

safely breaking the ship apart without injury to the workers. As the hulk is lightened, a powerful winch will pull it up further into the slip for the final effort to cut up the remainder. The slips are cutouts adjacent to a deep water channel. The length varies from 400-ft to 700-ft and up to 120-ft in width. Essentially, it is a dirt dry dock. Scores of ships have been broken up in this way including the infamous USS *Cabot* (CVL-28)/SNS *Dedalo* (Spanish), a light carrier with a sterling WWII record. The story of this ship has been sadly chronicled in previous issues of *Sea Classics*, and is an indictment of people who know little or nothing about ship museum preservation.

Soon after the cruiser arrived at the ESCO facility, the staff received over 200 communications from former crew and others interested in taking the ship back as a museum piece; acquiring memorabilia and such. The ship is now under the control of ESCO pursuant to a US Navy contract, so they are unable to grant the majority of the requests, and especially those to donate the



The ex-USS *Cabot* (CVL-28)/Spanish *SNS Dedalo* in a slip about to be stripped of readily available parts on deck and on the superstructure. As the ship is cannibalized further, a winch will pull it further into the slip and out of the water.

ship as a museum piece! The time for that passed years ago, and ESCO is in the business of selling ship parts, materials, equipment and memorabilia. It is reasonable to

expect that some memorabilia will be up for sale in the future, however, that is a decision that ESCO will have to make.

For those who love ships, seeing



The *Des Moines* in Philadelphia, November 1999. Many items, valves and other pieces of equipment have been taken off the ship, and the 3-in/50-cal guns have literally been stripped. This is one of the liabilities of a ship in a reserve basin.