Wartime Shipbuilding in America Encyclopedia Article

Wartime Shipbuilding in America

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Wartime Shipbuilding in America

Frederick Simpich wrote about America's shipbuilding effort in the May 1942 issue of *National Geographic Magazine*:

Build ships faster than our enemies can sink them, that's America's job.

We must get guns, planes, tanks, and food to our Allies and fighting men overseas to win this war. Everybody knows that … no nation in history ever faced so colossal a shipbuilding task in so short a time…. From Bath, Maine, clear around to Tacoma, Washington, old and new shipyards are busy building new ships and fixing old ones…. Day and night from these swarming yards rise the roar and racket of rivet guns, the creak and groan of giant cranes, the clang of forging shops, the thud of trip hammers, and the hiss of welding torches…. Whole armies of men [and women] are now at work building ships in the United States; this host [a large quantity of] will rise to 850,000 or more as production speeds up to two and three ships a day. Think what weekly payrolls —millions and millions!