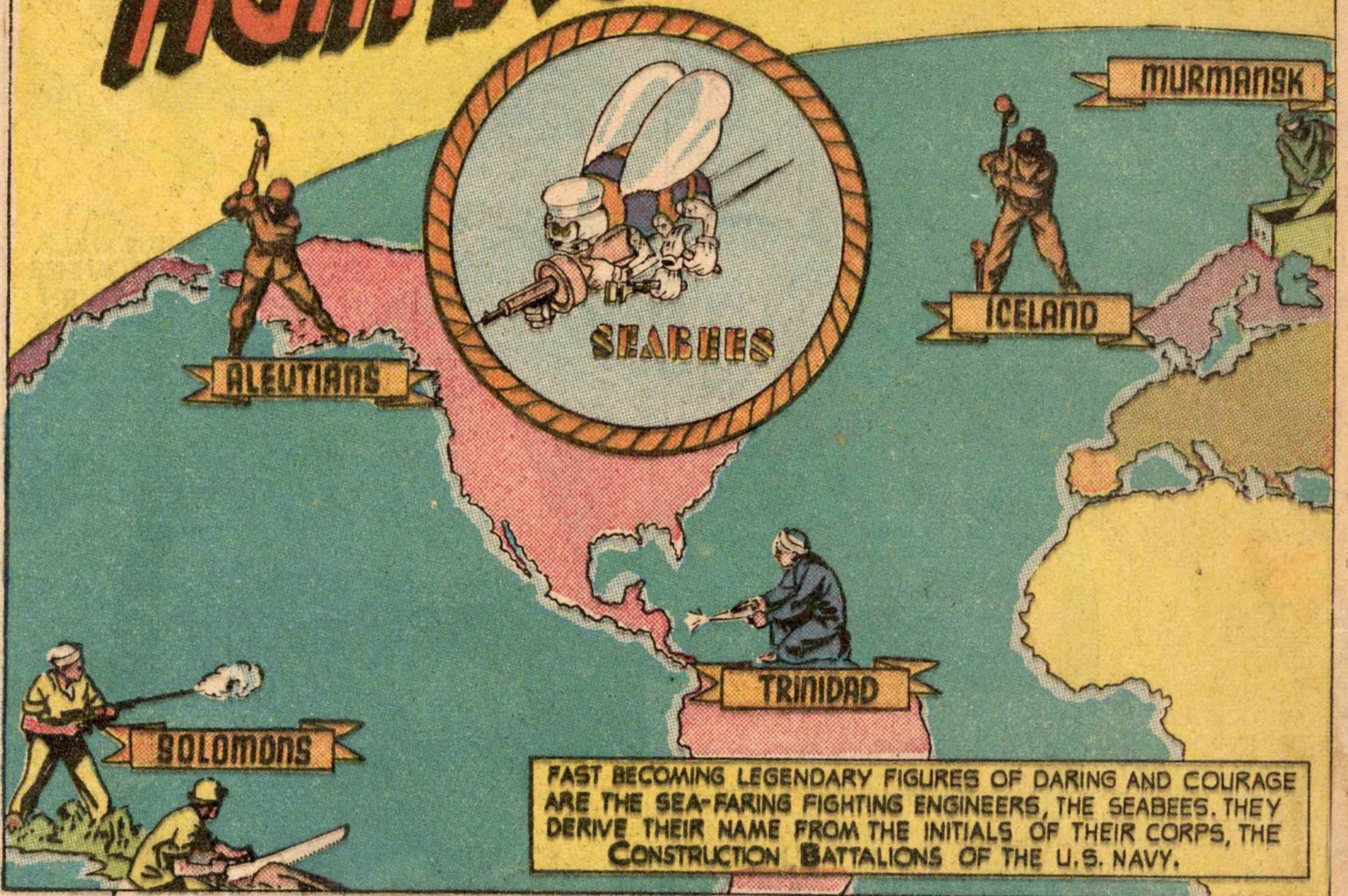


THE FIGHTING SEABEES



FAST BECOMING LEGENDARY FIGURES OF DARING AND COURAGE ARE THE SEA-FARING FIGHTING ENGINEERS, THE SEABEES. THEY DERIVE THEIR NAME FROM THE INITIALS OF THEIR CORPS, THE CONSTRUCTION BATTALIONS OF THE U.S. NAVY.

THE NEED FOR TRAINED FIGHTER-BUILDERS FIRST BECAME EVIDENT AT WAKE ISLAND, WHERE CIVILIAN WORKERS SHOWED PLENTY OF COURAGE BUT LITTLE MILITARY SKILL.



REAR ADMIRAL BEN MOREELL CONCEIVED THE SEABEES IDEA AND QUICKLY PUT IT INTO EXECUTION.



TRAINING CAMPS WERE OPENED AT VIRGINIA AND RHODE ISLAND.

FORTY-FIVE YEARS OLD— A STEEL-WORKER?

YES, SIR—AND A STRONG ONE TOO!

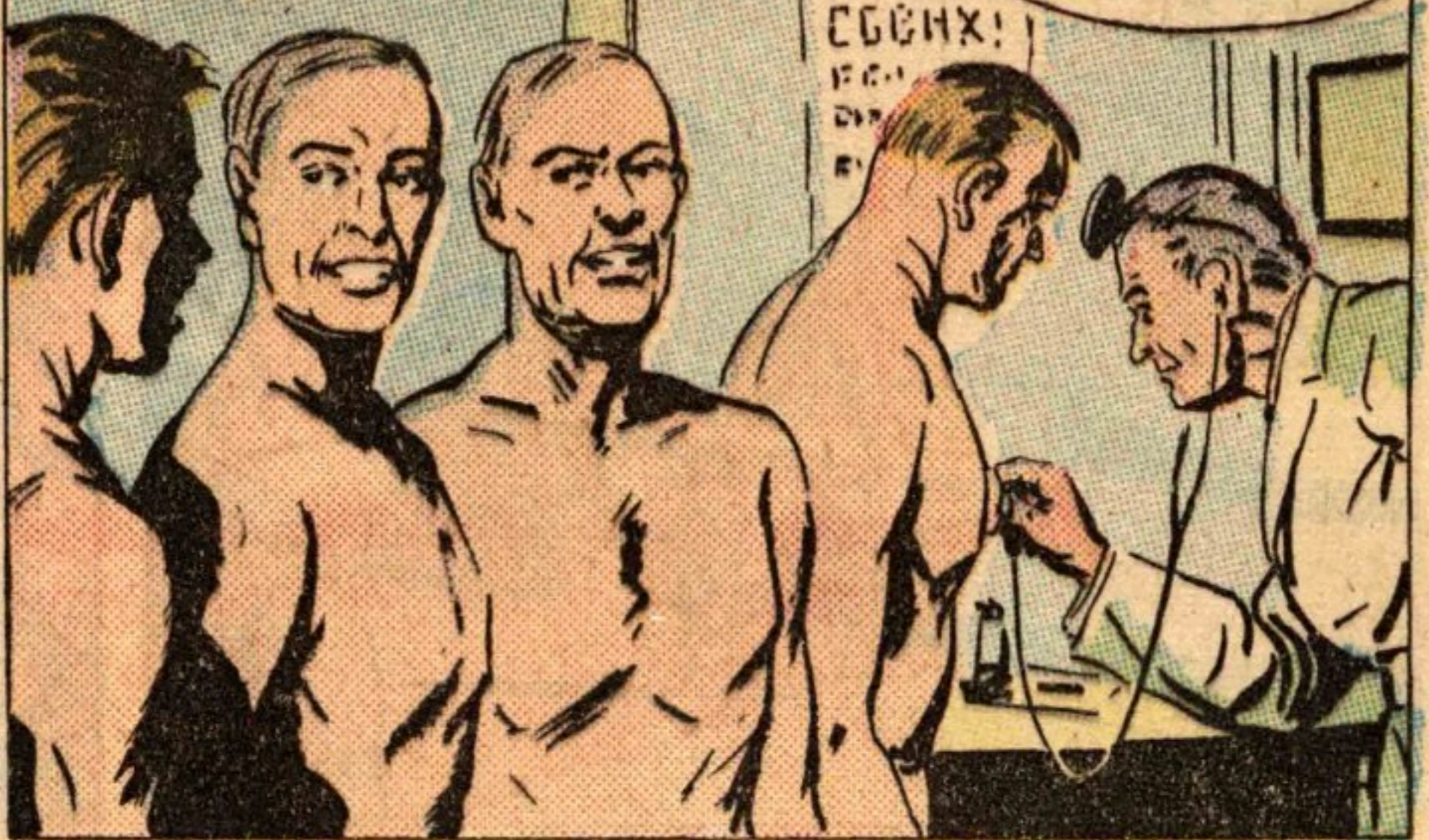


THE SEABEES' STANDARDS ARE HIGH. EIGHT MEN ARE REJECTED FOR EVERY ONE ACCEPTED.

I'M A LOGGER. WHAT'RE YOU?

I'VE BEEN A CARPENTER FOR YEARS.

I'VE BEEN A STEAM FITTER FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS.



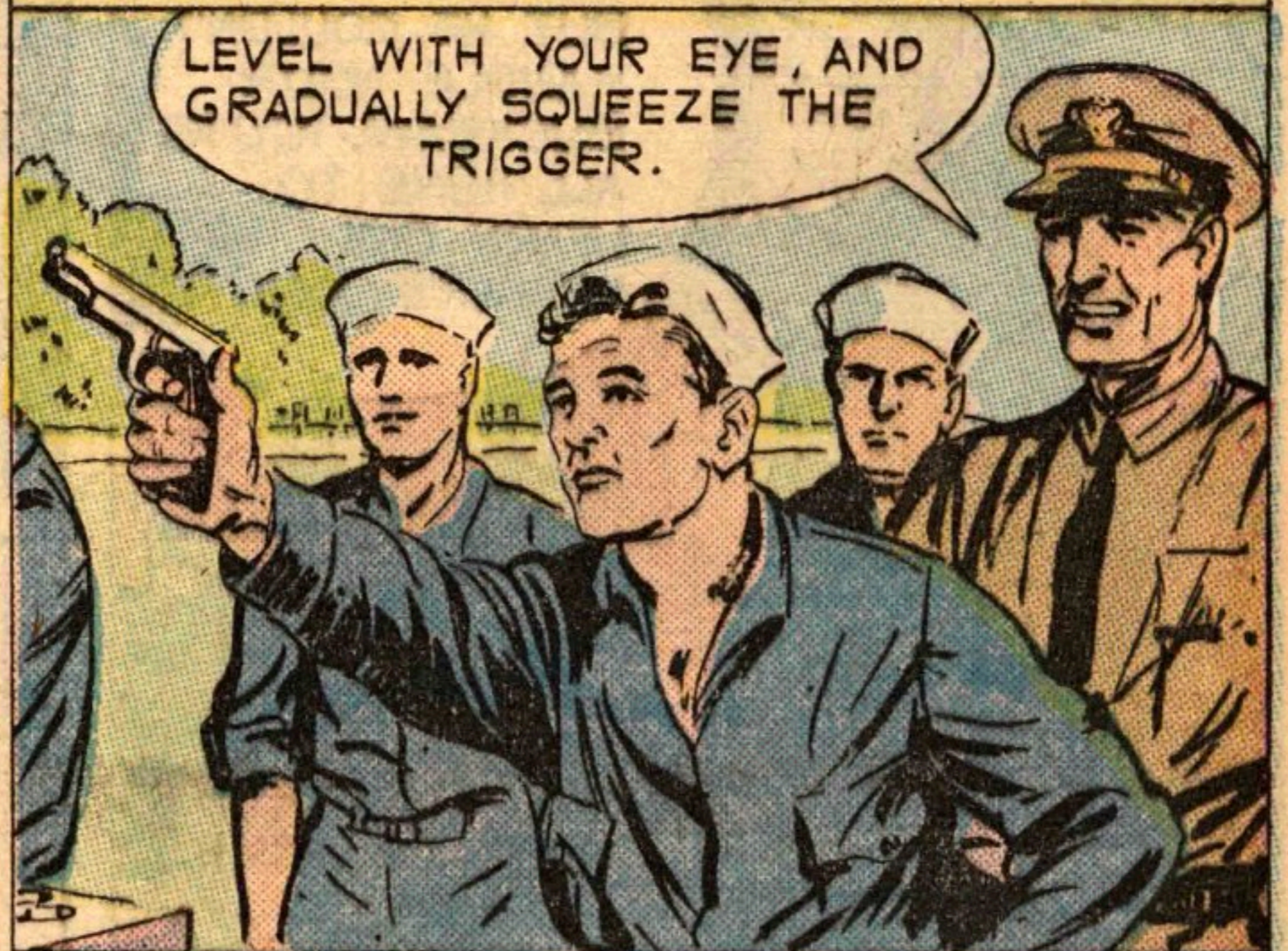
THOSE FINALLY ACCEPTED GO TO BOOT CAMP — NAVY SLANG FOR ROOKIE TRAINING CENTERS.

SPLendid TEAM WORK, HAVEN'T THEY, SIR?



THEY LEARN TO USE ALMOST EVERY TYPE OF WEAPON. THIS TRAINING TAKES FROM THREE TO FOUR WEEKS.

LEVEL WITH YOUR EYE, AND GRADUALLY SQUEEZE THE TRIGGER.



SOMETIMES YOU'LL HAVE TO FIGHT TO GET AND HOLD BASES, BUT THE SEABEES' MAIN JOB IS TO BUILD AND REPAIR THEM.



ONE OF YOUR JOBS WILL BE AIR RAID CAMOUFLAGE. WHEN AN ENEMY PLANE COMES LOOKING FOR YOU, THE IDEA IS FOR HIM TO SEE ONLY THE NATURAL COUNTRYSIDE — WITH YOU AS PART OF IT.



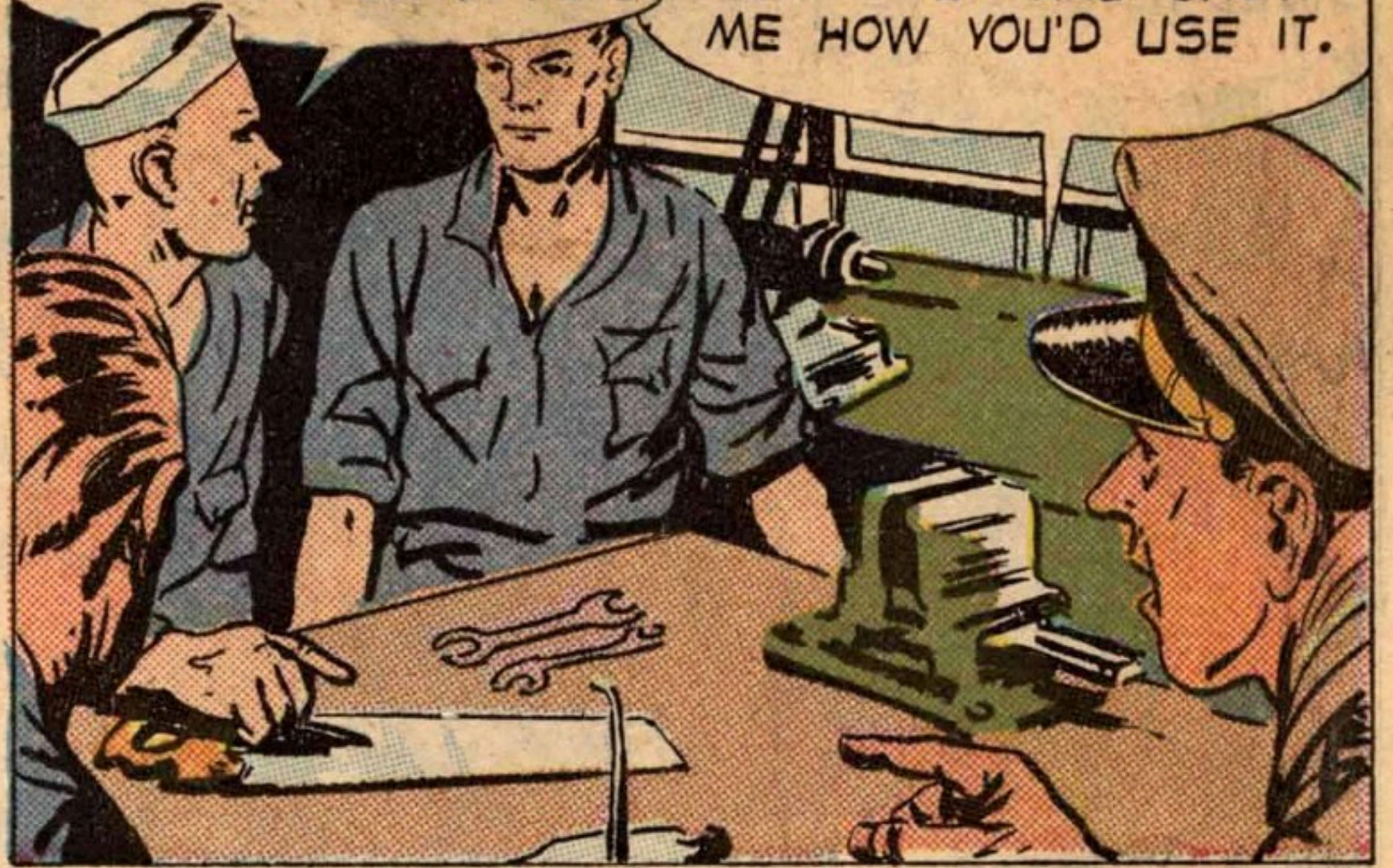
THEN COMES HARD, PRACTICAL TRAINING ON ACTUAL JOBS.

REMEMBER, THIS GAS TANK HAS TO BE TIGHT AS A DRUM!



TO ME, THIS IS ALL A WASTE OF TIME. I'VE BEEN A CARPENTER FOR FIFTEEN YEARS. WHAT CAN I LEARN HERE?

I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT YOU CAN LEARN, HARDY. THERE'S AN ACETYLENE TORCH ON THE TABLE. PICK IT UP AND SHOW ME HOW YOU'D USE IT.



I—I'M SORRY, SIR, I DON'T KNOW HOW.

THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT. BROWN HERE KNOWS HOW, BUT HE COULDN'T HANDLE YOUR BUCKSAW. YOU'RE ALL HERE TO LEARN ONE ANOTHER'S JOBS!



PRELIMINARY TRAINING OVER, THE SEABEES FACE A TOUGH PRACTICE ASSIGNMENT.

MEN, YOUR JOB WILL BE TO MAKE A LANDING ON A BEACH NEAR CAMP BRADFORD, CLEAN OUT THE "ENEMY" AND SET UP A COMPLETE BASE IN THIRTY HOURS!



WHAT'S A LITTLE WATER TO A NAVY MAN! COME ON, LET'S GET THOSE GUYS!

THIS FIELD GUN OUGHT TO CLEAN UP THE SITUATION. IF IT DOESN'T, WE CAN ALWAYS DO IT OURSELVES!



FLOUR "BOMBS" FROM THE "ENEMY" PUT MEN AND MACHINES OFFICIALLY "OUT OF ACTION"!



YOU'VE BEEN KILLED, LOWRY, WHETHER YOU KNOW IT OR NOT! AND YOUR MACHINE GUN WAS DESTROYED.

AS SOON AS THE "ENEMY" IS CLEARED OUT, DYNAMITE CREWS, UNDER SURVEYORS' INSTRUCTIONS, BLAST CLEARANCE FOR AN AIRPLANE RUNWAY.



"QUONSETT HUTS" SPRING UP, A KITCHEN APPEARS, ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS POINT SKYWARD.



WHEN WE GET THIS STEEL MESH DOWN, WE'LL COVER IT WITH SAND. THEN WE'LL PACK GROUND CORAL ON IT AND ROLL IT SMOOTH.

THESE MEN ARE MARVELOUS! THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANY JOB THEY CAN'T DO!



WELL, YOU KNOW IT'S THE BOAST OF THE SEABEES THAT THEY CAN FIX ANYTHING FROM BRIDGES TO WATCHES!

A COMPLETE VILLAGE FOR 1000 MEN IS SET UP, INCLUDING WATER, LIGHTS, DOCTORS' QUARTERS - AND EVEN DENTAL FACILITIES!

IF THIS HURTS TOO MUCH, JUST YELL.



DON'T BE FOOLISH, DOC. A SEABEE NEVER HOLLERS!

AND THE FIRST CONTINGENT SETS OUT FOR ISLAND "X" AND REAL ACTION.

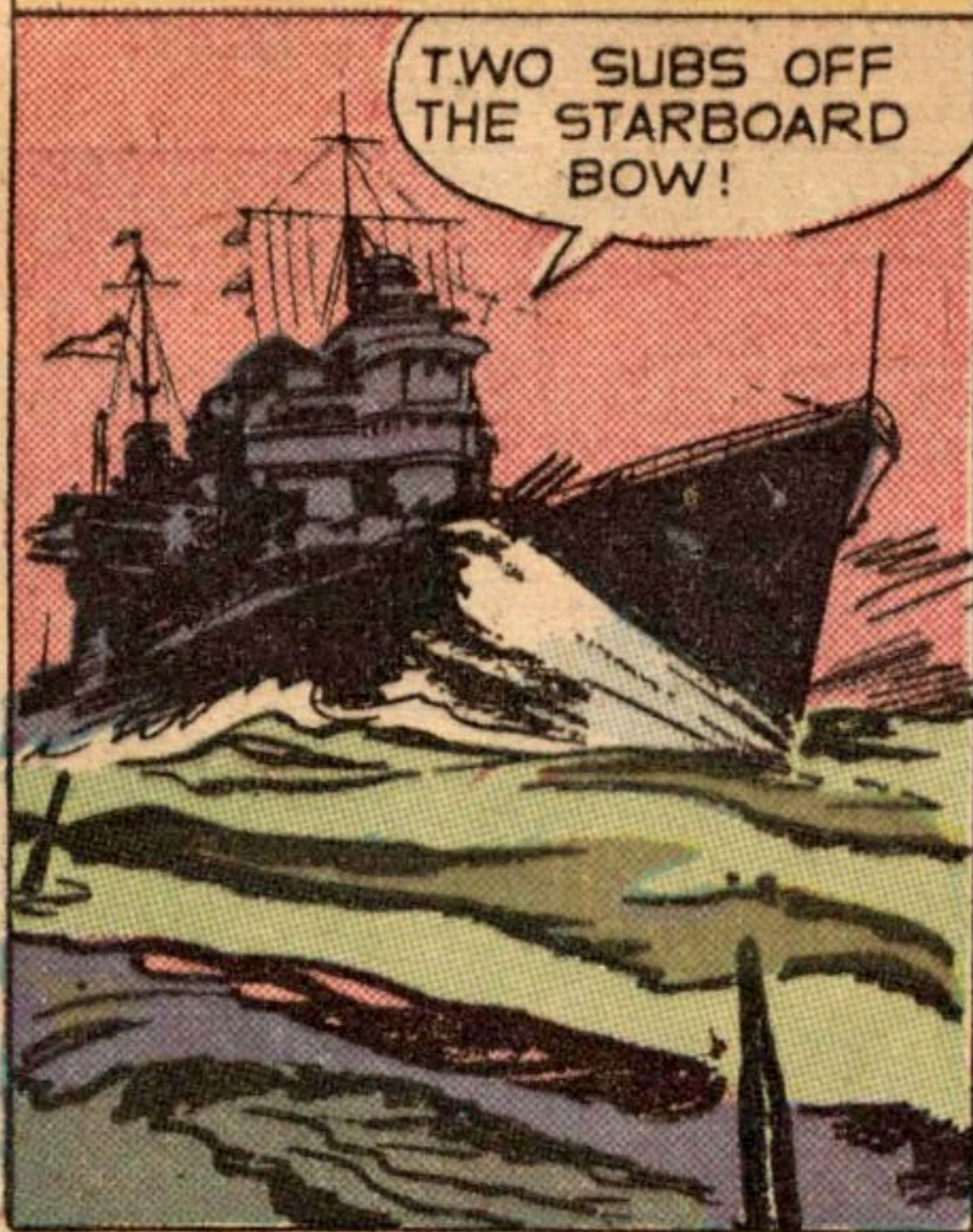
WELL, LIEUTENANT, HOW LONG DID IT TAKE?



LESS THAN TWENTY-SIX HOURS, SIR. THEY'RE READY FOR REAL ACTION!

THEY SAW ACTION SOON ENOUGH.

TWO SUBS OFF THE STARBOARD BOW!



O.K., SAILOR, WE'RE WITH YOU.

YOU SEABEES ARE READY FOR ANYTHING, AREN'T YOU?



THEY DROVE OFF THE ENEMY SUBS AND LANDED ON ISLAND "X".

AS AN ENGINEERING EXPERT, IT'S MY OPINION THIS BASE WILL TAKE A YEAR AND A HALF TO SET UP



I GUESS YOU JUST DIDN'T KNOW THE SEABEES, MISTER. THE BASE IS FINISHED, AND IT TOOK US JUST SEVEN MONTHS!



THEIR JOB COMPLETED, THE SEABEES SET OUT FOR A NEW ISLAND "X". TRANSPORTATION IS A MAJOR JOB SINCE THEY CARRY MILITARY SUPPLIES, WELDING APPARATUS, DIESEL ENGINES, CONCRETE, IRON, LUMBER, STORAGE TANKS, AND OTHER CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT.

HAVE YOU GOT EVERYTHING?

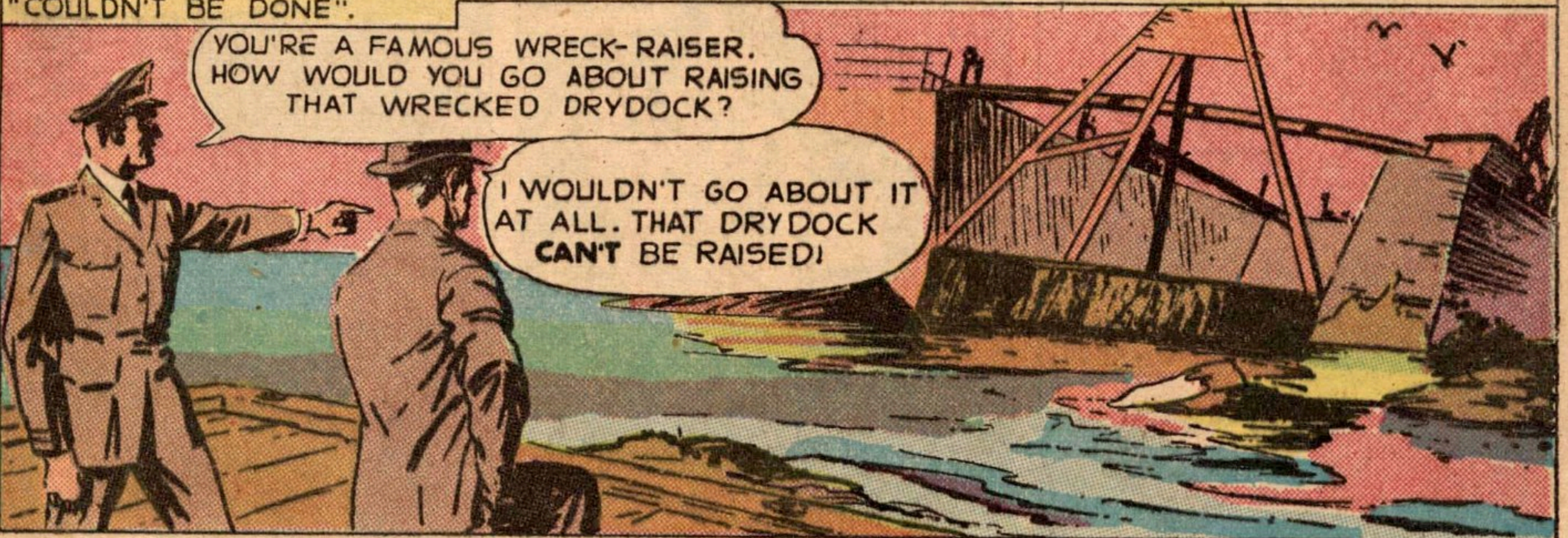
EVERYTHING, SIR— INCLUDING THE KITCHEN SINK! WE'RE A COMPLETE CITY IN OURSELVES!



THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL OCCASIONS WHEN THE SEABEES PERFORMED TASKS THAT JUST "COULDN'T BE DONE".

YOU'RE A FAMOUS WRECK-RAISER. HOW WOULD YOU GO ABOUT RAISING THAT WRECKED DRYDOCK?

I WOULDN'T GO ABOUT IT AT ALL. THAT DRYDOCK CAN'T BE RAISED!



AGAIN THE SEABEES FOOLED THE EXPERTS.

I UNDERSTAND THIS IS AN IMPOSSIBLE JOB WE'RE DOING.

THE IMPOSSIBLE JUST TAKES US A LITTLE LONGER, THAT'S ALL.



IN SHORT ORDER, THEY HAD THE DRYDOCK PATCHED, HAULED IT OFF THE ROCKS, AND TOWED IT TO PORT.

THIS WAS TOO EASY! WHEN ARE THEY GOING TO GIVE US SOMETHING HARD?



SOMETHING "HARD" CAME WHEN A CARRIER, WITH A CONTINGENT OF SEABEES, WAS HIT BELOW THE WATER LINE DURING A BATTLE WITH THE JAPANESE.

THAT ONE DID A LOT OF DAMAGE. WE'LL HAVE TO PULL OUT FOR A WHILE AND TRY TO MAKE REPAIRS.



THE SEABEES HAMMERED AND WELDED REPAIRS BELOW DECKS WHILE THE CARRIER STEAMED FULL SPEED.

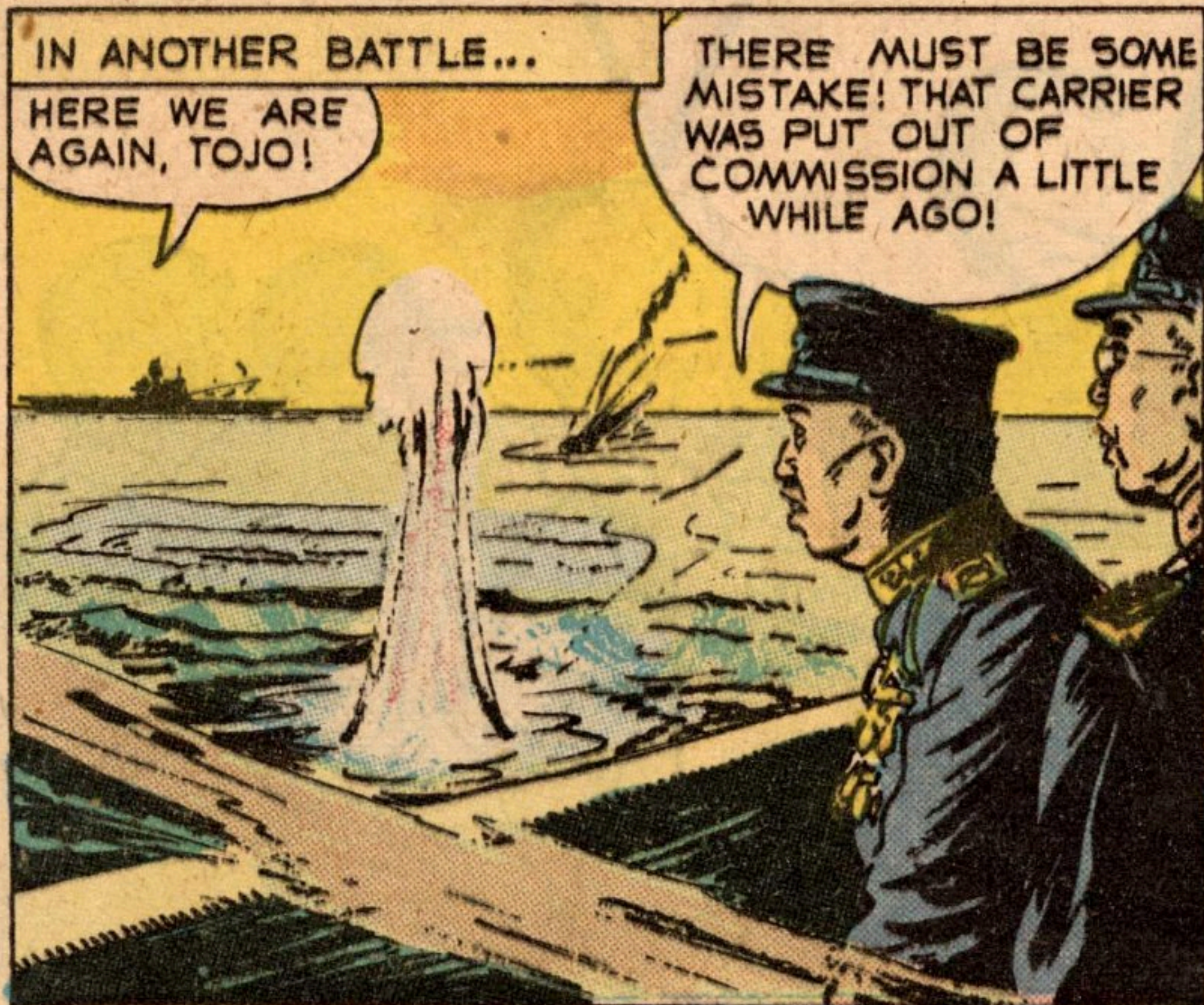
WE'LL HAVE THIS BATTLEWAGON READY TO FIGHT IN A JIFFY!



IN ANOTHER BATTLE...

HERE WE ARE AGAIN, TOJO!

THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE! THAT CARRIER WAS PUT OUT OF COMMISSION A LITTLE WHILE AGO!



IN APRIL, 1943, SECRETARY OF NAVY KNOX COMMISSIONED CAMP ENDICOTT AS A TRAINING CENTER FOR THE SEABEES. HERE THE SEA-GOING ENGINEERS OF THE U.S. NAVY TRAIN FOR THEIR DANGEROUS AND VITAL JOB. ALL THEY ASK FOR IS AN ASSIGNMENT THAT "CAN'T BE DONE"—AND THEY'LL DO IT!

