

confusion in the welfare office

by tom brennan

EIRS "loan shark"



Hectic days in a hectic office . . . but a million dollars wouldn't replace some wonderful memories. . . . Of the rainy days when the office was two inches below sea level and "Captain" Doyle preparing to give the abandon ship order. . . . Of Ex-Galleyman Moe Levy, being acquired to dish up yeoman duties in the office and taking it good naturedly when Islanders would come in for "ham and eggs" and steaks. . . . Of Log editor Twileger trying to talk Lt. Doyle out of 15 days leave, and getting 365 days—at sea when his orders came through while the parley was in progress. . . .

Of Bob MacCourt printing the Log on the multith machine with papers coming out of every outlet but the right one—and such language and temperament. . . . Of the big crowds of spectators lining up inside the office to watch the intra-mural football games when the weather was too chilly on the outside. . . . Of "Senator" Bill McEwen explaining to MacCourt in his best senatorial manner how a certain nut should be adjusted on the machine to keep the weekly Log rolling alone. . . .

Of a young hopeful dropping into the office for a loan and winding up in an office boat drill because an extra hand was needed. . . . Of the vigorous intra-mural arguments between Ship's Service and Boat Pool which were generally aired in the office. . . .

Of the "subway car" effect of the office with men lining up for loans, all maintaining their balance by holding on to the straps on the water pipes. . . . Of last minute substitutions in Commandant's Cup competition when even I was called upon occasionally to represent the island. . . . Of the ambitious efforts of the Welfare Office's baseball team which always managed to amuse rather than win games. . . . Of Twileger running like the devil and not getting anywhere. . . . And my catching flies with my stomach instead of my hands. . . .

Of the serene quietness which never existed, especially when the Band next store was blaring out. Block and McEwen arguing politics, MacCourt battling the machine and 40 guys trying to talk us out of a loan or two—all at the same time. . . . Of the off key harmonizing of Eddie Brembs, Costa and MacCourt which could only be stopped by throwing shoes, etc. . . . Of the Sea Girl excursions when each of us came back each week with harrowing tales of markmanship. . . .

Of "Red" Hoffman sneaking in the office before the LOG went to press to ascertain whether he was mentioned or not. . . . Of the "Welcome Home Mother" sign that was on my desk upon my return from a "Lost weekend".

. . . . Of Fuzzy Levane, Brembs and Wallace who could never be found for cleanup details. . . . Of Cy Block's green pajamas which he took with him on special assignments. . . .

Of the continual headaches we had in pleasing the males and females at the Ship's Dances. . . . Too many gals and the gals squawked. . . . Too many sailors and the men bellowed. . . . Of the stormy sessions with Gil and M.P. Rossi over an athletic decision. . . . Of Coach "Rabbit" Jacobson's winning philosophy, "Don't postpone a baseball game because it might snow tomorrow." . . . Of the guy from the West Virginia junk heaps. . . .

Of the outstanding successes of all our sports representatives—a tribute to Lt. Doyle, the athletic officer and an array of great competitors who were at the Island at various times. . . . Of MacCourt always having to go to Sick Bay at clean up time on Saturday mornings. . . .

Of the coming of the Spars and how lucky we were in getting such nice ones as Eleanor Schuyler, Fran Riley and Val Yonkos. . . .

Of the popular talent shows which "Bones" O'Will mugged and MC'd to outstanding success. . . . Of Fred Nabkey and his never ending short stories. . . . Of the team of MacCourt and Nabkey who met with some success in selling cartoons to national magazines. . . . Of the time Twileger was in the hospital and MacCourt, Costa and Nabkey presented him with a fake LOG in which heads were backwards, pictures up-side down and plenty of errors, and the near relapse that followed. . . . Of the rivalry existing between Personal, Pay, Supply and Welfare Offices and the "We do more than you do" remarks which followed. . . .

Of Costa's hectic times as editor and photographer when he took over the LOG. . . . And the eccentricities of staff members Ayre and McNeel. . . . Ayre's cockroach story which never made the LOG. . . . Of "Big Boy" Rice's ardent love letters to his wimmen. . . . Of "Hutch" Hutchins' smooth southern drawl which had a soothing effect on the office. . . . Of the Captain's inspection party catching a couple fellows with their pants down. . . .

Of Bobby Taylor, fighter de luxe, Joe Shelly, Ted Padja, Ben Ferriola, Joe Grant and hundreds of other fine athletes who kept up with sports through the facilities of the office. . . .

This could go on forever—but even above McEwen's gifted flow of words—and Bagel's conniving, one man only was responsible for keeping our department from being court martialled. . . . Anyone knowing Ellis Island can guess who that officer could be. . . .