

Newsweek

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The Sacred Cow

It was the world's only plane with a built-in elevator—a memorial to a handicap overcome. President Roosevelt, who had expected it to serve him often in shaping the victory and peace, actually had used it only once.

The four-engined C-54 had flown him from British Malta to Russian Yalta for last February's Big Three conference, thence back to his cruiser at Cairo. "All the comforts of home," he had chuckled to the pilot, Lt. Col. Henry T. Myers.

Douglas Aircraft's designers had been told that Mr. Roosevelt preferred doing for himself. The ramp attached to the elevator floor became a gate while he was lifted unattended in his wheel chair into the plane's belly, 15 feet above.

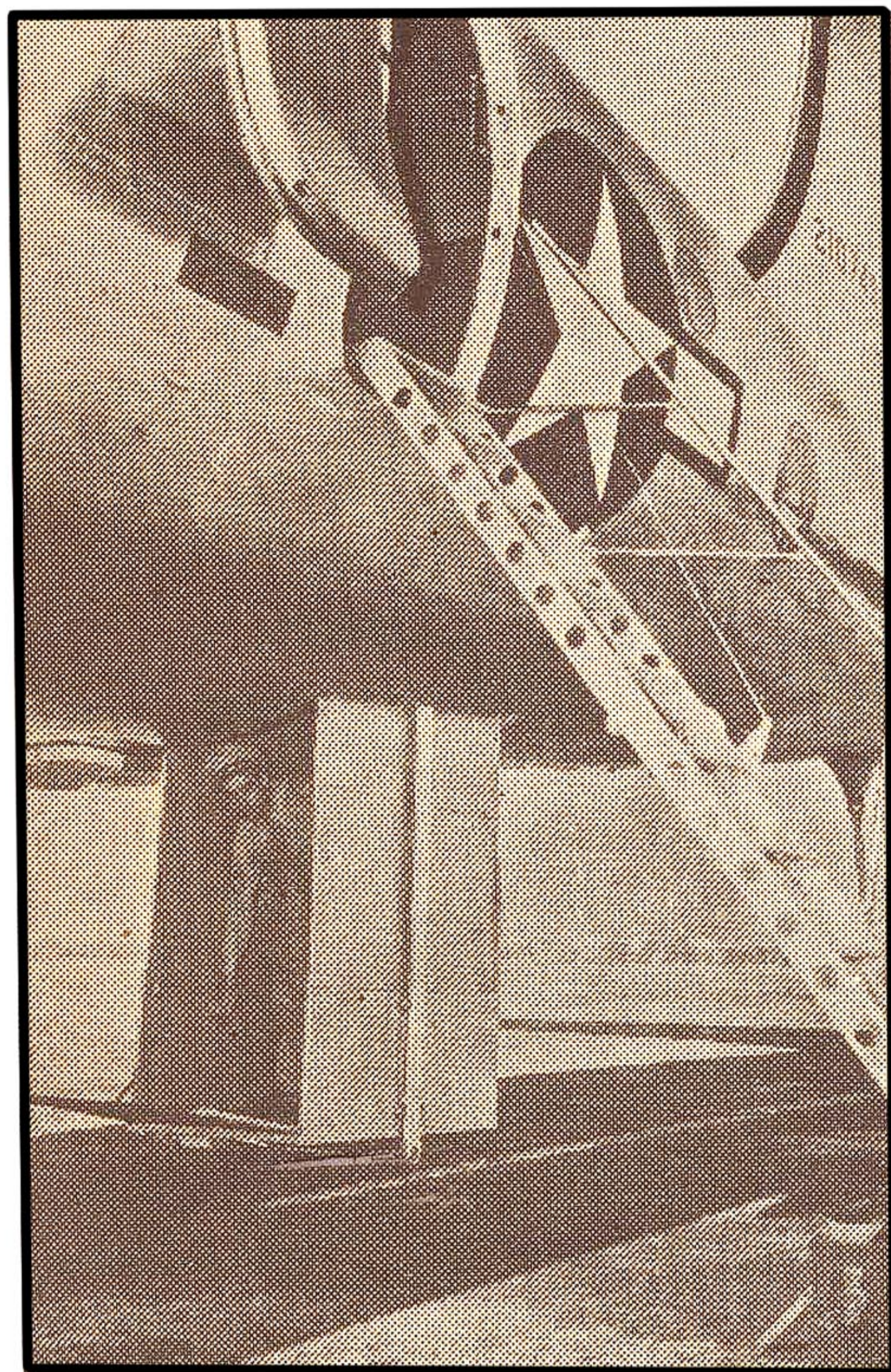
An intercabin telephone, radio, light switches, and curtain cords in his tan, blue, and beige stateroom were all within easy reach of his easy chair, which swiveled to a work table at his right. The lounge, which seated conferees by day, became his bed at night. A framed sailing ship on the wall, a gift of Donald Douglas, provided the maritime touch Mr. Roosevelt loved.

Other conveniences: A kitchen containing a stainless-steel sink, a two-burner electric stove, a good-sized electric refrigerator, lockers for food, pots and pans, an electric toaster, and a specially designed electrically heated locker in which precooked food could be kept. Sleeping facilities were also provided for five other passengers, besides two bunks forward for the pilot and co-pilot.

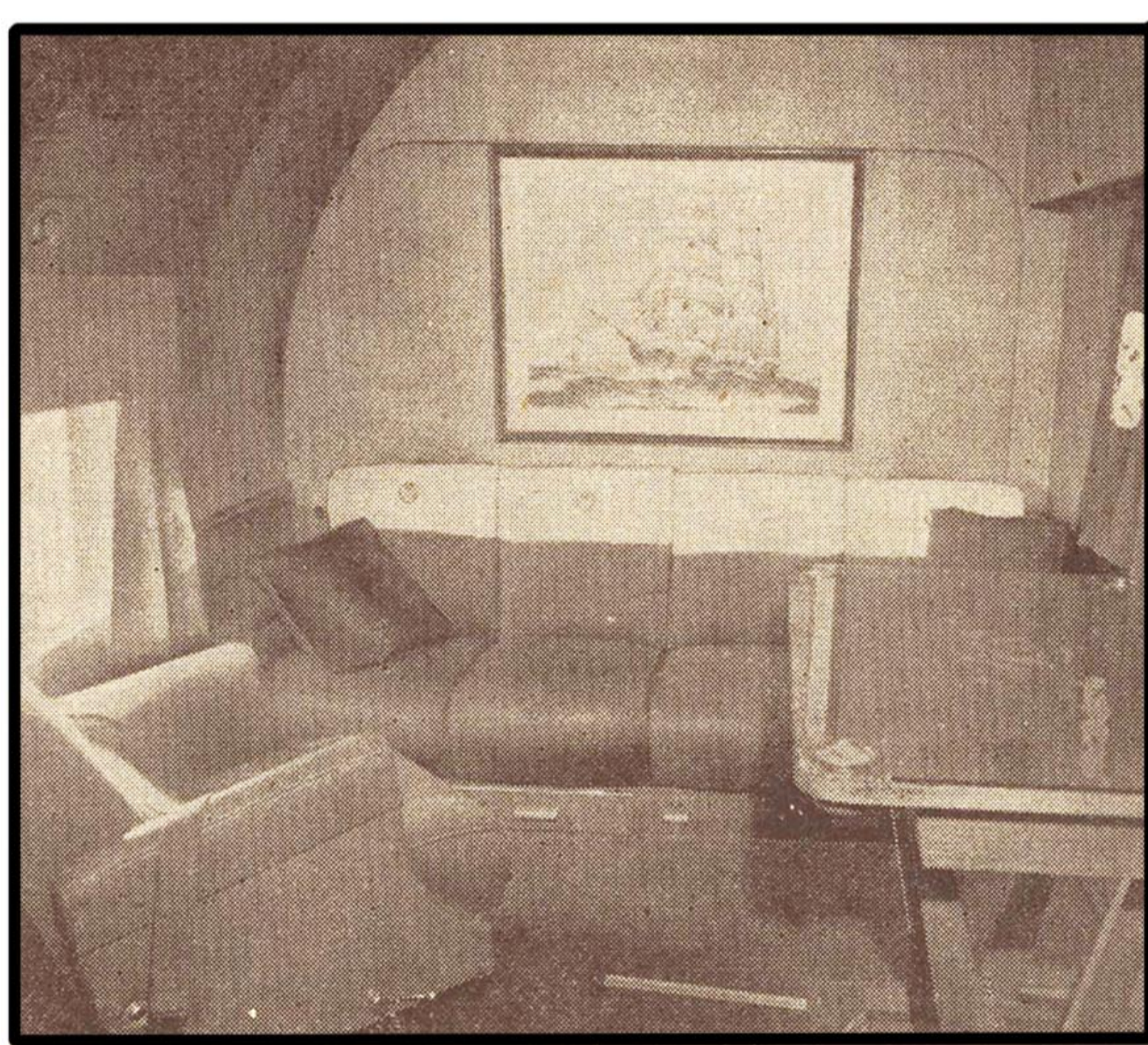
Commissioned last July, the plane became a dignitaries' carry-all and got the Army name of "The Sacred Cow." It flew Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson to the European battle fronts, and later spanned in a day the 5,300 miles from Rio de Janeiro to New York with Mme. Chiang Kai-shek. Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal's trip to Kwajalein added the rising sun flag to 43 other national emblems on its nose.

Tuned up last week for Mr. Truman's flight to close the San Francisco conference, "The Sacred Cow" shed its censorship blanket at last. The elevator will remain to hoist aboard the cryptograph machines which a president needs at international conferences.

The Sacred Cow



F.D.R.'s Plane: The built-in elevator



**the lounge eased Presidential
flights in the big C-54**