

In Norfolk, **Westwind** took aboard her two helicopters to be used extensively in the Antarctic. The ship's new helicopter crew folded the blades and made them ready for sea. She also received ammunition and demolitions (below right); never used but available.



After leaving Baltimore, we made a brief stop in Norfolk, Virginia. The ship was kept busy fueling, loading ammunition, and receiving her two helicopters. At their approach, curiosity and awe combined to make a large spectator section for the landing of the two helicopters that were to make the long trip with the **Westwind** to the Arctic.

Ammo loading required the cooperation and effort of all members of the deck force and took most of an afternoon. Fueling, also necessary prior to our departure from the States, required the effort of the engineers. After taking on these and other necessary supplies, the **Westwind** left Norfolk for the Panama Canal.

Before we could get our sea legs under us, the Panama Canal came into view. Heavy traffic passing from the Caribbean to the Pacific held us back for several hours, but passing through the locks was a fabulous experience for all. Unfortun-

ately, because of the delay, we passed through at night while most of the crew slept.

On the fourth of October, we entered and moored at Rodman Naval Base, Rodman, Panama. Many went ashore to shop and enjoy the few hours of liberty available. On board, fuel and supplies for the long trip South had to be brought aboard. The following morning at 0800, we got underway for our first South Sea liberty port — Suva, Fiji Islands.



(left) Canal workers row out to pass the line for the mules that guide the ship through the locks.

