



AMMO SHIPS such as *USS Paricutin* (AE 18) have big job supplying 'fireworks' to Fleet in many foreign waters.

## Power-Packing AEs Deliver Hot Goods

**T**HE SMOKING LAMP is out while loading ammunition — and your ship pulls alongside *uss Paricutin* (AE 18) or one of her sisters, who've been named after volcanoes.

As you steam side by side, messenger lines bridge the gap between you, then heavier working lines. Pretty soon, nets full of "fireworks" are coming to rest on the decks of

your ship—for you and your team mates to haul out of the path of the next load before striking below to the magazines and powder rooms.

But you might like to take a good look at that AE as the highlines are unrigged—she and her "workhorse" sisters have piled up quite a record in their few years as auxiliary vessel types.

Before World War II, our Navy had only two ammunition ships, *uss Pyro* and *uss Nitro* (designated AEs 1 and 2, respectively, after the present hull numbering system was adopted in 1920). Both of these were 482-foot vessels of some 10,000

tons displacement. Launched just after World War I *Pyro* and *Nitro* made most of their cruises up and down the U. S. coasts, replenishing ammunition dumps and ships in port —and even carrying passengers on occasion.

When World War II became imminent, however, the Navy faced the problem of supplying its striking forces far from their bases. The logical solution was to put hulls under service stations, supply dumps and ammunition dumps — and let them follow right along behind the fighting Fleet. To do that, the Navy acquired in 1940-1941 the Maritime Commis-



16-INCHER IS CHECKED (left) as it is lowered to armory of battlewagon off Korean shore. Right: Net of powder cans is unloaded for striking below.



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