

INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD TO ALL OFFICERS
OF THE ROYAL NAVY

For some time now we have been thinking deeply about the sort of officer and Officer Structure which will be needed to compete with the revolutionary advances in ships and aircraft which are even now beginning to take their place in the modern Navy and which will become more and more apparent in the Navy of the future.

2. To help us to clarify the problems involved, a Committee of senior naval officers and a senior Admiralty civilian under the chairmanship of Admiral Sir Aubrey Mansergh was set up in January, 1954 to collect evidence and suggestions from officers of all branches and seniorities and to make recommendations. The work of this committee is now complete.

3. In our very detailed study of the reports and recommendations of this Committee over the last 21 months, we have come to the conclusion that, in the Officer Structure of the Navy of the future, certain disadvantages which are inherent in the conditions which exist to-day must be eradicated. The most important of these disadvantages are :—

- (a) In the 50 years since this problem was last fully gone into, the tendency has been for the executive officer to become more and more technical and for the technical officer to increase in numbers and, at the same time, to become more and more executive. To put it bluntly, gone are the days when the executive officer told off the vast bulk of the hands for their day's work allocating a small proportion to the technical departments as he saw fit. To-day a very high proportion of the daily work of any ship's company is quite rightly controlled by the (E), (L) or (S) officer concerned. We believe that this process will continue.
- (b) There is no doubt that to-day we are not making full use of the experience and knowledge of the senior officers in the technical branches. Given the chance of more experience in the junior ranks outside their special technical fields, we believe that senior officers of the (E), (L) and (S) branches could and must play a more important part in the higher administration of the future Navy.
- (c) The present chances of promotion to Commander offer insufficient career prospects to attract into the future Navy the young men we must have for our future officers. Any new structure must offer better prospects of promotion to Commander and must allow for the best candidate, be he Seaman, Engineer, Electrical or Supply, to reach the higher ranks.

4. For the above main reasons (as well as for a host of lesser ones) we have decided as from 1st January, 1957, to form the officers of the present separate Executive, Engineer, Electrical and Supply and Secretariat lists into a single General List. We have decided that every cadet shall in future enter the Navy as "an officer"—which is his prime function, and that his early training shall be, to the greatest possible extent, common whether he is eventually to become a Seaman, an Engineer or a Supply specialist. Whether common entry shall in due course apply to the Electrical specialist has not yet been settled. After special training for his specialisation every junior officer will take a part in the day to day duties of running a ship in harbour or a shore establishment.

5. This raises the problem of "command." We have decided that, in the same way as only an aviator can command an aircraft whatever the seniority of his passengers, only a seaman officer will be appointed to command ships. But for other normal working command problems all officers of the four specialisations will be placed on a similar footing.

6. These decisions which were foreshadowed by the removal of the distinguishing colours of the various branches early last year are obviously very far reaching and they have only been arrived at after nearly two years of very careful thought. They will inevitably be unpalatable to many officers of medium seniority (especially in the Executive Branch) who had looked to serve for their lives under the old system. We realise that, during the transition period, a lot is being asked of these officers. But

APPENDIX C—*continued*ROYAL NAVY AND ROYAL MARINES—SPECIAL DUTIES LIST—*continued*

Existing Title.	New Title.	Sub-Specialist Symbol.
ROYAL MARINES		
Commissioned Sergeant Major	Second Lieutenant (Q.M.)	
Senior Commissioned Sergeant Major	Lieutenant (Q.M.)	
Commissioned R.M. Gunner	Second Lieutenant (S.D.)	
Senior Commissioned R.M. Gunner	Lieutenant (S.D.)	
Lieutenant (Q.M.)	Captain (Q.M.)	
Commissioned Bandmaster	Second Lieutenant (B.M.)	
Senior Commissioned Bandmaster	Lieutenant (B.M.)	
Lieutenant	Captain (B.M.)	
Recruiting Officer	Recruiting Officer (with status and uniform of Second Lieutenant (S.D.))	
R.N.S.W.S.		
Chief Officer (S.W.S.)	Communication Sub-Lieutenant ..	(S.W.S.)
Senior Chief Officer (S.W.S.)	Communication Lieutenant ..	(S.W.S.)
Lieutenant (S.W.S.)	Communication Lieutenant Commander	(S.W.S.)

(Q.R. and A.I.)

(A.F.O. 2499/55.)