

2395

^{IN}
 A lonely atoll in Mid-Pacific; but during the coming year, it will assume a growing importance in Britain's nuclear research programme. It's Christmas Island, ~~Though British troops will probably sell anything but that - when they celebrate the festive season with the~~ ~~WHERE THE FRIENDLY INHABITANTS~~ ~~islands~~ are helping to prepare ~~the~~ ^A base for forthcoming Hydrogen bomb tests.

But the troops are not shut off completely from the outside world. Supply-ships are frequent callers - bringing the equipment needed to transform the atoll from a coral island to a test-bed for modern science. In this building-up stage, ~~the~~ amphibious ~~vehicles~~ ^{vehicles} have proved their worth, for they are driven right into the largest ~~trucks~~ ^{LANDING-CRAFT} to be loaded with stores.

In the early stages, the heavy task of clearing the island fell upon the Royal Engineers. To-day, there are twenty-five miles of good-class roads. ⁽²⁾

In addition, a ^{large} ~~wide~~ area was cleared for the building of an auxiliary air-strip - and a seven thousand foot runway - suitable for bombers ~~aircraft~~.

Welfare facilities, too, have not been forgotten - and that eagerly-awaited mail has arrived in good time.

While the NA ~~API~~ has been well-stocked - to bring the festive spirit to Christmas Island...