

# Ingenuity Saves Navy Men Trapped in Bombed Warship

BY WES GALLAGHER

Allied Headquarters in North Africa, Oct. 5. *AP* Four American soldiers are alive today due to ingenuity and courage after having been trapped for 60 hours in a warship radio compartment surrounded by water after a bomb blew a huge gash in the ship's side.

The men had to stay in the cell, which was slowly filling with water, until the warship could reach dry dock and they could be cut out.

They were R. J. Garmuchsky of Canton, Ohio; Joseph Costa of Fall River, Mass.; James H. Lowes of Niagara Falls, N. Y., and Charles J. Clark Jr., of Covington, Ohio.

The water poured into the compartments all around them and water dripping through the cracks in their safety door.

They did not know it, but, if there had been an escape hatch they would have died because the compartment over their heads also was flooded and all in it were killed.

One telephone line was working from their cell to the bridge.

After many hours of effort, the men working on the bridge managed to pump air down to the trapped men.

The official account said that Lowes, who is only 19, tried to read and sleep, while Clark and Costa queried the bridge as to when they were going to get out. Costa, the only married man, worried about his wife, who is expecting a baby.

The crippled ship, which had put her wounded on a hospital craft, lurched slowly toward a port.

Capt. Robert Cary radioed the plan of the cell to the port and asked that a coffer dam be constructed so that the men could be gotten out as soon as the ship arrived.

"The dripping water sort of got on our nerves," Clark said. "We rolled up our dungarees and rags and stuffed them against the leaks. It still came through, but we could not hear it splashing."

On the deck the men worked at

scheme after scheme to get food and water to the trapped men.

First, they tried dropping ice cubes down the ventilator, but they failed to reach the men.

"We could hear the cubes dropping, but they didn't come out," Garmuchsky said. "Then they tried to pass down a wire. Then a rubber hose. But nothing worked. That's when I stumbled on the brightest idea."

Because the air was being pumped in a strong current, the air was going out toward the deck up the vent. Garmuchsky took some toilet paper, tied a piece of thread to it and threw it into the vent. It sailed up to the deck into the deck officer's face. The thread then was used to pull a large wire through the ventilator and finally a rubber hose through which water was sent down. Oranges and apples followed.

After 60 hours the ship reached port and the British rushed the coffer dam, which already had been built, on board, and the drilling started.

Recommendations have been made that all four be cited.

## State Air Raid System Not Affected by Order Deferring Volunteers

Austin, Tex., Oct. 5. *AP* The state's air raid warning system is not affected by the war department order putting civilian volunteers in the aircraft warning service on reserve status, since the latter is a different organization. Homer Garrison, director of the state department of public safety, said today.

Garrison said the aircraft raid warning service is essentially for plane spotting while the air raid warning system handles communications after planes have been spotted.

The army is maintaining its military personnel in the spotting service, Garrison added.

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