

A T D WASHERS

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ANNUAL EVENT

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It was Monday - the day typical of Necal - clear and hot - but little did we dream, when we climbed out of our cots at 0655, that it would hold anything different from the usual 'Gun Park' and fatigues.

We, the Gunners of ATD, were mistaken, as at morning parade we were told to gird our feet with sandshoes and mm ourselves with a towel. The mystery deepened until the S/M breathed the magic words "HOT SHOWERS". Those two words! We were prostrated with amazement, for this could truly be called an annual event, since it was only 3 days short of twelve months since we made our landing on Necal.

We duly and dutifully paraded at 1000 with towel and prescribed footwear, boarded a truck (I beg your pardon - "We embussed"), and proceeded to the rendezvous with our usual blind faith in the omnificence of our driver, which, alas!, was sadly misplaced. Rumour had it that we were to proceed to Bourail but we deviated from the main road some two miles from camp and waited patiently while the inevitable argument took place as to our destination. In due course we made a strategic withdrawal to the MT Park where a further conference took place. Time marched on, and finally we were deposited at the Depot pool, some five minutes amble from our own camp, there to await the arrival of the monster which was to deal with our contaminated bodies.

During the period of waiting, many of the prospective victims, whose faith in the ramifications of the multitudinous manifestations of the

Army had been somewhat blighted by prolonged and too close association with same, disported themselves in the pool. These pessimists were disappointed, however, when the invention crept in and at 1120 reported "READY FOR ACTION". Under the supervision of the No.1, a well known Capt., the order was "ACTION REAR", and 16 gunners were duly planted under the outside structure with a piece of soap on one hand, an expectent look on each face, and, I fear, a tremble in some of the limbs.

Then the "Silent Sgt." (Herb, by name) lent his mighty arm to the pump and commenced to sway gracefully from side to side. Lo and behold! Water gushed forth and each man received at least three cupfuls before it ceased. The No.1 then ordered "SOAP" and the New Zealander was at his best in the communal massaging of backs. In due course the 'Silent One' got pumping again and once more water gushed forth, this time at least a double ration, and all agreed that the temperature of the precious liquid was at least equal to that of the nearby pool!

A final order "CEASE FIRING, LIMBER UP" was given and 16 dutiful gunners were replaced on the stands of the worthy by a further supply of victims.

This organisation, known in civilised countries as the Army, intent on making our pleasure, and theirs, complete, duly collected the washed, cleaned, and albeit wiser, gunners and deposited them at their various quarters.

All agree that the elections should have been postponed a couple of months for "REGULAR HOT SHOWERS FOR OUR BOYS IN THE PACIFIC" would surely have been a fitting climax to any election campaign!!

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