

THE NAVAL REVIEW

TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT AND SPREADING WITHIN
THE SERVICE OF KNOWLEDGE RELEVANT TO THE HIGHER
ASPECTS OF THE NAVAL PROFESSION.

Founded in October, 1912, by the following officers, who had
formed a Naval Society:

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Admiral W. H. Henderson (Honorary Editor)

It is only by the possession of a trained and developed mind that the fullest capacity can, as a rule, be obtained. There are, of course, exceptional individuals with rare natural gifts which make up for deficiencies. But such gifts are indeed rare. We are coming more and more to recognise that the best specialist can be produced only after a long training in general learning. The grasp of principle which makes detail easy can only come when innate capacity has been evoked and moulded by high training.

Lord Haldane

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Editorial

I WELCOME Captain Stephen Roskill's monograph on Admiral Sir Geoffrey Oliver which continues the present series on Naval leaders. The accompanying article on leadership will, I hope, provoke further comment from the membership of *The Naval Review*. While on the topic of leadership I must correct, for future historians, an error that appeared in the article on Sir Thomas Troubridge at the start of page 307 in the last issue. FOES should have read 'Future Operations Enemy Section'.

Head in the Arabian Sand?

I could hardly believe my eyes when on day six of the new Middle East war, which was creating an unstable situation that carried with it a grave risk that threatened the world's major supply of energy, I read that the Services were to make a cut in their fuel reserves to meet Government financial targets. I found little comfort in the associated statement that 'service storage capacity was then full' or that the 'fuel suppliers have assured the Services that there will be no difficulty in topping them up from their full supplies'.¹ I was serving in Whitehall when the Arabs first made use of the oil weapon and saw, first hand, the effect on the West. Since this time I have campaigned, with only moderate success, for a greater priority to be accorded to the stocks of fuel for the Services.

It is difficult for us to begin to realise the pressure and tensions that must be felt by the leaders of the Arab oil producing states. To be catapulted into the twentieth century by a torrent of petro-dollars must be bewildering. The National Geographic reported an interview with the Deputy Planning Minister in Saudi Arabia. 'In your terms I'm a great success, a symbol of all the potential of Saudi Arabia — barefoot Bedouin boy goes to the USA to find happiness and a Ph.D., Sometimes I think I'm the greatest failure in the world. I, Faisal Saffooq al Bashir, of the Al Sabaa

tribe, was raised to be the next leader of my tribe. They expected it of me, and I failed them. Do you know that it took me eleven days to find my family when I first returned from the USA? Eleven days trying to find a few thousand Bedouin somewhere in the desert. What am I now? A technocrat-deputy minister of planning. Trying to find a way to spend a *five year budget of 236 Billion Dollars*. Dollars that will only speed up the disappearance of the nomads. I act against all the forces that created me.'

My feeling is that the maximisation of our storage capacity as well as diversification (where possible) to other fuels should be our national aim.

Towards a Maritime Strategy

Since writing about the cost of Trident in my last editorial, I have noticed an interview given by Mr. Francis Pym in which he is reported² as saying '(he can) visualise a different arrangement for the deployment of forces between NATO members' 'it would be perfectly possible to have, for instance, a lesser military effort by any country in the Central Front, including if you like the UK'.

This surely is the crux. The worst possible method of funding Trident would involve sacrifices across all the services to find the money from forces that are already under critical pressure. The best way would be to vote more money for defence, and this has been done before, the early '50's for example. But if no more resources are going to be made available let the central front bear the brunt where other nations have the capability and tradition of land warfare. Let us concentrate on the maritime arm of NATO, without which the concept of reinforcement of Europe will collapse, taking with it our ability to preserve the peace by deterring war.

There is a further point. We are confronted by a global threat from the

¹ *The Times*, 26 Sep. '80.

² *The Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 21 July.

Soviet Union. Such a threat requires a global response. A strategy based on maritime power remains the most efficient and flexible option for the West. Furthermore the West has the ability to make this a reality and the RN should play a vital role in it's achievement.

A.G.M. 1980

By kind permission of the secretary and officers the Annual General Meeting of *The Naval Review* was held at the Naval Club on the 14 October.

The Chairman (Admiral Sir James Eberle KCB) welcomed those attending, particularly Admiral of the Fleet Sir Terence Lewin GCB who had been a member of *The Naval Review* for nearly forty-one years. The Chairman reported that membership remained broadly at about 1,800, however active service members, in particular, were urged to use the enrolment forms in the back of each issue to recruit further members.

The accounts showed that the journal was financially healthy. He concluded by thanking the retiring editor who had done

so much for the journal over the last seven years.

Sir Terence Lewin stressed the need for such a publication as *The Naval Review* which he felt was good for ALL members of the services. He then presented Vice Admiral Sir Ian McGeoch KCB with a framed colour print from the membership in recognition of his excellent work.

In reply Sir Ian expressed his warm thanks for the gift that was a complete and most acceptable surprise. He remained most grateful for the support that he had always received from the membership and trustees.

Tailpiece

The Australian Naval Institute is holding a second national seminar entitled 'Seapower 81' at Canberra on 10-11 April. The delegates will be addressed by a distinguished collection of speakers that include Admiral of the Fleet Lord Peter Hill-Norton and Admiral Sir Anthony Griffin GCB. I envy any member who may be in the area over these dates and thus able to attend.

J. NUNN



ADMIRAL SIR G. N. OLIVER

Admiral Sir Geoffrey N. Oliver

G.B.E., K.C.B., D.S.O.**

THE FUTURE Admiral was born on 22nd January 1898 in London. His father was a distinguished botanist, Quain Professor in that subject at London University and a Fellow of the Royal Society, while his mother was the daughter of Doctor Thompson, a pioneer of the trepanning operation. He was educated at Durnford Preparatory School, Langton Matravers, which he joined shortly after the future Admiral Lord Tovey, who was the subject of a recent memoir in these pages. Oliver was accepted for the Navy as a Special Entry cadet from Rugby School in 1915. I know little about his early life and schooling except that he once told me how during the annual OTC training he and two other Rugby boys blew up the tent of some town boys who had raided the Rugby camp and were themselves under canvas near by. For this escapade Oliver and his fellow conspirators were severely birched. When I remarked that it must have been a painful experience Oliver replied philosophically 'Well, it was either that or expulsion'. Perhaps the prank was an early sign of his interest in explosives and experimental technology.

His first ship was the famous but elderly *Dreadnought*, from which he applied, unsuccessfully, to specialise in submarines. From 1917 to 1918 he was in the new battle-cruiser *Renown*, but she had no opportunity to use her guns against the enemy. After the war Oliver, in common with all other junior officers whose education had been cut short, came to Cambridge University for two terms — which he thoroughly enjoyed and from which he certainly profited intellectually. Technical courses for the rank of Lieutenant followed, and Oliver gained First Class Certificates in all five subjects as well as the Goodenough Gold Medal and

prize 'for the Sub-Lieutenant who passes the best examination of his year in Gunnery provided he already has a First Class Certificate in Seamanship'. Having gained maximum time in his courses Oliver's date as Lieutenant was 1st January 1921 — when he was not quite 23 years old.

A short spell in the battleship *Resolution* (Atlantic Fleet) followed, and in September of that year he was selected to take the Long Gunnery Course for specialisation in that subject. Both in the parts of the course taken at the R.N.C. Greenwich and in those taken in H.M.S. *Excellent* (Whale Island, Portsmouth) Oliver did brilliantly, coming out top of his class and being awarded the Commander Egerton Prize for passing 'the best examination in practical gunnery'. He then returned to Greenwich for the advanced course — which he later told me he considered to have been a great waste of time. Early in 1924 he returned to the *Excellent* as junior member of the Experimental Department. Here it is relevant to remark that it was in the Gunnery Branch that Oliver originally came to be known as 'G.N.', to distinguish him from his near contemporary in the same Branch R.D. ('Bob') Oliver. As that appellation stuck to him throughout his time in the Navy and afterwards (including in his family) it will be used henceforth in this memoir.

From 1925 to 1927 G.N. served on the China Station in the light cruiser *Carlisle* (Captain R. F. MacFarlan) as Gunnery Officer, after which he returned to the *Excellent* as second senior officer of the Experimental Department for two years. It was during this period that my life-long friendship with G.N. was founded, for I was then doing the Long Gunnery Course and on its completion returned to Whale Island on the Instructional Staff. G.N.

and I shared a love of sailing (despite the sea-sickness from which he always suffered) and of long country walks, especially on the Sussex Downs. In both fields his company was a constant joy to me — for his interests were very wide and, despite his never-failing modesty, I soon discovered what a vast wealth of knowledge in many fields and subjects he possessed. I also learnt to admire the great strength of character and complete integrity which underlay a quiet and perhaps rather reserved personality. When I married in 1930 G.N. at once accepted my bride as a personal friend, and he came on a sailing cruise with us to the Scilly Islands and the Brittany coast. When in 1933 he married Barbara, daughter of Sir Francis A. Jones, a distinguished jurist and legal adviser to Government departments, we formed a quartet in which the bonds of friendship were constantly strengthened with the passing years.

In 1930 G.N. became Gunnery Officer of the fairly new battleship *Rodney* (Captain A. B. Cunningham) whose armaments were beset by constant and serious technical troubles. Here it is relevant to mention that as early as 1924 G.N. received 'Their Lordships' appreciation' for work 'on Gyro Firing gear' (of gun directors), and in 1931 a similar appreciation 'for valuable work in connection with cable-winding' — which undoubtedly referred to the troubles experienced with the main armament electrical circuits of the *Rodney*. Three years later he was awarded £150 from the Herbert Lott Naval Trust Efficiency Fund — again almost certainly for the improvements he effected in the battleship's 16-inch turrets.

In 1932 G.N. joined the *Excellent* again, now as Experimental Commander at a time when developments in A-A Gunnery were very active, and new weapons and fire control systems were being designed. It was a very responsible job, and no one was surprised when he was promoted Commander on 30th June 1932, at the early age of 34. As with many of the Navy's most promising officers G.N. was next selected for command of destroyers, and from

1934-36 he commanded the *Diana* and *Veteran* on the China and Mediterranean stations. Evidently he adapted quickly and successfully to that most testing branch of the service, and in August 1936 he was appointed to the *Excellent* for the fourth time, as 'Commander of the Island'. I am fairly sure that he is the only officer to have served both as Experimental Commander and as Executive Officer of that famous establishment. Re-armament had now begun in earnest, and the *Excellent* was of course required to play a big part in training the increasing number of officers and men being entered. On 30th June 1937 he was promoted Captain, and in the following year joined the Naval Staff. Initially he was Assistant Director of the Tactical Division, but he soon transferred to the Training and Staff Duties Division, which was responsible for all the gunnery side of the Naval Staff's work until the Gunnery Division was formed in 1941. I then occupied the anti-aircraft desk in D.T.S.D., and was thankful to have so able and considerate a boss as G.N. during a most arduous and difficult period.

Towards the end of 1940 G.N. was appointed to command the new *Dido* Class cruiser *Hermione*, then building at Alexander Stephen's yard at Linthouse on the Upper Clyde, now part of the nationalised British Shipbuilders. She completed on 25th March 1941, worked up at Scapa and took part in the *Bismarck* operation in May that year with 2nd Cruiser Squadron of the Home Fleet, which was under Admiral Tovey's command. The *Hermione* then joined Admiral Somerville's famous Force H based on Gibraltar, and in July took part in the 'Substance' operation for the supply of Malta — which actually necessitated a double trip through those dangerous waters. The whole movement was successfully completed early in August. On 2nd of that month the *Hermione* rammed and sank the Italian submarine *Tembien* off Tunis, and in November she took part in an operation by which 37 Hurricanes were flown to Malta, though the *Ark Royal* was torpedoed by U.81

and finally sank when not far from Gibraltar on the return voyage. G.N.'s first D.S.O. was gazetted on 25th November 1941 'For courage and resolution in operations in Mediterranean waters'.

Early in 1942 the *Hermione*, still with Force H, now commanded by Admiral Sir Neville Syfret, took part in the operations which at the second attempt succeeded in flying the first Spitfires to Malta. Then she was ordered to sail round the Cape, take part in the seizure of Madagascar from the Vichy French and join the Eastern Mediterranean Fleet, whose C-in-C was now Admiral Sir Henry Harwood of River Plate fame. In June she and other ships of the 15th Cruiser Squadron (known as 'the Fighting Fifteenth') took part in the final attempt to re-supply Malta from the east, called operation 'Vigorous'. It was a costly failure, and in the early hours of 16th June the *Hermione* was torpedoed and sunk by U-205 off Tobruk. When I later asked G.N. about the experience all he said was 'I hardly got my feet wet' — which was a great understatement as about 90 of his ship's company of 530 were lost. A 'Mention in Despatches' was all that came to G.N. for his part in those very anxious days in the eastern Mediterranean.

After a short spell as 'Naval Liaison Officer to the Delta Army' G.N. was told he was to become Director of Naval Ordnance, the vastly expanded Admiralty department then based on Bath; but Admiral Cunningham, who had of course been G.N.'s Captain in the *Rodney*, knew all about his service in the *Hermione* and was now Naval Commander for the invasion of North Africa, had other ideas. Lord Cunningham later told me how he got the D.N.O. appointment cancelled, and G.N. sent to Gibraltar as a Commodore 2nd Class to organise and train the enormous number of small craft required to take part in operation 'Torch'. It was a very wise choice, and after the assaults at Algiers and Oran had succeeded Cunningham sent G.N. to the more easterly port of Bône to develop it as an advanced base — despite it being a target for frequent enemy

air attacks. 'Again', remarks Lord Cunningham in his memoirs, 'his drive and quiet determination proved him to be a veritable tower of strength in a situation which was always difficult and sometimes dangerous'. On 8th May 1943 G.N. hoisted his broad pendant in a motor torpedo-boat and made for the recently captured key port of Bizerta — only to be heavily fired on. However, two days later he was able to establish himself there, and played a big part in clearing and restoring the port. For his services 'in operations leading to the clearance of the enemy from North Africa' he received a bar to his D.S.O., and also the medal of the American Legion of Merit.

While the invasion of Sicily of July 1943 (operation 'Husky') was being planned and mounted, G.N. was Commodore in command of the Inshore Squadron — a highly responsible task; but for the landings at Salerno in Southern Italy of the following September (operation 'Avalanche') he was appointed Naval Commander of the British Assault Force (comprising X Corps under General Sir Richard McCreery) in the rank of Commodore 1st Class. His headquarters ship was the small and inadequate coal-burning *Hilary*, which proved a severe handicap. As is well known the Germans reacted violently to the assault, and for a time the situation was critical, especially in the southern (American) sector. When I was working on my war history I asked G.N. for his account of what followed. In his reply he told how at the peak of the crisis he had gone on board the flagship of Admiral H. Kent Hewitt, USN, the Western Task Force commander, and was horrified to find that, on the orders of General Mark Clark USA, the commander of the whole Fifth Army, the staff was preparing plans either to withdraw the British X Corps and transfer it to the American sector, or to withdraw the American VI Corps and transfer it to the British sector. G.N. at once made it plain that with about 100,000 soldiers ashore and vast quantities of stores and ammunition piled on the beaches, such plans, and even

the knowledge that they were being prepared, was a recipe for complete disaster. He strongly argued that the issue had to be fought out where the soldiers then stood. He got hold of General McCreery — whom he last saw heading resolutely for General Clark's headquarters, and signalled to Admiral Cunningham for all possible reinforcements to be sent immediately. That was the last heard of the withdrawal plan, about which General Clark is extremely evasive in his memoirs ('Calculated Risk'). I sent G.N.'s very modestly written account of the foregoing incident to Admiral Hewitt for this remarks, and he accepted it as entirely correct. Lord Cunningham has written that when he visited the *Hilary* on 17th September he found G.N. 'on the crest of the wave — calm, imperturbable and completely optimistic of the outcome'. It is as certain that he contributed vitally to the avoidance of a major disaster as it is that the tide was chiefly turned by the naval bombarding ships. For his part in the Salerno assault G.N. was gazetted Companion of the Bath and also received a higher grade (Commander) of the American Legion of Merit. I would add to the foregoing summary of a portentous incident that I have been irritated to find that in some accounts of operation 'Avalanche' the withdrawal or exchange of assault forces is described as 'the naval plan'. It was nothing of the kind, for it was originated by General Clark or his staff.

With Admiral Cunningham as First Sea Lord from October 1943 it was certain that G.N. would be called to play a big part in the invasion of Normandy. The British naval assault force was to be commanded by Admiral Sir Philip Vian, but the strains he had recently undergone in the Mediterranean made it doubtful for some time whether he would be fit enough to carry that great responsibility. Had that proved so Cunningham intended that 'the well tried Commodore Oliver' should take his place; but in the event Vian was able to carry the burden, and G.N. therefore commanded only one of the three British naval assault

forces. His conduct of that critical operation brought him a second bar to his D.S.O.

When the Normandy assault forces were dispersed G.N. had a short and very well-earned spell of leave and then took command of the 1st Aircraft Carrier Squadron, which was first employed in clearing the Aegean waters of mines and other obstructions and in the relief of the people of Greece, who were then living on the verge of starvation. For these services G.N. was again 'Mentioned in Despatches'. He then joined the Eastern Fleet as a Rear-Admiral in command of a number of escort carriers — soon to be known as the 21st Aircraft Carrier Squadron. That force took part in the amphibious assault on Rangoon in May 1945, and was then gradually increased with the object of providing air cover for the assault on the Malay peninsula; but the dropping of the atomic bombs and the Japanese surrender made its execution superfluous. The carriers accordingly played a very valuable part in re-supplying the starving population of the whole of south-east Asia, and in rescuing and repatriating the thousands of Allied prisoners-of-war.

So ended G.N.'s war service; but he was not left long unemployed. Membership of the Admiralty's Aircraft Maintenance Committee followed, and in April 1946 he was appointed Admiral Air, flying his flag at Lee-on-Solent. This was probably the least happy of all G.N.'s appointments, because not only was the Fleet Air Arm not one of the many fields of his expert knowledge and experience but with the navy in the throes of demobilisation personnel problems were unremitting and acute. Fortunately it only lasted for six months, after which two very busy years (1946-48) as a Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty and Assistant Chief of Naval Staff followed. Appointment as President of the R.N.C. Greenwich, where he was promoted Vice-Admiral in 1949, must have proved a pleasant break for him and his family. Then came two successful years as C-in-C, East Indies Station, where he was

promoted Admiral. His love of beauty and of horticulture were demonstrated by him planting 73 hibiscus bushes along the road leading to Admiralty House, Trincomalee; while his meticulous thoroughness was maintained by sending the Admiralty a scale drawing showing their exact location.

G.N. had not expected further employment after that, but the breakdown of Admiral Douglas-Pennant's health resulted in him being offered the Nore Command. He was made a Knight Commander of the Bath in 1951 and Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire in 1955, the year of his retirement. He and his wife then achieved the ambition of many sailors by buying a farm in Sussex, and settled down to enjoy the country life which he had always loved and perhaps at times envied.

Though G.N.'s married life was supremely happy it was scarred by tragedies which might have broken a less fine character. Their second son died of virus pneumonia at 8 years of age, and their only daughter was lost in a bathing accident

while on holiday on the Norfolk coast. But his strength of character, and above all his strong though never paraded Christian faith enabled him to surmount those tragedies with the same dauntless determination which characterised his war service. I am sure that, despite increasing deafness (that bane of Gunnery Officers) and the loss of the sight of one eye after two unsuccessful retina operations in 1962 his years of retirement were an undiluted joy to him. During that period we made many continental expeditions together, and he and his wife were the most delightful companions. When at home the Olivers played a full and active part in the life of the village of Henfield, and especially in the affairs of its parish church. He died on 26th May 1980 aged 82, and a packed congregation filled St. Peter's Church, Henfield, to say goodbye to him on 5th July. He was without the slightest doubt 'a verray parfit gentil knight' such as Chaucer eulogised, and an officer of whom the Royal Navy should always remain proud.

STEPHEN ROSKILL

The Demands on Leadership in the Navy of the 1980's

HUMAN BEINGS of both sexes have continued to respond in the same way to the same motivating factors since recorded history began. The fundamental need for preservation of life, status through recognition and appreciation, and comfort, continue to be the areas to which those who desire to wield influence over their fellow human beings should attend if they are to be successful. The priority that any of these fundamental needs has depends on the situation and in particular on which need is being threatened. The successful leader is the man who is perceived to be paying attention to the factors that are relevant, rather than those which are considered to be of less consequence. He has to have those well-proven qualities, which will be elucidated later, that stamp him out as standing above his contemporaries, and he also has to be able to use these qualities to the best advantage if he is to be really successful.

Before considering the correct priorities for leadership in the Royal Navy of the 80's it is necessary to state the principal factors governing the environment in which they are to be practised. This environment will be the result of a continuous trend in which social and technical factors are predominantly important.

Gone soft?

The social factors to consider are those which have a particular relevance to the maintenance of a fighting service in peacetime, and the resulting lack of a sense of purpose. This area has been explored extensively by Janowicz and Moskos.¹ It is now generally agreed that when the service is not seen to be performing its major role i.e. fighting, then it becomes considered as just an alternative form of employment. In

such times it is not possible to maintain standards, particularly of discipline, which diverge greatly from those practised in the rest of society. The Services recruit from society and discharge to it, they are in some spheres intrinsically part of it, and so they have to come to terms with the prevalent standards and behaviour patterns. Therefore it is apparent that the appropriate style of leadership will tend to become even more of the persuasive rather than the authoritarian kind, and that knowing the rules will be only the first step in learning how to apply them in an acceptable manner. This is going to be more demanding of leaders than in the past, and points to a need for experience in order that acceptable interpretations can be learnt; it also points to an increasing need for communication between leaders in order that evenness of interpretation may be achieved, and fairness seen to prevail. There is a widely held belief amongst senior ratings that the service has 'Gone Soft'; they feel frustrated at having to justify taking disciplinary action, at having to comply more closely than before with the requirements of the law, rather than relying on their own judgement, to bring a charge. Although this feeling is largely subjective, and is probably not peculiar to modern times, it suggests a lack of appreciation of the problem. The service is recruiting increasingly from a higher level of, if not intelligence, then at least education, and such people are going to increasingly feel powerless, frustrated, and disillusioned with their rate if they are not properly trained in the use of their authority.

¹The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait — Janowicz; Public Opinion and the Military Establishment — Moskos.

In the same way that codes of behaviour within the Service are a reflection of those in the rest of society, so also is the technology a product of the times. The most apparent characteristic of modern technology is its increasing diversification and complexity. In order to maintain the complicated modern warship, a balance has to be struck between employing many less able men who nevertheless could be given adequate highly specialised training in a much shorter time. The compromise that is being achieved is the employment of men having a greater academic ability and at the same time increasing the amount of specialist training. The significance of this is that the end result is a man who can be very attractive to industry, and who is therefore rather less likely to remain in the Service long enough to become a good leader, a problem which is exacerbated by the increase in training time and hence decrease in time actually spent taking charge. Having defined the main environmental factors relevant to leadership in the 80's it is now necessary to see which aspects of leadership are affected, and how.

Yogi or Commissar

Any senior rate who has been through the Petty Officer's leadership Course at H.M.S. *Royal Arthur* will remember that one of the first things he was invited to do was to state one quality that a man required to make him a leader. With a class of thirty-two it is not too difficult to get as many qualities, ranging from say Fairness through Knowledge and Example, to the ability to Communicate and to Control and so on. In fact many of the qualities in the long list that it is possible to produce are interdependent, for example Knowledge implies Experience, Application, Intelligence, Communication skills and a 'natural bent' (presumably inbred). It is frequently argued, normally by the fatalist, that leaders are bred, rather than made; it is left to such diverse authorities as Field-Marshal Montgomery² and The Industrial Society³ to refute this line of thought, and to declare that 'breeding' is only the icing on the cake. There are however, important qualities

of leadership which are beyond the individual's control, of which physical stature is an obvious example. Imagination is another inbred quality and one which is particularly worth a mention since it is so important to a person's natural style of leadership, it determines more than any other single quality where a leader fits most easily on the Yogi-Commissar scale. These terms, originated by Koestler⁴, are used to define personalities at opposite ends of the imagination line; they will be used later and need a short explanation. The Yogi is the contemplative man, the thinker, the forgetful scientist in the food-stained clothing with dishevelled appearance, the extreme democrat; his problem is that he cannot organise or run anything, discipline of any kind is not his forte. The Commissar on the other hand is the man of action, but no imagination, he knows the rule book off by heart and insists on strict compliance with it, he is the man to sort out the sloppy department, and is the extreme autocrat who has plenty of energy but no ability to question the assumptions under which he is working. The Yogi and the Commissar are archetypes who rarely exist in practice. The most effective leader in high stress situations is the Commissar and it is Dixon's assertion⁵ that the services have a tradition of recruiting officers who are too Commissar orientated, i.e. who lack imagination. It will be argued that the services in the 80's require Yogi officers and Commissar senior rates, the latter requirement stemming purely from a need to balance the former.

Essential qualities

Of the many qualities that can be considered as pertinent to leadership the six most important have been selected for examination below. They have been selected on the basis of being universally applicable, with no consideration of situation.

²'The Path to Leadership', Field Marshal Montgomery.

³'Notes for Managers No. 14'; foreword by John Garnett.

⁴'The Act of Creation', Koestler.

⁵'On The Psychology of Military Incompetence', Norman F. Dixon.

The first requisite of a leader is that he should know his job, that he should be 'technically' competent. This quality is most important, indeed is the only one that matters under conditions of extreme stress, when even physical survival is seen to be at risk. Under such conditions even the most reluctant will find himself in charge if he is the only one with the authority that stems from knowledge. Many examples could be used to illustrate the point, but a topical one concerns the Vietnamese refugee who could navigate, and found himself in a boat with 93 others and a useless engine in the China Sea, his protestations that 'I'm not the leader' fell on deaf ears. Thankfully the disaster situation is rare, but even in everyday situations technical competence deserves the highest priority, and it doesn't always get it. Witness the promotion report forms for both officers and ratings, which are personality-orientated; technical ability counts for about 10% of the points available. The requirement to keep abreast of the latest in tactics and technology is perhaps the major challenge facing the Operations and Engineering Specialisations, a challenge which is being made even more demanding by the almost continuous process of reorganisation within and between the branches. The extra knowledge that Principal Warfare Officers and Engineering Officers in particular have to assimilate is an obvious threat to leadership through knowledge. It will have the effect of giving the specialists, i.e. the senior ratings, a considerable advantage over their officers, placing them in a position of considerably increased power and therefore responsibility.

The second most important quality of leadership is honesty with subordinates, and the preceding paragraph shows why this will also be under strain. For the man in charge to be perfectly frank and honest when addressing his subordinates, particularly when assessing their performance, he has to have confidence in his own knowledge, and therefore in his perception of the correct standards they should be achieving. The consequent

danger here is that the Reporting Officer is likely to resort to assessments based more on personality, thereby failing to reward technical knowledge, promoting the less able, and weakening the leadership ability of his senior rates.

The third quality required of an effective leader is to be a good adviser, to pass on experience and advice in an understanding manner. In this respect the situation in the 80's may well be conducive to better leadership. The best way to advise is to lead the questioner through the principles, rather than by supplying a direct solution. The officer should be well able to do this, and he will probably learn something at the same time!

The fourth quality is judgement, which enables the leader to strike the correct balance between determination and vacillation. He must be seen to be firm yet flexible, and once having made the decision he must see it through. This requirement is going to place a high premium on leadership through the deft touch. It has always been a challenge to encourage the team to become 'ego-involved' by being brought into the decision-making process, and yet still be seen to be effectively in charge, and is going to be even more difficult with a more highly specialised team. It will require a rather better performance as a 'committee man' and will leave considerably less scope for the egocentric, the Yogi will tend to come into his own, but in the end he must be firm!

The fifth quality required is one of impartiality. This has always been the best reason for not resorting to the use of Christian names, as the sensitive are likely to perceive favouritism. There is a problem here which is going to get worse. Specialisation means small teams, advanced technology requires a higher proportion of senior ratings. In nuclear submarines we already have as many senior ratings (Petty Officer and above) as junior ratings. It is unrealistic to expect a senior rate to be very formal with the one junior rate he normally works with, but how should he refer to that junior rate when he is a member of a larger

team of which the senior rate has to take charge, or when they meet on the jetty, or ashore? There is also a tendency, which gives rise to greater concern, for undue familiarity towards one's seniors. Cases of junior ratings conversing with junior officers on nickname terms, and the acceptance of this as satisfactory behaviour, are becoming more common.

The last important quality of a leader is sensitivity, which will enable him to learn what motivates each man under various conditions, to know the importance each places on the five preceding factors. There is only one way to do this and that is to talk to them individually and as a group. He has to walk the job. This is an activity which naturally tends to be left for when no other demands are pressing for his time, and in particular for when no paperwork is waiting to be seen to. The trend is towards smaller ships' companies with a higher proportion of officers and senior ratings and therefore, providing the paperwork can be kept under control, this function should be easier to perform.

The six qualities of leadership which have been considered are those which are particularly relevant to junior management, and they have been discussed in this context. This is the area in which current developments can be expected to have the greatest impact, where the challenge to suit the style to the changing situation will largely be felt. The position of the very senior officer will remain much the same, the most successful being the man who is most adept at public relations; he must, as always, aim to project the most confident image and be seen to be affected as little as possible by the changing whims of politicians.

The female dimension

Even amongst the ranks of junior management the comments will seem almost irrelevant to the problems that some can expect to face. It has been shown that the increasing degree of specialisation and branch reorganisation will be the main factors bearing on leadership in the Operator and Engineering Branches and

will affect them mainly when afloat. The other major development of the 80's will be the greater scope for employment of servicewomen. This will have the most noticeable effect on the Medical, Supply and Air Engineering Branches, but others will not escape completely. The Medical Branch is already suffering something of a crisis in morale, brought about by the inadequate leadership of male by female and vice versa. It should not be forgotten that Montgomery maintains that the maintenance of high morale is the single most important factor in achieving the aim, and that good leadership is the prime factor in achieving high morale. The cause of this leadership problem, which luckily does not seem likely to impinge too much on the afloat situation, can be traced to two particular shortcomings. Firstly a fairly natural lack of understanding of motivation, and secondly a failure to get to grips with the career patterns and conditions of service of the opposite sex. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that males are very aware of the privileged position of females in the Service, they are seen as occupying valuable shore billets, as not being completely subject to the full force of the Naval Discipline Act, and as being suspect under, and therefore sheltered from, undue pressure. It is proving particularly difficult for men to take the leadership of women seriously, and the problems associated with men motivating women have been with us, in everyday life, for a very long time!

To summarise so far: There are various changes, both current and pending, which can be expected to have a significant effect on leadership. These are: firstly the increasing complexity of modern warfare which is resulting in senior ratings having considerably more technical knowledge of the subject than their officers, secondly the reorganisation between branches which exaggerates the first affect, thirdly the continuing change in society resulting in a requirement for persuasive rather than autocratic leadership, and fourthly the employment of servicewomen in greater numbers.

The solutions to these problems have in some cases been touched on already, but they need to be examined further. It is easy enough to say that officers will need to be more imaginative, or Yogi-disposed particularly when afloat, and that senior ratings will have to complement this shift of emphasis by using their stronger position to be more the Commissar. It is also apparent that appropriate training and experience, allied to a concerted attack on differential conditions of service, should at least alleviate the problems associated with the employment of servicewomen. But human nature and codes of behaviour are not readily changed; a positive approach is required, which must aim both to recognise the problems and to do something about them.

Starboard 30 or Port 15

It is well understood that the Military, as opposed to the Functional system of management is notoriously ill-suited to allowing scope for the junior manager to exercise his initiative for change. He has one superior and one superior only to satisfy and this superior sees it as his function to ensure that standards are maintained 'In the traditions of the Service', in other words as he knew them to be when he was in a similar position. In any case, in a tight organisation where personnel have to be readily interchangeable there is little room for innovators. If a different style of leadership is to evolve, therefore, in a reasonable period of time, it has to be encouraged from the very top. Otherwise initiative will not only go unrewarded but will be positively discouraged. In other words senior officers who succeeded by the 'Starboard 30, Full Ahead Both' style of approach have to reconcile themselves to the fact that 'Port 15, Half Astern Port' though less dramatic, may well be a more relevant solution. This is, of course a deliberate over-statement of the case, but it is necessary to make the point very clearly that past experience is not necessarily the relevant criterion for future success, and that therefore the standards

required have to be consciously decided and promulgated, and compliance with them has to be rewarded.

As far as officers are concerned there is considerable scope for optimism. The basic material, in the form of a junior officer corps that has been educated largely in a university environment, is already with us. All that is required is that the style of leadership which this education tends to produce should be fostered and refined, rather than frowned upon.

The position of Senior Rates

The problem becomes rather more difficult when the position of senior ratings is considered. As previously stated they have the ability to lead through knowledge — they are the specialists. They are therefore better placed to play the Commissar, and they will need to do this in order to balance the shift of officers in the other direction. In fact they will actually need to change very little as the consensus of leadership styles has to be a slight shift towards the democratic in line with society in general, but the important point to make is that senior ratings can no longer afford to imitate their officers' style of leadership. This principle will have to be pointed out in training, and will have to be actively encouraged, particularly with promotion, for those successful at it. Herein lie the seeds of a very real problem. There has been a trend for some time, and particularly in the technical branches, for the inexperienced but well educated senior rate to treat man management, or leadership, as something of a chore which is best avoided if at all possible. If it cannot be avoided then the tendency has been towards relying on willing co-operation through rewards of the most superficial kind. It has become easier to use their mental ability to reason against the necessity for high standards rather than to insist on them being met. This trend must be reversed, and in a society which increasingly fails to recognise the virtues of self-discipline this is not going to be easy, but there is scope for optimism. Increasingly senior rates state that

discipline and standards are not what they used to be, and are looking for guidance to improve them. The message is clear — officers are going to have to rely even more in the 80's on their senior rates both to set and to maintain professional standards, and a considerable effort is going to be required to persuade them so to do, especially since the emphasis is going to be on persuasion from officers and insistence from senior rates. One consequence of this is that personality differences between officer and rating may even be a good thing, the Yogi must appreciate the Commissar, impartiality is the leadership quality that will become of paramount importance in officers.

As far as the leadership problems brought about by the employment of servicewomen are concerned the solutions, in as far as there are any, are fairly obvious. Both sexes must serve under the same conditions. If this is really not possible in any particular situation then thought should first be given to whether it is really necessary for women to be employed in that job, before making concessions. It is most unlikely, for example, that women will serve at sea, and so is it really necessary to employ them in branches where sea service is prevalent for the men? Is it really necessary for a female nurse to be an officer whilst her male counterpart is a rating? Are unequal applications of the Naval Discipline Act really necessary? When such anomalies have been eradicated, and the trend is in the right direction, albeit slowly, it will be necessary to train those who aspire to lead the opposite sex so that they understand such things as career structure, pay scales and so on. Establishing equality and knowledge will be a good basis for mutual respect, which has to be a pre-requisite to leadership, but what of motivation? As already pointed out, there is nothing new in this problem, and it is most unlikely that the 80's will provide the solution. The correct action to take would seem to be to keep the problem to a minimum, and to rely on experience to make the best of it.

The need for a fresh look

The case for a concerted look at the requirements of leadership in the next decade is a strong one. It is now some 35 years since the Royal Navy was, in toto, involved in action, the *raison d'être* is becoming more obscure with the passage of time, servicemen (and women) join for employment rather than to fight, or even 'show the flag'. Suspect motivation is the bedfellow of suspect leadership. The main areas for concern have been examined and the case deliberately overstated. It is not in fact seriously suggested that a revolution in attitudes towards leadership is necessary, a suggestion that would in any case be wholly unrealistic, but rather that some aspects will need concerted effort towards improvement. It has been assumed throughout that styles of leadership can and have to be consciously adopted — an assumption by no means beyond contention, as many will argue that good leadership depends on integrity which is taken to imply natural behaviour. Those who believe in this argument are referred to William Shakespeare⁶, who pointed out that we are called upon to play many roles — in the Service we are actually paid to play the role of leaders. The Royal Navy has a long tradition of effective leadership, and there is no doubt that active engagement brings out the best in men. Even in peacetime there are real life-and-death situations, such as collisions at sea, fires, and engineering disasters, where personal reactions really matter, where the exercise and practice syndrome is non-existent, and where there is no scope for acting the part. In such circumstances reactions will always be very different from those practised under low stress situations; no amount of leadership training can simulate the real disaster. We therefore train for effective leadership in everyday situations, and trust that this will be sufficient to build the confidence, both in the leaders and the led, that will ensure an organised and well disciplined reaction to disaster — rather than panic and chaos.

K. WILLINGALE

⁶As You Like It, Shakespeare.

Christian Worship

THE LETTER in the October edition from Mr. A. M. Brown expressing concern about the sad decline of Christian worship in the country as a whole and wondering about 'attitudes to and the part played by Christian worship in the Navy today' deserved the courtesy of a considered reply; and I thought that the best way of providing one which would give Mr. Brown and other interested readers of *The Naval Review* a reasonably broad description of present-day attitudes and practice might be for me to ask three Chaplains serving in key areas to give me short accounts of their current experience which I could link together to form a composite article. What follow, therefore, are the observations of the Chaplains of H.M.S. *Raleigh* (The Reverend W. R. de C. M. Taylor MA RN), of BRNC Dartmouth (The Reverend W. E. Weldon MA RN), and of HMS *Invincible* (The Reverend S. J. Golding RN) who are able to describe at first-hand what they severally share in daily in the establishment where all new-entry sailors receive their initial training, in the college where all officers, both men and women, are trained, and in a sea-going ship eight months into her first commission.

A guide to current attitudes

Generalisations can be misleading, statistics can be made to prove anything and the figures quoted refer only to those who would describe themselves as members of the Church of England, but in HMS *Raleigh* some record is kept of numbers as one kind of guide to current attitudes towards 'the reverent observation of religion in the Armed Forces (which) is of the highest importance'. (QRRN 4401.2).

In 1979 73.2% of the young men joining the Navy as sailors still chose to describe themselves as members of the Church of England — though the individual's absolute right to describe himself as either agnostic or atheist is always clearly explained to new entries. It is true that the

majority happily so categorise themselves without any specially clear idea of what membership of the Church actually involves and that over 12% of those who claimed to be Church of England were not even baptised! Yet at the same time they preferred at least to be nominally identified with Christianity. 13.7% of them were confirmed, 6.1% were regular in their religious practice and 20.5% of the overall 'C of E' entrants voluntarily attended the Holy Communion Service on Sundays. Interestingly, the number of those who were confirmed before joining the Navy remained almost the same in 1979 as in 1978, which may indicate that the sad decline in Christian commitment in the country as a whole is not as progressive as may sometimes be thought.

Acknowledging that previous regular experience of worship will not be great amongst the new entries, *Raleigh* arranges the Sunday morning service to be both an act of worship and a means of instruction. The order of service is a Parish Communion which is now the usual form of Sunday morning worship in the majority of parish churches, certainly in the urban areas of the Midlands and the north of England from which the greater number of trainees is recruited. With the permission of the General Synod of the Church of England, *Raleigh* has produced a booklet setting out in clear style the modern language Holy Communion service from the Alternative Service Book which now stands alongside the Book of Common Prayer in the Church of England; and the first part of this, containing the Confession, the Creed, Bible readings, the prayers and the sermon, becomes the service which all Part I trainees attend. There is then a short but distinct interval and Holy Communion, which is obviously completely voluntary, follows. It is explained during the Chaplain's ordinary instructional periods that worship in the Fleet is rightly voluntary, but that it is reasonable to have some idea of what

religious services in the Navy are like before making any decisions about joining in or abstaining from them. Thus attendance at church in Part I training is seen as part of a young man's introduction to the Naval way of life and most of the trainees not only understand this but appear to enjoy being present and taking part. Preaching sermons to them is never easy, but they are always willing to listen when the message is pitched right and presented clearly and it does seem to be true that the young man who is currently joining the Navy is perfectly ready to be open and frank in his response to the idea of worshipping in public, prepared at least to have a look at Christian practice in ways which the Chaplain finds both refreshing and encouraging.

Departments lend a hand

The Chaplain of *Invincible* was concerned to make the point that he was commenting only upon the public and corporate acts of worship he conducted in his ship, feeling that he was not being asked to discuss those aspects of personal piety which sailors have always possessed and have always regarded as private. His ship possesses a compartment seating forty which doubles as chapel and schoolroom and, although its dual rôle restricts its use and status as a permanent and uninterrupted place of worship, it is used regularly for Holy Communion, Bible study and discussion groups. At sea the Sunday Morning Service is the main act of worship and is sponsored each week by a different department who choose the hymns, lead the prayers and provide lesson readers and collection-takers, though the address is always left to the Chaplain! Each department has a Church representative who liaises with the Chaplain and helps him both to ensure that the service is well advertised and to arrange the various kinds of participation. Out of a ship's company of 650, there is an average attendance at this service of about 70-80 and because they are too many to congregate in the chapel, it is held in the Junior Rates' dining hall. *Invincible* has a strong musical tradition

and as well as having enjoyed the presence on board since summer leave of a Royal Marines band, she can muster a church choir which is eighteen strong. Stewardship of money and giving to the needs of others is seen as a vital element in combating pure parochialism, and there is always a cheerful coffee-party after church to encourage the sense of community amongst men of all ages and ranks. There is never any element of compulsory attendance and Juniors are not required to be present.

On Sundays Holy Communion is celebrated early in the forenoon and at 1900 and there are forty regular communicants. The Chaplain asked if he might place a Bible in each messdeck and his suggestion was so well received that he subsequently had a number of requests for personal copies. He produces a monthly 'parish magazine' and he arranges a public baptism each leave period so that the presence of the families of the ship's company can be seen as important in the life of the ship. So far twelve babies have been christened on board. Ecumenical relations are excellent and the Senior Roman Catholic officer has been specially strong in his example of Christian leadership, not only establishing a regular Service of Praise for members of his own Church on Sunday evenings at sea but actively encouraging them to share as much as is possible in the general life of the worshipping community. Thus the Morning Service is attended by people of all denominations and on one occasion was sponsored by the Roman Catholics. The Chaplain sees his ministry on board as 'a great privilege and joy'.

It is interesting that in September 1980 there was a higher percentage of entrants to BRNC Dartmouth who were not baptised (13.6%) than is the case at HMS *Raleigh* (12%), though 58.3% out of the C of E element at Dartmouth were confirmed before entering the Royal Navy, 32.8% described themselves as regular churchgoers and 20.4% said that they normally attended church at Easter and Christmas. Thus there tends to be a clear understanding of the emphasis the college places upon the

practice of the Christian religion, an emphasis which is still symbolised by the fact that the first major activity in which the new-entry Midshipman participates when he arrives at Dartmouth is prayers in the Chapel.

A sense of security

Such an understanding is not extended to any high degree of knowledge about the Church's teaching, perhaps because 60% of the officers under training now come into the Navy from State schools. Yet there is more interest and less apathy than might be expected. The young officers may not, for the most part, attend church regularly, but many of them want to know more about God and about what it means to be a Christian. As a recently-joined Midshipman put it: 'I believe religion plays an important part in society because most people need to believe in something greater than themselves. Religion therefore provides a sense of security and well-being which is essential in our present society'. And it is religion which interests the young men, not some half-baked social awareness for, as another one rather robustly put it: 'My School Chaplain was too trendy. He got right up my nose by always talking of social relationships and has put me off for the moment, anyhow.'

The tensions of the world and the church outside the college inevitably are reflected within and there is an uneasy balance in the life of the Chapel between those who are accustomed to the more traditional Anglicanism of the Book of Common Prayer and those younger churchgoers who are more familiar with the experimental

services which, from Series II onwards, have led up to the Alternative Service Book. The present compromise is for there to be a Parish Communion alternating as the main Sunday service with a BRNC version of Matins, together with occasional combined services, and while this may not be altogether satisfactory it does indicate that worship in the life of the college community is thought to be of sufficient importance for the 'form of worship' debate to be real. The young officer is concerned because he cares sufficiently, and the Chaplain finds that caring very encouraging.

Perhaps all this will serve to hearten Mr. Brown and others who are concerned about the attitudes of the Navy's present people towards the Christian religion. There is little antagonism and less apathy than is sometimes thought to be the case. There is a genuine desire in the hearts and mind of many young men to discover more of the truths of religion and an unforced willingness to be identified with the visible Church. I would take leave to doubt whether many parish churches in the Kingdom are attended regularly on Sundays by 70-80 men between the ages of 17 and 45, as happens in that small parish known as *Invincible*; and while there is certainly no cause for complacency, there is, I believe, genuine reason to be confident in that openness of response to the things of the Spirit which is apparent among a significantly large number of those whose business it is to go to sea in the Queen's ships in the 1980's.

R. H. ROBERTS,
The Chaplain of the Fleet.

How the Oerlikon Gun came to Britain

IN 1933, AS A NEWLY promoted Commander(E), I was appointed Assistant Naval Attache to the British Embassy in Tokyo. The last time I had visited Japan was in 1923 when Yokohama and most of Tokyo were a mass of rubble resulting from the Great Earthquake. Japan had undergone a great change in those ten years. Few Japanese spoke English. It was in their interest to avoid being seen too often with foreigners or they could be arrested and accused of having 'dangerous thoughts'. Most foreigners were suspected as being spies. Japan was clearly preparing for war.

Our social life was therefore spent with members of the Diplomatic Corps and the few foreign residents. As I possessed a good knowledge of German, I became closely acquainted with members of the German Embassy and some of the German community.

In October 1935, I was invited to the Halloween party by Prince Albert von Urach. The Prince was the representative of the leading Nazi newspaper, the *Voelkischer Beobachter*. Most of the guests were German but as we all wore masks, recognition was difficult. However I soon discovered Dr. Richard Sorge who officially represented the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and was a close friend of the Prince and acted as a political adviser to the German Embassy. Sorge, as transpired later, was the most outstanding spy of this century. He was working for the Russians.

A chance meeting

Drinks flowed freely, an orchestra appeared and I took to the floor. Among the people I danced with was an unknown lady whose blonde hair fell over her shoulders — an unusual style for those days. Her name was Lola Gazda and she introduced me to her husband Antoine who told me that they were staying at the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo and hoped I could join them there for a drink. He said he had heard about me from Germans in Tokyo.

'I am Austrian,' he told me when we next met. 'I represent the Oerlikon Machine Tool Factory of Switzerland. Have you heard of the Oerlikon gun?' I confessed that I had not.

'The Oerlikon is a twenty millimetre gun of completely new design.' He then told me details of its muzzle velocity, high rate of fire, its armour piercing shells — also made by Oerlikon — and so forth.

'You can mount it in an aircraft or, in your case, use it in ships for close range anti-aircraft defence' he continued 'but its main advantage is its simplicity in handling.'

When I asked him what he was doing in Japan, he said he was selling the manufacturing rights to their Navy and expected the deal to go through within a few months.

'Why haven't you approached the British instead of selling this miracle weapon to a potential enemy?'

'That's just what I wish to do and why I wanted to meet you. When this deal is completed, I could offer the British a much improved model which the Japs know nothing about. When you're back in England, come over to Switzerland and we can give you a demonstration of the new gun at our factory near Zurich.'

He then asked me not to speak to anyone about his dealings with the Japanese; I was the only attache with whom he had spoken.

'The Japs are so spy conscious that all overseas calls are monitored. Mine to Switzerland are made in Schwitserdütsch. They cannot decipher that.' Neither can I, I thought.

I saw much of Toni Gazda after our meeting and we became close friends. I feel it is important to know that not only was he a good salesman but he was also a brilliant engineer and inventor. Little did I think then that this chance encounter at a Halloween party given by a German Prince would lead to the adoption of the Oerlikon gun by the British and American navies despite some scandalous efforts to stop it. The Japanese

contract was signed in July 1936; Oerlikon supplied a number of guns, drawings and machine tools to start production locally but all this ceased when war broke out in Europe in 1939. A few aircraft were armed with the gun but the Navy, thinking they could go one better, chose a 25 mm anti-aircraft gun of Hotchkiss design which proved to be much inferior to the Oerlikon. Perhaps someone could discover why they did this.

Return to Europe

After three years in Japan I was glad to leave. There had been an Army mutiny, cabinet assassinations and an atmosphere of crisis pervading our lives. Somehow I managed to pass an examination in the language which I had studied daily at breakfast time.

In October 1936, I was on leave in the mountains of Austria when Toni 'phoned asking me to come to Zurich the following day where he had booked me a room at the Schweizerhof. From there we drove to Oerlikon where I met Emil Buehrle, the President. Originally a German before adopting Swiss nationality. The story of how he came to acquire the factory, manufacture the gun and become an extremely wealthy man is fascinating in itself. He was a big man of boundless energy, treated me with the greatest civility and gave me so much of his time, that it was difficult to believe that he was one of the greatest industrialists of that time. On the following day, a Sunday, his attractive young daughter organised a series of firing tests in a long protected tunnel. The rate of fire was 480 rounds a minute — a very high figure in those days. The breech was closed by the 'blowback' design, assisted by a spring, so there was no form of lock. It was unbelievably simple to operate by one man and Buehrle had ensured that the design was completely protected worldwide.

I was so impressed with the weapon that I promised Buehrle and Toni that I would do my best to interest the Royal Navy so it was decided that Toni and I would go to London early in January 1937 when my

leave was approaching its end. When the time came, I met Toni in Paris where he had a house in Neuilly. We travelled to London by rail and boat enduring a Channel crossing in a blizzard which was probably the reason why Tony caught a bad cold. He had booked rooms at the Dorchester, his favourite hotel.

We started our exercise by calling on Lord Sempill, a well known figure in aeronautical circles and a former Under Secretary of State for Air. When we explained the purpose of our visit, he said, 'If I push this gun of yours, what commission are you prepared to pay me?' I looked at Toni, still suffering from a streaming nose. He pretended not to understand and said, 'Yes Lord Simple, it was very rough sea in English Channel.'

His Lordship's name was promptly struck off our list but later, on a number of occasions, he contacted Emil Buehrle in a vain attempt to become the Oerlikon agent for Britain.

Our next call was on Sir Charles Craven, chairman of Vickers, a former close friend of my father. Obviously worried that we might have a weapon superior to a Vickers gun, he told me, 'I don't want a damn Swiss product. I am not interested in your bloody gun . . .'

Vickers was all powerful in those days. With a number of retired naval gunnery officers in their ranks, they were almost a branch of the Admiralty. Anti-aircraft armaments on our warships consisted of the Vickers two-pounder Pom Pom, an old design which was useless against modern aircraft. This was superseded by the 0.5 inch gun installed in a number of smaller ships, including destroyers. It was a development of the .303 inch and was mounted in a cumbersome quadruple unit, notoriously unreliable and requiring a crew to operate it. It should have been foreseen that new aircraft would be armoured and that self-sealing fuel tanks would be the next step.

An Old Term Mate

With Vickers struck off our list, I visited the gunnery division of the Admiralty.

They had never heard of the Oerlikon and suggested that I was confusing it with Hispano Suiza, a gun which the Air Force was using. So much for military intelligence! It was while I was in the Admiralty building, that I called on my old term mate, Lord Louis Mountbatten who was then in the Naval Air Division, working on a scheme to regain control of the Fleet Air Arm from the Royal Air Force, a struggle which was finally successful before the outbreak of war. It transpired that the Oerlikon was exactly the type of close range weapon he had been looking for — a gun, easily swung by one man and firing armour piercing shells at a rapid rate.

I introduced Toni and it was arranged that he should show a film of the gun in operation to an audience consisting of members of the Board of Admiralty and a number of gunnery officers. At a private run-through of the film in our room at the Dorchester beforehand, I was alarmed to see shots of Japanese officers viewing the trials. We spent an afternoon re-editing the film.

The film show was a success but the events which followed can only be described as scandalous. Dickie Mountbatten succeeded in getting the Naval Gunnery School at Whale Island Portsmouth to do some trials with the gun. Toni told me on the day following, that someone had removed the grease from the ammunition drum which resulted in the feed jamming. It was a clear case of sabotage.

At the same time, Dickie was trying to get the Admiralty to adopt a new design of motor torpedo boat made by Vosper to replace the inferior slow boats built by Scott Paine. He arranged with Vosper's Managing Director to demonstrate a private venture boat with an Oerlikon gun mounted forward, a private free gift from Toni. The Admiralty accepted the boat (MTB 102) on condition that the gun was removed. Such was the influence of Vickers, the Naval Gunnery Division and Whale Island. Dickie pursued his task relentlessly, seeking the assistance of the assistant Chief of the Naval Staff, the Third Sea Lord and even the First

Lord Duff Cooper. All to no avail until the breakthrough when Admiral of the Fleet Sir Roger Backhouse became First Sea Lord.

The Breakthrough

Backhouse, Dickie's Captain in the battle cruiser *Lion* in 1916, was an acknowledged gunnery expert so Dickie invited him for a drink at his new home at the top of Brook House, Park Lane. It was the first large two-storey penthouse constructed in London. Over some drinks, Dickie told the story of the Oerlikon gun and the fierce opposition to its adoption. Here was the ideal weapon which the Navy required; it could also be installed in naval fighter aircraft when the Admiralty got control of the Fleet Air Arm.

Backhouse listened intently and then Dickie took him on a tour of the penthouse after which Toni Gazda came in. There followed more talk about the gun and then came the dramatic moment. To use Dickie's own words, 'I remember clearly Sir Roger standing with the light in his eyes and saying "Dickie, you have got a war winner there; I shall do it this afternoon".'

Until this decisive moment, Toni Gazda had had 238 meetings with Admiralty officials and it was now almost too late. Delivery of guns from Switzerland ceased when France was overrun in 1940. Production in England was slow so Gazda was asked to visit the United States to set up production there. He found a site on Rhode Island and so impressed was the American Navy with the weapon, that production was stepped up to equip their own fleet. By the end of the war some 460,000 men and women were employed in the manufacture of the gun.

Toni's problems were far from over. Once the Rhode Island factory got going — it became the American Oerlikon-Gazda Corporation — he was arrested by the FBI as an undesirable alien and the factory was confiscated. It is alleged that he was denounced by a British naval officer because he had refused to pay him the bribe he asked for in return for his influence in getting the gun accepted. With the help of

friends, he was cleared, became an American citizen and received a glowing Congressional citation. Toni had invented and patented the Oerlikon magazine and in 1957 a Bill was introduced in the Senate to hear a claim for compensation as the patents had been transferred to the Attorney General under the authority of the Trading with the Enemy Act and subsequently returned.

Toni did not live to see his claim allowed. He worked hard and played hard but he never became a rich man and I miss him deeply.

The Oerlikon story started in Tokyo and had it not been for the foresight of Dickie Mountbatten and Roger Backhouse, the gun would never have been heard of. But for their vision and decisiveness, many more ships and lives would have been lost during the war.

It is difficult to believe the antagonism which existed toward accepting the gun in Britain. As an example, rumours were put about that Dickie Mountbatten was receiving money from Toni Gazda for giving his support. This was ridiculous as he and his wife, Edwina, were so well off that he could not possibly be interested in a bribe, however large or small.

I did at least get one kick out of the Oerlikon saga. When I brought Toni to England on his first visit — the occasion of the rough channel crossing — I reported to E.A.P., the Engineering Branch Personnel Division, that I was back in England.

'We have a new appointment for you but we must know where you are staying. What is your address?' asked a Captain (E).

'The Dorchester, Sir.' I replied. Somehow this amused me.'

GEORGE ROSS

Another look at Graduate Training in the RN

IN JULY LAST YEAR, an article entitled *The Royal Navy and its Graduates* was published in this Journal, and described the present methods of training graduates and suggested ways of improving them. The author, GREY ROCK, also made suggestions that the Navy, amongst others, should adopt an 'in house' degree course for career officers who did not go to University, so as to be able to 'satisfy the raised academic ambitions of school leavers'. This idea was, arguably, rejected by SANDSTONE in the January edition. He countered in his conclusion, 'it is my belief that in its search for satisfactory systems of officer entry, the Royal Navy should accept that there are those entrants who are suitable for a University education, and those who are not'. While agreeing with SANDSTONE on this fundamental issue, one feels perhaps that his argument could have been well supported by a more positive suggestion as to how to build on his valid distinction. It is the present author's intention to try and fill this small gap with a few constructive ideas.

From the very outset, in conceiving the pattern of graduate training, it is surely important for the Navy to bear in mind what the graduate possesses and lacks in relation to his contemporaries on joining the Navy. What the graduate should possess is a mind trained and self-disciplined to study and assimilate information alone and then later in a class or seminar discuss or query what he has just learnt. One does not expect this ability to the same extent from young men, who as NCE's, have just left school. On the other hand, because of his age, the graduate cannot spend the same amount of time at Dartmouth as his NCE contemporary and thus will tend to lack experience, particularly in the character and leadership fields, by the time he joins the Fleet,

The Test of Good Training

If the Navy is to try and make training as enjoyable and challenging as possible (and this, surely, is the test of good training) then it is necessary that a man is challenged most

where his experience is least, and challenged least where his experience is most. At the moment, both NCE's and graduates spend similar proportions of their time in classrooms, being given not only lectures, but also printed lecture notes which contain the information in the lecture anyway. This may be a little boring to graduates who have spent three years studying by themselves. Perhaps more graduates would like to find out whether they have the capacity for leadership and organization, rather than discover anew the thrills of the classroom! A practical exercise poses far more of a challenge to a mind that has spent three years gaining theoretical academic knowledge than the challenge of staying awake in the Caspar John Hall during the first of six classes for the day.

Thus it might be worthwhile to consider the possibility of reorganizing the training programme of graduates to incorporate more practical exercises and less classroom work, so as to give graduates the same opportunities as their NCE contemporaries to develop their character and leadership before leaving Dartmouth. Of course, one should not try and shift the balance so much that the basic necessity to give a thorough background knowledge of the Navy is sacrificed, but some shift might be beneficial. That more time for practical exercises could be made available is not in doubt. Last summer six graduates who had been May Deferred entries before they went to University and had spent ten weeks at Dartmouth in 1976 (and had had long enough to forget what they learnt then!) managed to pass their professional exams in three weeks. The normal time allowed, counting the DTS, is 26 weeks for NCE's, and 17 weeks for graduates. Although none got first class passes, five obtained seconds, and this, surely, is an indication that a little less time need be spent in the classroom. It is worth repeating that the need to shift the emphasis from the classroom for graduates is desirable not just because it is possible, but because it is probably a better way to present the best challenge during training and thus make

training more enjoyable. Once this is achieved, fewer men, one hopes, will want to consider leaving the Navy.

Fleet Training and Middle C

The same general point can be made about the present thinking of Fleet Training. There is no variety to suit different backgrounds at a stage when it is still necessary to do so. All junior officers are placed in the same sardine tin and made to do the same 'Task Book'! No one has ever been particularly kind about the Task Book, but it might be worthwhile reflecting that what gives a great deal of enjoyment in Fleet Training is being able to get involved with departments within a ship, and also to let departments become involved in junior officers if they show the interest. It may just be that at present the Task Book, by presenting a barrage of questions to an instructor right from the start, reduces the subject at issue to being a chore for both parties — with too much detail too soon. Often it is the background information, such as the way a particular man falls into the ship's organization, rather than the way his particular bit of machinery works that will be of benefit to the junior officer in the future. In a way, learning how to understand the operation of a ship is rather like learning to play the piano. To be able to get the right results, you have to be able to put your fingers on the right keys. You do not need to know at what frequency middle C oscillates, but you do need to know what relation it bears to the whole, and what chords can be built upon it. Thus if a criticism can be made of the Task Book, it is that it spends too much time on unnecessary detail, and not enough time on letting the junior officer gain a broad appreciation of how a ship is integrated and operates. Particularly for graduates, the feeling of being tied to a book is all too familiar, and tends to leave (even for training officers) little room for individual initiative to vary the diet.

Thus if the training side of Fleet Training

is to be given the opportunity to become more enjoyable, a gentle loosening of the reins might bring about beneficial results. For graduates that could mean a broad syllabus laid down which would form the basis for their Fleet Board. For non-graduates, more help in giving questions (though fewer than at present) to ask might be useful. It must be pointed out that at present there is a wide feeling in the Fleet that the Task Book has many limitations, and that consequently it is causing frustrations amongst junior officers that can only be detrimental to the Navy's long term interests.

One is afraid (and one hopes that one's fears are ill founded) that if the reason for the present bad drop-out rate amongst graduates is because they do not find sufficient challenge or reward to time they must serve, it is because those in charge of training have not fully thought out the respective strengths and weaknesses of graduates compared to other entries.

One must agree that at some point (and the author would argue OW courses are that point) a general naval training common to all officers is necessary to produce the required standards and conformity for the fleet. Equally, one must recognize the fact that not all men who enter the Navy are starting from the same levels of maturity or mental training, and that it is essential to play upon the different requirements of men at those different levels. Thus if the graduate is short, by comparison with his NCE contemporary, on practical experience, but good at getting on by himself, the Navy should use this fact to their advantage. No doubt the NCE course could also be improved, but the purpose of this article has been to concentrate on the graduates, for it is they who will play an increasingly important role in the Navy in the future. The chief complaint must be that at the basic levels of training, the Navy does not recognize that there should be different courses for different horses!

B. Y. F. (HONS)

A Dutch Treat

HOW DO YOU get a world class chamber orchestra to play for you in a small Dutch chapel? It may sound a very taxing job, but just in case any reader is ever faced with a similar task, let me assure him that it can be done. Indeed, it was done. It was a wonderful experience, and once the thing had been set in motion, it seemed to generate a life of its own, dragging us participants along (not too unwillingly, I will admit).

It started on my way home from Turkey after a 2-year NATO appointment. I had made arrangements to stay a few days in Holland, seeing various friends — it's one of the nice things about having a motor caravan that you can invite yourself to peoples' houses without feeling that you will totally disrupt the organisation! Anyway, Holland being Holland, all our friends said 'Of course' and tried to persuade us to stay a few days more. It was while we were staying with Joop and Mieke that the fateful sequence started.

The weather (early October) was pretty foul, but in one of the breaks Joop and I were walking in the fields not far from his home in Schagen (he is a supply officer in the Royal Netherlands Navy). With the terrain so flat, distances are deceptive; more than that, small hollows seem to be able to hide houses and sometimes whole villages. So when I looked towards the village of Valkoog, all I could see was the top half of the church. 'What church is that, Joop?' I asked 'That's the church of Sint Maarten,' he replied, 'In fact, it's in the middle of the village of Valkoog, and it's where our little music society meets occasionally.' Joop is the secretary of this little local music society. 'It looks as if it's in the middle of the fields,' I said, 'like St. Martin in the Fields.'

Wouldn't it be fun

The next words spoken are quite important, as on them depended the whole adventure. Alas, neither Joop nor I can

agree who actually said 'Wouldn't it be fun if we could get the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields to come and play here?' I think Joop said it, he is convinced I said it, and there is no third party evidence. The fact must be borne in mind that our memories could be somewhat clouded by the number of Heinekens and 'oude Genevers' we had managed to dispose of.

Well, you will have guessed it by now, surely; we got the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields to come and play in the church. The funny thing is that, after the un-attributable suggestion I've just recorded, we were neither of us fired with any real enthusiasm or energy. The idea, such as it was, was put firmly into the category of *Wouldn't it be magic if it ever happened?* or *Such things don't happen to us.*

To all intents and purposes the project died in that October. The following July (1977), Joop and Mieke and their children were staying with us in Midhurst and it was on a drowsy, warm Sunday afternoon in the garden that Joop (I'm sure it was him, not me) opened one eye and murmured 'Did you ever do anything about that Academy idea?' 'No,' I replied, adding 'Did you?' so that he couldn't apportion all the blame to me. From such very tentative and unprepossessing beginnings grew the scheme whose success still makes us wonder if it did really happen. But it did.

I undertook to find out the telephone number of the Academy and to put the idea to them. Can one just phone up an orchestra? Yes, one can. I got Neville Marriner's number in the book, and his wife gave me the number of the Academy's secretary. 'How would it be,' I asked her, 'If the Academy were to play in a little church in Holland called St. Martin's? Oh, and would you like to come out to lunch?' I nearly dropped the phone when she said 'Well, I think your idea is possible. The Academy is doing a tour in Holland early next year, playing at the Concertgebouw and elsewhere; it would be a case of asking

the members to do another day. Is it for charity, because I'm not sure you'd be able to afford the fee?' She came to lunch.

The orchestra members thought the idea excellent, and within a few days we had things rolling. They were due to have the last concert of their tour on 12th March in Amsterdam; sixteen of them could easily stay an extra day, drive to Valkoog on the afternoon of the 13th, rehearse, perform, drive back to Amsterdam, and return to London on the 14th. Would the great international impresarios (i.e. H.L.F. and his friend Joop) kindly ensure that (a) the hotel bill for the extra night and (b) the transport costs would not fall to the members? Otherwise they were happy to play for no fee, as it was charity. 'Quick, Joop, think of a charity!' was my next phone call to my Dutch friend. 'No problem,' says he, 'I have not been idle. The good burghers of Schagen and Valkoog have been searching in the records, and can find no earlier mention of the church than 1478. We're organising a 500th anniversary celebration, with a fete and a fair. *Restoration of the Church Fund!* Is that good enough?' 'I believe so,' I said. The Academy (who seemed hugely taken with the idea) agreed, and so we arranged the programme. Vivaldi, Mozart, Corelli — excellent stuff! Joop and I were even asked if there was anything we particularly wanted.

The affair jogged on happily until the New Year, when another bombshell burst. 'Hey, you old TAS officer,' said my friend Joop one day, 'I've got a cousin whose pal is in radio broadcasting. He is very interested in recording the concert, and Radio Hilversum will pay £1,000 for the privilege. We can offer the Academy a fee.' So I got on the phone to the secretary, told her the latest information and offered a fee of £500. 'Oh, that's very generous,' she said, 'But I don't think that the radio authorities would ever pay so much. Can you afford it?' I said we might just manage, and came clean a few days later when my conscience caught up with me. 'No, that's fine,' she said, 'we were happy to play for charity,

and a fee of £500 is very good; we are happy to see the other £500 go to the restoration fund.' She had another lunch.

The detailed programme for the artistes needed careful managing. Joop was all for a big lunch, a tour of various places, a reception, a big supper and a general air of fete; the orchestra, highly professional musicians all, wanted to rehearse and perform, letting their hair down afterwards. How much I spent on telephones is no part of this story, but it was substantial. We finally agreed the programme for the whole visit, and then all we could do was wait, pray for reasonable weather, and resist the temptation to phone up and say 'Have you thought of . . . ?'

I spent the night of 12th/13th March in Holland with Joop and we toasted each other. What a great chap Joop was, supervising every smallest detail in Schagen and Valkoog! What a superb go-between H.L.F. was, ensuring all was well at the London end! I don't think we slept much that night, it's terrible stuff that generer.

Crisis averted

The 13th March dawned — a cool, blustery day. Joop and I, with quite a few local dignitaries and pressmen were at a tiny place called Einichenburg and the bus arrived at about 2.30. We gave the orchestra members a nice cup of tea and some cakes, and the local dignitary in full frock coat could not be dissuaded from making a speech. The camaraderie of England and the Netherlands, the co-operation of two naval officers — it all came out. (In the press, we were described as 'wartime comrades-in-arms', not really very flattering when you think that I was three when the war started, Joop two.) We all piled out and into seven vintage cars specially lent for the occasion, and off we went on a tour round the old dykes, led in some state by the local police car. One vintage car broke down, whereat a violinist, demonstrating a level of digital dexterity one shouldn't be surprised at, leapt out and fixed the electric leads. We got to Valkoog; flags, a band somewhere, the mayor in full

gear, and flashbulbs everywhere. A crowded reception, true to Dutch fashion, got a bit noisy. The mayor (a very young man) made a nice speech, the Academy replied and all was very friendly. A hilarious supper followed, and it was suddenly 6 p.m. Hastily we got the Academy into the church for rehearsals (complicated by the radio people with their microphones, of course) and we rushed away home to change.

The church, beautifully lit by candles, and with a lot of greenery, looked magnificent, even although the plasterwork, badly needing repair, was very evident. Joop had produced beautiful souvenir programmes, and tickets cost (I think) £6 and £9. Total seating was 250, and he said he could have sold each ticket 3 or 4 times over. It was a complete sell-out weeks before it happened, and on the night about 50-75 extra people turned up, hoping to get a seat, but staying to listen from outside when they were disappointed. The only near-crisis, easily averted, was when one viola player, who was running his instrument through the full limits of elevation and training during warm-up, nearly speared a spectator. Such was the atmosphere that he was soon chatting away happily to his near-victim, and pointing out peculiarities of the Vivaldi score, so much so that he had to be called to order to start the concert proper. Many winks and giggles followed.

The acoustics were just right, the playing was impeccable and the intimacy of the atmosphere was remarkable; they all combined magically, it seemed to me. You could have heard a pin drop between movements, and yet it was a totally relaxed and highly civilised evening. During the interval, Joop and I, with a few helpers, appeared with trays — a glass of wine for

everyone, orchestra and audience alike, why not?

The concert over (more speeches and presentations) we the organisers plus the orchestra adjourned next door to a lovely farmhouse owned by the man who owned two of the vintage cars. 'Informal supper with singing and some dancing' is a reasonable description of what happened. Noise, laughter, congratulations, flowers, jokes, more laughter, introductions, more noise, colour — what an event. I took my life in my hands when I told Iona Brown that I had moved her near-priceless violin. 'You've done WHAT?' she screamed, and only calmed down when I showed her that I had moved it to a safe place from where she had left it in a room which people were using as a cloakroom, and not being too careful about coats dropping on the floor.

All too soon the bus came to collect the orchestra for the return journey to Amsterdam. I cadged a lift with them, and was forced into joining their celebrations on the way back. I had booked a room in the same hotel, but three of us sat up till about 4.30 talking music, politics and religion (pretty traditional subjects for post-midnight discussions). I then slept from 4.30 till 6 (making it the most expensive room per hour I've ever had), caught the airport bus at 6, caught the 7 o'clock flight and because it was winter and Holland's clocks were an hour ahead of London's, landed at Heathrow at 7.15. I was talking, eruditely I hope, to my admiral in MOD about the intricacies of torpedo procurement by 9 o'clock. But my heart wasn't in it.

Meeting some of the orchestra a year later, they were still talking about their Valkoog concert as one of the most pleasant they had ever undertaken. That made it even more worthwhile.

H.L.F.

What sort of Ideology?

AN ARTICLE entitled 'The Problem of Retention' in the July issue of *The Naval Review* by NAGRO raised the question of the need to formulate an ideology able to support the sense of purpose which is so necessary to the people who serve in peacetime in today's armed forces. A contrast was made between the discipline of Marxism and the decline of Western religious morality. It was proposed that steps should be taken to extend the political education process within the Service by various means.

The aim here is to try and take further the ideas suggested in that article by means of a discussion of ideological matters in general and by setting out some considerations to be borne in mind while presenting an ideology to Service people. The role of the armed forces in society and the comparative study of political institutions are topics which already fill library shelves; thus there is plenty of material with which to sustain further more detailed argument. Here we will have to be as brief and simple as possible.

Failures abound

Bluntly, then, Marxism as an ideology has run its course. Marxism might have been a useful tool towards understanding social tensions in the days of cruel iron-master capitalism, but its predictions have failed and it cannot begin to account for the myriad processes of modern pluralist societies. We can see in Poland the classic Marxist process whereby the proletariat accretes power to itself; unfortunately for those infrared theorists still refracting the light of long-dead suns, as de Gaulle once put it, the procedures are being enacted against a Marxist state, not capitalism. Its proponents are left with desiccated angels-on-a-pin textual dissection, scrabbling¹ to find points at which Marx still touches reality. All around the world are clear-cut examples of the failure of socialist systems, the litmus test not necessarily being the

appallingly inefficient rigidities of their economies but the direction in which the refugees run. Whether it is across the Iron Curtain, into Thailand, from North Vietnam to the South in the early 1950's, from South Vietnam into the sea in 1979, from Afghanistan to Pakistan, or from Havana to Miami the story is the same. There must be value in resisting the regimes which do this to their people.

So, are we defending capitalism? Do we need a countervailing ideology? The problem here is to define what it is we wish to protect; capitalism as such does not exist in ideological form and is thus as difficult to attack as to defend. It has been described elsewhere as what happens when people are left alone. It exists in pure market form, no doubt with a number of unacceptable faces, and extends leftward under increasingly interventionist conditions. Service people have historically been vulnerable to propaganda which labels them as the duped, underpaid lackeys of fur-collared Wall Street arms cartelists or of greedy colonialist oppressors. Perhaps, therefore, we should not position our ideology anywhere on the Marxist-Capitalist axis, save that we should recognise the well-established fact that it is impossible to run an oppressive state system with economic freedom or, conversely, to maintain individual freedoms where the state controls all of economic life.

Another axis that should at least be considered in the definition of an ideology is that of the Left and Right. There are those of the Left who would see the armed forces as being an instrument of the Right, but where the Right connotes fascism and the Left totalitarian oppression it would be best not to become entangled with this inadequate and outdated social description. Is the Navy 'of the Centre' politically? Do we have a stabilising or mediating role?

¹ *Scrabble*: A board game involving point-scoring, word-chopping and bitter argument.

An alternative

The authoritarian-liberal axis is more interesting and one upon which it is possible to position all the world's governments. Brezhnev's Russia lies close to Mussolini's Italy, except that Italy's trains probably ran better. A legitimate role for the armed forces is to protect the people of liberal or 'free' societies against the actions of oppressive and authoritarian ones. There are two vulnerabilities here which must be explored. The first concerns the fact that 'freedom' is a relative quality, it not being possible to run a modern state on the rules of a greenpeace commune and depend on the societal environment to generate total unselfishness among the members. This was one of Marx's errors, man does not seem to be *perfectible* even when capitalist alienations are removed. A modicum of authority is needed, for the individual human rights of the citizen are nowhere more at risk than when law and order have broken down. Therefore it is legitimate to portray the armed forces as an arm of the State, in our case a legitimate and elected government. This is not to say that the internal security role is paramount, or that democracy can only be preserved by armed force, but that the armed forces are one of the stiffer fibres supporting the constitution of a free society. The vulnerability lies in being able to meet the charge from those who regard even our society as repressive and that the forces are the tools of such repression. The answer lies in drawing attention to the freedoms we all enjoy in comparison to those under other regimes, perhaps calling for, in the absence of an educative pilgrimage to one of the more tragically popular Berlin Wall crossing points, a feat of imagination from some members of our over-insulated public in envisaging what life might otherwise be like.

The second vulnerability is also concerned with the relative nature of freedom. The non-communist bloc contains a number of regimes occupying positions towards the unattractive end of the authoritarian-liberal axis, yet the United

Kingdom maintains agreements and alliances with some of these. This imperfect policy has to be unashamedly supported in terms of *realpolitik*; in an imperfect and dangerous world the enemy of my enemy is my friend, in the face of such a threat one must choose the lesser evil.

Motivation

That discussion, friction and argument about the difficulties outlined above should continue is of course one of the prerequisites for a healthy and progressive body politic. But, to conclude on the need for some sort of hard, bookish ideology, it would seem that in a diverse and evolving world such things are more of a liability than an advantage. Let us merely state that we exist to defend freedom, to deter aggression and to support our like-minded allies. Recent events continue to provide the evidence for the worth of these propositions.

A further element in the motivation package is straight old-fashioned patriotism, a force which the Kremlin at least does not underestimate. But patriotism is a sensitive subject; in discussing it one would wish to tread carefully and avoid causing the sort of embarrassment that afflicted Stalky and Co. in Kipling's psychologically interesting anecdote about the '*Jelly-Bellied Flag-Flapper*'. It is difficult to imagine Service people starting conversations with 'I joined the Navy to serve my Queen and Country' but we can assume with confidence that this is a strong if infrequently voiced motivating element.

Concerning religion, it is probably best not to mix ideological motivation with religious matters. We have a duty to facilitate worship, but this worship is between a man and his God. Given the present size of our battalions it would be imprudent to assume that God is on our side; one is reminded of the sentimental difficulties provoked by those spontaneous Christmas Day ceasefires on the Somme. In parenthesis, it is worth remembering that the Buddhists believe two trades in particular are incapable of making progress towards Enlightenment, soldiers and butchers.

Finally, there is the question of obligation. In an age where 'rights' excite more passion than 'duties', there is something very worthwhile in pressing the concept of duty. This concept is deeply concealed behind the ancient and well-known rubric 'If you can't take a joke, you shouldn't have joined' but something more formal is probably required for Divisional meetings. To give a little more than you take enhances self-respect, we draw our pay and owe the corresponding duty to the country and to the Service. Taking NAGRO's point about the decline of such values in society, it may be that duty towards the traditions of the Service should persist above all else:

'Here is the frontier, here our camp and place

Beans for the pot, fodder for horses
And Roman arms. Enough.

We, not the city, are the empire's soul
A rotten tree lives only in its rind.'

Thus Robert Graves' Roman Cuirassier of the Frontier; fortunately the moral condition of the country has by no means deteriorated to the point at which the Navy has to break the multi-natured connections that have already existed with the civilian population and become a sort of inward-looking knightly order. But we should take care to maintain our standards, thus attracting and retaining those many young people who are always looking for something better. We have our basis for an ideology, a powerful *raison d'être* coupled to a worthy tradition.

G.F.L.

Drake's Circumnavigation 1577-1580

MASTER THIEF OF THE UNKNOWN WORLD

Part II

THE DEATH of Doughty and Drake's fine speech at Port Saint Julian laid to rest the uneasy spirit of questioning and insubordination that had haunted the voyage from the outset. Not that Doughty's spirit was completely quiescent; like a body buried alive in a Poe novel its presence was felt from time to time and Francis Fletcher made it very evident that he was convinced that he had taken part in an injudicial murder. John Doughty was to bring an action against Drake in the Earl Marshal's court for the murder of his brother in which he stated:

'When the Queen did knight Drake she did then knight the arrantest knave, the vilest villain, the falsest thief and the cruelest murderer that ever was born.'

The case was never brought as Doughty himself was incarcerated in the Marshalsea, at first for libel and then as a suspected Spanish spy. Drake was plagued by the event also; one major theme that runs through the testaments of his prisoners is the conversations that they had with Drake about the execution. As Zarate records:

'All this he told me, speaking much good about the dead man, but adding that he had not been able to act otherwise because this was what the Queen's services demanded.'

Cynically it might be said that Drake was preparing an iron-cast brief for his acts in case the voyage went awry. In an age where results were so important few banners would be hung out to welcome the returning failure; great acts conveniently overshadowed questionable deeds. But that was looking to the future. Sufficient for Drake, at the moment was the fact that he had asserted his sole authority over all the adventurers. He had to prove now that their commitment was justified by demonstrating his superior seamanship as he led them into the fearsome Magellan Straits.

A perilous passage

The British fleet did not have all the advantages that possession of the Admiralty Pilot bestows on the mariner.² They knew only the Straits' reputation, endraged by Spanish propaganda. The educated gentlemen would also have been able to draw distinctive discomfort from their knowledge of mythology. The towering black cliffs bore some resemblance to the clashing rocks that almost sunk the *Argus*, while the eddies and backcurrents of these dark waters were like the perilous passage between Scylla and Charybdis.

Historically the crews' fears were justified. Magellan, after a bloody mutiny at Port Saint Julian, had taken 37 days to make the passage in 1520, and in that time he had been deserted by one of his captains, Gomez. De Loaysia, in 1526, took seven weeks to pass from East to West and he too had been abandoned by one ship. His losses through sickness had been heavy, but not as great as those of the 1535 expeditions of de Alcazata Sotomayor which was decimated. That unfortunate leader was forced to turn back by a mutinous crew who murdered him, only in turn to be hanged or marooned themselves. In 1540 only one ship of the Comargo expeditions reached port. Of seventeen ships that had attempted the passage twelve had been lost. The last person to make use of the passage, on a two way journey, was Ladrillero in 1558.

The Spanish, unable to use the route with much success themselves, and content with their overland shipments of specie across Panama were determined that others would not attempt this passage which was the only known entrance into the Pacific. So to add

¹New Light on Drake, Z. Nuttall, Hakluyt Society, 1914, page 209.

²Nor, of course, the knowledge that the land to the South was an island beyond which was the Cape Horn passage.

to the factual evidence they created their own myth. A popular poem existed which stated that the Straits had been blocked by a volcano or earthquake. Another rumour had it that the current through the Straits had a one way East to West flow, so strong, that the traveller who passed into the Pacific could only continue his voyage by going around the world; a fiction not supported by Ladrillero's passage. This latter deception became obvious when on the 20th August 1578 Drake's three ships were unable to enter the maw because winds and currents were unfavourable. In a small ceremony, while awaiting a turn in the weather, the *Pelican* struck her sails and after a service of Thanksgiving Drake renamed his ship the *Golden Hind* in honour of his, and Doughty's, patron Sir Christopher Hatton on whose arms this creature appeared. Why the change of name? Possibly a flattery insurance for his return home.

Close to the entrance of the Straits they found an island teeming with penguins which they set upon with gusto, precursing the violent destruction of wild life that the Southern Continents were to witness until, with the game destroyed, men decided to institute a set of rules by which to hunt their by now decimated prey. But Drake's men needed the food, and by the time they had sailed they had killed enough birds to last them seven weeks. The shores of the Straits also provided the travellers with fresh herbs, including scurvy grass, with which to stave off the ravages of a vitamin deficient diet. Drake has often been accused of setting out on voyages with insufficient victuals for his crew; in fact this shortcoming was to cause the fatal delay in his last voyage, but on this journey around the world, although there were periods of deprivation, few of the crew died through dietary deficiency. Only two are recorded as having died of scurvy and, at the worst estimate, of 140 people who sailed with Drake, 58 completed the circumnavigation; an unknown number returned with Wynter and 26 were left in the Mullaccas. Drake's ships were certainly not the slow moving

charnel houses that Anson was to sail in 160 years later.

The passage through the Straits demanded of Drake all his seamanship skills he had learnt in years of stern service. It was a difficult time:

'First, the mountains being very high, and some reaching into the frozen region, did every one send out several winds; sometimes behind us, to send us on our way; sometimes on the starboard side, to drive us to the larboard, and so the contrary; sometimes right against us, to drive us farther back in an hour than we could recover again in many; but of all others this was the worst, thus sometimes two or three of these winds would come together and meet as it were in one body, whose forces being become one, did so violently fall into the sea, whirling, or as the Spaniards saith, with a tornado, that they would pierce into the very bowels of the sea, and make it swell upward on every side; the halloween they made in the water, and the winds breaking out again, did take the swelling banks so raised into the air, and being dispersed abroad, it ran down again a mighty rain. Beside this, the sea is so deep in all this passage that . . . there is no coming to anchor.'

Yet Drake took only 16 days to tread his way through this labyrinth. However there was little time to give thanksgiving after they had rounded Cape Pilar. The full fury of the Pacific gales hurled down upon them.

No respite

The little fleet was driven south-eastwards along the coast whose lee shore was an inhospitable collection of craggy rocks and high mountains that created their own local maelstroms. On the last day of September having endured 24 days of savage gales the little *Marigold* was swallowed up and the last her companions heard was the forelorn cries of her drowning ship's company. Among that ship's company was Doughty's principal

accuser, Ned Bright; Fletcher noted in his diary: 'Marked judgement against a false accuser!'

The others hung on grimly, sleep starved and besotted; bruised and frozen they awaited the Lord's judgement on their enterprise. Instead the wind died and they turned wearily Northward to search out an anchorage to repair themselves and the ships. Fate remained unkind. Just as Drake found a likely anchorage the two remaining ships were driven out to sea once more. This time they did not stay together. When dawn came there was no sign of the *Elizabeth*. There was no time to search for Wynter. Once again the winds spun the *Golden Hind* southwards, further than any man had been before and this time when they came to anchor they made a major geographical discovery — Cape Horn.

Geographers had always assumed that South of the Magellan Straits lay the vast continent of Terra Australia — a balance to the Northern hemisphere. The Spaniards, naturally enough, were not too keen to disprove this hypothesis although any traveller through the Straits must have realised, as did Francis Fletcher, that to the South lay, not a great continent but a host of islands.

When the wind abated they worked out their position as 57° South and to the East lay, not a great land mass but the gray Atlantic Ocean. Fletcher was able to write: 'The uttermost cape or headland of all these islands, stands near in 56 degrees, without which there is no mainland nor island to be seen to the Southwards, but that the Atlantic Ocean and the South Sea meet in a most large and free scope.'

Drake, himself, determined not to be bested, went ashore and lying at full stretch wriggled out as far as he could over the southernmost cliffs stretching his arms out ahead of him. He had been further South than any man. The discovery made, and the winds now favourable, the *Golden Hind* turned North to try and rendezvous with the *Elizabeth*.

The second great storm had led to the loss of another boat; the 5-ton pinnace which Drake had launched to search out a safe anchorage. Hopelessly equipped for such a task in such savage conditions she lost contact with the *Golden Hind* and the crew were presumed drowned.

Miraculously this group repassed the Straits and made their way up the coast to Brazil where the last remaining member of the team, Peter Carder, took passage in a 'hulke' bound for England. He landed in November 1586, nine years and fourteen days after his departure with Drake. Carder was granted an interview with the Queen in which she asked him several questions about the voyage including the death of Doughty. This adventure of the abandoned Carder was to repeat itself during Anson's voyage when the *Wager*, attempting to rendezvous with the Commodore, went on to the rocks in the same latitudes. The survivors reached London in 1746, five years after the shipwreck. The account of their travels, by John Byron, who was to circumnavigate the globe himself in 1744-66, was a harrowing tale of pillage, treachery, murder and indiscipline.

That Wynter searched for Drake is not disputed; it is his diligence and perseverance that is questionable. After the ships had separated Wynter had anchored in the mouth of the Straits and had lit a beacon for Drake to see. Two days later storms drove them further down the Straits where they anchored for 22 days and the crew recovered their health on a diet of enormous mussels. Now came the crucial test. The two captains had agreed on a rendezvous at 30° South, Wynter had to decide whether this was still a reasonable aim. The two accounts that were written at the time are contradictory but it was Wynter 'who took the peril on him' and decided, probably under pressure, to abandon the voyage. His decision is too easy to condemn from a twentieth century armchair. It was easy enough to condemn from a 16th century English Court. Wynter returned to disgrace and imprisonment. Drake's Vice-Admiral last appears on the

historical scene during the Armada campaign when he sailed in the Queen's *Vanguard* — as a Lieutenant.

A rich prize

Drake had his problems also. A rotting ship, sluggish and foul, carrying a human cargo whose lethargy and health reflected that of the *Golden Hind's* weary timbers. He needed somewhere to recuperate. His first attempt was the island of Mocha, but unfriendly natives carried off two of his men and killed another. He had more luck at Quintero, where he managed to get food and water, and a piece of intelligence that must have revived the flagging morale. A rich prize, the *Capitana Grande de Los Reyes*, was anchored in the undefended harbour of Valparaiso, just fifteen miles away. On 5th December, 1578, one year after Drake had sailed from England, the crew of *La Capitana* were surprised to see a strange vessel entering harbour. They hastily set about organising a welcome. The reception misfired. The Spaniards were driven below and although one escaped to raise the alarm and panic ashore, both the ship and town were seized. This first encounter was very encouraging for it showed that the shroud of secrecy that had covered the voyage preparations had not been ripped open.

Drake did not wish to stay long in port. He released the prisoners, keeping back one, the pilot Juan Griego, to guide him up the coast and set sail with the *Capitana*. Her cargo of 25,000 pesos of gold covered the cost of his expedition and her capture had put new spirit into his men. The voyage was once more on an even keel. It was now imperative for the *Golden Hind* to be careened but with the alarm raised it was difficult to find a peaceful haven. One such attempt ended in more loss when Richard Minisy was shot and butchered by a Spanish patrol. It was not until 22nd December that a secluded uninhabited cove was found and the two ships anchored close to shore. The second pinnace was erected and when she was ready for sea Drake set off South to try and find Wynter. The men

he left behind careened the *Golden Hind*. The ship's bottom was not in bad condition but needed caulking and patching while inside the odour of the bilges had to be bucketed up and ditched. Once this task had been carried out the *Golden Hind* would be all set for her task as a commerce raider.

The initial raids were small affairs. The seizing of 13 bars of silver from a sleeping traveller; a raid on a coastal village and the capture of eight hundred pounds of silver. It did not all go Drake's way. In Arica a formidable reception committee prevented him from seizing the silver warehouse. At Chule, the large treasure ship Drake had been pursuing was hastily unloaded and instead of a rich haul the English departed with the jeers of the townsfolk, telling them that they had missed 500 bars of silver by two hours, ringing in their ears. At Callao it was a different but equally unrewarding story; they arrived too early, for all the ships in harbour had empty holds awaiting the silver wealth of Lima. These disappointments convinced Drake that he would have to change his tactics. In his West Indian raids it had been easier to lay ambushes ashore to seize treasure than to attack the well defended Spanish flotas. On this new coastline, with no escape route and with few men, success lay at sea not in the townships. After Callao he made only three brief calls at ports in Spanish America, as opposed to nine before plus numerous other stops, until he reached California.

Another reason for not calling too frequently at Spanish ports was the need to keep the enemy guessing. Drake was a lone commerce raider in an alien sea without means of communication or escape if things went wrong. It was imperative that the initiative remained firmly in his grasp; to lose it would spell disaster as it was to do for several of the German commerce raiders in these seas four centuries later. Unlike these latter pirates Drake had a tremendous advantage; his foes were incompetent and often cowardly. Ships sent in pursuit at Callao turned back because they had not enough food, guns or ballast to sail on,

and because many of the gentlemen were seasick and not able either to stand on their feet or fight. The Viceroy of Peru had the leaders of this abortive pursuit dismissed and exiled.

Pursuit

But Drake too was in pursuit. The one useful piece of intelligence that he had discovered at Callao was that a large and richly laden treasure ship, the *Nuestra de la Concepcion* was on passage to Panama. The ship's owner, San Juan de Anton, had sailed a fortnight before Drake and, secure in this Pacific sea, was making a leisurely passage up the coast. Drake also learnt that she was one of the few armed merchantmen in New Spain.

A fortnight's lead: the passage from Callao to Panama is approximately 1600 miles. The *Cacafuego*, or *Spitfire*, as the ship was known colloquially, was going to call at several intermediate ports to unload flour. Drake had therefore to scour both the coastal strip and the seaward passage if he was not going to miss sighting her. Accordingly he took command of the pinnace with which he scouted the creeks and harbours while the *Golden Hind* kept further out. The surface winds at this time of year flow in concert with the currents in a northerly direction so there was every reason to suppose the passage to Panama would be a swift one. Nevertheless Drake boarded the merchant ships he came across and wasted time seizing their none too valuable cargoes and transferring them to his ship. In one case suspecting that a clerk was concealing the whereabouts of a secret horde from him he hanged the poor man from the yard to make him confess. When it was obvious that the man knew nothing he was cut down and soon recovered.

To our age such behaviour may appear to be Draconian and Drake was to repeat this trick later in the voyage in an effort to persuade a pilot to take the *Golden Hind* across the Pacific. Yet his general attitude to prisoners provides us with a shining beacon from an age not noted for its humanity to captives. The Spanish tortured and killed Oxenham and other British sailors they captured and the enlightened

Elizabethans, such as Raleigh, slaughtered Irish women and children at Rathlin Island. Morgan's attitude to prisoners who refused to talk was slightly more robust; Exquemelin noted that he took hold of a cripple and had him;

'strappado'd until both his arms were entirely dislocated, then knotted a cord so tight round the forehead that his eyes bulg'd out, big as eggs. Since he still would not admit where the coffer was, they hung him up by his male parts, while one struck him, another sliced off his nose, yet another his ear, and another scorched him with fire — tortures as barbarous as man can devise. At last, when the wretch could no longer speak and they could think of no new torments, they let a Negro stab him to death with a lance.'

Of the two Admirals, Drake's behaviour is the closer to the procedures laid down in BR II.

Drake caught up with San Juan de Anton on 1st March off Cape San Francisco, in latitude 1°30' North, seventeen days after leaving Callao. His daily rate of progress had been fifty-seven miles, or an average of two-and-a-quarter knots; the *Cacafuego* had averaged less than one-and-a-half knots. The progress must have resembled the pursuit of the female of the species by a lustful Galapagos tortoise.

The capture of the treasure ship required guile. Drake who had cut in close to Galena Point was, in fact, ahead of his quarry when it was first sighted but he had all sail spread. To make a bold alteration to port and reduce sail would have aroused suspicion so Drake resolved to use a sea anchor. A number of empty wine jars were trailed astern to slow the *Golden Hind* down more than the festoons of seaweed clinging to her bottom were already doing. The pinnace was placed on the landward side of the ship to hide her from view as the distance between the two ships decreased throughout the day. Then just before sunset the Spanish ship turned to greet her fellow travellers. As the two ships touched the merchantman was ordered to 'Strike sail in

the name of the King'. They thought it was a joke. What danger could there be in this quiet sea? Anton answered the challenge in a jolly way, 'What — orders me to strike sail? Come onboard and strike sail yourself'. The English needed no second bidding. A whistle, a trumpet call, a blast of shot and the *Cacafuego* was swarming with desperadoes most of whom clambered up from the disengaged side where the pinnace had come alongside undetected. The Spaniards fled below leaving their captain alone on deck. He was wounded slightly. 'Have patience', said Drake 'for such is the usage of war.'

The usage of war was very valuable for Drake. The *Cacafuego's* cargo consisted of a registered total of 362,000 pesos in silver bars and gold, plus another 40,000 pesos in undeclared specie. To value the haul in modern terms is impossible but it has been estimated that Drake returned to England with the equivalent of £30,000,000 on board the *Golden Hind*, most of which was treasure seized so easily from the *Cacafuego*. As a single seizure it was only exceeded by Anson's capture of the Manila galleon, *Nostra Signora de Cabbadanga* off the Philippines in 1744, during his famous circumnavigation in H.M.S. *Centurion*.

A few days later Drake released Anton and his crew, returning some of their personal effects to them. He also gave Anton a message for Wynter to be delivered if the two of them should meet, and then he steered for Nicaragua, capturing two more Spanish ships on the way. One of these ships had two Philippine pilots on board and from them Drake obtained charts and sailing directions. Pursuing his passage North he stopped at Guatulco for water and it was here that the only mindless destruction of the voyage was carried out when the church was desecrated. The town lay in the territory of the Viceroy of New Spain, Don Martin Enriquez, whose treachery at San Juan de Ulua in 1568 had cost so many English lives, and had led to the miserable passage home by Drake and Hawkins. The damage at Guatulco showed the Viceroy that Drake possessed a long

and unforgiving memory. It was here that Drake also dispensed with the services of his faithful pilot, Nuno da Silva. This unfortunate man faced many years of trial and deprivation; poor reward from the captor he had served so well.

The voyage continued North. It seems likely that Drake set out to discover and return via the North West passage, the Straits of Anian, but that he became convinced around latitude 48° North that no such passage existed. He turned back and came ashore in Nova Albion, at a spot whose exact location has provided gainful employment for generations of American historians. The reception given to the wanderers precursees the wonderful welcomes that South Sea islanders were to give the early Pacific explorers. Drake stayed here among the Miwok Indians from 17th June until 2nd July and in that time he was made an honorary chief. It was with much sorrow on both sides that the *Golden Hind* eventually slipped for the historic crossing of the Pacific.

The Pacific — success and disaster

The voyage across the Pacific was free of recorded incident but, perhaps, this speaks volumes for Drake's leadership. This was the longest leg of the deployment and the sixty-six days outside sight of land was exactly twice the time Columbus had spent in his first voyage across the Atlantic. Yet there is no record that Drake had any morale or serious health problems. Landfall in the Carolines proved a mixed blessing. The double dealings of the natives convinced Drake that he had reached Magellan's Los Ladrones, 'The Islands of Thieves', and the belligerence of these Polynesians led eventually to arquebuses being discharged into the pursuing canoes killing about twenty men. Europeans, and Americans, seem to have either loved or killed the Pacific islanders.

On 16th September 1579 the *Golden Hind* reached the Philippines, the islands where Magellan was killed, a fact that cannot have escaped Drake. Recent research has suggested that Magellan had no intention of

circumnavigating the globe in which case to Drake belongs the full glory of the first successfully planned expedition³. However Magellan had the opportunity of turning back to a friendly port while Drake was over ten thousand miles from any allied harbour. It was in the Philippines and the neighbouring Spice Islands, or Moluccas, where the English became aware of the hotbed of intrigue, plot and counterplot that these islands, at the crossroads of so many cultures, had become. Drake, as the enemy of both Spain and Portugal, was made most welcome by Sultan Baab of Ternate and the official call can only be described as highly successful. Gifts and complements were exchanged while the ship's musicians serenaded the oriental court. Trade was freely entered with one exception. The Sultan objected to the purchase of five tons of cloves, for this valuable spice was carefully controlled to maximise profit, and the glut that this purchase would create in the market would not have been welcome in Ternate. It took several more gifts to placate the Sultan but had he known of the fate of his precious cloves he might never have agreed to their release.

Baab wished Drake to return for he saw the advantage of an alliance with England. The admiral was also offered a pilot to Cathay with the promise of direct trading links with that closed market. The reason that Drake turned down this tempting offer on the home leg of his long voyage is obvious; what is not so obvious or excusable is the complete failure of other Englishmen to take up this challenge later. To have done so might have made a success not a heroic failure of such grand seamen and explorers as Hudson and Humphrey Gilbert. The only expedition that attempted to keep these trade links open was that led by Fenton in 1581 which turned home in the Atlantic, leaving John Drake to try and repeat his cousin's success off South America. He did not succeed and was captured. All that remained for Drake was the passage through the islands and into the Indian Ocean. A new year dawned full of promises of home — time to relax.

Disaster struck on 9th January. The ship drove herself onto the jagged edge of a coral reef. It was night. Panic gripped the crew. Drake took charge, sending out search parties to look for damage while gathering the remainder to emergency stations for a palliative of prayer. The reports were good, the *Golden Hind* was not holed but a strong wind was bonding her to the reef. Boats were lowered to take soundings and find a place to drop the anchor to haul the ship off (the details of this evolution can be found in the Seamanship Manual). The next move was to lighten the ship; the jettison bill included eight guns, boxes of stores, sacks of food and three tons of the dearly won cloves. Still she would not shift. More prayers.

But this time Drake called upon Francis Fletcher to preach a sermon and the priest grasped the opportunity with both hands. Instead of praying for their future he lambasted the past blaming their fate on the false condemnation of Thomas Doughty. Drake remained silent. Then in the afternoon the wind changed and the ship heeled over, slipped down the coral face and refloated. Damage control saved the *Golden Hind*. Safe from the elements but not from men, Drake seized Francis Fletcher and in a peculiar service that made full use of his powers of ridicule he excommunicated the 'falest knave that liveth'. If the execution of Doughty was of doubtful legality this act had no justification except that Drake had carried it out and what he said mattered.

The ship sailed on to replenish at both Timor and Java where the sailors were once again made most welcome. Then at last the final unknown ocean passage to the Cape of Good Hope which was rounded on 18th June 1580. Unfortunately bad weather prevented a watering at the Cape and the *Golden Hind* had to press on for Sierra Leone. She arrived here on 22nd July with eight pints of foul water left — 118 days at sea without replenishment; those critics of Drake's logistical planning should look no further.

³Magellan and his Grand Design — A. Davies, *The Geographical Magazine*, October 1979.

Homecoming

On Monday 26th September the *Golden Hind* anchored in Plymouth Sound. Drake's first question to the local fishermen was, 'Is the Queen alive?' His neck depended on the answer. Nevertheless the next few weeks were as anxious as any on the voyage but as the Queen's share of the profit was enough to meet her government's requirements for a year there was little enough for Drake to fear. And, of course, there was Wynter whose long sojourn in jail could be used as a palliative for the Spanish. Drake was made.

Historically the voyage achieved little. Cavendish was to repeat the voyage at great profit to himself but it had little effect on European politics, exploration or colonisation. What it did do was ennoble all humanity and cast forth a challenge and a statement of man's potential for achievement against all odds. As Louis

McNeice was to write, of an earlier great tale, the voyage left

' . . . one great saga casting from the dark

Ages a lighthouse ray, a reminder that even then,

For all the spite and hatred and betrayal,

Men had the nobler qualities of men.'

That ray was to be seen as a guiding light by Cavendish, Cowley, Rogers, Dampier, Anson, Byron, Cartares, Wallis, Cook, Fitzroy, Vancouver, Portlock and Dixon as well as a tradition to be followed by the 1869/70 Flying Squadron and the 1923/24 Special Service Squadron and more recent group deployments. It was an example difficult to emulate and it gave to all that knew the story the realisation that however difficult the straits the good leader could overcome adversity.

D. J. CHILDS

Service Boats

AS THE COX'N of the Captain's motor boat I can vividly remember jostling for position with my rivals from other ships, waiting off Custom Steps, Valletta, for my Captain to appear from some official reception. And woe betide the cox'n who failed to provide his boat alongside the limited berthing space available as his Captain arrived with his opposite numbers on the jetty! A well aired story relates how one OOD had forgotten to provide a boat at all for his CO, a Senior Captain of a cruiser lying at head and stern buoys, again in Valletta. After waiting on the quay until the last boat from another ship was about to leave he boarded this and asked the cox'n to stop 100 yds off his ships accommodation ladder. At approx. 2330 and dressed in his No. 5, the Captain slipped over the side of the boat and was first remembered by his OOD as he was seen climbing, bedraggled but resolute up the accommodation ladder. Needless to say that particular duty officer saw little of Malta, or probably the remainder of the Mediterranean visits on that trip!

Those romantic boat stories are difficult to follow today although a quite recent Portland event was reminiscent of days gone past, and did bring back some maintainers' tears. It was Friday and a long week-end for some. The frigate was berthed starboard side to and had both the whaler and cutter in the water. The First Lieutenant had gone weekend and had left instructions for the boats to be hoisted the next day if the weather allowed. On Saturday morning, the wind was Force 5 blowing the ship onto the jetty. The OOD had arranged for a tug to haul off the stern of the ship whilst the whaler was manoeuvred between the frigate and the jetty for positioning beneath its falls. The whaler was nearing its falls when an anguished cry from forward told the OOD that the cutter was still secured on the

inboard bow, and in danger of being crushed. The tug was immediately ordered to stop pulling. The ship rapidly blew back onto the jetty and neatly crushed the whaler. Seeing this the OOD ordered the tug to pull hard. The response was impressive — the stern came out, the bow swung in and the cutter also was neatly crushed. Both boats were wrecked.

When in use, boats always have been and probably always will be a First Lieutenant's and duty officer's special concern. A good boat is a credit to its ship but the reverse, so often the case today, is also true. It is for the latter reason, no doubt, that service boats are greatly under-employed. Indeed, there are many who would support the removal of all but the gemini-type of boat from sea-going ships altogether.

Organic boat support has distinct advantages for a warship, despite today's trend to reduce the number of anchored-off visits. When required, locally hired boats are not always available and their cost is prohibitive. The move in recent years to rely more and more on outside service resources has severely restricted ship requirements, and trying to obtain transport, fuel, ammunition, berths, brow movements craneage — to name but a few resources, at short notice, in the dark hours or over public holidays or weekends is becoming increasingly difficult or impossible. It would be a retrograde step to allow yet another facility to fall outside the Navy's jurisdiction.

And that leads me to today's boats and their future. The generally poor upkeep and scant use of the Navy's power boats shows that personnel are probably unaware of the value of this investment. The September 1980 costings and scheduled future of the most common service boats are as

follows:—

Boat	Cost	Future
a. WHALER	£29,000	To be replaced by the 5.0 metre Rigid Inflatable Boat (RIB) AVON SEARIDER.
b. CHEVERTON	£40,000	To be replaced probably by the 8.0 metre Q26.
c. HUNTRESS	£44,000	
d. 6.5M RIB HALMATIC PACIFIC	£40,000	
e. 34FT. FAST MOTOR LAUNCH (FML)	£127,000	
f. 36FT. WORK BOAT MK II	£112,000	
g. GEMINI	£2,800	Probably to be replaced by the AVON 4.0 Metre RIB.
h. 5.0M RIB (AVON SEARIDER)	£9,000	

Only one ship remains fitted with the ATLANTIC RIB and this will be withdrawn from service shortly.

Outboard engines too are very expensive items. A reputable supplier offered the following Johnson outboards at the costs shown. These prices included a 25% reduction off the makers recommended price. All engines had only short shafts and no propeller guards.

Engine	Cost
20 HP	£544
25	£570
35	£687
50	£957
60	£1024
75	£1453

The design and capability of the various ships' boats win numerous sarcastic comments generally quoted by the ill-informed. Like so many Naval items where space, weight and joint purpose cause considerable restriction, the resultant is a compromise. Rarely can their design be single role, ie to land libertymen, to which purpose the average frigate's boats are not best suited. However, they do perform this task and innumerable others adequately, with safety, and with considerable reliability providing they have been given adequate attention.

Why do service boats cost so much in relation to what appears to be their civilian equivalent? This is a commonly asked question, rarely satisfied. The main difference is in the provision of slinging arrangements unique to davit slung vessels, which also demands hull strengthening. To be added to this major difference are specialised fittings and perhaps equipment

sittings, such as fuel tanks, to meet the Navy's stringent safety and employment requirements.

Boat and associated equipment upkeep generally leaves much to be desired. No material whether it be wood, GRP, steel or alloy will withstand the relentless and continual exposure to salt-laden air or water. A daily half-an-hour fresh water wash or clean off is essential on all exposed areas; whilst metal fittings need regular application of grease, or oil filming, to ensure the whole retains its protective, working and good looking qualities. Outboard motors are commonly neglected, often being left uncovered and worse than that, left sitting in filled test tanks for sometimes days at a time. The consequence that service outboards are unreliable and costly to upkeep is a direct result of negligent stowage and failure to cover whilst scant and therefore inexperienced driving further aggravates this situation.

In conclusion, I have tried to show that we do need service boats and that their design does have constraints to meet the varied requirements. I am certain that their cost is, to many, an enlightenment and that the apparent civilian equivalent, cheaper though it may be, in comparison, does have a very different way of life and therefore construction applied. I hope that few can now deny that the RN's investment in its boats is a heavy one, worthy of putting to good and frequent use, worthy of daily upkeep, worthy of better love and care.

SOS

A Letter from Australia—VIII

DEAR COMMANDER M,

The most important news is that the Government has announced its decision, in principle, to purchase a new carrier. The decision is hedged about with reservations; the particular design selected will not be announced until next year and the decision as to whether the ship will operate V/STOL aircraft will not be taken until 1983. I fear, also, that the Government has determined that there will be only one replacement for *Melbourne*.

The news is good, nevertheless. Of course the timing of the announcement is open to suspicion — 9th September, when the next Federal election is in mid-October — that it is a political ploy. But how else do Governments work? Labour's spokesman on defence, Gordon Scholes, and the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Hayden, are both very much against replacement of the *Melbourne*. Even a day aboard the flagship failed to convince Mr. Hayden of the value of fixed wing at sea for the RAN. If the ALP come into Government in October, the carrier project will not survive.

The plan is now to announce the design selected and place the order in twelve months time. Three ships are still under consideration: the Italian *Giuseppe Garibaldi*, the Spanish-built, American-designed *Canarias*, and the American *Okinawa* LPH, modified to take gas turbines. In view of equipment difficulties and the general unsuitability of the design, it seems likely that the *Garibaldi* can be rejected out of hand as a practical option.

Our choice thus falls between the Spaniard and the American. The major problem concerns where the vessel is to be built and whether or not there is any chance of a second being ordered. If the Government insists on only a one-for-one replacement, almost certainly that replacement will be a modified *Okinawa*. But, the Sea Control Ship is probably the better design for the RAN. It is designed to operate with the FFG 7 class, four of which

are under construction for the RAN, and shares much of the frigates' equipment and machinery. It is actually entirely an American conception, being Admiral Zumwalt's solution to the problem of getting V/STOL aircraft and helicopters to sea in cheaper platforms than super-carriers.

The Sea Control Ship is, however, being built in Spain, not America, and the Spanish shipyards, which take five years and much foreign assistance to build a frigate, have given no indications that they are sufficiently cheaper and faster about their work than Australian shipbuilders to merit placing an order with them. Were the SCS available in America, and the Government willing to build two, there would be no doubt at all about the selection.

V/STOL or not

So we must wait and see what the next twelve months will bring. What is more, we will have to wait three years until the decision whether or not to purchase V/STOL aircraft is made. This, if anything, is going to be an even more difficult order for which to secure approval. Whether or not to equip the *Australia* (as she will inevitably be known) with V/STOL fighters raises the whole issue of the requirement for the Navy to have its own fixed wing aircraft at sea, as opposed to relying on shore based air cover. The RAAF, it would appear, is fighting the proposal because it believes that it can do the job better with its new fighters — which must, inevitably, be far better *aircraft* than any V/STOL machine — based in the north and west. More important, the RAAF believes that the purchase of aircraft for the *Australia* will draw away funds which could be more usefully employed in strengthening its own front-line squadrons.

Certainly the first set in the match has been won by the Navy, with the Army in support. The *Australia* will have the capability of transporting a force of up to battalion strength, with stores, ammunition,

light vehicles and artillery, and putting them all ashore by helicopter. Purchase of the new vessel fits very well the Army's new organisation of 'fighting groups' presently being introduced. *Australia, Tobruk, Jervis Bay*, an AOR and the requisite escorts will be capable of transporting a substantial force to any area in the region.

Yet, if the RAAF should prevail, they will be without air cover. A particularly telling article on the carrier question, written by a former Chief of the Naval Staff and a distinguished defence journalist, displayed a map of Australia giving the radius of action of RAAF fighters from present bases, and other strategically placed airfields. This made it quite apparent that should the RAAF even establish a chain of bases along the exposed northern and western coasts, and double the size of the fighter force, the *practical* air support which could be provided would not even begin to approach that which could be sustained by a carrier with a full squadron of V/STOL aircraft embarked. So we must hope for an RAN victory, and a victory to the extent of the Government agreeing to the purchase of a second carrier and up to 30 fighters.

New escorts

The second announcement by the Government concerned the long awaited Follow-On Destroyer project. As you will be aware, Williamstown Naval Dockyard has been extensively modernised in order to equip it to build modern escorts. The problem, however, has been with labour. Industrial relations in the yard are in an appalling state. Communist-inspired trade unions have been quick to take the utmost advantage out of any weakness or mistake on the part of management, and have also been conspicuous in their lack of co-operation with any attempts to improve the situation. For example, the oceanographic vessel *Cook*, a ship of less than 2,500 tons displacement, has been under construction since 1974 and will not commission until late this year! On this performance, the time which Williamstown Naval Dockyard would take to produce a sophisticated frigate staggers the imagination.

A solution can be found. The industrial relations situation at Garden Island was once equally bad, but patience and shrewd bargaining have resulted in enormous improvements. Subject to such 'satisfactory resolution of a number of problems affecting productivity in Williamstown Dockyard', to quote the Ministerial statement, the Government intends to order two guided missile frigates.

These vessels will be largely equipped with American-built weapons and sensors, although I dare say that they will be fitted with the Mulloka sonar and other Australian-built anti-submarine equipment. Agreement with the American Government as to terms and prices will obviously be crucial to the order, for the Government intends to place options on the long lead items necessary for a further four of the class.

You will appreciate the ingenuity behind the decision. If the venture at Williamstown fails it will be possible to shift the order to America, for it is certain that whatever weapons are purchased will be fully compatible with contemporary American escort designs. The FFG 7 class, for example, will still be coming onto the order books for the USN as late as 1984, and perhaps even after that. Thus, the Government is not committing itself irretrievably until after the Dockyard has given satisfactory indications of improvements in labour relations and productivity.

The decision on the Follow-On Destroyer has determined the shape of the RAN's escort force for a very long time to come. Assuming that the programme proceeds as it should, by 1992 we should have in operation the 6 vessels planned, the 4 US built FFGs, and the 3 Modified *Charles F. Adams* class DDGs. It is likely that by that time some replacement for the ageing DDGs will be under construction — and that such a replacement class should be a development of the Follow-On Destroyer type.

The announcement by the Government should mean, subject to the conditions outlined above, that no more Australian FFGs will be ordered in the United States. It is to be hoped, since Australia was quite

capable of building escorts in its own yards between World War I and 1971 (the year in which the modified *Leander* class frigate *Torrens* commissioned), that these ships will be the last of such a size to be built overseas.

Easing of the purse strings

The presentation of the Federal Budget, which preceded the announcement of the carrier decision by only a few days, also brought much good news for the RAN. The Navy is being allowed more oil fuel for operations, a very welcome and continued easing in the restrictions which so hampered training and foreign deployments for most of the last decade.

More weapons, such as HARPOON missiles and Mk 48 torpedoes, are being purchased, as are two SEA KING helicopters as partial replacement for those already lost out of the original purchase of ten. Significantly, more money is being allocated for spares and support — two problem areas which have always been of great concern to the RAN, perhaps because we have always suffered, like many small organisations, from under-capitalisation. One can only hope that this process will be continued in the years ahead and that we will never again become hypnotised by the acquisition of major units, to the detriment of the all-important back up to those units.

The other measure of interest is that the Defence Force as a whole will be increased by 1,000 men per year for the next four years. Those of you who do your sums will realise that, in a Navy the size of the RAN, the commissioning in short order of *Tobruk* (LSH), *Adelaide* and *Canberra* (FFGs), numerous patrol boats and the *Cook*, while paying off as compensation only a destroyer (*Vendetta*) and the old *Diamantina*, an ex-*River* class frigate since employed as an oceanographic vessel, may cause several difficulties with manpower. What is more, both *Vampire* and *Supply* will each be replaced by two ships — two more FFGs and the AORs, all of which will be in service about the middle of the decade.

The situation could be said to be analogous to the problem you in the RN are now having, in the aftermath of the large orders placed by the Labour Government of

Mr. Callaghan and the accelerated construction of major units by builders in order to minimise the effects of the depression in their industry. One cannot help but notice that the Standby Squadron is becoming populated by units retired several years before their service lives were due to expire.

The RAN is being forced to embark upon a large-scale programme of training both officers and sailors. A case could possibly be made for considering the Fleet for two or three years to be one huge *basic* training platform while all the new entries are brought up to standard. The RANC is entering over 200 officers this year. In comparison with the entries of only a few years ago this is an enormous increase, and the sailors' training establishment at HMAS *Cerberus* in Westernport reflects a similar gain in numbers.

You may ask what is the reaction of the Australian Labour Party to all these decisions. The Opposition does not disagree with the expenditure on defence, despite the increases, but it disputes the wisdom of the Government's programme of purchases, feeling that Australia 'could get better value' for its money. As I mentioned, neither the carrier nor the escorts are popular with the ALP, who are becoming increasingly enamoured of the patrol boat-submarine combination. If the ALP wins the election we may expect a radical recasting of all the RAN's plans and a repetition of that unfortunate period in 1972 which saw the cancellation of the DDL and the *Protector*, the Australian designed AOE.

Since all but one of the FFGs are too near to completion to be cancelled (*Adelaide* will be on trials before the end of 1980), we could expect to see a fleet in the 1990s which is comprised half of frigates and destroyers and half of large missile equipped patrol boats. Perhaps the submarine arm will be numerous and well equipped, but it is not doing too badly at the moment — *and* such a Fleet would most certainly have no organic air cover.

A desirable outcome?

Yours sincerely,

'MASTER NED'

Fish Out of Water

(A NAVAL OFFICER'S LIFE AT SHAPE)

I AM NOW approaching the end of a two and a half year appointment to the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers in Europe (SHAPE) and had been considering writing an article for *The Naval Review* describing my experiences. This intention was strengthened when I read 'BARBARIAN'S' article on *'Manpower at NATO Headquarters'* in the October 1980 issue. It is not my intention to challenge any of 'BARBARIAN'S' statements and criticisms, but to try and give some idea of what life is like in SHAPE for a junior Desk Officer.

Sometime towards the end of 1977 my friendly appointer had offered me a job at SHAPE, saying that it was a new post, and one for which my (G) background was required. It was a Married Accompanied job, of which there are all too few, and I therefore accepted with pleasure. Shortly afterwards I was fortunate enough to meet a Senior Officer who had just returned from SHAPE, and asked him what I could expect. He was very encouraging, and told me that he was sure that I should find the job both interesting and enjoyable, if a little unusual, and his wife added that she was sure that my wife would also enjoy life.

I duly acknowledged my appointment to The Deputy United Kingdom National Military Representative (Navy) at SHAPE, who replied, welcoming me and stating that my 'Sponsor' would be in touch to put me in the picture, and would look after me on arrival. My sponsor gave me a lot of good advice, including a recommendation to remember to drive on the right hand side of the road in Europe, and on 1 May 1978, I packed my bags, and set off by car for CASTEAU, near MONS, in BELGIUM. On arrival, my sponsor was kind enough to put me up for the first two nights, and I then moved into the Bachelor Officers' Quarters, where I would live until a Married Quarter became available. There is no Officers Mess, as we understand it, but there is an Officers Club, where meals can be obtained, except for breakfast, on working days.

Unfortunately, the Club is closed for meals on weekends and holidays, and the BOQ dweller is then forced to fall back on his own resources. I had been warned to take a frying pan, plates, and knife, fork and spoon with me, and found that the Bon Marche had a good selection of tinned and easy to prepare meals available, so managed to survive quite happily, but I missed the convenience and comfort of a UK establishment Wardroom.

An Introduction to SHAPE

The Supreme Headquarters, Allied Powers, Europe, is the Headquarters of the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), one of the three Major NATO Commanders, the other two being the Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic, (SACLANT), and the Commander-in-Chief, Channel (CINCHAN). It is a multinational military Headquarters, with officers and other ranks from 14 of the 15 NATO nations present. ICELAND, which has no military forces, is not represented, LUXEMBOURG has only one officer, the National Military Representative, and FRANCE, which has withdrawn from the integrated military command, has a Military Mission, headed by a Major General. SACEUR himself is an American Army General, with two Deputy SACEURs, one a British General and one a German Admiral, and an American Air Force General as Chief of Staff. The two Deputy Chiefs of Staff are a German Lieutenant General, who is responsible for Plans and Operations, and an Italian Vice Admiral, who deals with Logistics and Administration. There are nine Divisions, each headed by a Major General or equivalent, including Operations, Plans and Policy, Intelligence, Personnel and Administration, Finance, Information Services, and, the Division in which I found myself, Logistics and Armament, headed by a Belgian Major General, with Danish and Turkish Major generals as Deputies.

As implied by BARBARIAN, this is a very top heavy set up, but it is government by

political factors, whereby each nation wants to have its senior officer representation. The most obvious duplication is that of the two Deputy SACEURs and the two Deputy Chiefs of Staff, where the division of tasks and responsibilities is the same, and it therefore appears as if the same job is being done at the four star and three star level, but as the German contribution to NATO forces increased, they required representation at a higher level.

The Headquarters building is a large, three storied, hollow square office block situated in CASTEAU. It is of interest that within two hundred yards of the main gate are memorials commemorating the positions at which the first and last shots were fired by British and Commonwealth forces in the First World War.

The Job

As mentioned, I was assigned to the Logistics and Armaments Division, and had been assured that my Gunnery background was important. It therefore came as some surprise to be told that I should be working on the Logistics, not the Armament side, and that I should be a member of the Movements and Transportation Section of the Division. The Rapid Reinforcement Concept had just been introduced, which involved speeding up the movement of reinforcements from America to Europe, and M & T Section was closely involved with this, and a Naval Officer was required to help with the sea side of this movement.

The idea of bringing reinforcements from America to Europe is, of course, nothing new, but the Rapid Reinforcement Concept envisaged the use of civilian ships and aircraft for the trans Atlantic crossing, and civilian lorries, trains, and barges for onward movement in Europe. This therefore required some civil/military co-operation, and I found myself acting as SACEUR's representative on the Planning Board for Ocean Shipping, dealing with the sea-borne movement of reinforcement equipment and supplies, the Ports and Beaches and Inland Waterways sub committee, dealing with the reception of

this equipment and other Sub Committees dealing with the onward movement of the equipment and supplies when they had been off loaded. My task is to present the military requirements for transport to the various Planning Boards and Sub Committees, and report back to SHAPE the progress that is being made in meeting these requirements — if any! Most of the meetings are held in NATO HQ in BRUSSELS, and they are attended by civilian and military representatives from all the nations involved. The Committee members speak in either French or English, whichever is their mother tongue, or the language with which they are most familiar, and simultaneous interpretation is provided. The interpreters do a superb job, but are sometimes taken a little aback when, for example, Dr. LUNS, the Secretary General of NATO, gives half of each speech in French and half in English, and the turnover point presents problems, and also when the Americans, in particular, come up with some particularly idiomatic phrase, which has no exact counterpart in French. It is also amusing to note how the French, and French speaking nations, will plead complete ignorance of English until and unless their English speaking counterpart produces a few stumbling words in French. Once the effort has been made, they then continue the conversation in very good English.

Staff procedures within SHAPE are also unusual to those of us who are used to British procedures. In particular, I find it difficult to get used to the idea that every paper must be produced in its final form at each stage. This means that when a Desk officer produces a paper, it has to be produced by the secretary as if it were to be sent off in that state. When, naturally, the Section Chief makes his additions and amendments, the secretary again types a 'final' paper, which is submitted to the Branch Chief, who again amends it and returns it for re-typing. This is repeated at DACOS, ACOS, and DCOS level so the poor Section Secretary has to type and re-type the same paper several times. Fortunately my own Section Secretary is an

English girl with a sense of humour, who is prepared to accept this.

The Environment

The area around MONS is an old coal mining part of the country, but the mines are now worked out, which is one reason why the Belgian Government offered SHAPE a home here, when we had to leave FRANCE, to bring some employment and income back to the area. SHAPE is very much a self contained community with some 10,000 inhabitants, and has a Married Quarters area; a shopping precinct with grocery store, furniture store, newsagents, bank, flower shop, etc.; a gymnasium with swimming pool, squash and racquetball courts, and weight lifting facilities, sports fields for baseball, football, rugger, American football and hockey, Clubs for Officers, 'Top-Graders' (Senior N.C.O.s), and Junior rates, a Youth Centre, Library, Chapel Centre, Schools, and a nursery. These are run very much on American lines, as is to be expected as more than half the people in SHAPE are Americans, but they are open to, and used by, all nations. The Chapel Centre is particularly interesting, as there are two chapels, with services starting on the hour in one, and at half past the hour in the other, and they cover all religions and all languages. When the clocks change forward or backward in Spring and Autumn, one tends to find a very mixed and puzzled congregation! Sermons tend to be kept short, as each service is limited to forty-five minutes in order to allow one congregation to leave, the church to be re-rigged, and the next congregation to enter in the remaining fifteen minutes.

I live in a Married Quarter on the Base, and my two sons, aged fifteen and fourteen are delighted to be able to make use of all these facilities, which far exceed anything available in a complex of similar size in England. Other families, who live off base, — on the economy, as it is called — have nicer houses, but mothers and fathers find that they spend their time acting as taxi drivers delivering their offspring(s) to, and collecting them from, sporting and social

functions in SHAPE.

The Distaff Side

In the same way as it took me some time to settle down in my unusual job, the tremendous change to this new environment took my wife some time to accomplish. However, there are an enormous number of things for wives to do, and she is now involved with: Red Cross work in the Hospital for one forenoon per week; working at the Thrift Shop on one afternoon; attending 'Welcome to Belgium' coffee mornings; when she chatters in French; going on Officers' wives clubs trips to places of interest in the neighbourhood; attending church group meetings; British wives evenings; Naval wives coffee mornings; and other amusements. There are also opportunities for wives to take full or part time jobs, if they so wish. Certainly life need not be boring for wives, and most of them enjoy it enormously.

Conclusions

The two questions that I am asked most frequently are: 'Does NATO work?', and 'Is SHAPE worthwhile?'. The answer to both of them is a very definite 'YES'. Having served here, I am firmly convinced that because of the united front that the NATO nations have presented to the Warsaw Pact we have had peace in Europe for the past 35 years, and the opportunity for officers and ratings of each of fourteen nations to work and meet socially together can do nothing but good. The efforts of a non-English speaking Italian or Turkish officer to produce a Staff Paper may result in something that is less than satisfactory to English eyes, but the ideas are sound, and the effort by the British officer to turn these papers into acceptable English leads to a greater understanding of national outlook on both sides, and if we ever do have to fight together, this could be very important.

As a result of my tour in SHAPE, I am convinced that NATO is a going concern, and I am delighted that I have had the opportunity to serve here. Efficient it may not be, but fun it certainly is.

P.B.M.

Officer Specialisation in the Royal Navy

ONE EVENT and the publication of two recent books have led me to some random thoughts on officer specialisation in the Royal Navy. The event was the introduction of the Principal Warfare Officer, which, as I see it, virtually abolishes the seaman specialist and produces an all rounder. I welcome it and wish that I had thought of the idea myself for reasons which will be clear later. The first book was *Whaley* in which John Wells gives a delightful and nostalgic picture of the Gunnery branch over many years. He omits, however, or glosses over many of the failures of naval gunnery. The second book was *The Great Gunnery Scandal* in which Anthony Pollen describes his father's unsuccessful attempts to introduce an efficient fire control system into the Navy in the years just before World War I. With it came a flexible system of tactics which would have been made possible by the new fire control system.

Before proceeding further, may I define my three main categories in the field of officer specialisation: the Specialists, the Vocationalists and the Super Specialists (or non-seamen officers)? A specialist was a seaman officer who elected to study one particular aspect of his trade in depth and to become an expert. A 'Dagger' specialist studied his trade in greater depth and was often more intelligent than his colleagues. There were not many 'daggers' however and it does not seem to me to affect the issue. The vocationalist (my definition) elected to spend most of his naval life in a different environment to the rest of the Navy. I look upon the Aviators, both Pilots and Observers, and the Submariners as falling into this category. While the Gunnery, Signals, Torpedo, Asdic and Physical Training experts fall clearly into the category of specialist, the Navigator is less easy to define. His environment was the bridge at sea and the chart house in harbour. I am inclined to put him with the vocationalists but I am open to argument.

The Surveyors are clearly vocationalists. They ply their lonely trade in peace and war with great efficiency. The Salt Horse comes under neither of these categories — the best of them tried to be competent all rounders and good seamen; many were too thick to do anything in particular. Since the 1920s, there have been only two Salt Horse First Sea Lords, David Beatty and Andrew Cunningham. There were three vocationalists, John Cunningham, Caspar John and David Luce, and the rest — about a dozen — were all specialists. This small number of Salt Horses in the list is not surprising in view of the difficulty which faced a young officer with, say, five firsts in Subs courses in dodging conscription as a specialist. A Super-Specialist (my definition again) is an officer who was not eligible for command at sea and concentrated almost entirely on his trade. Examples are the Marine Engineers, the Ordnance (Weapons/Electrical) Engineers and the Aeronautical Engineers. The Supply and Secretariat Branch and the Instructors also fall into this category.

Other navies

It is interesting to note that the American Navy has never adopted our system of specialisation, though their 'Engineering Duty Only' officers approach in status our Marine, Ordnance and Aeronautical Engineers. Annapolis trained officers had science degrees and the USN gave most 'line' officers a Post Graduate course at a civilian university at some time as a Lieutenant. The subjects included chemistry, physics, electronics and radio, sound waves, engineering and even meteorology. Thus a number of experts were created in the realms of ordnance, engineering, communications, sonar, etc. These officers remained 'line' officers and were eligible for command at sea. For example, the famous destroyer captain, Arleigh Burke, was an Ordnance P.G. of the University of Michigan. Such officers were employed in the Technical Bureau of the Navy department as well as at sea.

It has been difficult to gain information about the German Navy. British experts on the period are no longer alive, and several letters to Germany have remained unanswered. But I have been able to establish some important information. Firstly, there was considerable social snobbery, similar to that in the RN before the reforms of 1905. Engineers and scientists were regarded as second class citizens with low status. Scientists were kept strictly to their technical role and were unable to study operational research until too late. Many serious mistakes were made in the weapons and electronics field as a direct result. Secondly, they did not indulge in seaman specialisation, to the same extent as did the RN. Thirdly, the German Navy was not air minded, due, after the advent of the Nazis in 1934, to the influence of Goering. Fourthly, the German engineering industry, both marine and general, was far more modernised than its British counterpart.

In discussing and analysing these matters, I have restricted myself to the period after the First World War for two reasons. First, I know less about the former period, and secondly, because of the four main figures in *The Great Gunnery Scandal*, two, A. K. Wilson and R. H. Bacon, were Torpedo Officers. Moreover, many of the Gunnery Officers supported Pollen against Dreyer. So analysis of this affair is difficult, though I believe that it would reinforce my thesis. It does not seem to me that the United States Navy suffered from its lack of specialist branches. In WW2, its surface gunnery was as good as ours and its anti-aircraft gunnery was much superior, due to its tachymetric system of fire control, both for the long range and short range weapons. The Marine Engineering side of their Navy proved markedly better than ours. I do not know much about the electricians, but in this field they were not inferior. Only in the fields of Anti-Submarine warfare and, initially, of Radar, were they inferior, and they caught up fast. Their submarine torpedoes were most unsatisfactory at the start of the war, a fault which they shared,

as we will see, with the Germans. Again, they learnt fast, faster than the Germans, and their acoustic air dropped torpedo, which came into service in 1943, was a good weapon.

Their naval aviation, which had been allowed to develop on its own, was far superior to ours. Their submarine service, after a disappointing start due to the poor torpedoes, performed as well as ours, and they had better submarines, specially designed for work in hot climates. In 1939, they had a good fleet train which developed rapidly. Their damage control was at least as good as ours, which is not saying much in 1939. They had developed, in 1939, the techniques of re-fuelling at sea to a more advanced stage than we had. They had no navigating branch, but do not seem to have been handicapped thereby. They had naval construction battalions (the Seebecs) which did great work, especially in the Pacific. American naval cryptographers and intelligence officers did fine work in breaking Japanese codes and cyphers. Their own cypher machines were, in general, secure.

A strategic blunder

They made one notable and unforgivable mistake in the strategic field when they entered the war in 1941 entirely unprepared for the U-boat war and with no convoy system planned nor ships or aircraft available to escort convoys. And this despite the fact that they had full access to all our plans and operations in this field since 1939. I think that this tragically expensive error can probably be attributed to Ernie King's attitude that he was not going 'to be told by these God Damned Limeys' and preferred to make his own mistakes. He certainly did. In addition, the USN took a long time to get the measure of the Japanese, who had no active radar until 1944, in the long drawn out Solomons Islands campaign. I think that this was due to a lack of appreciation of how to use their equipment rather than to technical deficiencies.

As to the German Navy, their surface fire control at the start of WW2 was superior to

ours, due to the use of radar for range finding. Their anti-aircraft gunnery, due to the tachymetric system and to better short range weapons, was far superior. Their air warning radar was not so good as ours. In 1939, their torpedoes were unreliable and remained so for some time. If the torpedoes fired at our ships in the Norwegian campaign of 1940 had gone off, the results would have been disastrous. Their Marine Engineering techniques were better, though the machinery sometimes lacked reliability. In anti-submarine warfare, they started without active asdic and relied on accurate hydrophones. Having captured some British asdic sets after the fall of France in 1940, they caught up quickly and were effective in actions against our submarines. With special weapons, like the acoustic torpedo, the glider bomb and the guided bomb, the Germans led and we had to think of counter measures. Similarly, in mine warfare, they led and we followed. They seemed always to have the initiative. Where they failed was in their refusal, until too late in 1943, to use scientists in the role of operational research into tactics and the use of weapons and detecting devices. Here the Royal Navy (and the Royal Air Forces) had a great lead, especially in the Battle of the Atlantic.

Of their vocalionalists, the U-boat arm was very good and their morale, under desperate conditions, never seriously faltered. The German Navy was insufficiently air minded — Goering with his refusal to co-operate with the Navy saw to that. In the field of re-fuelling at sea, they were well advanced. Their damage control was good and their ships difficult to sink, being very stoutly built. Their cryptographers were superb. They were reading our cyphers from 1936 to 1943, and they even unscrambled the transatlantic telephone calls between Churchill and Roosevelt. They never realised, however, that we started reading their cyphers from May, 1941 onwards, a result of complacency which was shared by almost all communicators.

I do not know enough about the Japanese, French and Italian Navies to comment on their performances in war.

Now let us take each British specialisation in turn and see how it stood at the start of WW2 and how it adapted to the demands of war.

We were far inferior

The newer ships of the Royal Navy in 1939 had efficient fire control for surface fire, but there had been an unaccountable lag in the use of radar for rangefinding. Captain Roskill helped to correct this when he joined the naval staff in 1939, but it was too late and the main surface engagements of the first two years of the war were fought without radar range finding. The fuzes of our shells generally worked satisfactorily and our shells were efficient — this had been learnt from Jutland. Bombardment proved unexpectedly effective. As to AA gunnery, the situation was very bad indeed and we were far inferior to the Germans and Americans. The tachymetric system of A.A. fire control had been suggested between the wars but had been rejected and an almost useless system adopted instead. In his *'Naval Policy between the wars'*, Roskill explains that money was not available for the development of the new system, but with all respect I cannot agree. If the Gunnery branch had demanded it, they would have got it. And radar too. The proximity fuze for A.A. fire was a British idea which was brilliantly developed in America. As to short range A.A. weapons, the 2Pdr Pom Pom, whether single, double, quadruple or eight barrelled, was a poor weapon and the 0.5" Machine Gun was laughable. I do not know the history of the 40 mm Bofors, but I do know that the introduction of the 20 mm Oerlikon was at first strongly opposed by the Gunnery Branch. Both these weapons were far superior to ours. 'Foreign' weapons were anathema to the Director of Naval Ordnance.

The Torpedomen seem to have made fewer mistakes. Their magnetic fuze torpedoes for dropping from aircraft were defective, as the *Sheffield* showed when she was attacked in mistake for the *Bismarck*. But the British torpedo as a whole had the

merits of being most reliable, though of low performance. The loss of the *Trinidad*, which torpedoed itself, is the only exception which I know about and then the gyro froze!

British mine clearance was fairly good, once it had been established how the enemy mines worked. Surely, our intelligence should have told us more about them. British mines were satisfactory on the whole, though the large A/S minefield laid between Iceland and the Orkneys was more of a handicap to our side than to the enemy. This was due, I think, to conditions, such as weather and great depth rather than to bad design. Air dropped mines appear to have been efficient. Considering that we had a magnetic mine in 1919, their production for WW2 seems to have been slow. In 1939, the Torpedomen were still responsible for electricies. The system used by the Royal Navy seems to have stood the test of war satisfactorily.

The Signalmen produced good ship to ship and ship to shore communication on the whole, though they should have provided V.H.F. voice circuits for aircraft and convoy escorts earlier. The H/F D/F set, both for strategic and tactical purposes, was a brilliant achievement. The signal branch was responsible for the development of naval radar. Considering that radar for the Air Defence of Great Britain was first priority, the communicators did well to produce a good air warning set in 1938. In 1941, they produced the excellent type 271 (10 cm) set which did so much for A.S.W. As we have seen, they were slow to make a radar range finding set for surface gunnery. Maybe they were not pressed hard enough by the user. The system of coloured light recognition worked all right as far as I remember, but it did not seem to last long. Perhaps the advent of allies produced difficulties.

Insecure codes

The Royal Navy started the war with insecure codes and cyphers. As a result, until summer 1943, when the British one time pad was introduced world wide, the Germans were able to read most of the

codes and cyphers, gaining an immense advantage. They continued to read the US/UK cypher until late in 1943. This failure to provide secure signals can only be due to complacency. A secure cypher machine was ordered by the R.A.F. in 1936, and among others, Mountbatten advocated its use at sea. The Signal Division turned it down on the basis of an unsatisfactory trial at sea of only five sets. It is difficult to forgive this crass mistake which was directly responsible for so many ships and lives lost. British intelligence managed to break the German naval cyphers in May, 1941, and with occasional gaps, they were read to the end of the war. Some progress was also made with the Japanese signals. But the Signal Branch cannot claim the credit for this feat.

The Anti-Submarine Branch was the Cinderella of the pre-war Navy, and some of its officers were not of a high calibre, but it achieved much. The Asdic set worked well in good water conditions and with well trained operators. A/S weapons were the responsibility of the Torpedomen. The depth charge was a good weapon, but it was a pity that the hedgehog ahead throwing weapon was not developed earlier. It had great advantages over the depth charge and was first thought of in 1919. In the 1930s, the Gunnery Branch developed a gun to throw A/S bombs ahead of the ship, but nothing came of it. The depth estimating attachment to the Asdic set took too long to develop. It was a simple idea. The main criticism of the A/S Branch however, must be that it oversold its wares to senior officers and to Mr. Churchill before the war and persuaded them that ships could be efficiently protected by an A/S screen — a claim which was proved false by the tragedies of war. This led to the unnecessary loss of many ships and to many thousands of miles of futile steaming by so called 'hunting' groups. The A/S branch was struggling for existence however and the exaggerations can be understood if not condoned.

The Physical Training Branch was very small and I will refrain from mentioning

where rumour had it they kept their brains. Admiral Bob Burnett and General Campbell Hardy proved this canard untrue.

As to the Vocationalists, the Submariners gave a good account of themselves during WW2 and it is difficult seriously to fault their operations, though they were slow to undertake night attacks on the surface. The rejection of the Snorkel when it was brought over in Dutch submarines in 1940 was clearly a serious error of judgement, and the Submariners' suspicions delayed British counter measures to the German Snorkel. It took much time before they would admit that the German snort worked. The fitting of radar might have been accelerated, and when it did come, there was a reluctance to use it. British hydrophones were not so good as the Germans. Our boats were not designed for hot weather operations, unlike the U.S.N.'s. Flag Officer, Submarines, by his refusal to believe that German U-boats could dive to depths of 7-800 feet, delayed the advent of deep depth charges for escorts.

Deplorable aircraft

The Admiralty only regained control of the Fleet Air Arm in 1937 and many of its short comings, notably the deplorable aircraft, must be laid chiefly at the door of the Air Ministry, though the F.A.A., contributed by its insistence on three seat multi purpose aircraft. Other short comings, the useless A/S bombs and the lack of air dropped depth charges at the start of the war, must be shared with the Air Ministry. The British aircraft carrier was well built and the armoured deck was correct for a Navy with a limited number of carriers. It did however considerably limit the number of aircraft which could be embarked compared with the Americans and Japanese. Between the wars, the F.A.A. was slow to appreciate the merits of the 'across' as opposed to the 'fore and aft' arrester wire. The navigational skills of the Observers were unparalleled. There was an unaccountable slowness in fitting air warning radar to the carriers in 1938, and

consequently a slow start at fighter direction. Once started however, fighter direction was very good. Airborne radar came quickly. In the matter of air operations, and air tactics, we lagged behind the Americans, as we found out when the U.S.S. *Saratoga* was attached to the Eastern Fleet in 1944.

Owing to the nature of their trade, which they tried to represent as arcane as possible, the Navigators are difficult to assess. When the Plan Position Indicator (P.P.I.) revolutionised operation rooms, they seem to have been quick to respond. They were slow to adopt the bubble sextant if they ever did so.* The Navigators were also slow to use the R.A.F. system of working out sights which was much quicker but slightly less accurate than ours. But their record was a good one on the whole.

Next come the Marine Engineers. The ships in which we fought WW2 had reliable machinery, but it was gravely out of date and lagged far behind the Americans with their high temperature, high pressure steam. Both speed and endurance suffered.

The Ordnance Engineer is more difficult to assess. The Branch was small and it had little time to develop before the war started. On the whole, it seems to have done very well. The Aeronautical Engineers similarly started late, but did well. After the war, they helped to produce the angled deck, the steam catapult, the mirror landing sight and the Harrier ski jump — a fine achievement.

The Supply and Secretariat Branch performed its own work well. Some S and S officers, notably Ned Denning, developed a flair for intelligence and in the light of hindsight, it seems a pity that these officers had not been made the ship intelligence officers, instead of the Royal Marines who were not, with some exceptions, suitable for such work. Intelligence had been badly neglected between the wars. I think that

*NOTE. May I give one personal recollection of 1941? I was in charge a convoy escort destroyer in the North Atlantic and one dark but clear night, I received from the Commodore an observed fix which was badly needed. On return to harbour, I bought a bubble attachment to my sextant and all was well.

there is a case for it to be made a super specialisation, open to late careers in all branches of the service.

The Instructor Branch proved valuable as plotting officers in operations rooms. Again, in retrospect, it seems that the talents of these officers could have been better used.

Who was guilty?

We must now discuss other short comings of the Navy in 1939 and also the way it developed during the war. First comes the lack of appreciation of the threat to ships from the air. This must be put down to the Naval Staff as a whole, though the Gunnery and Aviation branches must accept the main responsibility. Next comes the fact that the Navy started the war with the intention to operate a convoy system, but with insufficient ships or aircraft to escort the convoys. There was also a complete lack of any doctrine of convoy protection and this had to be worked out by trial and error. There was much error. This must be placed at the door of the Naval Staff as a whole. There was only an embryo fleet train and we had to learn from the Americans. I have heard that Admiral 'Dummy' Oliver advocated setting up a fleet train during the wash up of a combined fleet exercise at Gibraltar in about 1925, but no one seems to have listened. Damage Control was almost entirely non-existent at the start of the war, but improved, after the unnecessary loss of ships, with the help of damage control schools. While the naval staff must accept the main responsibility, the marine engineers and the torpedomen must also feel guilty. The delay in developing the astern method of refuelling at sea was serious and should not have happened, as the alongside method had been well practised before the war. The Naval Staff again. Similarly, the lack of any serious preparation for Combined Operations is an indictment of the thinking of the naval staff, while some consideration should have been given to the design and tactics of Coastal Forces. Of course, it is easy to

criticise in the light of hindsight, but surely, if we could not have developed all these facets of naval warfare, priorities were wrong. Much effort was given to the Mobile Naval Base organisation, for example, which was not so important as the other matters mentioned. It is interesting to record that the 'civilian' supply services — Victualling, Naval and Armament stores fulfilled the considerable demands on them with efficiency.

The above analyses will, I hope, demonstrate that our specialists had failings and that other Navies, notably the American, were superior in many technical fields. The Naval Staff does not emerge too well. The Staff Course had taken a long time to gain acceptance in the service and even in the thirties, there was no rush to get places. The influence of A. K. Wilson and of Jackie Fisher, who hated the idea of a naval staff, lingered on.

The Gunnery Branch comes out bottom of the specialist league, mainly because it entered a war which was clearly to be dominated by aircraft with inefficient long and short range A.A. armament. Why should this have occurred? The Gunnery Branch traditionally had attracted most of the best brains and the best officers in the service. It rejected Gerald Langley, in a fit of pique, and he was the best brain of all when he applied for a gunnery course between the wars. I believe that the failure was due to a built in weakness in the system of specialisation as a whole, which led to false feelings of superiority and complacency. Once they had qualified, specialists, particularly gunnery officers, came to believe that they were alone qualified to think about their trade. They were unreceptive to new ideas, though they had a high *esprit de corps*. As a small and minor example, let me recount a personal tale. In September, 1939, I was Jimmy of an old 'Wair' destroyer, which was just finishing conversion to the A.A. role. I noticed that the trainers sight of the 0.5 inch machine gun was gate type and asked why. I was told 'for use against torpedo attack' or some such nonsense. So I put

a ring sight on the trainers sight in order that both layer and trainer should have the same aim and things were better. This created much fuss in high gunnery circles, but fortunately Tom Larken and Guy Western were at the local Gunnery School and they managed to convince their bosses that the change was right and it was adopted universally.

There were of course exceptions to my strictures, but their voices were submerged in the tide of complacency. The refusal to accept Langley as a 'G', difficult though he was, is typical of this attitude. He would have upset many preconceived ideas and might also have improved our whole gunnery system.

The Super Specialist suffered to some extent from the weakness of the Specialist, though not so badly. Our marine engineers should have replaced the main machinery before the war. The Vocationalist seems to have been more open to ideas than the Specialist and did not show the same complacency or arrogance. As to the Salt Horse, all U.S.N. line officers except the Vocationalists were Salt Horses. They seemed to do all right. I will not comment on British Salt Horses for personal reasons.

Things will now be better

In a Navy without seaman officer specialists, specialist schools are clearly needed. It is a pity that the Gunner's Mate has disappeared. A well trained naval staff is all important. Some unofficial sensible appointing is also appropriate in order to produce some experts. I believe however that the mystique of seaman specialisation damaged the Navy and that things will now be better. We must rely heavily on the expertise of Special Duty Officers and Fleet and Chief Petty Officers; even more so than in the past.

I am sure that I will be told that specialist 'G' and 'T' officers were needed both afloat and ashore, that signal officers were essential and that not a U-boat would have been sunk without the Asdic Branch; and so on.

Yet the American Navy did without them, except for the Post Graduates, and

no one can claim that the Americans were inferior in the technical field except for one or two comparatively minor areas. Their 'line' officer depended heavily on the expertise of the Warrant Officers and Chief P.O.s, but they also had a good scientific education at Annapolis to support them. The U.S. Navy has always had a Supply Corps, though they made do without professional secretaries. Only in the field of marine and aeronautical engineering did the U.S.N. find it necessary to have Engineering Duty Only Officers — Super Specialists.

As for the German Navy, many of its faults can be attributed to its Prussian attitude of snobbishness to its engineers and scientists. They had seaman specialisation, but not to the same extent as the R.N. They produced fine ships and fine weapons.

A summary of the performance of the main specialist branches in preparing the Navy for Hitler's war produces some interesting conclusions. The Gunnery Branch does not emerge well from examination. Gunnery departments of ships were well run, the morale of the branch was high and it contributed much to naval discipline as a whole. In preparing for a war of the future, however, it failed. The Torpedo Branch comes out better though its record is not all that impressive. The Communicators did well on the whole, except for the unforgiveable errors which lead to the reading of our codes and cyphers. The Anti-Submarine Branch was fighting for its existence, being new, but it got results. The Naval Staff officers did not prepare for war as well as they should have done, particularly in the fields of trade protection and the threat from the air. Here, the slow response of the Navy to the idea of a trained staff must be held mainly responsible.

The responsibility for these technical shortcomings falls, I think, not on individuals, but on the system of specialisation itself, which, all too often produced able minds which were arrogant, complacent and closed to ideas from outside their own circle.

Turning to other categories, the Vocationalists emerge, on the whole, rather well. They seemed open to ideas and were ready to experiment. The Fleet Air Arm never reached, during WW2, the operating efficiency of the Americans, but it started with a built in handicap of years of neglect between the wars. The new ideas which flourished after the war — the angled deck and the others — showed a readiness to accept new thoughts. The Super Specialists, especially the Marine Engineers, had some faults, but they did well as operators. Clearly, both Vocationalists and Super Specialists are needed in our Navy. The Diver should be added to this list. I also believe that a new form of late Super Specialisation for Intelligence Officers should be developed.

As to the present and the future, it will be asked 'Who is to provide the expertise to serve the Navy and to provide the technical ability to communicate with scientists on a

high level'? I believe that the Super Specialists should do this, though some of the more technically gifted P.W.O.s will find themselves experts in a trade and will be able to help.

Perhaps the outstanding fact which emerges from my analysis is that the Royal Navy entered two world wars with fire control arrangements for its most important armament (I look upon Anti-Aircraft as the most important armament in WW2) inferior to those in use elsewhere in the world and which had been available to us if we had accepted them. That this state of affairs should have arisen is a damning indictment of the system which produced it.

I welcome comment and correction of my paper. I am most grateful for much help from distinguished ex-Specialists, Vocationalists and Super Specialists in writing it.

PETER GRETTON

Officer Specialisation — A Commentary

(The foregoing article, in draft form, was sent to Dr. Norman Dixon, the author of *The Psychology of Military Incompetence* and a distinguished psychologist with a military background. His comments follow. *Editor*).

GENERALLY, I accept the thesis, not so much on the basis of differences between the American experiences, which are perhaps not only due to differences in specialisations but to a host of other factors (e.g. economic considerations; socio-cultural differences in personality, inventiveness and flexibility; weight of traditional practices and beliefs; and the plain facts that the U.S. had time to learn from the mistakes of the U.K., were less stressed and, if only for geographical reasons, could be more detached.)

The crux of the argument is contained in the paragraph which describes the built in weakness of specialisation. Personally, I would like to see this section expanded by emphasising that while some specialisation is necessary because:—

- (a) In a modern navy there are a number of very different roles that require to be filled.
- (b) There are pronounced individual differences in skills, talents and expertise.
- (c) It is a waste of time and money to train everyone to do everything.

(All this is the 'round peg in the round hole' argument.).

It (specialisation) introduces certain dangers. The latter include —

- (a) The forming of elites with the consequent breakdowns of com-

munication between the in-group and the out-group.

(b) The tendency of specialists to be conservative. Like cavalymen between the wars, who resisted tanks, some specialists cling to what they know, being afraid of looking foolish at having to master something which is new to them. In the interim, they cease to be specialists and it is painful to relinquish a previous status.

(c) In the armed services (as in the medical profession), specialisation fosters jealousy and inter departmental friction. Just as neurologists quarrelling with psychiatrists may result in the relative neglect of the patient, so interdepartmental fights in the army or navy may benefit no-one but the enemy.

(d) The work of specialists can never be entirely divorced from that of others in the same service. I would have thought that the engineer needs to know something of the job of the navigator and the latter should be at least acquainted with problems facing cooks and gunnery officers (i.e. too much specialisation could interfere with the teamwork on which ultimate success depends.)

My last point is the rather obvious one that where a high rate of casualties is expected, it is important that people can take over each others jobs. Therefore I would opt for specialisation on top of rather than instead of, general training.

NORMAN DIXON

Correspondence

THANK YOU

Sir,—May I, through your columns, express my warmest thanks to our Chairman, Trustees, Committee and all members for the gift of a magnificent engraving of 'Lord Viscount Duncan's Victory and Admiral De Winter's Resignation on Board the *Venerable*, October 11th 1797', done by Daniel Orme. That the presentation was made by Admiral of the Fleet Sir Terence Lewin, Chief of the Defence Staff, friend, and serving member of longest standing, added greatly to the pleasure as well as to the honour of the occasion.

Had I been able, during my term as Editor, to increase the membership, sell *The Naval Review Index*, and establish the journal even more firmly as 'the thinking naval officer's *vade mecum*', I should have felt more worthy to be the recipient of so handsome a memento. The task was rewarding in itself, made enjoyable by the contacts it engendered with so many members; with our Chairman and his predecessor; with our devoted Secretary Captain 'Joe' Blamey; with our Printers; and with my predecessor and successor as Editor. Thank you all, and long may *The Naval Review* flourish.

IAN McGEACH

PLUMBERS' HUNDRED

Sir,—It was good to see John Winton's witty pen employed in covering the Keyham/Manadon centenary events. What a strange coincidence that the 175th anniversary of Trafalgar should fall in the same year as Whaleys's 150th, Keyham's 100th and Dartmouth's 75th. It was of some interest therefore to see in the same issue Lancaster's introspective views on the Gunnery world in conjunction with Winton's — occasionally waspish — comments on the seaman attitude in the past towards engineers. There has without doubt been a struggle over the years, often bitter; but I am sure it is largely a reflection

of the national attitude towards engineering at any particular period, and not just one peculiar to the prejudice of the seaman branch of the Navy; after all it was not so long ago that doctors and solicitors used the tradesmens' entrance rather than the front door!

Winton mentions the shortages, poor pay and status of the naval engineers in the 1840s — 'the Navy's demand for engineers has always exceeded its regard for them . . . unless things improved there simply would be no engineers'. And yet 140 years later look how Ministers are hell bent in trying to encourage the nation's young to enter a technological career, because our whole economy depends virtually on what technologists can produce, and sell. The success or otherwise of North Sea Oil, the Mini Metro and so on is fundamental to our national economy, and our engineers will have confirmed their status accordingly. In the same way, I would like to think, the Naval engineers (and indeed the Supply branch) in two World Wars have already earned such recognition — as was implied under the provisions of AFO 1/56. Despite the discrepancies in promotion zones which have recently been ventilated in these columns, and which it is hoped are now being rectified, it is surely a measure of this recognition that there will shortly be two engineer officers as members of the Board, that the Chief of Defence Staff and the Second Sea Lord attended the Manadon Centenary dinner, and that Prince Charles took ceremonial divisions at Manadon in May and unveiled a commemorative plaque.

I wore the purple stripe for over twenty years, and as the direct descendant of a Portsmouth ship constructor in the 1700s, followed by two generations of Captains (ex Masters), and with my father a Paymaster, I may not be quite so conscious of branch distinction as some who may have suffered under the occasional overbearing of a 'Blue Water School' fanatic. Perhaps too, small

ship life is a great leveller. Winton mentions the discomfiture of a young (E) officer visiting his watchkeeping 'oppo' on the bridge. The welcome might have been equally cool had a visit in reverse been made unexpectedly to a machinery space? Many the pleasant hour by day and night that I must admit to as a destroyer Chief nattering on the bridge. Two occasions of a rather different nature come to mind. During the Plymouth blitzes my destroyer was the duty ship anchored in the Sound. The first load of incendiaries on the Hoe on the first night drew us all up to the bridge from a good Wardroom dinner to watch developments and the sporadic futile fire of our own guns at unseen targets. What control existed came through the K.H.M.'s signal lamp at Longroom. Eventually I heard the Yeoman say to his mate 'Sandy, you can pack up takin' Longroom now. It's 'ad it' — as indeed Longroom had, under a direct hit. And the Captain followed with 'Come on Chief, down to my sea cabin — there's damn all we can do up here!'

On another occasion during a Commando night raid on a Greek island I went up to natter as we lay off, stopped. It was a perfect still, moonlit evening, with the Royals well ashore, when suddenly we came under small arms fire from a nearby cliff. I was down those ladders like greased lightning to find the Captain's 'Full Astern' had already been nearly achieved!

Admittedly in those days there was always a very good reason for a visit to the bridge because before broadcasting round the ship became possible there was no other way of keeping the watchkeepers below informed of what was going on. And in return I was always glad, as Chief, when my Captain (and any other officer) was able to spare the time to visit the machinery spaces at sea, especially at full power — both for his own appreciation of what went on, but also to show those below decks that we were all of one company. Unfortunately in the case of our Major of Marines in one cruiser, who was a born practical joker and a great friend of the E.R. Department, things almost went too far. His fiddling

with the pins on the polished brass 'Boiler Hours' board in the Engineers Office was one thing, but a threat to fiddle with the controls below had to be considered seriously. He met his deserts by finding himself walled up while asleep in his cabin by a barrage of very heavy beer crates across his doorway.

May all these important anniversaries be turning points in cementing the happy relationships between branches which are so vital to the well-being of our great Service.

I. G. AYLEN

PLUMBERS' HUNDRED

Sir,—As a one-time RNR engineer with only a refresher course through which to lay claim to a connection with Manadon I should shrink from commenting upon a small detail in the history of naval engineering.

However, please let me quote from C. R. Low's *History of the Indian Navy*, Vol. I page 412.

'The Hon. Company's steamer *Diana* was undoubtedly the first vessel propelled by paddles that floated to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope. She was launched on the 12th of July, 1823 at Kyd's Dock Kidderpore, and the Calcutta *John Bull* in announcing the event, added, with prophetic foresight, "She sits well on the water, and is a great ornament to the river. We hail her as the harbinger of future vessels of her kind who will waft us to our native shores with speed and pleasure." Up to the time of her purchase by the Bengal Government, shortly before the Burmese War, she was managed by Mr. Anderson, the Engineer, who, like most of those who originate improvements, derive little personal advantage. The *Diana* was eminently useful on the Irrawaddy, and it is a remarkable fact that up to March, 1831, when she came to Calcutta for repairs, the little steamer had run for eight years with only such occasional repairs to her engines as her

engineers could give. The *Diana* was not a seagoing ship, but her continued passages, at a period subsequent to the war, from port to port on the Tenasserim Coast during the south-west monsoon, proved her to be seaworthy.'

The HEIC's use of naval steam vessels and their support of the RN in the Far East generally appears to have been ignored as has their decision of 1839 to have the first wholly steam driven naval service. The cost of maintaining a timber built fleet seems to have been a constant source of irritation to the company and, this probably explains why, by the middle years of the HEIC's Indian Navy, that is in the 1840's, half of their active naval steam vessels were of iron construction.

Marine engineers and sea-going military officers all suffered in the service of the Company. Low does not tell us whether it was one of Mr. Anderson's legs that ended up in a bucket, but an appreciation of the general conditions under which the Company's engineers worked can be gleaned from the Engineers' Lists of 1837-1848. From a total of one hundred and sixty-nine engineers, nineteen retired, twenty-nine were dismissed, fifty-six died in service and two deserted.

R.J.T.

PLUMBERS' HUNDRED

Sir,—I much enjoyed reading John Winton's article in your October number. Few officers today are aware of the scandalous behaviour of the Board of Admiralty towards the engineering branch in the Nineteen-Twenties.

In 1919, as a Sub-lieutenant in a 'V' class destroyer, I opted to specialise in engineering under a scheme similar to the Selborne-Fisher. The course consisted of 6 months instruction at Greenwich and 18 months at Keyham. We were a mixture of Lieutenants and Subs — some 30 in all — including a Japanese officer who later reached the highest rank as an engineer in the Japanese Navy.

We had hardly started the course when the Admiralty informed us that either we

remain as engineer officers for the rest of our careers or cease the course forthwith. A few left the course. The Admiralty also informed us that (E) officers would no longer hold military command. This meant that engineers would be placed in a subordinate position *vis-à-vis* other officers and they would have to take orders from deck or executive officers, however junior. Ironically (E) officers become ineligible to become members of the United Services Club though I was made an exception because I held a bridge watching certificate. One concluded that engineer officers were not considered to be gentlemen.

The Admiralty Order created a furore among the large engineering institutions throughout the country. They considered it a slur on the engineering profession. A delegation led by famous engineers including Lord Weir, Sir Charles Parsons and Sir John Thornycroft visited the First Lord of the Admiralty to express their strong views. The First Lord had apparently never heard of the Order although he was alleged to have signed it. Even *The Times* carried strong leading articles and letters on the subject. All to no avail.

The next stage occurred in 1925, described by John Winton as 'The Great Betrayal'. I was on the staff at Keyham and so offensive was the new Admiralty Order that many of us applied to resign. To add insult to injury, the order to ship the purple stripe specified that it was to be of a more distinctive hue than that hitherto worn by engineer officers. In other words, (E) officers must never be mistaken for their superior executive officers. That is how we felt about it and it was three years before I had my uniform changed. I doubt whether I ever recovered completely from the way we were betrayed.

When I retired in 1953, I felt that, at last, I could express my views. I called on Lord Mountbatten, my old term mate, and Sir John Lang, Secretary of the Navy and told them that they were losing many brilliant officers, capable of filling high administrative posts, because they wore either purple or white distinguishing stripes.

I cited the American and Japanese Navies with both of which I had been working. I claim no credit for the great changes which occurred soon after.

G.C.R.

BAND OF BROTHERS

Sir,—I read John Winton's article *Plumbers' Hundred* with great interest, and thought that within the confines of such a brief survey, it was very well done.

However, as the Lieutenant (E) whose rather frosty welcome to the bridge of *Dorsetshire* is quoted, I would like to add a postscript.

In my experience, the coolness shown by some Executive Officers to Engineers was confined to big ships. From 1932 till 1938 I served in submarines and destroyers, where I found the wardrooms seldom other than echoes of the Nelsonic 'band of brothers'. In one destroyer I was trusted sufficiently to do Officer of the Watch on the bridge when most of the others had been struck by some epidemic disease.

In 1938 I joined a battleship as Senior Engineer, and found things inclined to be 'sticky' at times. For instance, throughout the commission I was never asked to drink or a meal in the cuddy. Which all goes to show the truth of the old saw — 'Different ships, different long splices'.

PURPLE STRIPE

WHALEY

Sir,—Lancaster in his perceptive article on the place of the Gunnery Branch in our naval history commented on the dig taken at the subspecialists by Vermis in 'Worms Eye View' (*The Naval Review*, April 1962). Vermis and I have had some satisfaction over the years in seeing the great majority of the 'outrageous' suggestions in that article implemented to the general benefit of the Navy, but I would plead 'not guilty' to Lancaster's charge that I recommended the complete abolition of the subspecialists. The extract from my article quoted by Lancaster made the point that subspecialists had shortcomings as watchkeeping PCOs/PWOs. The action

needed to remedy this was the greater cross-training of these men in operations room watchkeeping skills which took place progressively in the 1960's.

The PWO scheme when it was introduced was considered by many, including me, to be 'throwing the baby out with the bathwater', in that in seeking for complete 'across the board' tactical knowledge, the requirement for more than a cursory knowledge of equipment was abandoned. While this 'cultural revolution' brought many benefits, it is very doubtful if it will stand the test of time.

One of the main charges against the subspecialists was their inability to deal with the complex information handling problem in the Ops room; this is only soluble in the long term by the automation which has already been fitted to our weapons. As the requirement for men to be involved decreases those that remain must fully understand their equipment to get the best out of it. This knowledge is already possessed by the maintainers and so they can fulfil both functions.

I put forward the view in 'Don't go up the Rigging Jack, they've taken it away' (*The Naval Review*, 1977, pp. 278 and 364) that the Navy took the wrong turn in 1947 with the formation of the Electrical Branch. Lancaster commented on the illogicalities that this produced in the early stages. These are now apparent, at a time when we have had to pay off ships through alleged shortages of men, in large 'top heavy' complements caused by having two branches involved with each bit of warfare equipment, in contrast to other navies who manage with considerably fewer men. The solution then proposed was the re-amalgamation of the Operations and Weapons Engineering Branches into the Warfare Branch and this remains a course open to us. The traditionalists amongst us can take comfort that such a move would accord with one of the earliest statements on the best way to run a ship, made by Francis Drake, which has been well used in this journal — the need to be 'all of a (one) company'.

D. B. MANSERGH

CAPTAINS AND KINGS

Sir,—I am doing research for a study, which I shall publish later this year under my own imprint of Bluejacket Books, on the influence of the Royal Family on the Royal Navy since 1900. In other words: what exactly is this special relationship the Royal Family undoubtedly have with the Navy?

Many members or their relatives must have met or served with members of the Royal Family. It they have any opinions, anecdotes, reminiscences, or any biographical material of any kind I would very much like to hear from them.

JOHN WINTON
Bryn Clwyd,
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Clwyd LL16 4HP

WARSHIP DESIGN

Sir,—‘An Admiralty spokesman said that HMS *Coventry* (4,300 tons) had sailed in company with RFA *Olna* (36,000 tons) for the Indian Ocean’ — paraphrase of press report 28 September 1980, Iraq-Iran war.

Doesn't that simple statement summarise a major design problem? To deploy one destroyer to an isolated hostile area for anything in excess of a weekend requires its accompanying milch-cow. No doubt the Admiralty oiler will be supplemented from time to time by a stores ship to top up naval and victualling stores; if *Coventry* actually has to open fire, then an urgent requirement for an armament stores vessel will also emerge.

As our thin grey line becomes steadily thinner, the concept of the Fleet Train becomes ever less attractive. The current warship will have enough difficulty in defending itself against the wide-ranging and sophisticated threat; to add protection of the Fleet Train to its duties ensures that the time and capability left for independent attrition is seriously reduced.

Surely commonsense insists that every warship Naval Staff Requirement should start with the sine qua non that the ship should be self-supporting for fuel, stores

and armament for the specified period of its patrol (presumably not less than a month), with certain clear assumptions about average speed and percentage of time in ‘hot warfare.’

These principles pose problems for the designer which will result in a very different kind of surface warship. It will probably be nuclear-powered, its offensive weapons will either be nuclear tipped or be of the power-laser type; and its manpower will be lean enough, and its equipment reliable enough, to live on the stores embarked at the start of the patrol.

This paragraph describes a vessel which closely resembles a Fleet Submarine and therein lies the point. If the surface warship is to survive it will be by assimilating as many of the successful characteristics of the contemporary submarine as it can. Otherwise we shall continue to have two Navies, of which one may be of limited use in peacetime, but the other will certainly perish in time of war.

SNIFE

THE ADOPTION OF THE OERLIKON GUN — AN ADDENDUM

Sir,—In April 1980 (Vol. 68 No. 2) of *The Naval Review* I put on paper my recollections of the above subject, named Sir Charles Goodeve (who unfortunately died in the same month that my article was published) and Sir Steuart Mitchell as the chief heroes of the story, and invited recollections from other members of *The Naval Review* — which produced a number of interesting and valuable letters.

The generosity of Patrick Beesly in presenting to my College all the correspondence and papers which he had collected while working on his two books *Very Special Intelligence* and *Very Special Admiral* (1977 and 1980) brought to my attention a letter which Sir Steuart Mitchell wrote to Mr. Beesly shortly after reading his first book. As it throws interesting light on how Sir Steuart got the American Navy to adopt the Oerlikon, a decision from which the Royal Navy ultimately benefited greatly under Lend Lease, I sought his approval to

publish it — which was readily given. The relevant paragraph of his letter is as follows:—

‘Ernie King (Fleet Admiral E. J. King) was a rabid, and very unpleasant, Anglophobe¹ and his No. 2 Edwards (Rear-Admiral Richard S. Edwards, Deputy to King) was nearly as bad. But it would be wrong to think that King and Edwards were typical of the USN. My own experience (as a mere Commander) was in dealing extensively over several years with the Chief of the Bureau of Ordnance in the US Navy Dept. — Admiral Blandy. Before I could start making Oerlikon guns in the USA, with the US still at peace, I had by law to get one of the US Services to say that if the USA got into the war then this weapon would be of value to them. That is their State Dept. would not allow a weapon to be made in the USA if it was purely “for export” as it might compromise their much vaunted “neutrality laws”. So I talked to Blandy: set up an Oerlikon at the USN Proving Ground (Dahlgren): persuaded them to fly a radio controlled target plane over me²: shot it down myself: put Blandy into the “harness” of the gun: loaded it with a full magazine of tracer ammunition: and told Blandy to write “B” for Blandy in the sky with the tracer and see how marvellously one could control that gun. For the first 2 seconds he had his eyes firmly closed, but finally opened them and wrote a firm “B” for Blandy in the sky. He then unbuttoned himself from the harness: looked me straight in the eye: thought for about 5 seconds: and then said “O.K. Commander. We’ll take that. Go ahead”. And thereafter his help and support were tremendous. I had a huge respect for the man. (Our Foreign Office had told the Admiralty it would take “many months” to get a decision on our building the Oerlikon; Blandy gave me the go ahead in about 45 minutes). So Ernie King was not by any means typical of the USN. In my experience they are first class chaps and grand to work with’.

To supplement Sir Steuart’s memories of Admiral Blandy I would add that when I carried out a number of missions to the USA between 1944 and 1946 I had exactly the same experience with Admiral Blandy’s successor Admiral George F. Hussey Jr., who always invited me to attend meetings where matters of interest to us were to be discussed. I very well recall how after one such meeting Hussey turned to me and said ‘Are you satisfied Stephen?’ to which I replied with an unhesitant affirmative. Hussey and his wife have remained my close friends to this day. I only got to know Blandy well when he was appointed to command the Joint Task Force organised to carry out the atomic bomb trials at Bikini in 1946, to which I was appointed as the senior British ‘observer’. It was entirely thanks to Blandy that we got all the information we needed — despite the MacMahon Act having just been passed by Congress forbidding exchange of information on nuclear weapons. Our report to the British Chiefs of Staff became something of a Top Secret best seller in the USA — which asked for 200 copies of it, a demand which the Admiralty generously met by printing it in full.

STEPHEN ROSKILL

Postscript

Sir Steuart Mitchell writes that he was sent to USA ‘in October or November 1940 to get Oerlikon gun and ammunition production going since I knew pretty well all about it from my time in Switzerland. I remained in charge of this, and of all

¹Admiral King was C-in-C, U.S. Fleet, from 20th December 1941. On 12th March 1942 President Roosevelt combined that office with the post of Chief of Naval Operations, and on 26th March King relieved Admiral Stark as CNO. It is only fair to add that when I interviewed Walter Whitehill, the biographer of Admiral King, he firmly declared that he was not an Anglophobe but merely wanted his own service to reap the full fruits of victory. None the less there is a great deal of evidence about King’s attitude towards the Royal Navy and the British being little if at all short of Anglophobia. — S.W.R.

²With reference to the target fired at that day Sir Steuart asks me to explain that it was not a fully fledged W/T controlled aircraft like our own ‘Queen Bees’ but ‘a small and very simple model plane of low speed, low height, and virtually zero G manoeuvrability. One could have knocked it down by throwing a stone at it, and it was no problem to an Oerlikon.’ — S.W.R.

Admiralty's ordnance requirements in the USA until early 1944. By autumn 1941 of course, my organisation was turning out Oerlikons and their ammunition in numbers far in excess of U.K. production. . . . Mountbatten had *nothing* — absolutely *nothing* to do with the adoption or production of the Oerlikon'.

With reference to the statement in my original article that Mitchell's extraordinary gun-running exploit out of Switzerland at the time of the fall of France he writes that it was not done to Constantinople as I stated but to Yugoslavia by means which he is still under oath not to divulge to anyone. Moral, once again, never rely on memory.

NARVIK

Sir,—In the course of a cruise up the Norwegian coast I visited several of the ports that figured in the Norwegian campaign of 1940. At that time I was the Staff Officer Plans on the Commander-in-Chief Home Fleet's staff and hence much involved in all that went on. This letter is in one respect a sort of postscript to P.W.G.'s article on Narvik on page 235 of the July issue of *The Naval Review*.

The first port visited was Andalsnes — a village in a fjord south of Trondheim. Here the intention was to land troops to make a pincer movement round that city, the other jaw being landings at Namsos further north. I had always thought this was a wild idea and now I have seen the area I am certain it was. To begin with, landings had to take place in the darkness because of enemy air attacks which meant captains of the troop carrying ships had to proceed up a pretty narrow fjord, which most of them cannot have known beforehand, in the dark. Apart from that movement of troops would have been almost impossible. I do not know what the roads were like in 1940 but in 1980 though quite good they are a mass of hairpin bends many of which in the standard sized motorcoach we were travelling in could not be negotiated without the coach having to back and fill two or three times. Hair raising at times with a sheer drop one side. The village itself

was bombed out of existence in 1940 and has been completely rebuilt — as have most of the towns and villages occupied by the Germans who burnt them when they pulled out in 1945.

Next came Narvik. How different to 1940. When Captain Warburton-Lee VC went in with his five destroyers at daylight in April 1940 and caught two of the German destroyers alongside, the whole harbour was full of small tramp steamers loading iron ore or waiting their turn to do so. In 1980 there was one big ore carrier alongside loading from the modern loading equipment but no other shipping at all except for our cruise liner and a coastal passenger cum freight carrier. The volume of iron ore exported is however considerably larger than in 1940.

Like P.W.G. we were impressed with the cemeteries. Four war cemeteries in the town cemetery — British, French, Norwegian and German. The last named much the largest, mostly the crews of the German destroyers. The sad thing is that many of the graves in the British cemetery are inscribed 'An unknown sailor from H.M.S. *Hunter*' or 'an unknown British soldier'.

The cemeteries are all beautifully maintained and, believe it or not, though Narvik is a couple of degrees *inside* the Arctic Circle, girls were cutting the grass in them etc. wearing nothing, and I mean literally nothing, but a bikini and a bra!

A story not generally known about the second battle of Narvik is that on the way up the fjord the Admiral in the *Warspite* noticed that the starboard wing destroyer, the *Hero*, seemed very interested in a point of land where there was a lighthouse. He signalled asking if they had sighted some newly created gun emplacements. Since the actual object under scrutiny was a dizzy Norwegian blonde standing alongside the lighthouse keeper the captain found a suitable reply awkward to frame.

That completes my comments on the Norwegian campaign but the cruise liner went on to the ice-barrier in 80 degrees North and to Spitzbergen. It so happened that in the middle of the war when we were

supporting and supplying a small Norwegian occupying force at Long Year City I was much concerned with what went on with it and indeed with everything in Spitzbergen. It is a remarkably strange area which has ten months winter and two big main settlements. Long Year City is Norwegian and Barentsburg is Russian. Both exist because of coal mining, the coal being at no great depth. We were told that the Norwegians, whose territory it is, to avoid political troubles, have laid it down that anybody can mine coal there provided they do not take out more than they can use themselves i.e. they must not export it.

We landed at Long Year City and walked to the Bank and the general store, which was well stocked, and the ship steamed slowly past Barentsburg which is some miles away. Only about two or three women were visible at the latter place and one wondered if the coalminers were volunteers as the Norwegians are.

As a final comment talking to several Norwegians in various places their attitude to the Second World War is that they are very happy to maintain the various war memorials and cemeteries but in other respects they wish to forget the war in every detail. They wish to forget it ever took place.

C.C.H.H.

ENGINEERING BRANCH DEVELOPMENT — MK II

Sir,—Members of *The Naval Review* (or regrettably, as is more often the case, readers) would probably agree that the prime role of the Royal Navy is defence — and in particular defence of the United Kingdom. Defence can be achieved by two distinct methods — reliance on threat of all-out nuclear war or by the use of conventional armed forces to 'snuff out' aggressive acts.

Maintenance of any deterrent — nuclear or conventional — requires a high state of weapon effectiveness and readiness to be maintained *at all times*. The advantage is with the nation prepared to make the preemptive strike — it needs weapon effective-

ness only over a short period. How well the Israeli armed forces have learnt this lesson!

Listening to the conversations of young WE Officers, it is clear that they accept that Weapon effectiveness is their prime concern. The main argument supporting present EBD activities was the requirement to relieve WE Officers of their more mundane (as they saw them) responsibilities so they could concentrate on, and improve Weapon effectiveness (should Weapons effectiveness not increase EBD must be declared a waste of time, money and effort).

Having been associated with post-EBD course design for WE Officers it has been apparent that Weapon systems and their use have become very complex and that a thorough understanding of the full range of electronic engineering techniques is an essential ingredient in the 'make-up' of the future WE Officer. It is inevitable that WEs will play an increasing part in tactics as a thorough understanding of basic electronics and systems becomes essential for the tactician of the future. One sees this already in the amount of support from WEOs in Operations Rooms.

How is the WE Officer of the future going to have time to gain the deep engineering, systems and tactical knowledge and experience? Another EBD — EBD Mk II would be required. Already WEs are questioning the need to learn any mechanical engineering (though a walk around the car repair bay by an RNEC would tend to disprove this!) — after all electronics is the name of their game. To allow the WEs to concentrate on Weapon systems and their operation above all, their remaining mechanical responsibilities would need to be transformed to the ME sub-branch. Magazines, handling systems, launches and hydraulics and all services for Weapon systems might become a ME sub-branch responsibility, thus the WE Officer would have little reason to learn any mechanical engineering. The MEO would thus be the only mechanical engineer in a ship, and thus in the Navy.

Warfare has become so dependent upon electronic engineering that a thorough

understanding of the engineering aspects of weapons, systems and communications must now be considered an essential for any officer aspiring to be successful in the tactical field. It could be that the only way to provide this type of expertise is in the formation of a new branch, the Warfare Branch, whose officers would have the tactical training and experience of the PWO and the electronic engineering training and experience of the WE. A formidable combination indeed!

There are major implications for the 'officer corps' outside the direct effects of mere engineering activity. The road to top jobs in the Royal Navy is through a series of doors labelled 'sea command' (or so it has been stated on many occasions). Those officers forming the new warfare branch would be the only ones considered for sea command, thus the race between the PWOs and the WEs for dominance would be set. (The corollary is that non-membership of this exclusive company would probably mean restricted appointments and restricted promotion). The interplay between the rivals in this race will make most interesting watching for those other officers on the sidelines. Inevitably a common training and employment will be required so that the PWO and WEO cease to exist, being replaced by WO, the Warfare Officer. It would seem that a degree in Naval Weapon Engineering followed by tactical training would meet the branch requirements.

What happens to the remainder of the 'officer corps'? Those officers not included in the Warfare Branch would remain in their present form as support for the Warfare Branch. A return of the old 'OE' would be a possibility for the ME sub-branch as the MEO struggles to master the vast and complex range of engineering expertise required to match his considerably expanded responsibilities. Other basic ship functions such as seamanship, navigation, NBCD and bridge watchkeeping may well become 'services' supplied to the Warfare Branch by the support branches.

'High-flyers' will naturally gravitate

towards the Warfare Branch as this would give exclusive outlet to sea command and hence a road to the top jobs. The remaining members of the 'officer corps' forming the support branches would still have their limited job satisfaction, while watching their no more able contemporaries go leaping up the promotion ladder by virtue of branch membership, and access to most of the key appointments in both the technical and tactical fields. Needless to say the 'medics', 'pusser's' and 'schoolies' will also be members of this support branch with limited promotion.

In summary present EBD activities could well be the start of a large change in officer education, training and responsibility. If the Royal Navy of the future is to maintain its credibility as an effective deterrent force it may have to form a new and exclusive branch responsible only for weapons and their use, allocating its remaining manpower to a lesser support role.

L. WRIGHT

READINESS FOR WAR

Sir,—Winston Churchill used to say 'Give me the nub of the matter on half a sheet of paper.' This is an excellent way of concentrating the mind which I have tried to follow below.

Recently, I have been studying the readiness in September, 1939, of the Royal Navy for a war against Germany. It seems that there were three main mistakes — first, an almost criminal neglect of the threat from the air to our ships and submarines. Second, an over confidence in A/S detection capabilities, and thirdly, and linked with the second, a complete lack of thought about the tactics of convoy defence and a shortage of ships and aircraft to escort the convoys. Everyone knew that our guns would not shoot down aircraft, but there seems to have been a conspiracy of silence. The sight of a Queen Bee radio controlled drone passing unscathed down the line of ships was only too familiar. No one who mattered did anything about it.

If we went to war today, war with the Soviet Union or police action operations against a minor power, what would be the corresponding shortcomings?. From my ivory tower of retirement, I can suggest some possibilities. A/S capabilities have improved since 1945 and much thought and practice is given to convoy defence. The ability of the sea to bend, attenuate or otherwise disturb the sonar beam has not, I understand, changed. It seems to me however that the most serious threat comes from guided missiles, skimming or otherwise, fired from aircraft, submarines, FPBs or ships. There are three ways of dealing with them. First to destroy the launcher before the missile can be released, second, to destroy the missile in flight and third, to confuse the missile electronically, causing it to miss.

I do not know enough about modern developments to comment. But I would like to know whether those responsible can put their hands on their hearts and affirm that we can compete with this threat, whether wielded by the Soviet Union or by a small navy containing missile firing F.P.B.s.

PETER GRETTON.

SIR THOMAS TROUBRIDGE

Sir,—The excellent monograph of Vice Admiral Sir Thomas Troubridge which appears in the October issue of *The Naval Review* omits two items that may be of interest; the first is that Troubridge was a great nephew of Elizabeth Fry, the 18th century prison reformer; and the second is that the day of his death in 1949 was not only the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel, Destroyer of Evil, but also the 191st anniversary of Nelson's birth.

E. P. K. WALKER

TOM TROUBRIDGE

Sir,—Reading the minibiography of Tom Troubridge took my mind back to the thirties when he was commanding *Windsor* and I was serving in her subdivisional mate *Wolfhound* and an incident at Rosyth.

The sixth flotilla were lying at the Timber

flagship — a C class cruiser — lying at the stone jetty to the south. Tom had many skills but ship handling was not one of them. In this case when getting under way to go out for exercises *Windsor* finished up across the stern cables of *Ambrose* which was moored up astern of us. Eventually Tom was rescued by a tug. All this was in full view of Commodore(D) pacing his quarterdeck. By the time he got to the Forth bridge vibration was so severe in both shafts that he had to return to the Timber Jetty. By this time the rest of the flotilla had left and he had the jetty to himself. Divers were down within the hour and reported no blades left on the starboard shaft and only two on the port.

Readers may remember a major postwar collision during night exercises in which a destroyer rammed the flagship. To the latter's signal asking what he proposed to do now the commanding officer of the destroyer replied 'Buy a pig farm'.

Tom could have been excused if he had made a similar signal but that was not his way, instead he chartered a taxi and went off into the hinterland of Inverkeithing to see if he could find the retired dockmaster of the floating dock. Rosyth was at this time closed down with grass and nettles rampant and no dockyard staff except for a few watchmen.

Tom found the dockmaster and persuaded him to come and help. He then manned the floating dock with ship's staff who scraped off the grease and other preservatives and raised steam. By that evening *Windsor* was safely docked. Meanwhile Tom had toured the dockyard looking for propellers.

I think that it was Napoleon who said that great commanders needed to be lucky and Tom Troubridge was certainly that because he found a pair of propellers that would fit. You or I had we got this far would have found two left or two right handed screws but not Tom. With a humping party from the ship these were loaded on to railway trucks and pushed through the grass and nettles to the ship where they were successfully fitted.

I went down to the dock that evening to have a look. It was dark and there was Tom standing at the bottom of the dock surrounded by naphtha flares and scurrying forms, a figure larger than life wrapped in a boat cloak, looking like Christopher Wren directing the building of St. Paul's.

By the next day *Windsor* was back alongside the Timber Jetty and Tom reported ready for sea. In under forty-eight hours he had completed a job that would have taken a fully equipped dockyard a week and all with ship's staff except for the dockmaster.

A truly astounding performance and as a result there was never even a Board of Enquiry.

DAVID BIRD

LORE OF THE SEA

Sir,—The other night whilst enjoying my High Table dining in College I was in conversation with another naval member. We both felt that there was a lack of knowledge of naval customs and 'folk lore'. That ingredient of tradition and humour which binds the Service together and sets it apart. I suggested that *The Naval Review* could have a section on traditions and another on humour incidents. He being senior, I recommended (a lovely word senior officers use) that I write to the Editor.

If there is enough support could there be a section on the lines of the Readers Digest 'Life's Like That' dealing with traditions and memorable incidents? I would like to know all the toasts for each night of the week. An incident I can recall concerns one of the founders of *The Naval Review*, Admiral Richmond. I was invited as a very new naval officer to his ruby wedding. He found me sitting out and not dancing. He asked why, and when I told him that I could not, I received my first and last dancing lesson. 'Naval officer can't dance! Ridiculous! Get on the floor'.

It might be possible for a collection to be published for sale to the general public and the proceeds go to help *The Naval Review* finances.

J.H.

PICKET BOATS AND SHIP HANDLING

Sir,—With reference to Hank's letter in the October issue, running a picket boat in the uncrowded and still water of the Mediterranean must have been fun.

But with two boats in tow and a picket boat from every cruiser and battleship in the then large home fleet trying to do the same thing, it was not easy to get alongside 'Southend Pier', for example, with the tide sluicing past it. It was not fun.

G.D.O.

RECRUITMENT

Sir,—I read with interest the tailpiece of the October Editorial, referring to the encouraging standard of our new recruits and their determination to complete training. Having no little experience of them, however, I must take issue.

I am not sure where such encouragement originates; surely not from the recruiters? For when the recruiting standards were lowered some twelve months ago, the drop in standard of recruit was said to be acceptable, on the basis that although wastage would be higher, a few would succeed who would otherwise not have been accepted. Although in some cases the minimum recruiting test score has been restored to former levels, we are still feeling the effects of the poor recruits. Informal conversations with recruiters also reveal that there are more applicants accepted who have been subjectively assessed as less suitable.

A further worsening comes from the application of a 'retention at all costs' policy. Doubtless in the hope that a trainee will eventually come good, Divisional Officers are directed to expend considerable energy in trying to persuade all, the good and the bad, to withdraw Premature Voluntary Release (PVR) requests. The poorly motivated trainee who fails his course is often given more chances, re-categorised (often more than once) or encouraged to try harder, in an attempt to find a job with which he can cope — not necessarily one in which he will be an asset

to the Service, or in which he will shine. What has thus been made almost impossibly difficult, in some establishments, through worthy but misguided intent, is the discharge of the unsuitable rating. Are the higher wastage rates therefore *not* acceptable?

This policy is not likely to help the motivation of a trainee of weak character, nor will it encourage those who are trying, when they see the system allowing those of lesser worth and doubtful ability to continue, whilst they are working hard. An unfortunate side effect of this is that, with so much Divisional attention being concentrated on the minority (and not necessarily a small one) the average trainee does not receive the care he expects, or deserves, under the Divisional system.

Notwithstanding the above, I believe the length of PVR options is too generous, and further reduces the commitment and morale of trainees. Without the necessity of knuckling down to Service life, many of them fail to do so. Some, indeed, treat the Royal Navy as an extension of the Job Experience schemes introduced at school. Not only is a disproportionate amount of time spent in trying to retain poor prospects, but good men are being lost because of a lack of all-round attention. Morale is reduced in many of the remainder and the effect of the whole on the Service is most detrimental.

Possibly at least as important as the standard of recruit is the standard of the instructor. It is not enough to say that our senior rates are as good as they have ever been — 'the backbone of the Navy'. Many are, but far too many are inadequate for the task. A blinkered approach to training, an unwillingness to admit responsibility for

general naval training outside the purely professional sphere, and an 'office-hours only' approach, though not common, are increasingly prevalent. They do nothing to help foster a deep commitment to the Service in the young rating.

What is to be done about it? We must accept that the standard of recruit is not as high as it should be. This message, shouted by senior rates and junior officers, who really see the problem at first hand, has been ignored for too long by those at the decision-making level. We must either raise the basic standards of those we recruit, surely not difficult at a time of major unemployment among school leavers, or we must reconcile ourselves to the fact that turning our recruits into what we require will take a greater time and more effort from those in the training establishments. All this will be more expensive but must be looked upon as a long-term investment. The heads must be pulled from the sand before we become a second-rate Navy with low professional standards. Oh for a latter-day Jackie Fisher!

'LUTINE'

BACK NUMBERS

Sir,—Referring to your notice in the July issue, in spite of the vicissitudes of war and peace I have been able to supply the back numbers from 1922 to 1952 with the undermentioned exceptions and am arranging their shipment to Commodore Oland through the good offices of the Agent General, Province of Nova Scotia, Pall Mall. The missing numbers are 1922 Nov., 1925 Feb., May, and Aug., 1929 Aug., 1939 Nov., 1948 May, Nov., 1949 Feb., 1950 Nov., ten copies in all. Perhaps some other member could supply the missing issues.

G.L.G.

Reviews—I: Naval Periodicals

LA NOUVELLE REVUE MARITIME

FOUR ISSUES, June to November, come under review. The June issue marks the fortieth anniversary of 'the tragic days of May-June 1940' with an excellent history of the battleship *Jean-Bart* which, uncompleted, managed to sail from Saint-Nazaire on the 19th June as the Germans arrived. The journal of the then *enseigne de vaisseau* Luc-Marie Bayle is a valuable personal account to complement the ship's history. The issue opens with an Editorial which sets out the lessons to be learned from 'the epic of the *Jean-Bart*' and spells out the main one: 'The Navy escapes in a large measure and in any event resists far better and far longer the moral and political blows, the risks of decomposition which so often (and in all countries) threaten the land armies: perhaps because with seamen their vocation, choice and commitment is more marked than in other callings'. In a nation without a strong maritime tradition it is more than ever necessary to give its Navy the support in financial and political terms that it needs to carry out its world-wide responsibilities.

The *Jean-Bart* survived fully operational to play a number of roles, finally as gunnery training ship after the era of the battleship had ended, to be condemned for scrapping in February 1970 after efforts to convert her into a naval museum had failed through lack of financial support. A useful historical record, with lessons for today.

Charles Hernu, national delegate for the Socialist Party on defence matters contributes an article 'Towards a new deal in the Mediterranean'. He reviews the strategic scene in the area, what is being done, what will be and should be done. The article is followed, to keep the record straight, by the official Order of Battle of the Navy for 2000 defined in 1978 by the French Government.

In July Andre Fontaine, Editor-in-Chief of *Le Monde* writes on 'The Sea in

International Relations'. Starting with the axiom 'La mer rapproche, la montagne separe', M. Fontaine reviews the command of the sea throughout history, its riches to be gathered and present Soviet sea power. He writes: 'In truth, in a state of war, even in a period of detente, the sea is only a less dangerous and economical means of making war, and duly adapts itself to local wars, and one could easily write a history of the cold war where the major battles could be named Turkey, Greece, Quemoy and Matsu, Suez, Tiran, Cuba or Bab-el-Mandeb'. He concludes that, with its availability as an area of manoeuvre between virtually equal forces, and a source of wealth, the sea could play a role of prime importance.

There is a final article by Claude Huan in his series on the Soviet Navy in the Second World War. The International Symposium on the influence of Nutrition on Naval and Maritime History, held at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich in April 1980 is amply covered.

In October the main naval article is 'The Royal Navy' by Admiral Sir James Eberle. It is well illustrated: HMS *Resolution* (twice), a Sea Harrier, HM Ships *Invincible*, *Broadsword*, *Birmingham*, Royal Marine Commandos in Norway and RFA *Pearleaf* replenishing the *Ardent* and *Eskimo* with the *Sirius* providing A/S protection. There follows a brief summary article on the French submarine nuclear deterrent force, La FOST (Force Oceanique Strategique Francaise).

The November Editorial is headed 'The Five Navies' (*les cinq Marines*) and takes stock of the Journal in its eighth edition in a new format. The term 'Five Navies' was used by Admiral de Joybert, Chief of Naval Staff in 1974, to cover its main areas of interest (the Merchant Fleet, the Fishing Fleet, the Yachting Fleet, the Scientific Fleet and the Navy). The review continues

to fulfil its task well with its perennial plea for the arousing of interest in maritime affairs.

A long article sets out the various maritime budgets under consideration for 1981.

Under 'Transport' Rear-Admiral M. de Brossard, himself a naval and also an airship pilot, contributes a study of airships in their various forms and uses. Their economy in fuel and suitability for a number of tasks are underlined.

The main, and lengthy, naval policy article is by Ingenieur general de l'Armement J. Touffait on Naval Construction: 'The D.T.C.N. (*Direction Technique des Constructions Navales*) and modern naval construction'. The subject is well and fully covered. *La Nouvelle Revue Maritime* welcomes suggestions and criticism and support. It deserves a large circulation in France.

C.M.S.

Reviews—II: Books

ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET

EARL BEATTY

The last naval hero; an intimate biography

by STEPHEN ROSKILL

(Collins—£12.95)

This is an astonishing book. The seldom seen Orpen painting of Beatty strikes us from the dust jacket and in the book, where the pen picture of the man, both as a lover and as an Admiral, is a startling new one, while the new role for Roskill is equally surprising: whoever thought that he would have to chronicle and comment on such a love affair in his pursuit of naval history? And how different is his view of Beatty from that in the interim work written by that somewhat naïve biographer, Admiral Chalmers; not only did he chronicle Beatty's life without referring to Eugenie Godfrey-Faussett except obliquely as "a friend" but went on to write the life of Max Horton without mentioning Lady Boynton except to say that the book has been written at her request.

It is also a fortunate book. Members of the Navy Records Society who will have three volumes of Keyes' papers and two of Jellicoe's, and who were becoming reconciled to the fact that they might never have even one of Beatty's, will be especially glad that Roskill has managed, and so successfully, to deal with the problems surrounding the papers. These he consulted with the consent of the second Earl and used with the more enthusiastic

encouragement of the third, only to find that their copyright is vested in the trustees of his predecessor, while the future of the papers themselves awaits a Treasury decision about death duties. This discovery has caused the insertion of an errata which only emphasises the need for the biographer to walk, like Agag, delicately — an analogy quoted twice by Roskill to the amusement of the reviewer. And the book appears hard on the heels of the rather unfortunate work "Our Admiral" by Beatty's nephew Charles, noticed in our previous issue.

Astonishing or fortunate, this is a first class book in itself and in its contribution to naval history. While it tells us much more than we might have expected about Beatty's private life it also provides a new approach to his professional career, though here the novelty lies more in the synthesis than the originality of the material. Its particular quality is its balance: balance of composition and of judgment. The adjective "magisterial" has been used before of Roskill's work and it is repeated here because this book exemplifies it to an even greater extent and because no other word seems as appropriate. The structure is sensible: sufficient but not too much about that impressive and accelerated promotion to the brass hat and a flag, and enough to make the necessary points. The same too about Jutland itself. And similarly in the weaving of the professional and the personal strands and within the latter of the

two threads, of the one who truly loved and the one who merely offered a cheek.

For many readers the most fascinating aspect of the book will be its account of Beatty's affair with the wife of another naval officer. Eugenie's letters to Beatty have been destroyed with those from his other female friends: so far (the emphasis in Roskill's) 158 of his to her have been discovered and, thanks partly to the enlightened attitude of her son, are now at Churchill College. Their judicious use leaves no doubt that he and Eugenie were for a time lovers in the sense of that word which few are fortunate enough fully to experience. At first the quotations suggest no more than a rash, romantic, escapist correspondence but they soon become explicit evidence of the fuller relationship. Why should this seem so startlingly important? Nelson had his Emma and gave us the maxim that if there were more Emmas there would be more Nelsons. But their affair was public, to the shame of poor Frances, while Eugenie was classically discreet and Ethel publically profligate. Is it because Beatty is still, to some extent, a man of our own time who we grew or were brought up to regard as *sans peur et sans reproche*, etc.? Though the behaviour of the famous figures of the first half of our century are now becoming public — and Eugenie was related by marriage to Edward VIII's mistress — it seems somehow to require a conscious effort to see Earl Beatty GCB, GCVO as a fretful if scheming and selfish lover and not simply as an Admiral, a C-in-C and First Sea Lord, even without taking any moral stand. And on the evidence so carefully and tentatively presented — and it is a pleasure to see the historian's almost legalistic technique of teasing it while offering it — we cannot dissent from Roskill's conclusion that, while without Eugenie's love and support Beatty might not have overcome his miserable marriage and carried so successfully his great professional responsibilities, we are "left with a great admiration of Eugenie's character and a feeling of distaste for her lover's selfishness

and the inconsiderate way he not seldom treated her." For his marriage to Ethel, that wretched rich and tiresome woman, though advantageous was unhappy for reasons not all of his making. At least it can be said of his solace-seeking that it was conducted discreetly by both parties and especially by Eugenie, and that although Ethel knew of the friendship her own miseries were not made worse by any knowledge of its intensity. So let us be grateful to Eugenie rather than censorious about Beatty, and grateful to Roskill on behalf of them both, reflecting that the private lives of public men are targets for the prurient.

In matters of naval rather than romantic Roskill is happier and even more confident. He deals with the episodes in Beatty's career in nice perspective and proportion. Previous works on the period have dwelt on materiel matters with particular reference to the conflict between speed and armour, to the deficiencies of our shell and to our ammunition handling arrangements. Here Roskill deals mainly with the last but emphasises a largely new subject — the fire control equipment available to the Admiralty, its wrong choice of which to use and the effect of that decision upon the fighting ability of the Fleet. Much use is properly made of the recent biography of Pollen and we must await Mr. Sumida's thesis on the subject, tantalisingly promised as thorough and highly revisionist. We must also lament the destruction by the weeder~~s~~ of three dozen boxes of Admiralty papers on Pollen. And we must lament too Roskill's revisionist view of Chatfield, if only because we grew up to regard him as another irreproachable. How sadly empty his two volumes of autobiography now seem, with their single reference to "Pollen (inventor)" in their indexes.

With all the new evidence available for the reinterpretation of the old, Roskill concludes that Beatty was selfish, arrogant, anti-Semitic and Imperialist. Some of these characteristics were not peculiar to Beatty and in manifesting them he was only epitomising that section of society in which

he moved. Nevertheless, the imperious attitude which he took towards the Admiralty, even with all the authority that his appointment as C-in-C the Grand Fleet gave him, and the quite extraordinary and in some cases unnecessary steps he took to protect or even to further his own reputation substantiate the criticism. Roskill spends far less space — only one paragraph — on that inexplicable circle through which the battle cruisers turned to starboard at about 1900 on 31 May 1915 than on the part it was to play in the Jutland controversy, to which he devotes a chapter of eighteen tightly written and well-argued pages. (It is interesting to note Chatfield's careful reference (Vol. I p. 147) to being ordered by Beatty to turn 180° to starboard, and then turning the command over to the Staff Chaplain for ten minutes: it excludes any mention of either a completed circle or a compensating turn to port, which now seems curious). The same chapter includes a memorable footnote (p. 336) on the Agag-like lot of the so-called official historian: Roskill was threatened with the same treatment as Corbett and speaks of "The Admiralty's long memory". It is a pity that this faculty was not better exercised elsewhere: Roskill makes several telling comparisons between the experience of events in the two great wars of this century, e.g. strategic bombing preventing even *ad hoc* advantage bombing of U-boats at Bruges after the Zeebrugge fiasco, the substitution of offensive but blind hunting groups at the expense of convoy escorts since convoy seemed too defensive to be acceptable even though it gave the escort "ample opportunity to strike back at enemies who would otherwise have remained elusive", and the reaction to an invasion threat to name but three. Beatty rightly regarded the destruction or the neutralisation of the High Seas fleet as his main responsibility and was less than enthusiastic about hurtling south to shatter an invasion force which he never expected to see: yet only a quarter of a century later, when 'invasion was less unlikely, his successor at Scapa had to represent the

same view to the same Admiralty mentality, embodied in the same W.S.C. who is subject to more than are incidental but perfectly reasonable criticism in this book.

Roskill's references to Marder are numerous but restrained: an agreeable and welcome tranquility seems to be descending on their relationship. Marder's third volume, especially in its revised version, is as definite a work as Jutland as we need on are likely to get and Roskill, though never hesitant to comment critically, seem content to accept it as a basic source. His own style is unchanged: the faintly biblical "and so it came to pass" stamps the text as his while if we were in any doubt the even more frequent use of "this" would resolve it! He refers to Beatty as "wailing" to Eugenie three times when "lamenting" might have been kinder. But the book is a delight: not only of immense importance but also fascinating in itself. One wishes that Roskill could go on and on with what is after all his second career so that he could produce a second volume for the NRS on the RNAS, a life of Wemyss and perhaps one of Dreyer, and then bring his history of the War at Sea 1939-1945 into a study of naval strategy in our uneasy peace.

There are some errors that merit correction. There is confusion between a WRNS and a women's reserve: there is a conflict between the text and the notes over the date when U.40 was sunk (as a result of tactics suggested by the Admiral's Secretary): according to the orders for Operation ZZ — the handing over of the German HSF — the guns of the Grand Fleet were empty, though the ammunition was ready to load. And if I may venture another correction to another conversation between Beatty and Chatfield, it would be to put right the former's remark, misquoted on p. 279 in a way which suggests an arrogance lacking on that same unique day in the Firth of Forth. Beatty did not make the rather dogmatic assertion attributed to him and was in fact not going to say anything. But when he said as much to Chatfield the latter, who had cleared lower deck, prevailed upon him

whereupon Beatty, still intent on going below, turned, grinned and said rhetorically "Didn't I tell you they'd have to come out?" A small point, perhaps, but important to his credit.

Whether or not he was the last naval hero is not a matter of much comment, (and it is certainly ludicrous to suggest that because Beatty received a gratuity twice the size of Jellicoe's he was as does A. J. P. Taylor). What does matter is that this reassessment of him as an individual and as an Admiral enables us to see him a new and more accurate way. Some may think less of his in some ways: we can all see him in a new way, "warts and all" if we may adopt and adapt Cromwell's honesty, and he still describes his place high in history if low in Trafalgar Square.

A. B. SAINSBURY

✓ THE GREAT GUNNERY SCANDAL

by ANTHONY POLLEN

(Collins—£7.50)

Everyone interested in the naval side of the First World War, or in the way the Navy hoists in new technology, ought to read this book, which has much to say for all its faults. The chief figure in it is that remarkable man Arthur Hungerford Pollen, inventor, strategist, journalist and friend to the mighty. The book's basic proposition is that Pollen witnessed a fleet target practice in 1900 and was so amazed at what he saw that he went away to rewrite naval tactics and to invent a new fire-control system to make them possible. These things he did most brilliantly, only the Admiralty was too stupid to realise it. In consequence, when the war came the Royal Navy did much less well than most people expected it to.

The book is interesting at two levels. Firstly, it documents incompetence in high places in the Navy of the period just before the First World War. Senior officers of that time laboured under wrong and unquestioned assumptions about the future of battle at sea (which, they thought, would be an affair fought out at close range between forces in relatively fixed positions). Instead

battle turned out to be a matter of great distance and swirling movement. They also failed to test Pollen's revolutionary fire-control system at all fairly, reacting with a mixture of incomprehension and hostile prejudice to its claims and its supporters. Worse still, some of the system's naval opponents pirated Pollen's ideas and peddled an inferior copy to the Navy which eventually proved virtually useless in action. This is strong meat indeed, but the author largely carries his case.

Secondly, the book is interesting for the light it sheds on what actually happened in the war. The author shows how different things would have been if the Navy had been able to use the Pollen system. Perhaps the British would have triumphed at the Dardanelles; perhaps they might have been able to seize the opportunity of finishing off the German fleet at Jutland. The book has some interesting material on this battle, including a weird battle sketch by Beatty himself which the author uses to argue that Beatty was right all along, and Jellicoe wrong. The argument here is less strong, but still interesting.

Although it may seem churlish to end this review with some criticisms, it ought to be done in case the author is thinking of writing another book on naval history. Unfortunately *The Great Gunnery Scandal* is organised in a way which too often obscures the thrust of the argument; it is rambling, repetitive and doesn't do as much as it should to help the reader see the wood for the trees. I suspect that the author (actually Pollen's son) was unsure whether he would produce a biography of his father or an analysis of the development of naval gunnery, and accordingly fell between two stools. The book is also dotted with strange passages, especially about naval strategy. The title of Mahan's book on the subject is misquoted and his views grossly distorted, for example (p.160). The author is evidently an adherent of the perverse *guerre à outrance* school associated with Admiral Custance, whose notions the author quotes as though they were divine writ. The British, Mr. Pollen seems to assume, could

have had their decisive victory if only they had tried a little harder. The fact that the German fleet had no intention of getting into a set-piece battle is presumably neither here nor there. These idiosyncracies would not matter if they were incidental to the text, or if they were applied solely to the battle of Jutland, but they are not; they are a considerable part of Mr. Pollen's onslaught on Churchill and Jellicoe's handling of the whole war at sea. Their presence therefore enfeebls the attack.

Altogether, *The Great Gunnery Scandal* is a mixture of good and bad. Most of the material is important and interesting and the argument is often fascinating. But in overall execution the book is basically faulty — the guns being better than the gunnery would suggest.

GEOFFREY TILL

THE CRUCIBLE OF WAR: WESTERN DESERT 1941

by BARNIE PITT

(Jonathan Cape—£8.95)

'Barrie Pitt's dramatic narrative of the campaign in North Africa in 1940 and 1941 combines meticulous historical accuracy with a lively style, bringing to life the complex battles of the desert' writes Field Marshal Lord Carver in a jacket note. High praise and fully justified. Barrie Pitt's new book surpasses even the high standard set by his memorable *1918 The Last Act*.

O'Connor's brilliant successes in December 1940, destroying the Italian Tenth Army, taking Cyrenaica and laying Tripolitania open to attack, came as a tonic to the British after a desperate summer. Stripped of most of its strength to send aid to Greece, the army in the Western Desert was in March 1941 taken by surprise by a lightning thrust mounted by Rommel and his newly arrived Germans and driven back in confusion to Tobruk and the Egyptian frontier.

In June the British, re-equipped largely by the daring Tiger Convoy through the Mediterranean, returned to the attack, Operation Battleaxe by XIII Corps under Beresford-Peirse. It failed with heavy loss.

Churchill replaced Wavell by Auchinleck as C-in-C Middle East, and in November Auchinleck under pressure from Churchill mounted a new offensive by what had become the Eighth Army under General Cunningham, Operation Crusader. For three weeks the battle surged forwards and backwards across the 70 miles separating Tobruk from the frontier wire. Then on 6 December Rommel, faced by fuel shortage and heavy losses of armour seemingly irreplaceable under sea and air blockade, ordered withdrawal to the Tripolitanian border 400 miles to the west. On 21 December part of an Italian convoy got through to deliver half of the 90 tanks with which it started out. Shortly afterwards another arrived with 55 more. Rommel returned to the attack and by 2 February 1942, when the battle had stabilised, faced the British defences of Gazala only 35 miles from Tobruk. Here the book ends.

Mr. Pitt conducts his reader through the confused battles and swings of fortunes with admirable clarity, sustained interest and well-judged comment. He tells of command decisions made inescapably on inadequate information, of headquarters overrun, of burning days in June and icy nights in November, of growing confusion as each side takes over captured tanks and lorries, of death, thirst and exhaustion. Towards the end of Crusader a German officer driving alone in the desert approaches an unidentified column, sees one of his own eight-wheel armoured cars, and hails the column first in German then in Italian. The reply comes in English, 'Oh, piss off, mate . . . for Christ's sake.'

All this is admirable. But Mr. Pitt seems less sure of what to tell of the wider Mediterranean theatre and the other services. Understandably he mentions Greece, Crete, Syria and Iraq only for their effect on the Western Desert, but why he gives the approach to Keren the full treatment is not clear. He describes Taranto in detail, the navy's support of Tobruk, the loss of the *Barham* and the disablement of the *Queen Elizabeth* and *Valiant* in rather less. He tells of the decisive effect on

Rommel of the convoy losses, but says little about the battles in which they were inflicted or the Malta convoys. The result is to give an inadequate impression of the intensity of the naval operations associated with the Western Desert, while the uneven emphasis has led the blurb writer to claim that the book is about the whole theatre of the Mediterranean, which it is not.

So too with the RAF engaged both in the desert itself and in the more distant operations. Occasional references to bombing in support of the army are a poor substitute for the intimate account of men and regiments, of weapons and tactical problems, which bring the desert armies on both sides so vividly to life. 'Out of sight and out of mind, the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force had been doing just as much at and over the sea to defeat Panzergruppe Afrika as the Eighth Army had been doing on land'. Excusable enough for the frontline soldier which Mr. Pitt once was, out of mind is less so for the historian. But make no mistake. Mr. Pitt tells brilliantly a fine and stirring story which has undeservedly become overshadowed by subsequent events in the Western Desert. It is pleasant to read again, among quotations from more recent works, extracts from Cyril Joly's *Men Like These*. It is a pity that nothing similar appears from, for example, the relevant chapters of Donald Macintyre's *The Naval War Against Hitler* and Johnnie Johnston's *Full Circle*.

The book is well produced with good maps and at 481 pages of main text a great bargain at its price.

J. L. MOULTON

WHO DARES WINS, THE STORY OF THE SPECIAL AIR SERVICE, 1950-1980

by TONY GERAGHTY

(Arms and Armour Press—£8.95)

There were not many public benefits to be immediately derived from *The Times Newspapers* strike of 1978-9, but this book is one of the consequences which, indirectly, we can now attribute to that unfortunate period. *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* journalists were able, in

various ways, to re-charge their batteries of skills; and Tony Geraghty was able to follow up an interest of long-standing and to write this account of the development and organisation of the S.A.S.

It is not an easy story to tell, partly because the functions which the S.A.S. exists to perform are by their very nature unusual; but it is also the case that the mystery is clouded with an unease which makes the S.A.S. particularly vulnerable to misrepresentation as well as to myth-making. As Geraghty says 'the Regiment serves democratic society in a unique fashion by nominating itself as the elite military group willing to take risks that others, comfortable in their suburban semis, prefer to experience from the safety of a seat in the Odeon cinema (or, for that matter, the author's study', (p.193). That is not only true for civilian society as a whole, but as Geraghty shows, has affected the attitude of more conventional elements of the Army at important stages in the regiment's history. The special figure of the tough lawman represented by Wyatt Earp disturbs the conventional sheriff as much as he bemuses the citizenry of the outlaw-ridden settlement, because the need to have such a figure tells us that not only are our conventional methods unsuitable but that our ideal patterns of law, order and reasonable behaviour are — even at the margin — unattainable. This rather ambivalent environment is brought out very clearly in a chapter called 'The Mercenaries' in which Geraghty describes how ex-S.A.S. personnel have tried, in various ways and at varying levels of credibility, to package the S.A.S. function to fit other, less rigorously controlled, circumstances: guarding particular individuals, servicing particular causes and, in a few cases, peddling particular skills. Here, as in the mainstream of the regiment's duties, the esoteric fringes are romantic and necessary enough to be traded upon, sometimes rather unscrupulously.

The main strands of the regiment's history, in Malaya, Borneo, South Arabia, Oman and Northern Ireland are fully dealt

with, and a good deal of attention is paid to personnel, training and organisation. There is a good level of general information, and really quite a lot of detail, but I am still not sure quite how the S.A.S. goes about most of its business. Overall, Geraghty builds up a picture of what the S.A.S. is, that is as nearly comprehensive as we are likely to get for a long time to come but, even so, the regiment remains rather elusive and private. He is approving, but without illusion: he is understanding, but not uncritical. It is an important story to tell, and Geraghty tells it interestingly and fairly.

PETER NAILOR

COUNTDOWN

Britain's Strategic Nuclear Forces

by Air Vice-Marshal STEWART MENAU

(Robert Hale—£8.25)

'Paddy' Menaul has never made any secret of his conviction that by lobbying hard the Royal Navy succeeded in wresting from the R.A.F., contrary to Britain's best interests, the responsibility for mounting and deploying the nation's strategic deterrent. 'On all counts,' he now writes, 'and especially from a cost-effective point of view, a small force of four Polaris submarines to replace the V-bombers was the wrong choice for Britain.' Unfortunately the Air Vice-Marshal adduces no evidence to support this assertion. Indeed the lack of reference to sources other than 'personal experience and first-hand knowledge', given Menaul's somewhat specialised, if dedicated, service career, detracts from the value of his book. Nevertheless, its subject is of such importance, and the information which it contains of so much interest, that it may well be widely read. It is therefore prudent to recall here the comments of A. J. Pierre (*Nuclear Politics* — O.U.P. 1972 pp. 200-201):

In retrospect the failure of the Royal Navy to make a strong case to the Cabinet for acquiring Polaris rather than Skybolt . . . was an irresponsible mistake. The Admiralty had been watching the development of Polaris

closely since 1956 and recognised that it was an ideal system for Britain because it was not subject to surprise attack (as was any weapon located on British soil), because it permitted delay in retaliatory action (and, therefore, gave time for verification of the source of an enemy attack and consultation with the United States), and because it moved the nuclear force away from the homeland. But the Navy chiefs were not enthusiastic about Polaris, being worried about its costs and the accompanying drainage of skilled technicians. . . . nevertheless, some senior Navy officers acknowledged that the choice of Skybolt in 1960 was perhaps only a 'postponement' of Polaris, and that the undersea missile might become the successor to Skybolt in the 1970s.

Menaul is not alone in refusing to accept — or even to indicate that he understands — the unique quality, for a retaliatory strategic system, of concealment in the ocean depths when deployed; and, like other interested parties, he hedges his bets by raising expectations of a 'breakthrough' in detection and location which would deprive submarines of concealment, and hence of their unique contribution to nuclear deterrence. But, if such a 'breakthrough' were to be made, the greatest single factor in the prevention of nuclear warfare would have been eliminated unless, in the meantime, an entirely new system of providing an invulnerable second-strike strategic nuclear system had been provided.

It is typical of Menaul's lack of objectivity that he stresses the flexibility of the V-bomber force in being available for conventional tasks if required, in contrast to the Polaris force which, he believes, has no such alternative capability. Yet he does not explain how the V-bombers could have maintained a four-minute reaction time to nuclear attack if they were engaged in conventional operations. In fact, the Polaris submarines have an excellent anti-submarine weapon system; and it has been

announced that when the older American Polaris boats are replaced by Trident they will be re-equipped with cruise missiles. As to the comparatively small size of the British Polaris force, with only one boat deployed for a good deal of the time, it is worth bearing in mind that credibility is in the mind of the prospective targettee. In the case of the Soviet Union, which 'centres all authority in a single arm', a single strike of sufficient penetrative and destructive power on the seat of government/military direction would be decisive. What conceivable *political* objective could justify risking such retribution? In this context the question should always be asked: 'Would "the bomb" have been dropped on Hiroshima if Japan had been known to possess an invulnerable retaliatory system capable of targeting the U.S.A.?'

Finally, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that in the gallant Air Vice-Marshal we have an unreconstructed Douhet disciple, for whom the advent of bigger and better nuclear weapons offered the prospect of at last proving that aerial bombardment alone could be decisive in modern war. Yet the Soviet Union lays stress upon the cooperation of all arms in war; and a similar view prevails within the Nato Alliance. More important still, deterrence must be at all levels. The necessity to subordinate armed force to political objectives is also widely understood. It is doubtful whether *Countdown* will persuade many of its readers to adopt its author's *jejune* viewpoint.

IAN MCGEOCH

THE DESTRUCTION OF CONVOY PQ17

by DAVID IRVING
(William Kimber—£12.50)

Readers of *The Naval Review* will doubtless remember that when the original edition of this book first appeared in 1968 its author and publisher (then Cassells) were immediately engulfed in litigation. An action was brought against them both by

Captain Jack Broome RN (who had commanded PQ 17's escort group) and resulted in one of the most famous libel trials in recent British legal history. Author and publisher were severely criticised during the trial and subsequent appeal, for, as one of the Appeal Court Judges remarked: 'Captain Broome has had a long and honourable career in the Navy. To say of him that he was largely to blame for this disaster and indifferent to the fate of the convoy is indeed shocking. To say this, knowing it to be wholly untrue and in order to make money by promoting the sales of the book designed to be read as history, is outrageous conduct of an altogether exceptionally high order.' Eventually in 1971 Captain Broome was awarded substantial damages.

Since that time other books on the disaster have been published, which have stolen or at least shared Mr. Irving's remaining thunder. Paul Lund and Harry Ludlam produced at the time *PQ 17 Convoy to Hell*, a good eyewitness account. The dramatic sequence of signals together with some distinctively pungent comment formed the basis of Captain Broome's own *Convoy is to Scatter*. The Admiralty's handling of the affair — and especially its evident misuse of available intelligence — was discussed in Patrick Beesly's excellent *Very Special Intelligence* — a book which shows how to be critical without being scurrilous. The episode will also figure in a forthcoming volume of Professor Hinsley's official history of British intelligence.

So why the new edition of *The Destruction of Convoy PQ 17*? Perhaps it is a belated attempt to put the record straight for the originally lurid publisher's blurb and the offensive passages about Captain Broome have been removed and there have been some other revisions of the text, particularly over the role of Ultra and Admiral Pound's handling of the affair. For the rest, the 1980 version is pretty much the same as the original.

The book can be approached from two levels, the strategic and the operational. Although *The Destruction of Convoy PQ 17* is by far the fullest account of this episode, some of the larger strategic questions are still left unanswered. Were the British after a battle with the German fleet or were they not? If so — with all of it or only a portion — and where. Was the principle of Admiralty control of this operation wrong — or merely this example of the way in which that control was exerted? Perhaps there are no complete answers to these questions. In any case, I suspect we have not heard the last of Convoy PQ 17.

Turning to more detailed analysis of what actually happened, it is perhaps important to recall that David Irving is a historian of the knocking persuasion. He probes and prods. He shines searchlights on things that others might pass over in silence or cover in decent veils of discretion. He doesn't always seem fair, balanced or wholly reasonable. But, he argues that 'gallantry is best portrayed in its real setting, the ships should be shown to be crewed by normal men with normal fears and feelings.' Only then will 'the individual jewels of gallantry sparkle most.' And this is surely fair enough. So, in *The Destruction of Convoy PQ 17* we read of crews in mutiny, of ships trying to surrender or being abandoned prematurely. There are also disquieting innuendoes about the conduct of some of the close escorts after the scatter. But the deeds of the great and the good are described as well as those of the weak and the fallible.

It is difficult to come to any conclusion about this part of the story. The narrative is written in a very readable, even gripping way; its points are always based on evidence, but I suspect that most of the book's readers will have their reservations about parts of it. Mr. Irving's account needs to be handled with care; it is the truth, but not perhaps the whole truth.

GEOFFREY TILL

BATTLESHIP BISMARCK. A SURVIVOR'S STORY

by BARON VON MULLENHEIM-RECHBERG
Translated by Professor Jack Sweetman
(United States Naval Institute Press,
Annapolis, Maryland, 1980,
US dollars 15.95)

A recent production from the press of the United States Naval Institute, *Battleship Bismarck* is a most interesting and detailed account of the short career of the *Bismarck* and her part in Operation 'Rhine'. Baron Burkard von Mullenheim-Rechberg as a senior Lieutenant commissioned *Bismarck* and remained in her until the end as Fourth Gunnery Officer and Adjutant to the Commanding Officer. Rescued by H.M.S. *Dorsetshire*, he was *Bismarck's* senior survivor.

It is quite time that such a history of the German side of the affair appeared and Baron von Mullenheim - Rechberg is uniquely qualified to write it. He served on the staff of the German Naval Attache in London before the war and, as a descendant of one of the 'Wild Geese', seems to have maintained a lively interest in and affection for the British Isles. Certainly his account of his feelings as the world edged towards war is a fascinating part of the work. After the sinking of the *Bismarck* the Baron became a prisoner of war. Some years after the end of hostilities he entered the Diplomatic Service of the Federal Republic and rose to be an Ambassador, specialising in African affairs. The Baron began, almost as soon as he was repatriated, to assemble material on the *Bismarck* and to reconstruct precisely what had happened to the ship, and the manner of the British pursuit and eventual victory.

His research has been very thorough indeed. The Baron must have been a very observant and perceptive officer, since one of the major interests of the book is his analysis of the characters of Captain Lindemann, Commanding Officer of the *Bismarck*, and of Admiral Gunther Lutjens, and of their reactions as *Bismarck's* situation deteriorated day by day. Captain's Adjutant in the German

Navy was a duty which seems to have equated to a cross between Captain's Secretary and a Flag Lieutenant and Baron von Mullenheim-Rechberg made every use of the position. He describes, too, the slow deterioration in morale, although never discipline, aboard *Bismarck*. This account is thought provoking, to say the least, for one must ask how would officers and men of the Royal Navies have faced such a prospect? Unless it be Cradock's fatal action against von Spee's cruisers or the disastrous Battles of the Java Sea and Sunda Strait which accompanied the fall of Singapore, the Royal Navy has very few parallels to *Bismarck's* gallant last stand. As von Mullenheim-Rechberg writes of the *Bismarck* rolling over onto her beam-ends with Lindemann still on her bridge, one is reminded very much of Grenville and the *Revenge*. Into the hands of God indeed.

The saddest part of the tale — and, in retrospect, each side paid a bitter price for Operation 'Rhine' — was the U-Boat scare which forced *Dorsetshire* to abandon the rescue of survivors and leave hundreds of men to their fate. The Baron, who at the time very properly remonstrated with Captain B.C.S. Martin of the *Dorsetshire* and was equally properly rebuffed, remarks, 'No matter what it (the object seen which caused the scare) was, I am now convinced that, under the circumstances, Martin had to act as he did'.

To the account of the career of the *Bismarck*, Baron von Mullenheim-Rechberg has attached a number of most interesting appendices. Those devoted to the rudder damage and to the cracking of the German codes deserve particular attention. Regarding the latter, I had understood from the material released on ULTRA that the British had broken the codes and that they learned from their intercepts a sufficient idea of *Bismarck's* position and intentions to direct a Catalina onto the ship. The Baron ascribes success to 'then-conventional methods of reconnaissance' and I would be most interested to see this point fully cleared up.

The book is well worth obtaining and reading but there is one warning attached. The work has been admirably translated by Professor Jack Sweetman of the United States Naval Academy, but it has been translated into the American idiom. British and Australian readers should bear this in mind and that the use of nautical terms such as 'Stack' for 'funnel' tallies with that of the United States Navy and not the RN or RAN. One point of minor interest is the direct translation of the term 'brown ship' to describe a private ship in the German Navy. I wonder what, if any, is the USN term?

J. V. P. GOLDRICK

FIND, FIX AND STRIKE The Fleet Air Arm at War 1939-45

by JOHN WINTON
(Batsford—£9.95)

The title had been used previously (in 1943) vide the 'Sources and Acknowledgements' in the book but the sub-title accurately describes its contents. The coverage appears to be extremely complete but to classify the book is difficult. It is in essence a condensed historical account largely drawn from other publications and records with no particularly extensive comments by the author. Further, despite the brevity of the accounts of the various episodes (inevitable in only 149 pages) it includes in detail every carrier's squadrons involved and the numbers and types of aircraft in these squadrons plus the individual number of U-boats sunk by F.A.A. aircraft.

The subject is dealt with chronologically — broadly speaking each chapter covers one year, as the chapter titles indicate.

Apart from the descriptions of the various operations the author highlights many of the Fleet Air Arm's difficulties, which were largely outside its direct control. It started the war with aircraft of which many were not ideal for the tasks they were called upon to undertake. R.A.F. control in the inter-war years and a lack of interest in aviation on the part of the majority of senior naval officers must take a considerable amount of the blame.

Then the heavy casualties among experienced air crews in the early years of the war resulted in very few senior officers with aviation experience later on, and those that had survived had to be used in charge of training, aircraft procurement, and staff appointments leaving hardly any for command of carriers. None of the six large Fleet Carriers in the Pacific at the end of the war had aviator Captains. This led during the war to some misuse of carriers and aircraft — not in the Pacific I hasten to add.

As regards types of aircraft the author rightly points out how unpopular the Barracuda was, with which I agree. What he does not mention is that I believe the Barracuda was designed for a different and higher powered engine than that which it had when it became operational. I was told this was owing to Lord Beaverbrook, who was responsible for aircraft production, refusing to allow the original engine to go to a Naval aircraft as he wanted it for the R.A.F.

The author also speaks of the love-hate of the Seafire. In the only form I saw this was that *Indefatigable* hated them whereas *Implacable*, while realising their weaknesses from a deck landing point of view, liked them — particularly with ex-Kittyhawk drop tanks which were obtained. To some extent this love-hate was influenced by the atmosphere in the carrier. *Indefatigable* and *Implacable* exchanged a flight of four Seafires at one time. *Implacable's* pilots had no difficulties in *Indefatigable* though they did not care about the atmosphere in the ship; *Indefatigable's* pilots, somewhat to their surprise, found their prejudices much reduced in *Implacable*.

There are a few, but very few, minor errors of fact — all I think in non-aviation matters.

A nice book and easily readable, with some excellent photographs and one or two useful maps and worth its price, particularly for those whose interest leans towards the Fleet Air Arm. On reflection I suppose one might look on it as a sort of Fleet Air Arm supplement to Roskill's *The*

War at Sea though the latter of course covers the same ground more extensively.

C.C.H.H.

THE MORTAL DANGER

by ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN
(The Bodley Head—£1.95)

In this seventy - one page essay, Solzhenitsyn pursues a variation on the theme of his thought-provoking (if not conscience-stirring) Harvard address in June 1978. On that occasion, it may be recalled, he expressed his sadness at, and disillusionment with, Western consumer society — its greed, softness, decline into decadence and ostrich-like attitude towards the threat posed by Soviet Communism.

His primary target — then and now — is the USA. He castigates, in this latest and elegantly argued essay, the American failure to realise that Communism is irredeemable; he scorns the belief that Communism is capable of growing 'kinder'. He postulates a stark choice: that Communism will either spread, cancer-like, to destroy mankind or else mankind will have to rid itself of Communism. Small surprise that such an unpalatable message, which I personally believe to be correct, scores few points in the States in election year.

Much of *The Mortal Danger* is devoted to demonstrating the stupidity of assuming an indissoluble link between Communism and the country where it first seized control — Russia. Solzhenitsyn argues that this misinterpretation is fraught with tragic consequences. 'Russia', he writes, 'is to the Soviet Union as the man is to the disease afflicting him'. That Communism is suffocating Russia and would, with equal certainty, suffocate our own country to death, is something which has still not been totally grasped by that well meaning and often clever, but never wise sector of our society, whose liberal illusions, much publicised by the BBC, are such anathema to Alexander Solzhenitsyn. In hammering away at the dangerous stupidity of confusing 'Russia/Russian' with 'USSR/Soviet', he lapses into a slightly florid style

— 'One will not have to await the coming of future generations to hear curses flung at those who have implanted this misapprehension in the public awareness'.

Many readers of this review will doubtless comment along the lines of 'But all this is a blinding glimpse of the obvious.' Be that as it may, I continue to meet experienced naval officers and erudite civil servants whose understanding of Communism is curiously naive. As naive, it might be argued, as a sprinkling of their fathers' generation were about Fascism in the 1930s. As an antidote to naivety and as a forceful reminder that Communism will never desist from its efforts to seize the world, I recommend this latest work by Solzhenitsyn most strongly. His courage — physical and moral — and his robust sanity merit our respect and attention. It would be no hyperbole to claim, in my view, that he is one of the truly great men of our time and, as such, it surely behoves us to listen to him.

One hopes that the readership will include the spectrum of further education which stretches from the R.C.D.S. in Belgravia to the Petty Officers' School at Corsham. It is too good an essay, with too profound a message, to be limited to the esoteric few (but ever increasing) who fancy themselves as 'Kremlinologists'.

Finally, members of *The Naval Review* may wish to ensure that Solzhenitsyn's essential message to the West — 'Take care lest your headlong retreat lead you into a pit from which there is no climbing out' — is beamed towards those who do not want to believe that the time for sacrifices has arrived. Who can dispute that the disquieting message comes from a man who is well qualified to talk about sacrifices?

NILDIFVOL

THE BATTLE OF MALTA

by JOSEPH ATTARD

(William Kimber—£9.95)

The unusual thing about this book is that it is written by a Maltese and that it tells us the story of the island as a whole and not merely that of its servicemen, airfields and

naval base. It is reasonably well written and is punctuated with eyewitness accounts and personal reminiscence for as the author tells us, he was at the time 'only a youngster of sixteen but with great powers of observation and reasoning.' But on the whole this reviewer found *The Battle of Malta* faintly disappointing; it has neither the definition and focus of real history, nor the dramatic impact of art. Mr. Attard shows us that the story is indeed a heroic one, but somehow does not quite do it justice.

GEOFFREY TILL

COMBAT FLEETS OF THE WORLD

Edited by J. L. COUHAT

(Arms and Armour Press—£24.95)

Published every second year in the English translation this 'hard bound' reference book contains 792 pages excluding the preface and introduction. But how does it compare with *Janes* at £40?

The size is 10 inches by 8 inches which I find convenient for desk top use. The quality of printing is good although some readers will find the type size a little small, but this in turn allows for a considerable amount of detail to be included.

The introduction contains a succinct but comprehensive analysis of the US and Soviet naval programmes. Shorter sections of the introduction are devoted to the other naval powers, including the UK. In the main section of the book, which is divided alphabetically, Great Britain occupies 52 pages. Checking the UK and Soviet sections for accuracy I can find no serious fault. However the reader must accept that most measurements are metric (a notable exception are missile performance parameters) and one has to get used to the 'Twin 76mm DP secondary armament of the Tiger class.' Somewhat surprisingly Sea Slug Mk1 and Mk2 are grouped together with a common description of performance. Clearly a misleading oversimplification. Other RN information appears comprehensive and correct. Photographic cover is excellent, although the use of such words as 'stricken' for

'paying off' detracts from my enjoyment of the text. As to be expected the Editor has been caught off balance by the continuing changes in the details of government defence plans. (*Tarbatness* is listed for conversion to a 'landing platform assault ship').

The USSR has 95 pages introduced by three quotations from Admiral Gorshkov. The section summarising warships in service or building contains a useful description of weapon systems with their NATO designations, illustrated by close up photography. The Kiev class follows next as an introduction to Naval Aviation which is in tabular form with supporting photographs. Thereafter follow twelve pages of submarines that cannot fail to remind the reader of the size and diversity of the Soviet submarine fleet. This section is commendably up to date with the three variants of the Delta class of SSBN detailed as well as a rather shadowy reference to yet another class that will be a derivative of the Delta.

The new Kirov class of nuclear powered surface combatant receives a mention with some commendable detail but, of necessity, without a photograph.

In conclusion a reference book that is among the acknowledged world leaders. At its price, just on half that of *Janes*, it represents outstanding value for money. I recommend it strongly, if not quite unreservedly.

J. NUNN

THE SHIP

No. 4 *The Century before Steam*,

by ALAN MCGOWAN

No. 6 *Channel Packets and Ocean Liners*,

by JOHN M. MABER

No. 7 *The Life and Death of the Merchant Sailing Ship*

by BASIL GREENHILL

(Her Majesty's Stationery Office, £2.95 each)

The National Maritime Museum's commissioned series on *The Ship* — ten short books on the development of the ship, both

the merchant vessel and the specialised vessel of war, from the earliest times to the present day — marches on with three more titles, all happily at the same price as before.

Broadly, Dr. McGowan's theme is the development of the warship and the foreign-going merchant vessel during the 18th Century. He gives a crisp summary of the major events: the increase in size of ship as the century went on; the first appearance of the frigate about the middle of the century; and the evolution of the schooner. There were several important innovations: the introduction of triangular headsails into the old fore-and-aft rig, the replacement of the old whipstaff with the steering wheel, and the design of a sliding keel for smaller vessels towards the end of the century. There was also the constant fight against the *teredo navalis*, brought home in infected hulls from the east, to find its favourite food in the native British oak.

Dr. McGowan also includes a chapter on coastal and short sea traders, all the snows, brigs, smacks, wherrys, hoys, barges and billy-boys, carrying coal, timber, salt, stone, wool, fish and beer around the country in the days before railways. One of the best and most interesting features of this series is the way all the authors keep a sharp eye on the commercial aspects of the ships they are describing. These are not just ships: they are working ships, in a real business environment.

The same theme is pursued by Commander John Maber in his discussion of channel packets and ocean liners. He points out the importance of having a contract to carry the mails; the dramatic effect of the screw propeller; the brisk business to be done in transporting immigrants, across to America, or round the Cape to Australia.

Commander Maber is evidently an enthusiast for his subject and has provided a number of the photographs for his book. Some lovely, majestic ships steam across his pages. Here are *Britannic*, *Lusitania*, *Titanic*, *Carinthia*, *Queen Mary*, *America* and *Canberra*. It is good to know that

Great Britain is now being restored in her original building dock in Bristol.

After several successful centuries the merchant sailing ship declined and all but died in about fifty years. Basil Greenhill explains how much more complicated a story this is than at first appears. He shows, for example, that the tea clipper was really only a sideline and despite the publicity it got never accounted for more than about 2% of the sailing ship tonnage.

There were four reasons why the sailing ship died: screw propulsion; iron ship construction; the triple expansion engine; and steel boilers and furnaces. The sailing ship (although always very dangerous to life and limb) had its heyday between 1850 and 1865, a short renaissance between 1916 and the early 1920s, and a somewhat longer one for smaller vessels with diesel auxiliary engines until the 1960s.

All three books are very well illustrated. The captions in Dr. McGowan's book, commenting on the particular sails and the way they are being used in the picture, are especially informative.

JOHN WINTON

MERCHANT SHIP PANORAMA

by P. RANSOME WALLIS
(Ian Allan Ltd.—£10.95)

An excellent photo book of merchant ships, taken between the thirties and now. The book covers the subject by types, each picture has an adequate historical and technical explanation, and there is an index of the 290 ships.

The book brings home the evolution of design and appearance. Looking at such superb examples as the *Viceroy of India*, *Strathallan*, the pre-war *Queens*, and some typical Blue Funnel designs, and comparing their appearance with modern ships, one is thankful to have lived and served in the thirties. Ships, like dogs, have sadly short lives.

A book which will give great pleasure to young and old. Worth the high price.

D. C. E. F. GIBSON

THE SOVIET NAVY 1941-78 A Guide to Sources in English

by MYRON J. SMITH, JR.
(Clio Books—£16.50)

This is the ninth title in the War/Peace series, that have covered such diverse titles as *Uncertain Judgement* (a bibliography of War crimes trials) to *Arab-Israeli Conflict* (a historical, political, social and military bibliography). The series is produced under the aegis of the 'Centre for the study of armament and disarmament, California State University.'

This book contains 1741 references from 'ABS guide to recent publications . . .' to 'Zumwalt, Elmo R., Soviet strategy and US counterstrategy'. There is a short introduction by Commander S. F. Kime USN (Faculty of the National War College) thereafter the volume is divided into eleven sections and three appendices dealing with such subjects as 'Policy and strategy' and 'Forward deployments and Western responses'.

I found the book sensibly laid out and easy to use. The list of authors at the back simplifies finding references from particular writers. References span the whole field of defence writing from the 'classics' to military journals, Congressional reports, and unpublished Ph.D. dissertations.

Myron Smith is the Director of Libraries at Salem University, West Virginia. This is hardly the book for bedtime reading but for the serious researcher it is an investment well worth making.

J. NUNN

ENGLISH CORSAIRS ON THE BARBARY COAST

by CHRISTOPHER LLOYD
(Collins—£7.50)

A new book by so eminent an author as Christopher Lloyd must always be counted as an event by anyone interested in naval history. This makes it rather sad for your Reviewer to have to say that he did not find this new work completely satisfactory.

It is, of course well and interestingly written — so far as it goes. The reason why,

despite these merits, the book is not completely satisfying is that it does not go far enough — because it cannot. There is just not enough material for a complete book on the subject. As a result, this comparatively short volume has had to be filled out with chapters that do not really fit into the main thread of the narrative. These chapters are interesting in themselves, and obviously based on thorough research, but they tend to make the book disjointed. The final impression is more of a collection of journal articles, rather than of a book with a single theme.

There is, however, such a theme making up a significant proportion of the book. This is the story of the short-lived period in which the Barbary pirate states were at the height of their power. The circumstances that combined to bring this about are carefully traced and explained. The period began after Lepanto in 1571, when the two contemporary great naval powers disengaged. Their mutual withdrawal allowed a revival of the corsairing that had always been endemic in the Mediterranean. The next decades saw the replacement of the traditional galley by the sailing ships-of-war developed in northern Europe. When the Protestant powers made peace with Spain, many of the privateers who were flung out of employment sought service in Barbary.

It was this combination of circumstances that made the Barbary states, led by Algiers, temporarily so formidable. They dominated the trade routes through the Mediterranean, hastening the decline of Venice and Ragusa as mercantile powers. Outside the Mediterranean, they ranged as far afield as Iceland and Ireland in search of booty and slaves. The period of dominance was to be short-lived. The first attempts at retribution had little success, but Blake's operations marked a turning point and the author rightly pinpoints Herbert's treaty with Algiers as the end of the period of dominance. The Barbary pirates remained a threat to the poor and humble for another century and a half; but to citizens of the stronger naval powers they became a

controlled nuisance — a protection racket limited in its scope.

Just as the English Corsairs of the title made a vital contribution to the period of dominance, so their rundown contributed to the decline. The sort of men who were attracted by corsairing could once again find employment elsewhere. There are some fascinating character studies and accounts of the men who became corsairs, and renegades, or the similar type of man recruited to oppose them. One report by the Venetian Ambassador on Captain Mainwaring reads almost as the 'Job Spec.' of a privateer. There are also some admirable accounts of actions, drawn at first-hand from the original sources.

One of the interesting side-lights of the book is a dispassionate attempt to assess the severity of slavery in Barbary. As the author rightly points out it did not mean inevitably the life-long harshness of negro slavery. Slaves could hope for ransom, some of the treatment they received was designed to stimulate the payments of ransoms; or they could win their freedom by embracing Islam.

The author contrasts the slaves' lot with that of the average British Seaman. I think that he may be straining a point in claiming that slavery in Barbary might be less harsh than the voluntary service of merchant seamen; and I cannot entirely accept his attempt to minimise the horror of service as a galley slave, of which he gives vivid descriptions, by the comment that the voyages were of short duration.

All the same, an interesting book; but one to be borrowed from your library rather than purchased.

J.S.

SEA STORY

by RONALD JOHNSTON
(Macdonald Futura—£6.50)

This 'sea story' is about the Merchant Navy and it comes within an ace of being a very good novel indeed. It is well and knowledgeably written — perhaps even *too* knowledgeable. The author's display of expertise sometimes approaches self-

indulgence. Forty pages, for instance, on taking a liquid-gas tanker down from Antwerp to the sea, in thick fog, without a pilot, is a bit much for all except Schelde river pilotage buffs.

Ronald Johnston is himself a master mariner and a tanker captain. He once came ashore to go into business, and then went back to sea again. His hero, Jim Bruce, also a tanker captain, has also come back to sea again, after a business setback. He has sold up, settled everything on his wife and kids, started all over again, as a Second Officer on board the not-too-well maintained or officered liquid-gas tanker, carrying bulk ammonia, uninspiringly called *Seagas 2*.

When the captain is killed in an accident, Jim Bruce is promoted over the head of an inexperienced Chief Officer and takes command again. At once he begins to feel the adrenalin flowing, leads those of the crew who are willing to be led, and drives those who are not. The author clearly knows what he is about, has done it all himself, and now takes the reader right along with him as Jim Bruce tries now the velvet glove, now the fist of iron, humouring the Chief Engineer, keeping a

strict hand on the drink-prone Bosun, while he begins the painful process of turning *Seagas 2* into a taut ship.

Jim Bruce is less certain with women. His attitude wobbles hilariously between reverence and lust for the shapely owner of the ship, the widow of the man who first started the *Seagas* company. But the contrast between life on board, and the business machinations ashore (*Seagas* is very nearly broke) is well caught.

Eventually, Jim Bruce's success in *Seagas 2* also helps to save the company and he rounds it all off with a most resourceful bit of salvage. With his share of the money, he begins to consider going back into business again — which brings the story round neatly in a well-turned circle.

The author does it all with great gusto and conviction — he *knows* what he is writing about — and he has a nice line in throwaway remarks. Jim Bruce, for example, likes that Rod Stewart number, the 'Sailor' theme music. 'Amazing', he thinks to himself, 'how it seems to catch something of the feel of going to sea, even though it themed a series about the Royal Navy rather than the *real* navy.' My italics.

JOHN WINTON