What it takes to maintain a single B-17

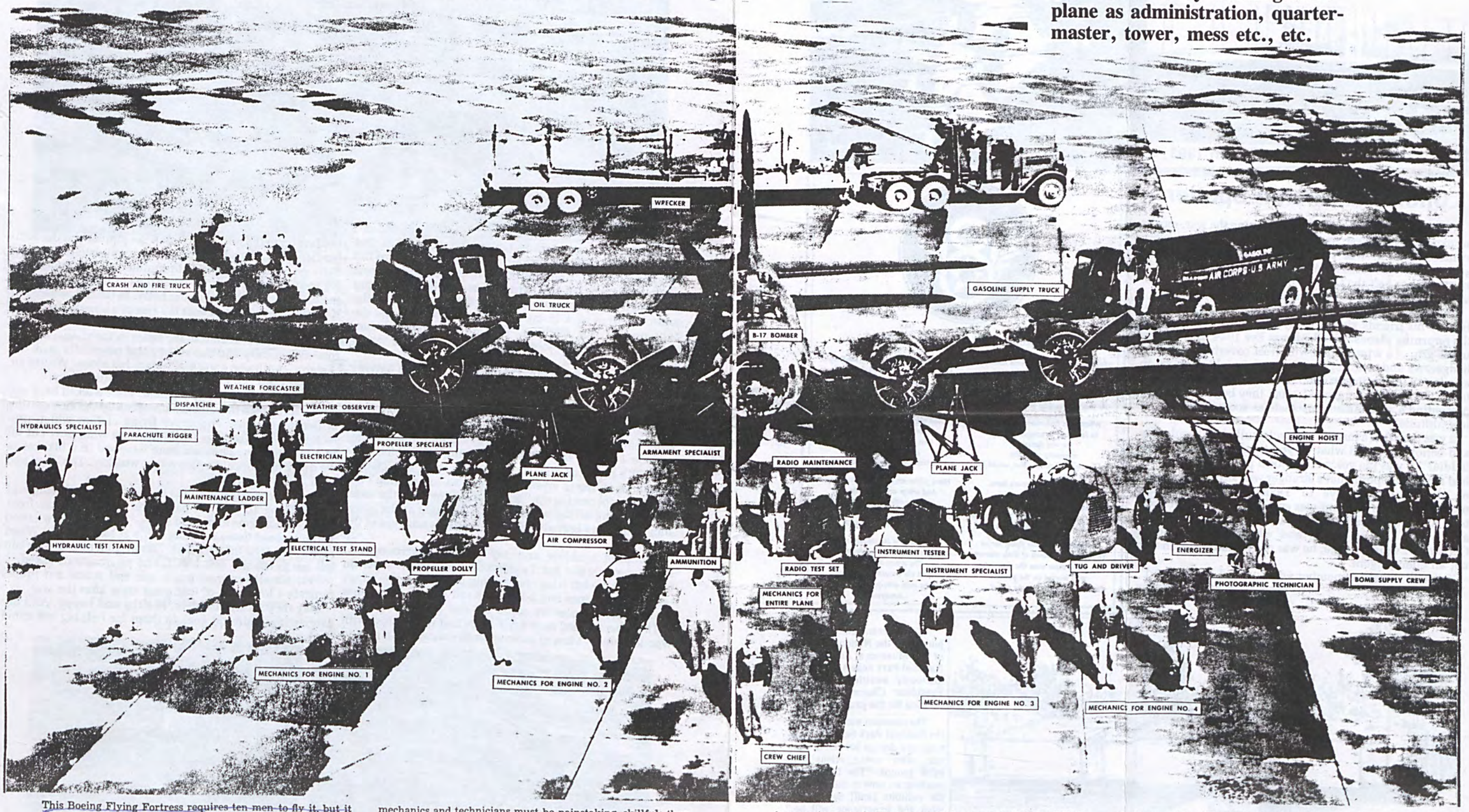
Thirteen 8th Army Air Force personnel were needed to provide essential ground support to keep each B-17 combat crew flying.

1 crew maintenance chief, 1 air compression technician, 1 armament specialist, 3 as a bomb supply team, 1 dispatcher, 1 electrician, 1 gas truck supply, 1 hydraulic specialist, 1 instrument specialist, 1 plane mechanic for the plane as a whole plus 8 engine mechanics (two for each engine). 1 oil truck supply, 1 parachute rigger and 1 specialist, 1 radio maintenance technician, 1 radio testing technician, 1 tug driver (used for towing a plane), 1 weather forecaster and 1observor.

That's not all by a long shot! There must be stand-by relief and management coordination at all times. Food providers and helpers. Medical care and helpers. Fire fighters both for the airplanes and extensive base facilities. Base chaplains. Base security forces. And base entertainment and recreation.

What it takes—to sustain a single U. S. Heavy Bomber

Personnel listed does not include those not directly working on a plane as administration, quartermaster, tower, mess etc., etc.



This Boeing Flying Fortress requires ten men to fly it, but it takes these thirty-one men to keep it flying. Each one of these mechanics and technicians must be painstaking, skillful; they must be ready at any time to down tools and defend their air base against attack. They know their responsibilities and their importance, for a song of the Air Force maintenance men reminds our pilots: "You're hot on the stick when we make 'em tick." It's teamwork in everything that makes an Air Force.

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