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REPORT

on certain "Incidents" which occurred
on board

**H.M.C. Ships ATHABASKAN, CRESCENT
and MAGNIFICENT**

and on other matters
concerning

THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY

made to the Minister of National Defence by a Commission duly
appointed for the above purposes
and consisting of:

Rear-Admiral E.R. MAINGUY, R.C.N., *Chairman*
L.C. AUDETTE, *Esquire, Commissioner*
LEONARD W. BROCKINGTON, *Esquire, Commissioner*

OTTAWA, OCTOBER 1949

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EDMOND CLOUTHIER, C.M.G., B.A., L.Ph.,
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Report of the Commissioners

The Honourable BROOKE CLAXTON, P.C., M.P.
Minister of National Defence,
Ottawa

SIR,

The Commissioners appointed by you to enquire into certain incidents on board H.M.C.S. *Magnificent*, *Athabaskan*, and *Crescent*, have the honour to report as follows: -

Our conclusions are unanimous.

In an attempt to assist you, the Government of Canada and the Officers administering the Royal Canadian Navy, we were requested to find out and record what happened on the occasion of each of the incidents of alleged mass insubordination which occurred in the three ships concerned. We were further instructed to make appropriate recommendations, if we reached the conclusion that there were things which could and should be done to improve conditions of service, the relations between officers and men, the machinery for the ventilation of grievances and other collateral matters. We were also asked to consider whether there should be changes in regulations, conditions of service, and the training of naval personnel.

Without in any way controlling our activities, directing our inquiries, or attempting to shape our conclusions, you were kind enough to add to your instructions a number of most valuable suggestions. We wish to thank you for the honour of our appointment and for the helpful observations with which it was accompanied.

Mr. W. N. Wickwire, K.C., of Halifax, was assigned to us as Chief Counsel, and Commander P. R. Hurcomb, R.C.N., Judge Advocate of the Fleet, assisted him and us. We would like to place on record our appreciation of the able work and high professional standards of Mr. Wickwire, who attended throughout our hearings at both coasts. Mr. Wickwire wishes to join with the Commission in paying a tribute to Commander Hurcomb. This Officer's ability, experience, industry, and thoroughness during this period of preparation, the time of the hearings, and the days spent in the drafting of this report, deserve and command the admiration and gratitude of us all. We cannot speak too highly of the devotion to the public interest displayed throughout by this fine public servant.

During the course of our Inquiry, we held sittings at Halifax. We also sat at Esquimalt and Vancouver and paid a visit to the United Naval Establishment at Seattle. We also met at Ottawa for the purpose of taking evidence at Canadian Naval Headquarters. After a suitable time allotted for the analysis of evidence, we sat at Ottawa again for the preparation of this report. We thought it our duty in accordance with your

instructions, to extend our investigation to the state of the Navy, with particular emphasis on morale, discipline and training. We did not make an exhaustive inquiry into Canada's Naval policy and the part which our Navy might be called upon to play in case this country was involved once again in war. On the other hand, the known and elicited facts about the part which Canada might take in a naval war were bound to influence our inquiry, our thought and our recommendations.

PROCEDURE FOLLOWED

We heard all 238 witnesses, who ranged from Admiral in Command to some of the most recent "new entries". Of the 238 witnesses, over 150 were petty officers and ratings. By far the greater number attended at the Board's request. But over 50 appeared at their own request as a result of the invitation to appear, which was widely advertised in the newspapers and on the radio. Those examined also included chaplains, medical officers, civil servants, and two active journalists, both of whom had naval experience and one of whom accompanied the cruise of *Magnificent*.

In accordance with your suggestion and our own desire, we used every effort to make the hearings informal in order to encourage free and frank discussion.

Our procedure was briefly as follows: -

The Commission met the three ships concerned upon their arrival at port. We went aboard and had a preliminary talk with the men, telling them who we were and what we had been asked to do. We explained that we were fellow Canadians, sharing their hopes and wishes that the Canadian Navy might be as happy, as efficient and as well disciplined as any navy in the world. Our Chairman spoke to them simply and as man to man. At the hearings, each witness was invited to sit down and to smoke, if he wished. He was told that he was free to speak about anything and anybody in frankness and without fear of punishment or prejudice to his career. Although evidence was taken down in shorthand, each witness was told that all testimony was confidential to the Commission, and that the records would be destroyed as soon as this report was written. All those involved in the incident in *Magnificent* were asked to come before us. In the case of the other ships, it was not thought necessary to invite all who took part in the acts of insubordination. In the case of both *Athabaskan* and *Crescent*, twenty-five names were chosen by lot from the men concerned with the event. The system of choice was explained to the men. It was also emphasized that anyone not selected by lot was free to come forward voluntarily. We also reserved on our part the right to call any men whom the evidence indicated would be valuable witnesses. In addition, we summoned from each ship the Captain, the Executive Officer, as well as other officers, chiefs, and petty officers. In practically every instance, the witnesses appeared frank, truthful and free from fear. It was especially noticeable that as the Inquiry progressed, mutual confidence increased.

Sixty-four exhibits in all were filed and over twenty papers were submitted by officers and men containing suggestions for the improvement of the service. Many of these were of great value.

In addition, each of us sought many opportunities of private conversations with

men and officers which contributed to the factual foundation upon which this report is based.

SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Before we proceed, we wish to remark that many of those whom we interviewed were men who wished to voice complaints. They offered criticisms of prevalent conditions, no doubt often with a sincere wish to remedy them, but in some cases also with a hope of justifying the illegal action which they and their fellows had taken. A very few of them were professional grumblers. Some of the circumstances of which they complained had been remedied or eliminated at the time of our sittings. Others have been dealt with since our adjournment. Some of the witnesses whom we examined were enthusiastic; some were satisfied; some were complacent about conditions as they now exist. Although this report in the very nature of things is bound to be critical, it must not be assumed that there are not many reasons for great national pride in the achievements of the Canadian Navy past and present, and in the men who inherit and guard its traditions. It is certain also that wisdom, experience, and the passage of time will, by their own momentum, work many great and lasting improvements. We were asked to find out what was wrong with the Navy. If, therefore, we have stressed what is wrong, it should not be forgotten that a great deal also is overwhelmingly right. The fact that men and officers are restless, and constructively critical, is a welcome sign of national convalescence, and a bright promise of naval and national health and well-being.

Without any desire to excuse a lack of discipline, without any wish to justify or condone it, but with a determination to recommend the enforcement and maintenance of strict discipline as vigorously as we can, we feel that we should preface our findings with a few general observations.

The times in which we live, like all postwar times, are full of restlessness, uncertainty and change. Wise men throughout the ages have observed that just as the sea after a great storm is troubled for many days and it is a long time before the winds are lulled and the calm settles upon the waters, so after every great conflict, there are turmoil and ferment in the affairs of mankind. The social and economic uncertainties and changes, which affect Canada as they do the world and the general deterioration in the discipline of family life, which is one of the misfortunes of our times, press with particular intensity on the lives of young men. It would be a miracle if the comparative isolation of men within the walls of a ship at sea should protect them from the disturbing influences which harass their companions and contemporaries on shore. It is obvious also that the Canadian Navy, like the British and American Navies, is itself in the process of readjustment, reformation and change. In our Navy there is a mingling of men of old traditions, of new traditions and of no traditions. Our ship's crews are a mixture compounded of the Royal Canadian Navy with many years of training in peace and in war; of the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, who all their experience in the grim swift and exciting days of war; and of men who during the years of peace with little

training at sea or on shore have, from motives that vary from patriotism and the love of adventure to the stark necessity of earning a living, joined the Naval Defence of our country. Those defences have grown and shrunk in a manner unparalleled. The following figures tell the story, vividly and accurately:-

STATISTIC RE ACTIVE PERSONNEL AND SHIPS – 1939-49

1939

Officers	129
Men	1456
Total Personnel	<u>1585</u>
Ships	<u>16</u>

Wartime

During the war 106,465 persons passed through the Navy. This, added to the permanent force personnel, means that during the war approximately 108,050 persons were in the Navy from time to time. However, due to discharges, casualties, etcetera, the peak strength at any one time during the war was as follows:-

Officers (male).....	8920
Men.....	78221
Wrens (officers and others).....	5893
Total Personnel.....	<u>93034</u>
Ships.....	<u>956</u>

Today

Officers.....	1212
Men.....	7601
Total Personnel.....	<u>8813</u>
Ships.....	<u>54</u>

Future

A peace time ceiling of 10,375 officers and men for the Permanent Navy was approved some time ago. The present interim authorized strength is:-

Officers.....	1399
Men.....	7648
Total Personnel.....	<u>9047</u>

Such growth and reduction need no verbal comment. Every such process must have its accompanying stresses and pains. We hope in the course of this report to diagnose some of the ills and to suggest a few remedies.

For the purpose of this record, we propose to deal first with the bare outline of the incident in each ship as it occurred and then with any special circumstances which might

be held to influence the conduct of the men in their particular vessel. We will follow that analysis by a statement of the conditions common to all three ships and presumably not uncommon to many of the ships of the Canadian Navy. We then propose to make some general observations on training, education, recreation, supply and other cognate matters and to follow those observations with a number of recommendations respectfully offered in accordance with your expressed desire to receive them.

THE "INCIDENT" IN H.M.C.S. "MAGNIFICENT"

This is an aircraft carrier with a complement of 70 officers and 828 men, of whom 32 aircraft handlers were involved in the mutinous proceedings. On February 25, 1949, *Magnificent* arrived at Halifax from Great Britain. She left Halifax on March 5th. The period of preparation at Halifax was short and the work of her crew was intense and hurried. This was due to delays in Great Britain and the exigencies of the impending cruise, all matters beyond the control of the Canadian Naval authorities. On March 5th, H.M.C.S. *Magnificent* sailed from Halifax to Colon as part of Task Force 215, to keep a rendezvous with Canadian west coast ships and units of the British America and West Indies Squadron. It was anticipated that *Magnificent* would remain in Colon for two days. In order to take part in manoeuvres and rendezvous with the ships of the Royal Navy, it was found necessary to reduce the stay in Colon to one day. The result was that not all of the men were able to secure shore leave at Colon.

H.M.C.S. *Magnificent* sailed from Colon at 1100 on Wednesday, March 16th. Flying operations were carried out during the afternoon, the last aircraft landing on board at 1755. There was no flying on March 17th, although "flying stations" were piped at 0530 on that day and not secured until 1400. On March 18th, "flying stations" were also piped at 0530. The first aircraft took off at 0641. The last aircraft landed onboard at 1219 and "flying stations" secured at 1300. On March 19th, "flying stations" were piped at 1315 and flying lasted approximately five hours, the last plane landing on board at 1850. Daily orders for Sunday, March 20th, which had been posted throughout the ship the previous day, called for "flying stations" at 0530 and continuous flying during the morning. Men of the air department, including the aircraft handlers, were awakened at 0500 on the morning of Sunday, March 20th. They went to "flying stations" at 0530, the first aircraft being scheduled to take off at 0615. Aircraft were ranged on the flight deck and at 0546 a message was received from the Commander in Chief of the America and West Indies Squadron, that the flying program was cancelled because of weather conditions. Accordingly, a pipe was made to secure aircraft temporarily and lashings were complete by 0645. At 0645 a pipe was made for hands to carry on for breakfast and for "flying stations" to resume at 0850. When this order was given, there was considerable murmuring and "moaning" on the flight deck, which was overheard by several witnesses. It is not entirely clear whether or not this pipe included definite orders "to fall in" to clean the ship at 0745. In any case, the normal ship's routine would have called for this since flying was not in progress. The result was that when the men went below for breakfast, the great majority, and probably all of them knew that at 0745 they would be piped to fall in to clean ship and to resume "flying stations" at 0850. At "out pipes" (0740), the chief petty officer in charge of the aircraft handlers noticed that the only handlers on the flight deck were leading hands. He sent a petty officer below to see what was wrong. The petty officer reported that the men were not coming up. He did not

state why and was given no information by the men. The chief petty officer then went below and found the men sitting around their mess deck in silence. When he asked them if they were coming out he received no reply. No orders were given by the petty officer or by any other officer to the thirty-two men involved, except the instructions in the pipe at 0745 which by that time had been made. The state of affairs was reported to the Captain. He proceeded to the mess deck at 0810 accompanied by the Executive Officer, Commander (Air) and the Master at Arms. At the time of the Captain's visit, all ratings present in the mess were then employed in scrubbing out their mess deck. This work, which would have been part of the normal duty of most of the men after 0745, was well advanced. The men stood when the Captain came in and behaved throughout in a respectful manner. The Captain informed the men that mass statement of grievances or mass action to overcome grievances would not be tolerated. After advising them of the proper method of stating grievances under the King's Regulations (to which further reference will be made below), he said that he would see each man individually as soon as the state of the day's affairs permitted. He then told them that the next pipe would be to occupy flying stations at 0900. He ordered them in the meantime to carry on with the cleaning of their mess deck. At 0900, the pipe "flying stations" was obeyed by all ratings. The Captain subsequently interviewed all the men involved. No disciplinary action was taken then or has since been taken.

The above facts were established by the examination of the personnel involved and in most cases, with their help.

CAUSES OF INCIDENT IN "MAGNIFICENT"

We shall deal below with some of the causes and conditions of all three incidents. The particular facts affecting the *Magnificent* are, in our opinion, briefly as follows:-

It should be noted at the outset that the operation of an aircraft carrier has its own particular problems. The ship's company is more than usually departmentalized and those concerned with the department of Air tend to consider themselves an almost autonomous body within the ship's domain. There is, therefore, in an aircraft carrier, a greater need than ever for complete cooperation between the various ship's departments. As a result, the Executive Officer, who is a pivotal figure in every ship, is charged with special additional responsibilities in a ship of this type and class. There is, in our opinion, no doubt that there were not the harmony and cooperation in the *Magnificent* between the Executive Officer and the other departmental heads, which were desirable and necessary. There were dissension and open criticism. The criticism and dissension were known throughout the ship and critical words were often spoken by officers in the hearing of stewards and other men. Orders were given over loudspeakers in tones and terms which indicate dissatisfaction of at least one officer with another. This state of affairs therefore, generally known throughout the ship, contributed to the unrest and tended to make the ship unhappy. Several officers expressed their regret that they had privy to such conduct and were frank in stating that it was contrary to all accepted naval traditions.

As has been stated, the time spent in Halifax between the arrival of *Magnificent* from the United Kingdom and the beginning of the cruise, was unusually short. This imposed intensive and hurried duties upon the crew and did not allow for that cooperative

preparation for a tactical cruise in tropical waters which would normally be desirable. With reference to the cruise itself, it was in many respects a new experience for Canadian ships to be engaged with the British Navy in joint manoeuvres. Such manoeuvres require a great deal of advance detail planning, which experience, no doubt, will improve in case such adventures are pursued in the future. The aircraft handlers who were concerned in the incident, tended to consider themselves separate and distinct from the rest of the ship's company. While they were not called upon to perform tasks as onerous and continuous as the air mechanics, they were probably required to perform, at least during certain periods, heavier duties than the rest of the ship's company. This made them somewhat "sorry for themselves". They complained particularly about the late and long hours worked on the day and night preceding the morning's insubordination. In any event, they believed they had a series of grievances, particularly because after heavy duties they were piped to early morning tasks which were subsequently postponed without an adequate explanation. There were also complaints that expected periods of leisure had been cancelled. There was considerable dissatisfaction because of the short leave at Colon. Many men did not get ashore because the anticipated stay of two days was reduced by high authority to one day. There was also a lack of entertainment on board. The films available were wholly inadequate, dull, and out of date. One was a film about Russia, which some men thought nothing but crude and unacceptable propaganda. The crew did not receive sufficient information as to the nature of the cruise and the progress of the manoeuvres. Your commissioners were much impressed by the expressed desire of almost every witness to know something of countries which he was to visit and the operations in which his ship was engaged. Many of the men examined said in varying ways that they felt they were cogs in a machine, whereas they would have liked to have been in however humble a capacity, partners in a common enterprise. While some notices of operation were posted in the ship, they were not sufficient for the purpose and all would have welcomed a series of simple chats by the Captain or Executive Officer on the object of the cruise and the unfolding panorama of the joint manoeuvres with their British companions.

Your commissioners will have some further observations to make on the subject of information, entertainment and educational opportunities for men engaged in sea-going exercises. There were many complaints about living conditions in the aircraft handler's mess. We feel that there was some basis for the opinion that the men had agreed on a recital of these matters as a justification for the incident after it had happened and that many of the criticisms were cited as excuses for insubordination rather than a prior cause for its occurrence. Nevertheless, several of them were contributing causes. The complaints concerned unsanitary conditions and the presence of bedbugs, defective showers, overcrowding and inadequate arrangements for late-comers at meals. There was some ground for all these complaints. It was apparent that some of the matters complained of were adjusted. Over-crowding could not be dealt with at all during the cruise. Some fumigating was done to make the living quarters more sanitary. We are of the opinion that a good deal more of explanation could have been given of the reasons why some things could not be done. Reference has been made to the alleged lack of the proper planning of aircraft operations. It is true that a number of flights were cancelled for reasons which were not apparent to the men concerned. Apparently the aircraft handlers took some pride in their work and were quite willing to do extra tasks if they

knew they contributed to the objects of the cruise. They felt that some of the changes were capricious, whereas many of them could have been easily explained but were not. The medical evidence suggested that some of the unhappiness and restlessness on board a ship which everyone called “unhappy” could be attributable to the tropical heat to which many of the men were not accustomed. This appears reasonable.

We propose to consider at a later stage in this report the question of the presentation of grievances, and especially the functioning of the so-called Welfare Committee. In the meantime, we think it our duty to offer in this connection some criticism of the Executive Officer of H.M.C.S *Magnificent*. The establishment of a Welfare Committee which had been ordered by a signal and was, in fact, within the knowledge of the Executive Officer, was not instituted on board *Magnificent*. For this, the Executive Officer is primarily to blame. He did not approve of Welfare Committees and therefore did not set one up on board his ship in accordance with the signalled order.

We further observed from the evidence given before us that the relations between the Captain, his officers and crew were far too distant for the good of the ship. The Executive Officer was allowed to take too much upon himself. In fairness to the Captain, we wish to say that the duties of the Captain of an aircraft carrier are most onerous, especially in the case of a cruise of this kind in which his ship was a unit in extensive international manoeuvres. Most of the Captain’s available time had to be spent on the bridge.

Although conditions in *Magnificent* were well-known to most of the crew, and there was a feeling of uneasiness in the air as though something were about to happen, the incident itself came as a complete surprise to the Captain and the Executive Officer. If there had been reasonable co-operation between leading hands, petty officers, divisional officers and their superiors and a proper working of divisional system (to which reference will be made below) and particularly if the Welfare Committee had been functioning in accordance with its purpose and design, there is every likelihood that this regrettable incident might have been avoided.

We shall refer later to the pattern of the various incidents and their inter-relation to each other and to a prior incident on board H.M.C.S. *Ontario*. We shall also, at a further point in this report draw your attention to a series of happenings on board *Magnificent* not connected with the events of March 20th. It would probably be an exaggeration to call them acts of “sabotage” in the usual modern sense of that word. Some, however, were serious and unexplained acts of wilful damage.

THE “INCIDENT” IN H.M.C.S “ATHABASKAN”

We now proceed to deal with the incident in *Athabaskan*. On the 28th of January, H.M.C.S. *Athabaskan*, as part of Task Group 215.9, sailed from Esquimalt. The group was under the command of the Captain of *Ontario*. The Commanding Officer, H.M.C.S. *Athabaskan* had joined the ship in November, 1948, and the Executive Officer had joined on January 7, 1949. They were both new to the ship and strangers to the crew prior to their appointments. There had been many changes within a very short period of time in the officer responsible as First Lieutenant for the Executive duties on board the ship

As we shall observe later, frequent changes in personnel tend to contribute to a confusion of discipline. On the 1st February, *Athabaskan*, having been detached from the Task Group the previous day, arrived at San Diego to refuel and to make tentative arrangements for the arrival of the entire Task Group, due there on the 14th February. Later, on the 1st February, *Athabaskan* sailed for Magdalena Bay, arriving there on the 3rd February. The time at Magdalena Bay was chiefly devoted to cleaning and painting ship. Recreational leave was granted daily. On the 12th February, *Athabaskan*, in company with the other ships of the Task Group which she had joined at Magdalena Bay, sailed for San Diego, arriving there on the 15th February. Officers and men were entertained at the port by the U.S. Navy. On the 22nd February, the Task Group sailed from San Diego and course was shaped for Acapulco. Inter-ship exercises were carried out throughout passages. On the 25th February, *Athabaskan* was detached and ordered to proceed to Manzanillo and to refuel there at 0845 on Saturday, the 26th. Daily Orders for the previous day (Friday), which had been posted and piped in the ship on Thursday, indicated that there would be a "make and mend" on Friday afternoon. "Make and mend" is a period of leisure so named from the early days of sailing ships when the men made and mended their clothing. This period was to compensate for the loss of the usual "make and mend" on Saturday, which change was necessitated by fueling operations at Manzanillo. All hands were called earlier than usual (at 0545 on Saturday) and the Daily Routine Orders for that day indicated that after the morning work and the normal lunch hour at 1315, hands were to carry on with work.

On arrival at Manzanillo, the ship was secured about fifteen feet off the fuelling jetty, which was then undergoing repairs. After the ship had been secured in the proper place for the taking on of a supply of oil, hands went to dinner. At 1255, twenty minutes before the pipe to fall in, the Chief Bosn'n's Mate, having finished lunch, went to the upper deck and walked around to see how things were progressing. In the meantime, a whaler's crew had been piped away for a particular duty, but there were no signs of the crew. The Chief Bosn'n's Mate asked the Duty P.O. where the crew were. The latter said he would go forward and investigate. He went to the mess deck and found that the doors were closed. He tried to open the door by manipulating the "dogs" but was unable to do so, as apparently some men inside the mess deck prevented him from so doing. He shouted "Come on Boys", but there was no answer from behind the door. After the Duty P.O. had reported this to the Chief Bosn'n's Mate, the latter went to the mess deck and also tried to open the door. He also was prevented from so doing by the men within. Both the Boatswain's Mate and the P.O. then reported to the Coxswain. He also tried to open the door but failed. The Coxswain then reported to the First Lieutenant, who at about 1327 reported to the Captain.

The Captain, after ascertaining that no Chief Petty Officers, Petty Officers or Leading Seamen were within the mess decks, gathered the Senior Chiefs together and tried to find out from them what was wrong. They were unable to tell him. Meanwhile, the Coxswain had gone to the forecabin and had shouted down into the mess deck through an ammunition hatch, asking the men what the trouble was. No one answered at first, but when the Coxswain tried again, the men told him that they wanted to see the Captain. This was reported to the Captain, who then went to the ammunition hatch. The Coxswain called through the hatch telling the men that the Captain was there.

The men shouted that they were opening up the door to the mess deck. When the Captain went below at 1350 with the Coxswain, the door was open and both entered. The men rose on the arrival of the Captain. As the Captain began to speak to the men he saw on a table beside him a piece of paper containing some writing. This, however, he covered with his cap, after he had quickly noted that it apparently contained some demands. He told them that he was not going to receive complaints, but intended only to give them advice. From the quick glance which he was able to give to the paper, he observed notes requesting the removal of the Executive Officer, the removal of the Coxswain and more cooperation between officers and men. There were some other points which he did not have time to read. He did not again see the paper. He explained that he was speaking to the men, not as Commanding Officer, but as the senior officer present to advise them. Several questions were asked:-

1. When do we go into tropical routine?
2. Why are we always told to put our caps on straight?
3. How can we retain our self-respect and keep our pride at the same time?

After he had completed his talk with the men at 1410, the Captain instructed the First Lieutenant to pipe "Stand Easy" over the loudspeaker system. Ten minutes later, in accordance with the normal routine, "Hands carry on with your work" was piped, whereupon the men turned to and carried on. The ship sailed from Manzanillo at 1500.

Approximately ninety men, all under the rating of Leading Seamen, were involved. Charges of slackness were subsequently made against those who took part. Each case was heard and those who had no reasonable excuse were cautioned. Caution is not a punishment. No other disciplinary action was taken, nor where any orders given by any officer to the men during the period of their self-incarceration other than the pipe referred to.

CAUSES OF INCIDENT ON "ATHABASKAN"

It was obvious to us many of the leading hands and perhaps some of the P.O.'s, were aware of impending trouble in the ship and conveniently absented themselves at the time of the incident. As far as we could find out from questioning the men and officers who appeared before us, the particular grievances which led to the incident were, firstly, too much emphasis on the proper wearing of caps and general dress regulations at a time when other ships both Canadian and American were not subject to similar regulations. There was, secondly, considerable complaint that certain officers, and particularly the Executive Officer, made unreasonable demands and minor criticisms and refused to listen to any explanation. The men complained that there was a failure to go into tropical routine, an unusual and sudden tropical heat wave causing the men much physical discomfort. In "tropical routine", work begins earlier than usual in the morning and finishes for the day at 1300.

There were also considerable criticism by the men of the varying routines in the ships of the Task Force, and much unfavourable comparison with the routine in other ships in which the men had served. Particularly there was comparison of the routine in the *Cayuga* with the routine in the *Athabaskan*. There were in the *Athabaskan* some twelve men who served in the *Cayuga*. We should also remark that there was more feeling in *Athabaskan* concerning the social gap between officers and men than in any

other of the ships whose crew were examined. There was apparently an even greater lack of sympathy in this ship between the men and officers than is usual throughout the Canadian Navy. This matter will be fully discussed when we deal with the Divisional System and the officer's training.

It should be noted also that although the Ship's welfare Committee had been set up in *Athabaskan*, it never met from the time the cruise began until after the incident under investigation. Further reference to this will be made when we come to deal with the welfare committees.

THE "INCIDENT" IN H.M.C.S. "CRESCENT"

We now give a recital of the facts found in connection with H.M.C.S. *Crescent*.

This ship sailed from Esquimalt on February 2, 1949. Originally it had been planned that she would form part of the Pacific Squadron and rendezvous with the Atlantic Squadron at Colon, proceeding thence to participate in exercises with ships of the Royal Navy and the United States Navy. The Captain of the *Crescent* was informed on January 27, 1949 (which was the evening before the ships were to sail) that *Crescent* would not join the others but would proceed to China on a special mission. On the following morning, January 28th, the Captain informed the ship's company to that effect.

Both the Captain and the First Lieutenant had been appointed to the ship within three months before she sailed from Esquimalt. The First Lieutenant had never served in a destroyer before and had little or no experience of the duties of Executive Officer. There was a Welfare Committee in the ship. The Minutes produced to us were most unsatisfactory and it was obvious that the Committee's proper functions were arbitrarily curtailed by the Executive Officer and Commanding Officer. H.M.C.S. *Crescent* arrived at Pearl Harbour on February 8th, and sailed the following day for Kwajalein, arriving there on February 15th. She sailed from Kwajalein on February 16th, arriving at Guam on February 19th. On February 21st, she sailed from Guam for Shanghai, arriving at Woosung on February 25th and at Shanghai on the following day. She then proceeded from Shanghai on March 10th down the river to Woosung; thence up the Yangtze to Kian-Chang, anchoring the same night under the guns of the fortress at Kiangwin. On March 11th she proceeded to Nanking, arriving at 1700, when she berthed alongside the only available jetty, which belonged to a British Company, the International Export Company Limited.

On March 14th, H.M.S. *Cossack* having departed for Shanghai the Captain of H.M.C.S. *Crescent* assumed the duty of Senior Naval Officer at Nanking, which included the obligation to make and receive a larger number of diplomatic and social calls. Just before his ship sailed from Esquimalt, a draft of 25 men from H.M.C.S. *Ontario* joined the ship. Of these, fifteen had been in *Ontario* when as a result of a mass protest the Executive Officer was transferred. There is no doubt that the incident which will be immediately described, was planned the night before it happened. Many men, leading hands and some Petty Officers knew it was imminent. On the morning of the day on which it occurred, an organized attempt was successfully made to attract cooks, stewards and stokers to the deck that had been selected for the mass protest.

On Tuesday, March 15th, the men were called at 0630 and had breakfast at 0700. "Hands fall in" was piped at 0800, when the men were to be mustered and detailed for part-ship work. When the First Lieutenant appeared on deck amidship for the "Hands fall in", he found that only senior men were there. He asked the Coxswain what was wrong and the latter informed him that the men had shut themselves in the mess deck. There were in fact, 83 men in the mess deck. The First Lieutenant and the Coxswain then went below and tried the door leading into it. Finding that they were unable to get in, they called through the door but received no reply from inside. Amongst the 83 men locked inside, there were no chiefs or Petty Officers, but there were a few leading seamen who had recently been advanced from the rating of "able seaman" under the revised rating structure. In view of their attitude to the incident and to their duties with reference thereto, we were strongly of the opinion that the advance of some of them was an unfortunate and reprehensible error.

The First Lieutenant and the Coxswain went back amidships to where the senior hands had fallen in. The First Lieutenant asked if they knew what was going on. They all said they knew nothing about it and could advance no reason for it. The matter was then reported to the Captain, who mustered all officers in his cabin. They did not appear to know what the reasons were for the incident and had no prior knowledge of such threatened action.

At 0900, the Captain ordered the First Lieutenant to pipe that lower decks would be cleared five minutes later. The pipe to clear lower decks was made at 0905. There was no reply from the men shut in the mess deck.

The Captain then instructed the First Lieutenant to get word the men that Able Seaman "X" (who was known to be a good hand, well liked by the men, and was among those shut in) should report to the Captain's cabin. Able Seaman "X" is one of those influential men, with an affable nature, who reminded those amongst us who served at sea of old "three-badge A.B.'s" who have unfortunately disappeared from the Canadian Navy. Able Seaman "X" was asked to report to the Captain's cabin. The message was called from the jetty with a megaphone through one of the scuttles. Able Seaman "X" came out and reported to the Captain's cabin.

Meanwhile (probably soon after the pipe at 0900), a paper had been affixed to the outside of the door. Evidently the door had been opened from within and the paper placed on the outside of it. The paper was in a variety of handwritings and had been placed on a table in the mess deck with the request that anyone who wished to add any demand to it should do so. The man responsible for the initial production of the paper and for some of the writing upon it, frankly admitted his part in the incident. The paper was addressed to the Captain and it contained the following demands upon him:-

1. "A First Lieutenant to relieve the existing Executive Officer;
2. A Welfare Committee that will not be vetoed by the Captain;
3. A definite routine that will not be changed every few days.

We are a Canadian Ship and should have a Canadian Routine;

4. Too many sentries are required due to the Wet Canteen, which is used by very few of the ratings. The watch has two and sometimes three four-hour watches to stand besides their working day;

5. A little consideration from the Captain. We are a ship's Company that are used to being treated like men and we are proud of our ship. Esprit de Corps has sunk to nil;

6. This has been in her four years of Commission the happiest and most efficient ship in the Royal Canadian Navy. Now there is not a happy man aboard her. Your first consideration is the ship's company, not your social functions ashore."

The Captain talked to Able Seaman "X", who told him that the men wished to speak to the Captain personally. The Captain told Able Seaman "X" that while he was ready to go forward to the mess deck, it would be for the purpose of addressing the men and not to discuss complaints. The Captain said that he would do all the talking. He instructed Able Seaman "X" to give this message to the mess deck and to inform him of the men's reaction.

Able Seaman "X" returned in a few minutes to say that the men were ready to receive the Captain. The Captain then went into the mess deck alone. Among other things, the Captain informed the men that if there were any complaints he was anxious to get the bottom of them, provided they were put forward in the proper manner as individual complaints. He would interview each complainant. He also stated that since he wanted to find out all the facts and the reasons for the incident, he was not contemplating any disciplinary action thus far. He then left the mess deck after stating that he was going to have "Hands fall in" piped at 0950 and that requestmen would be seen at 1045.

At 0950, all hands responded to the pipe and from then on normal routine was carried out. The Captain saw nineteen men later that day as he had to receive a Chinese Admiral in the early part of the morning. The other men who had put in requests, withdrew them the next day. No disciplinary action was taken. In view of certain press reports, it is to be noted that there was no complaint made either to the Captain or to us about the lack of good or proper food on board the *Crescent*. This alleged shortage will be dealt with later by us in this part

CAUSES OF INCIDENT IN "CRESCENT"

The major complaint voiced in connection with the incident in *Crescent*, concerned the restricted functions of the Welfare Committee referred to above and to be elaborated below. There was also a great deal of dissatisfaction concerning sentry duty at the Wet Canteen operated by the International Export Company Limited, and the necessity of setting a guard on the bridge that led thereto. A number of cases of beer had also to be unloaded from the ship on the quay for transportation to the British Embassy, to replenish the Embassy's exhausted supply. Owing to the failure of the British Ambassador's Staff to arrange for the cartage of these cases to the Embassy's premises, the beer had to be reloaded on the *Crescent* and unloaded on the quay on a number of occasions in what appeared to be a confused chain of unnecessary labour. There was a good deal of criticism also concerning the apparent tendency of *Crescent* to follow the Royal Navy routine in a manner which many men thought slavish and unnecessary. "We are a Canadian ship and should have a Canadian routine" was frequently heard on the lips of witnesses. There is no doubt also, that the fact that the *Crescent* was engaged on a

mission unique in Canadian Naval experience, and that she was isolated from other Canadian ships in rather bleak and inhospitable surroundings, added to the difficulties and the discontent.

There was a feeling also that the Captain was devoting too much attention to social functions ashore. *Crescent* was operating in waters and ports where there were ships, officers, and dignitaries of many nations. The Captain's sense of duty imposed upon him a number of social and official obligations which were unique in his experience. It should be observed, however, that after some explanation, the men realized the necessity of many of the Captain's extraneous activities, although the cocktail parties and entertainment on board added to the duties of many of them. There was a feeling in this ship that there was an excessive emphasis on social deportment and behaviour; especially in the wardroom. Meals were served at varying times and at late hours. The Captain acknowledged to us that he had stressed some of these things in a desire to train his officers to meet unusual social obligations. There was also in *Crescent* as in *Athabaskan* a general criticism amongst the men of frequent changes in routine and a tendency not uncommon in Canadian and other ships to compare the present times and present officers with the old days and with departed Captains and First Lieutenants. The *Crescent* had previously been a ship with a fine tradition of appearance and efficiency in which the men took a great pride. This feeling is confirmed by the memorandum which was drafted in the mess deck at the time of the incident. A good deal of the old spirit was recaptured after the mass insubordination. This improvement was attributed by the men to their action on March 15th. Most of the officers denied that there was any change in their attitude or actions resulting from the protest of the crew.

THE FOOD SITUATION ON BOARD "CRESCENT"

Inasmuch as considerable publicity in the shape of an anonymous letter was given to alleged complaints about the food, we should observe that such complaints were completely unjustified and were not voiced by any witness who appeared before us. They all said that with due allowance for the difficulties of obtaining fresh supplies in Chinese waters, the food, although dull, was completely adequate. It was just as well for the physical comfort of the writer of the anonymous letter (which appeared in a Vancouver paper) that his identity was hidden from his comrades. As an indication of the attitude of the crew in this matter, and of the unexpected and unsuspected talent that sometimes shines amongst a group of Canadian youth, and in order to throw a little joyful light on the sombre scene of this unfortunate incident, we quote an article written by a member of the crew and posted throughout the ship at the time when the complaint about the food was published:-

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nanking, China.

19th April, 1949.

A rumoured account of the disastrous incident which occurred on H.M.C.S *Crescent* (Devil's Island) whilst keeping open the life line to the outside world.

On the spot account received from an exhausted sailmaker, who says, and we quote, "---" too late. He too has joined the posthumous ranks of his comrades as a result of dire malnutrition.

Roaming the uppers, I happened upon a small group of emaciated men dressed in rags and appealing to an S.A. (Semi-Automatic) who was armed with a deadly twenty-foot Bull Whip with which he kept the half-starved, crazed pack at bay. Allegedly these men were reported to have asked if the Master (S.A.) would allow them to pick over the garbage from the Vegetable Lockers. On hearing this request the S.A.'s face took on a diabolical expression and one of intense rage; whereupon he went berserk and with a fiendish scream began to lash out at the unfortunate scarecrows, pressing them back and over the ship's side into the murky depths of the Yangtze. Next of Kin will be notified.

Focal point of the day's activities in the Issue Room located in the forward part of the ship. About this room a crowd of gaunt seaman and stokers gathered, night and day, waiting in anticipation for their issues – consisting of a pound of Bologna, or one tin of corned dog, on alternate days. Men fortunate enough to have survived and to be receiving issues must first put in a request through the proper service channels. If the request is approved by the S.A. the man drawing issues must approach this hallowed room on knees and knock his head three times on the sill of the door, at the same time uttering cries of “Simba Simba” which is an old Ukeberian word for “Master”. If the man is sufficiently subservient the S.A. will weigh out the required amount of Bologna or corned dog and issue same (first peeling off the crust of stagnant mold and penicillin which has gathered on the meat over a two-year period.)

Scenes similar to the aforementioned are reported to be common sight on this Hell Ship. A traveller in the area reported seeing starving seaman with glassy eyes, swelling tongue and bloated stomach crawling along the upperdeck in pursuit of the Ship's Mascot – a kitten that had recently broken three legs. The seaman allegedly could not catch the kitten, and is reported to have perished on the iron deck in his vain attempt.

A reliable source has it rumoured that a well-fed S.A. is quickly becoming an accomplished drummer in his spare time. Present boast of the Supply Branch is this man's talent to beat out the “Saber Dance” in six/six time on the protruding ribs of his less fortunate “Ship Mates”.

Up to Press time today information has been received to the effect that Naval Headquarters is rushing emergency medical supplies and additional stocks of Bologna and Corned Dog to relieve the situation.

Your half-starved reporter,

DIGBY O'DELL.

We take judicial notice of the fact that Digby O'Dell is a radio “character” otherwise known as “the friendly undertaker”.

OTHER CONCLUSIONS – (*Continued*)

In view of our belief, which we shall elaborate further, that there was a chain of causation in the incidents in the three ships under review and the prior incident in the *Ontario*, it is to be observed that just before *Crescent* sailed from Esquimalt, a draft of twenty-five men from *Ontario* joined the ship. Of these, fifteen had been in *Ontario* when the incident happened there.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the dissatisfaction on board *Crescent* was

apparently not known to the Captain and the Executive Officer and those who would normally be expected to be informed of unsatisfactory conditions. The impending incident was within the knowledge of many leading hands and some petty officers, but there was in this ship also lack of cooperation, frankness, and communication between leading hands, petty officers, divisional officers and their superiors.

VARIOUS INCIDENTS IN “MAGNIFICENT”

We have already made reference to certain acts and incidents in *Magnificent* which might lead to the suspicion that there were subversive elements on board the ship. It was obvious that some of them were acts of adolescent wilfulness akin to Halloween pranks. Some of them appear to have been more serious. It is proper to observe that all of them occurred some time before the incident specially investigated and were followed by a substantial change in personnel and an absence of further acts of wilful damage. It was impossible, after a lapse of time, to fine out any more facts than had been brought to the attention of the officers concerned at the time the damage took place. At least one of the major happenings was thoroughly investigated. In our opinion, more of the happenings should have been reported to headquarters than was apparently the case. In at least one case, it was suspected that the damage was done by workers on board ship not connected with our Navy. While there is no evidence that these prior events were connected in any way with the insubordination of the aircraft handlers which constituted the mutinous incident on board *Magnificent*, they disclosed an unsatisfactory condition on board the ship throughout a period of time. It is impossible to fix exact dates for the various acts of wilful damage, but they can be sufficiently identified by the following recital:-

1. Three weeks after *Magnificent* commissioned at Portsmouth, a Carley float was cut adrift. In the circumstances related, this act could hardly have had serious consequences. But at about the same time it was discovered that two of the three strands of the quarter-deck ladder had been cut through. This might have easily resulted in a serious accident. The culprits were never identified.

2. About a week after the above mentioned incident, the wardroom stores were broken into and thirty bottles of wine and spirits were stolen. No offender was identified, although one was suspected.

3. Again at Portsmouth, several guardrail stanchions disappeared from the ship. It was believed that they had been thrown overboard. The absence of these stanchions might have caused a very dangerous condition at night. Again no culprit was identified.

4. During the period of commissioning in England, while the Executive Officer was ashore on the Isle of Wight, his telescope was taken from his cabin and dropped overboard. The officer was considered to be unpopular and the throwing overboard of his telescope was presumably an act of petty revenge. The young seaman responsible confessed to the act. The matter was treated lightly as a stupid prank. The offender paid the value of the telescope.

5. While the ship was alongside the dockyard at Halifax during the summer of 1948, a garbage chute was cut away from the side of the ship and drifted out of the harbour. The culprit was not identified.

6. At about the same time as the last event, the starboard accommodation ladder (some forty feet in length and very heavy) was removed from the brackets and dropped

over the ship's side. This operation would have required a combination of effort by more than one person. The ladder was subsequently recovered by divers but the culprits were never identified.

7. At some later time, leads to the "after radar" were severed. This might have been accidental but in the opinion of those best able to judge, was probably deliberate. The offender was not discovered.

8. On one occasion also, quantities of sand were found on the spindles on the flying deck. This might have had the effect of preventing the arrester lines from working properly, thereby jeopardizing the safety of landing aircraft and their pilots. This might have been accidental but was probably not. Who was responsible was never found out.

9. In the course of the northern cruise prior to the southern cruise under investigation, water was found in the gas tanks of the aircraft on board ship. No personal injuries resulted as the aircraft were grounded after discovery and pending investigation. This investigation was the most thorough of all those directed to a solution of the mysteries of these happenings. This act was completely and promptly reported. While the cause was not definitely determined, the view of the experts was that the presence of water was due to excessive natural condensation. This view was not shared by some of the flying officers who appeared before us. They felt that their lives might have been seriously jeopardized by what they believe to be a deliberate act. On the evidence available, we incline to the belief that the official explanation is probably correct.

10. Some time at the Dartmouth Air Station, it was reported that sand had been found in the oil filter system of an aircraft engine. On another occasion an aircraft was found to be without oil, although on the day before, it had been filled and certified as full. The implication was that someone had removed the oil. Had the aircraft been flown, there might well have been a fatal accident, but the deficiency of oil was discovered before the aircraft took off. It is proper to observe that if this was an act of wilful sabotage, members of the crew of *Magnificent* were not concerned in it. The culprits were never discovered.

In further explanation of all these incidents, it should be pointed out that they extended over a long period of time during which many people not connected with the ship's crew were in some instance on board and in a period when there were many changes of personnel. We have already observed that they had ceased before *Magnificent* returned to Halifax. It would be wrong to over-emphasize these happenings, and equally wrong to give them less weight than they deserve. As isolated instances they may not have seemed as important to the officers of the ship as they might appear in a detailed recital to anyone possessing knowledge of them all and did, in fact, appear to us. We repeat that they should have been reported in greater detail and more promptly than was apparently the case.

GENERAL CAUSES CONTRIBUTING TO BREAKDOWN OF DISCIPLINE

We now propose to discuss some of the general causes which contributed to the temporary breakdown of discipline in H.M.C.S. *Magnificent*, *Athabaskan* and *Crescent*, together with some other factors which form the basis of criticism, unrest and dissatisfaction through the whole Navy.

PERSONNEL IN THREE SHIPS SPECIALLY INVESTIGATED

1. In the first place we list the number of personnel in all three ships and the number of those of the crew who participated in the temporary mutiny:-

Magnificent – 70 officers, 828 men
Persons engaged in the incident – 32.
Athabaskan – 14 officers, 196 men
Persons engaged in the incident – 90.
Crescent– 13 officers, 167 men
Persons engaged in the incident – 83.

In the case of the *Magnificent*, it is proper to observe that the insubordination was confined to a very few men who were engaged in a specific and separate quasi-technical task and had little or no experience of life at sea.

NATURE OF ACTS

2. While there were many conditions which contributed to the incidents or which could and should have been mitigated, modified, or eliminated, there was no cause sufficiently strong to justify in any degree the insubordination which took place. If the best interpretation is placed upon it, the incidents were foolish and reckless acts by men who in the main blindly followed a line of no resistance. All reasonable steps should be taken to improve any conditions justly complained of. Above all, no disobedience should ever again be tolerated or go unpunished.

RING-LEADERS NOT IDENTIFIED

3. The ring-leaders were not identified, although in at least two instances their identity was suspected. In view of the fact that no punishment had been imposed and immunity was granted, it was not considered desirable to attempt to break down the loyalty of men to their fellows in and attempt to discover what men were originally responsible for the agitation which terminated in the incidents. In any event, the incidents came to a head because of the gradual and continuous murmurs of discontent against a series of small annoyances and a few basic injustices. In such conditions the more dominant and vocal individuals usually lead their fellows consciously and unconsciously to the final and fateful decision.

SUBSEQUENT ATTITUDE OF MEN

4. The majority of the men involved subsequently regretted their part in the proceedings. Some were ashamed not only for themselves but for the blot on the good name of the Navy. Some stated quite frankly that in their view the action taken was the only action possible to obtain a remedy. A few took satisfaction in the belief that the action not only produced improved conditions but also resulted in the appointment of this Commission instituted to inquire into the incidents and also to recommend reforms in the conditions of service at Sea. While determined men may have organized the incidents, the acts seemed to be the result of general discontent rather than a deliberate plan

founded upon a widely-held feeling of specific injustice. There was a great deal of evidence that many men took part in the proceedings out of curiosity or because of their conception of their loyalty to their fellowmen who were suffering from some real or imaginary injustice. There were one or two instances of men who declined to take part. While their action was courageous and in line with the best traditions of loyal service, their abstention was usually condemned by the witnesses who appeared before us.

NO EVIDENCE OF SUBVERSIVE OR POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

5. There was no evidence whatever that subversive or political activities had any bearing on the incidents. One or two men and an officer with Communistic affiliations (not in these ships) had been previously removed from the Service. This does not mean that some unidentified men had not unobtrusively encouraged discontent for sinister purposes. However, even if such men existed it would be hard to identify them. In one case the identity of the rating who wrote most of the manifesto to the Captain containing the men's demands was disclosed by his own frank admission. We were impressed by his honesty, his frankness and his belief in the reality of the grievances. We were convinced by his general demeanor that he was not a professional or reckless agitator.

After interviewing several hundred men, typical of the youth of Canada, we were satisfied that they would have dealt promptly and vigorously with any person whom they suspected of Communistic or subversive purpose. It should be emphasized, however, that general restlessness on shore and stories of strikes and sit-down resistances and other incidents of labour unrest, must have some reflection amongst young men whose comrades and friends in other departments of Canadian life take their part in the activities which we have mentioned. We repeat, however, that in our opinion there was no evidence whatever, either obtained or obtainable by us, indicating subversive or political activities on board the ships under investigation.

MEN'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS "MUTINOUS ACTS"

6. There was some confusion in the minds of the men to the nature of acts in which they participated. In the great majority, however, they knew that what they did was at least technically "mutiny". They were prepared to face the consequences although many of the regretted the occurrence and stated that they would not repeat their acts in the future. Others, by no means men of inferior type and character, frankly said that if the same conditions arose again and if there were not opportunities for presenting a mass grievance, they would probably repeat the performance.

ALLEGED SHORTAGES OF FOOD

7. There was no evidence of any shortage of food in any of the three ships at any time. There were complaints that food was dull, occasionally badly cooked, and particularly that when men, because of the pressure of duties, arrived late for meals there were shortages of the general rations and inferior substitutions. There was no evidence, either medical or personal, of malnutrition or substantial loss of weight. The men in *Crescent* were indignant at the publication of the anonymously written letter. They made efforts to find the author but did not succeed.

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF IMPENDING INCIDENTS

8. In every instance word had gone around the ship at least several hours before the incident occurred that there would be a meeting. In *Magnificent* the decision seems to have been made not very long before the occurrence. In *Athabaskan* the knowledge was shared for a longer period; in *Crescent*, it was known the day before. Many of the men involved went to the meeting without any clear idea of what was to take place. When the doors of the mess deck were closed, it was almost impossible for any men to get out. Even those who might have wished to extricate themselves from the situation which developed, remained inside because of fear of consequences, curiosity or a sense of loyalty to their comrades. The Captain, the Executive Officer and senior ratings, almost without exception stated that they were surprised and shocked at what had occurred. It must be regretfully observed that a considerable number of senior ratings, a few petty officers and a few officers must have had some knowledge which was not communicated to their seniors. Some admitted that they were aware of discontent on the lower deck but did not think it would result in mass insubordination. Even in *Magnificent* where the incident was isolated and involved but a few men, two or three senior officers were aware of exceptional circumstances and growing unrest, which, in our opinion, should have been reported to the Executive Officer and the Captain.

CHANGE IN SHIPS' ROUTINE

9. In all three cases under review, there was an almost universal complaint concerning changes in ships' routine. These changes were not only variations from destroyer to destroyer or ship to ship; they were not even necessary variations as between one class of ship and another. The complaints centred frequently around changes in routine in the same ship during the same cruise. The result was that frequent adverse comparisons were made by ratings with ships in which they or their fellows had formerly and more happily served. This resulted in criticism, often unfair, or officers charged with executive duties. Many changes in routine could and would have been accepted without murmur or moan if the reasons for them had been explained to the crew. This is another instance of the desirability of the dissemination of much more information on board ship than has usually been the case.

SELECTION OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

10. A great deal of trouble arose from the unpopularity of the Executive Officer. As a subject of criticism he seems to be the naval equivalent of the proverbial Sergeant-Major. As has already been pointed out, he is the pivot of the ship's routine and general discipline. If he fails to handle the ship's crew with tact, humanity, firmness and common sense, there is always a danger of trouble. Recognizing as we must present difficulties due to a shortage of experienced officers, and allowing for the tendency to blame the Executive Officer for everything that goes wrong, we do not believe that sufficient care was exercised in the selection of the Executive Officers. In *Athabaskan*, particularly in *Crescent*, the Executive Officer was inexperienced. Inexperience and lack of knowledge frequently result in the adoption of an arrogant and unsympathetic attitude towards the men. Such conduct is an example of what the psychologists call a "defence

mechanism". In the case of *Magnificent*, the able Executive Officer was inclined to be too dominant in decisions, routine and conferences which demand a large amount of cooperative discussion and effort between a series of ship's officers. This particular officer himself needed domination and direction from above. It is fair to say, however, that particularly in the case of *Athabaskan* and *Crescent*, the growing experience of the voyage was accompanied by an improvement in morale and esprit de corps.

TOO FREQUENT CHANGES IN OFFICERS AND CREWS

11. Throughout the three ships and indeed throughout the Navy, there are far too frequent changes of officers and men. Life on board ship involves an intimate relation between a great variety of human beings, which is almost unique in human experience. Confidence between officers and men and between men and men can therefore only be the result of slow growth and increasing knowledge and experience. Where men are decent and friendly human beings, as the great majority of our men are, and officers are men of character, as they usually are, and of skill and training, as they should be, familiarity breeds respect and not contempt. Frequent changes in the personnel must have a most detrimental effect. It is not a new problem, but is as old as the Navy itself.

It is interesting to observe that Nelson, as a twenty-five-year-old Post Captain, wrote in 1783:-

"My time ever since I arrived in Town has been taken up in attempting to get the wages due to my good fellows for the various ships they have served in the War. The disgust of Seamen to the Navy is all owing to the infernal plan of turning them over from ship to ship so that men cannot be attached to their officers or the officers care twopence about them."

ABSENCE OF CONFIDENCE BETWEEN OFFICERS AND PETTY OFFICERS

12. At a further stage in this report we propose to deal with the training of officers and men and particularly with the provisions of additional opportunities for young officers to become more closely acquainted with the Canadian men whom they are supposed to lead. Throughout the three ships there appeared to be, in general, an absence of close confidence, not only between officers and men but in a large degree between officers and petty officers. No doubt some of this lack was due to the great changes since 1939. There is no stronger link in the chain of discipline than the relation between the officer and the petty officer. It is the petty officer who, by his close contact with the men, knows or should know their feelings and their reactions to conditions on board. It is the duty of the petty officer to communicate all essential facts to his superior officer. It is the duty of the superior officer to encourage such communication. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that if the ideal intercourse between officer and petty officer had been the fashion in *Magnificent*, *Crescent* and *Athabaskan*, the "mutinies" would not have taken place. We shall elaborate on this matter when we come to deal with the Divisional System and the training of officers and petty officers.

WELFARE COMMITTEES

13. One of the most serious lacks in all three ships was the absence of an effective Welfare Committee. While Welfare Committees as then constituted were not in our opinion adequate, they could have been made, and should be made, the most useful and proper safeguard against insubordination resulting from mass grievances. At the time of the incidents, the Welfare Committee organization on board a ship was governed by the following signals:-

Naval Message from NSHQ to Cangen 54

Naval Board has decided to introduce Welfare Committees in H.M.C. Ships and establishments organized as ships with the object of providing machinery for free discussion between officers and men of items of welfare and general amenities within the ship or establishment that lie within the powers of decision held by the Captain or his immediate Administrative Authority.

2. These Welfare Committees will be organized on much the same basis as the present ship fund committees – vide KRCN 72.10 (2). They will not repetition not be entitled to discuss questions of welfare or amenity outside the ship nor will they be entitled to deal with conditions of service, e.g. discipline, pay allowances, leave scales, etcetera.

3. The Welfare Committees will comprise an appropriate number of officers detailed for the purpose by the Commanding Officer (one of them to be the Executive Officer who ex-officio will be the Chairman of the Committee) and a number of lower deck representatives to be chosen by ballot by the messes or groups of ratings whom they would be representing.

4. It will also be within the competence of the Captain to arrange for the cooption as members of the Welfare Committee of divisional or other officers and also of senior ratings when specific questions arise on the committees in the discussion of which their experience would be useful.

5. The conduct and administration of the ship's canteen will fall within the scope of the Welfare Committee in all but the smaller ships. The duty will be discharged by a sub-committee comprising the officers detailed in KRCN 72.10 (2) and lower deck representatives chosen by the Welfare Committee from the men's representative thereon.

6. The institution of these welfare committees is not intended to interfere in any way with or prejudice the right of the individual rating to put forward suggestions through his divisional officer or the responsibility of the divisional officer for looking after the interest of his men.

281445 – 25/7/47

Naval Message from NSHQ to COAC COPC SCOA

Can. Gen. 54 T.O.O. 281445. Immediate steps are to be taken to institute Welfare Committees in H.M.C. ships and establishments under your administration. Ensure that all classes of ratings are represented.

281635 – 28/7/47

The interpretation of the functions of the Welfare Committee is by custom largely

left to the discretion of the Captain and the Executive Officer. In *Magnificent*, as we have already explained, there was no Welfare Committee at all due to the arbitrary and mistaken assumption of the negative powers by the Executive Officer without the knowledge or the active interference of the Captain, who should have known of the lack and prevented it. In *Athabaskan*, while a Welfare Committee had been set up, its functions were atrophied because no meeting of it was held during the cruise until after the date of the incident. In *Crescent*, there was a Welfare Committee. Its operation was almost completely frustrated by the Commanding Officer and the Executive Officer who, out of fear that is born of ignorance, restricted the subjects for discussion and did not take proper steps to communicate the reasons for their decisions. The obvious functions and possibilities of a Welfare Committee had not been clearly set before the crews and the officers responsible. In the case of the *Crescent*, the Committee's minutes were inadequately kept and apparently some essential decisions were not recorded. It could well be argued that the faulty operation of the Welfare Committee on board *Crescent* did as much harm as the absence of a Welfare Committee in *Magnificent*.

While we are on this subject, we would like to record that in some ships of the Royal Canadian Navy a kind of "Town Hall" is held periodically, in which the Captain and his officers meet the men and have general discussions of the ship's welfare. This practice should be more generally adopted. It obviously needs great skill in handling and may be fraught with some dangers. But it is our opinion that within the limits of strict discipline such friendly discussions should be encouraged. Even the danger of the asking of awkward questions is infinitely more desirable than the menace of future mutinies. In any event we recall a statement once made by a famous diplomat: "There are no such things as embarrassing questions. There are only embarrassing answers." When we come to deal with our recommendations, we shall have more to say on this subject.

PRESENTATION OF MASS GRIEVANCES

14. There was no adequate method and, in fact, no method at all of communicating mass grievances to the Captain. The grievance procedure is governed by the following regulations:-

Extracts from Canadian Naval Regulations (K.R.C.N.)

12.20 – *Improper Criticism*

Subject to article 12.37, clause (e) (Rules to be Observed in stating Grievances):-

- (a) an officer or man shall refrain from making remarks or passing criticism on the conduct or orders of his superiors, tending to bring the superiors into contempt;
- (b) an officer shall refrain from saying or doing anything which, if heard or seen by or reported to, those under him, might discourage them or render them dissatisfied with their condition or with the service on which they are employed.

12.21 – *Combinations Forbidden*

- (1) Every one who seeks redress of any grievance under which he considers

himself to be suffering, shall seek redress as an individual and not in combination with any other person. (See also article 12.37, clause (c) – “Rules to be observed in Stating Grievances”).

(2) Persons in the Naval Forces shall not combine for the purpose of bringing about alterations in existing regulations or customs of the Naval Service.

(3) Persons in the Forces shall not:

- (a) sign collectively memorials, petitions, or applications relating to the Naval Service;
- (b) obtain or solicit signatures of memorials, petitions, or applications relating to the Naval Service;

12.24 – *Use of Outside Influence Forbidden*

A person in the Naval Forces shall not attempt to obtain favourable consideration for any application relating to himself by use of outside influence.

12.36 – *redress of Grievance – Men*

(1) If a man thinks that he has suffered any personal oppression, injustice, or other ill-treatment, he may request to see the Captain for the purpose of making a complaint. He shall make the request to the Executive Officer, through his Divisional Officer, and shall make his complaint to the Captain orally.

(2) If a man thinks himself wronged by the Captain either because his oral complaint under (1) of this article has not been redressed or in respect of any other matter, he may complain in writing to the Captain. The Captain shall then forward the written complaint to his next superior officer, with his own remarks endorsed thereon.

(3) Upon receipt of the written complaint, the Captain’s next superior officer shall deal with the complaint and cause the complainant to be informed of his decision.

(4) If the complainant does not receive from the Captain’s next superior officer the redress to which he considers himself entitled, he may complain in writing direct to the Senior Officer in chief command, who shall deal with the complaint and cause the complainant to be informed of his decision. (See article 26.01 – “Senior Officer in Chief Command”).

(5) If the complainant does not receive from the Senior Officer in chief command the redress to which he considers himself entitled, he may complain in writing to the Chief of the Naval Staff who, if requested to do so by the complainant, shall make a report to the Minister.

(6) Every officer to whom a complaint is made under this article shall cause the complaint to be inquired into, and shall, if he is satisfied of the justice of the complaint, take all steps necessary to afford full redress to the complainant.

(7) A man shall not be penalized for making a complaint in accordance with the rules prescribe by this article and by article 12.37.

12.37 – *Rules to be Observed in Stating Grievances*

The following rules for preferring complaints under article 12.35 and 112.36 shall be followed:

- (a) A complainant may ask any officer in his ship to assist him in presenting his case at all stages. Where a complainant does not request such assistance, it

will be the duty of his Divisional Officer in the case of a man, or other officer detailed by the Captain to assist him, unless he prefers to present his case unaided.

- (b) Complaints shall be confined to a statement of the facts complained of and to the alleged consequences to the complainant himself.
- (c) Complaints by two or more persons shall not be made jointly. Each individual shall make his own complaint. (See also article 12.21 – “Combinations Forbidden”).
- (d) A complainant shall not include in his complaint a statement that is to his knowledge untrue.
- (e) A complaint, either oral or written, shall not include language or comments that are insubordinate or subversive or discipline, except insofar as such language or comments are necessary for an adequate statement of the complainant.
- (f) The complainant shall make his complaint as early as practicable while it is still possible to ascertain the facts and explore fully the grounds of complaint.

(NOTE: Where the complaint is in respect of a punishment it is not necessary for the complainant to delay making his complaint until the punishment is completed.)

12.38 – *Conditions of Service – Representations Concerning*

- (1) A man may make any representation affecting his welfare to his Divisional Officer through his Divisional Petty Officer.
- (2) If the representation is one with which the Divisional Officer cannot deal, he shall bring it to the attention of the Executive Officer (through the department officer, where applicable) and subsequently through the Executive Officer to the Captain, if necessary, and so to higher authority as circumstances require.
- (3) A man may bring a request before an inspecting officer at an inspection, the request being made through the man’s Divisional officer.
- (4) A man may request, through his Divisional Officer, to see the Captain concerning matters of a private nature.
- (5) A man may make a request or complaint of an immediate and urgent nature direct to the Officer of the Watch.

(See also article 31.34 – “Representations made by Men – Duties of Divisional Officer”.)

12.39 – *Suggestions for the Improvement of the Naval Service*

- (1) An officer or man who has an idea or suggestion for the improvement of equipment, administrative methods, or the fighting efficiency of the Naval Service may submit his idea direct to the Naval Secretary, without consulting his superior officers, unless he desires to consult them.
- (2) The idea shall be stated in writing and forwarded to the Naval Secretary marked “Confidential, Reference K.R.C.N. article 12.39”.

(4) This article does not apply to complaints or personal requests, which shall be made in the manner prescribed by article 12.35, 12.36, or 12.38, as the case may be. (See also Section 7 of this Chapter – “Inventions and Patents”.)

This procedure is not only cumbersome, but practically every witness told us that there was an opinion throughout the lower deck, sincerely held, but in our conclusion only partly justified, that every time a man made a complaint his present and his future were liable to be prejudiced in his disfavour. In any event, for one man to complain of the food or of the conduct of an officer, or some individual unfairness, could not be very well interpreted as a statement of general dissatisfaction. Many men therefore felt, however wrongly, that the only method likely to be successful was the illegal and mutinous procedure on which they ultimately decided.

BREAKDOWN OF “DIVISIONAL SYSTEM”

15. In the three ships into which we enquired, and in other ships of which we heard, there seems to be, if not a total breakdown, at least a partial breakdown of what is known as the Divisional System. This system will be analyzed below in the section dealing with recommendations. Evidence of this breakdown was not only a natural deduction from the evidence of many men and junior officers, but was also emphasized by some of the highest ranking officers throughout the Navy. Much of the failure could be attributable to the lack of experience; some of it, unfortunately, to a lack of sense of responsibility. Most of it is the result, in our opinion, of inadequate training in the handling of men, in human relationship, and in the general arts of good seamanship. In our recommendations which follow, there will be a detailed reference to these matters.

INCIDENT IN “ONTARIO” and RELATION BETWEEN ALL INCIDENTS

16. There is no doubt that the incidents referred to were interrelated, not only with each other but with a prior incident which took place on board H.M.C.S. *Ontario* in August, 1947. On the 22nd of August in that ship in that year, a number of junior ratings requested the leading hands of the messes to procure an interview with the Executive Officer. The latter reported to the Captain, stating that he understood that approximately fifty men were ‘making a bit of a scene’, but that he did not know the reasons or any further facts. The ship at that time was anchored off Nanoose Harbour, Vancouver Island. She had previously been in port for approximately two years undergoing a re-fit, and this was her first short cruise since the period of lay-off. When the Captain received the Executive Officer’s report, he told him to see the leading hands immediately, and to keep him informed.

At approximately 1300, the Executive Officer was proceeding forward to meet the leading hands, when the master-at-arms reported to him that some of the men had locked themselves in one of the mess decks. There is a conflict of evidence as to whether there was or was not any mass insubordination. Perhaps it is fair to sum up the situation by saying that if there were no mutinous proceedings in fact, mass insubordination was certainly and obviously incipient.

The Captain spoke to the ship’s company through the loudspeaker system, stating that he understood that there was some trouble in the ship, and that he would clear lower decks in five minutes’ time to talk to the ship’s company. The Captain did so speak to the ship’s company for approximately fifteen minutes. On conclusion of his talk, the men reported to duty. No pipe for hands to fall in was made when the master-at-arms

discovered that the men had locked themselves in. This omission was deliberate, because the master-at-arms and presumably the Captain did not wish to allow the incident to develop into a serious condition of mutiny. Subsequent investigation by the Captain disclosed that the main grievances had to do with the wearing of uniform, particularly of "night clothing" and overalls, with the capricious variation of the ship's routine, and with general dissatisfaction with the Executive Officer.

As a result, the Executive Officer was immediately transferred to another ship. In retrospect, the speed of his transfer, without a complete investigation, appears neither completely wise nor completely fair. We examined the Executive Officer concerned at his request and, having regard to the sense of injustice which he must have felt, he gave his evidence with highly commendable dignity, sportsmanship and objectively. This incident involving the transfer of the Executive Officer was widely publicized and generally known throughout the Navy. We have already mentioned the fact that men from the *Ontario* who took part in this incident, were subsequently drafted to *Athabaskan* and *Crescent*. The incident in *Athabaskan* was also known to the men in *Crescent* and *Magnificent*. Men from *Magnificent* and from *Athabaskan* fraternized during the shore leaves at Colon, immediately prior to the insubordination in *Magnificent*. In fact, the Captain of *Athabaskan* told his men to discuss that incident frankly and fully with their fellow-seamen. It is, therefore, not surprising that in all four incidents, much of the alleged dissatisfaction was centred on the personality and practices of the Executive Officer. In at least three incidents, his removal was one of the major demands.

ABSENCE OF PUNISHMENT FOR ACTS OF INSUBORDINATION

17. It is also noted that in none of the incidents was any punishment given for the "mutinous" acts. In *Ontario* it would be unfair to suggest that there was in fact a serious mutiny. In the case of the other ships, it is to be noted that they were all far from their home base when the incident occurred. The officers concerned handled their men with humanity and in the opinion of the highest officers of the Navy, with wisdom and perfect propriety. It would have been both difficult and no doubt a shock to Canadian national pride, if marines from American or British ships had been asked to take Canadian sailors into custody. In any event, in all three incidents, the commanding officers felt that the action taken by the men in the nature more of a culmination of petty grievance than a deliberate act of planned mutiny. Many of the men they believed had for the moment gone astray or followed errant leaders as foolishly as the proverbial sheep. They needed a fold and not a dungeon. It might have been wiser, and probably would have been, had the threat of punishment remained until the ships reached their home ports. There is no doubt in our opinion that the initial incident in *Ontario* and the subsequent chain of incidents, the comparative success from the men's point of view of the action taken by them, and the absence of punishment all contributed to make the insubordination a pattern that ran through the ships concerned. We can only recommend, what the high ranking officers of the Navy have already determined, that any reoccurrence of such incidents be promptly and severely punished.

OFFICERS' AND PETTY OFFICERS' LACK OF EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

18. There was evidence of general inexperience and many officers, chiefs and

petty officers. This, in the men's opinion, was evidence in frequent changes of routine and sometimes in lack of knowledge of the elementary rules of seamanship. While it is to be emphasized that the lack of experience, of knowledge and of sea-going skills were by no means general, they were sufficiently numerous to be noticeable. Ship's crews are very quick to notice deficiencies such as those mentioned above. The result is an inevitable lack of confidence in leadership.

ARTIFICIAL "DISTANCE" BETWEEN OFFICERS AND MEN

19. It is no use disguising the fact either that there is a prevalent opinion that there is an "artificial distance" between men and officers, not wholly connected with the necessity of maintaining the essential differences in rank. When we come to deal with discipline, we shall point out that the only discipline which in the final analysis is worth while is one that is based upon pride in a great service, a belief in essential justice, and the willing obedience that is given to superior character, skill, education and knowledge. Any other form of discipline is bound to break down under stress. The problem is of particular concern in a country which does not intend to follow the pattern of Soviet Russia and resents also the survival of distinctions in speech and social status, which are accepted with equanimity in some other countries. In Canada, many officers and men come from the same kind of home, and spend their boyhoods in playing baseball in the same lot, in swimming in the same swimming hole and playing "hookey" from the same school. With such a national background, it is more important than ever that discipline shall be based on the realities which we have mentioned, rather than on artificial distinctions. We shall make an extended reference to this source of unrest at a further place in this report.

MALCONTENTS WISHING TO BE DISCHARGED FROM NAVY

20. We heard several witnesses who want to get out of the Navy. In our opinion there are too many malcontents on the lower decks. They are useless, and do great harm to morale and discipline. Whether their contracts are sacred or no, they should be removed from the public service. They are in the great minority, but they tend to poison the system. As a contrast, we would like to observe that perhaps the pleasantest hour of our whole sittings was taken up with listening to three or four very new entries at Esquimalt. They included two boys from the West, one from Ontario, and one from Quebec. They were merry, full of sense of adventure, satisfied with their lot, even though they were short of uniforms and supplies. They were anticipating in a fine resilient Canadian way the prospect of serving their Country at sea. The problem of the Navy is to keep the enthusiasm of those youth, and to turn it into the steady, disciplined devotion of grown men.

COMPARISONS BETWEEN AMERICAN AND CANADIAN NAVIES

21. There is a tendency to compare the Canadian Navy adversely with the American Navy. Equipment, routine, accommodation, and above all recreational facilities are believed by most Canadian sailors to be much superior in the Navy of the United States. This comparison is in many instances justified, but it might be observed that if the strictness of American discipline and the severity of American punishment

were prevalent in the Canadian Navy, some of the witnesses who appeared before us would now be spending their time in confinement and would not been afforded the opportunity of a free and easy discussion with the Admiral who was our Chairman, and with those of us who attempted to assist him in his deliberations.

ABSENCE OF CANADIAN IDENTIFICATION IN NAVY

22. There was amongst the men a very real and almost universal opinion that the Canadian Navy was not sufficiently Canadian. The absence of identification on uniforms of Canadian ratings gave rise to many unpleasant international incidents in ports where American sailors were present. While the incident often resulted from ignorance, ill manners, and unfortunate national prejudices, there is no doubt that the relations between Canadian, American and British sailors were greatly impaired by the continual mistaking of Canadian ratings for British sailors. While in general the officers of the Canadian Navy were satisfied with their uniforms and lack of Canadian identification thereon, the men were vehement in their demands that they be identified as Canadians. With the demand we are unanimous in our sympathy, and shall have some further observations to make both in connection with uniforms and ships.

ABSENCE OF CANADIAN TRADITIONS IN NAVY

23. As collateral to the complaints referred to in the above paragraph, there was a general insistence also on the necessity of building up whenever possible Canadian traditions. Stephen Leacock once said, "Leave the Ukrainians alone, and in ten years they will think that they won the Battle of Trafalgar". Unfortunately this genial prophecy has not been fulfilled, and however regrettable it may seem to some people, an opinion is widely held amongst many ratings and some officers that the "Nelson tradition" is overdone, and there is still too great an attempt to make the Canadian navy a pallid imitation and reflection of the British Navy. This is in no sense a criticism of the magnificent traditions of the Royal Navy, but it is natural outcome of the growth of a healthy Canadian national consciousness. A few suggestions in the matter will be found amongst our recommendations.

SOME OTHER GENERAL CONDITIONS

While the findings which we have detailed above more or less exhaust the special conditions which contributed to the incidents under investigation, we have also reached the following conclusions concerning conditions which apply throughout the Navy, and with varying strength contributed to the occurrences on board *Magnificent*, *Athabaskan* and *Crescent*.

A – NAVY'S GROWING PAINS

The Canadian Navy is suffering from growing pains and from rapid peacetime expansion. Whether it is over-committed to the necessities of peace or under-committed to the potential necessities of war, it is not within our province nor our knowledge to determine. Several high authorities suggested that the Navy is engaged in making too many bricks with too little straw. Most of the unsatisfactory conditions have been known

to naval authorities for three years or more. It can be recorded that some of the recommendations which we propose have already been the subject of reforming action between the date of the sitting of our Board and the presentation of our report. Most of this prevision is intelligent anticipation; even if some of it is a pleasant coincidence, it is none the less welcome.

The comparatively heavy commitments of the Navy have required constant operation and hurried change. It is not, therefore, surprising that training has not gone ahead as fast, as thoroughly and as systematically as it would have done if the Navy, after World War II, had retained its 1939 status as a small Navy, concentrating as it used to do on a "proper training system". Such a retention of status is obviously impossible. It would have been contrary to the wishes of the Canadian people and a betrayal of our national promises, in a world not yet at peace and still restless beneath the threat of War. It should not therefore, be forgotten that some of the criticisms which follow are perhaps observations upon the inevitable rather than animadversions on the avoidable.

B – INADEQUATE COMPLEMENT OF OFFICERS AND MEN

The present actual complement of officers and men was stated by several witnesses to be inadequate for the exiting commitments and tasks of the Navy, if it is to concentrate on training, as it must do. It was suggested that officers and senior ratings who are qualified to train their fellows are of necessity employed in "Operations": there is little time to pause and "take up the slack", because the number of men available for all essential purpose is inadequate. We did not seek to obtain extensive evidence on the commitments and tasks of the Navy in order to comment upon this problem, but we commend it to your consideration and to that of the Chief of Naval Staff and his advisers.

C – TOO FEW SHIPS AVAILABLE FOR ADEQUATE TRAINING

While it may sound like a contradiction with the preceding paragraph, it was also represented to us by witnesses that not only are there too few men available, but also there are too few ships in active commission. The suggestion was that to give adequate sea-time or adequate sea-training to the personnel of the Navy, more ships are required and less frequent changes in appointment. Time and time again, both officers and men regretted the frequent transfer from ship to ship and from ship to shore. Again on this point we did not seek extensive evidence on the number of ships in commission or on the number in reserve available for commissioning or on the number being built to bring the complement of ships in line with the commitments and tasks of the Navy. Without expressing any agreement or disagreement with the opinions expressed before us, we also commend this problem to the consideration of yourself and that of the Naval Staff. However, we have no hesitation in expressing our agreement with the view that changes in appointment of both officers and men in our sea-going ships have been too frequent for the good of the service.

D – RECRUITING

In our opinion and in the opinion of almost every witness, the recruiting methods were bad. Many officers complained that the organization of advertised recruiting had

been left almost entirely to professional advertisers and specialists in commercial radio, who have known nothing of the Navy, however skilled they may be in the sale of consumer's goods to a coy and jaded public. We propose to deal with this matter at some length, as we join with the men and officers whom we have examined in the belief that "soft soap operas" do not contain the virility, dignity and patriotic appeal which should be used to persuade young Canadians to serve their country.

Many men in the Navy complained that conditions were not as they had been let to believe. Many responsible officers stated that they disapproved of the method of recruiting and particularly of the content of recruiting literature, advertisements and broadcasts and their tendency to attract men, if not of the wrong type, at least with the wrong viewpoint. Travel and adventure, education, good pay, pension and a number of comforts were overstressed and the hardships of the sea, the manliness of the service and the appeal of practical patriotism are rarely, if ever, mentioned. Many officers and petty officers, under questioning, contrasted the methods by which young men were enticed into the Navy with the more manly and direct methods used by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. They felt, as the Board feels, that a balanced statement of advantages and hardships calculated to appeal to the best instincts in Canadian youth is the only policy which will finally succeed. The following is an extract from "Career for Canadians" put out as literature by the Navy:-

"During the past years the trend in the Canadian Navy has been to provide more comfort and greater conveniences for the crew. Clean, airy mess decks, roomier individual lockers for clothing and equipment, all go far toward making life at sea an enjoyable occupation, rather than the hardship it used to be in the cramped quarters of the small-ship wartime fleet." (Page 17.)

"When you enlist in the Navy, you will receive a complete kit, including summer and winter clothing, tropical gear, bed and blankets Navy life is far from being all the regimentation that some people imagine and suggest. Certain rules are necessary to the well-being of any team. They are a part of the game, such a part as when you hear the stirring pipe, 'Hands to Stations for leaving harbour', and others, 'Let go forward, let go aft', and you know that travel and adventure lie ahead When the day's work is done, and you climb into your hammock, you will find reason to be grateful for a Navy that has provided you with a pair of good warm blankets 'JOIN THE NAVY AND SEE THE WORLD' – Is it (sic) a rare young Canadian who has not felt the urge to discover what lies beyond far horizons. Travel is a certainty for those who enlist in the Royal Canadian Navy today A healthy Navy is an efficient Navy, and in the new R.C.N. Training Programme, much stress has been placed on physical and recreational training. Completely equipped 'Gyms' with competent instructors play an important part in the basic training of all recruits." (Page 18)

An examination of posters and advertisements discloses the following subjects:

"THE NAVY'S THE LIFE – Travel and Adventure in Fast new ships – Financial Security Now, and a Pension for the Future."

"DOWN TO THE SEA OVER THE SEA AND ON TO THE WORLD.

The training of the modern sailor takes him to far places. In our Royal Canadian Navy's Ships, the young sailor quickly learns the skills of the seaman and there are several trades to master which will be valuable in civilian life to any man. It's a healthy life with new friends to make and new places to see. There are four weeks leave at home each year."

"YOU CAN BECOME A SAILOR – and what a swell life it is too. Travel, adventure, special training, recreation, good comradeship – plus such benefits as free dental and medical care and generous leaves with pay. As for pensions – well take my case. I joined the Navy when I was 18 and I am 41 now. In two years I will retire on a pension of \$100 a month – which I will get for the rest of my life. Yes sir – it's a great life in the Royal Canadian Navy. Joining up was the best thing I ever did."

We can cite many other instances from posters and advertisements, pamphlets and particularly from radio programmes. This kind of propaganda may have been skilfully directed and may have produced a large number of recruits. It is certain, however, that the awakening to reality was a disappointment after the anticipation encouraged by the publicity. It is unwise as well as unfair, to understate the rigors of Naval Service.

A practice has also grown up in which Naval Divisions produce their own recruiting literature. This is not only allowed but encouraged by the official Royal Canadian Navy recruiting Manual, Clause 101. The inadvisability of allowing this enlargement of official propaganda can be illustrated by the extract from a document entitled "Adventure for You", which we discovered in Vancouver. It was illiterate and full of spelling mistakes. The following is an extract from this amazing document. It could hardly be worse:

"ADVENTURE FOR YOU THE ROYAL CANADIAN NAVY – beyond the blue horizon there are strange lands and adventures awaiting you. See them from the deck of one of Canada's many (illegible word) ships. If your (sic) normal healthy young Canadian, there is a job waiting for you now in the Royal Canadian Navy. Enlist for five years today and get the equal of a college (sic) education and travel - in less than it takes to become a Doctor or Lawyer. Or make the Navy your career, and look forward to a life-time pension *before your* (sic) 40. If you are anxious to become a player on a hockey team or if you are applying for your first job, there would be certain qualifications which you would be expected to possess before you were excepted (sic). The same holds true when you apply to the Navy, on (sic) of the largest teams in the world."

E – OFFICERS' TRAINING AND ROYAL ROADS

We visited Royal Roads, formerly the Royal Canadian Naval College and now the Tri-service College. At the present time potential Naval Officers are admitted to Royal roads by examination. Senior matriculation is a precedent to entering. Cadets may enter at any age between 16 and 20. The instructors appear to be men of high quality and qualification. The accommodation and surroundings are most desirable.

The courses are divided into executive, engineering, electrical and supply. After two years' course, the Cadets in the executive branch spend two years at sea, generally

with the Royal Navy. Their professional and academic training are both less extensive and intensive than the training of their contemporaries and counterparts either in the United States Navy or the British Navy. Officers entering the electrical branch spend two years at Royal Roads and two years at the Royal Military College at Kingston. They then go to sea, either in the Royal Navy or, where possible, in the Royal Canadian Navy. Most of them serve with the former. Officers training in the engineering branch study for two years at Royal Roads and four years at Keyham College, Devonport, England. They then go to sea, generally with the Royal Navy. Officer candidates in the supply branch are trained for two years at Royal roads and two years' special training on shore in Canada.

While the following observations have some general application, they are particularly directed to the executive branch, which, in our opinion, is the weakest. The year's curriculum is divided into seven months of academic work and three and one-half months of practical professional work. During the three and one-half months of professional work, students go to sea in Canadian ships as Naval Cadets. In this capacity they are given opportunities of learning something of practical seamanship and of observing the workings of a ship, its officers and men. They, of course, exercise no authority. At the end of their two years' course at Royal Roads, it has been the general custom for them to serve in British ships as midshipmen. There they learn what they can of divisional duties and the principles of leadership, while receiving their first real experience of the intricate human relationship upon which command and discipline depend. At the end of their two years' training as midshipmen in the Royal Navy, they either continue their service with their British comrades or return for their first commanding of Canadian men.

This is not the place to estimate the difference between Canadian sailors and British sailors nor to comment on the educational and social systems of Britain and Canada. Without assuming any superiority on the part of the Canadian sailor, all are agreed that he is not the same kind of man as the British sailor. It must, therefore, be concluded that a young Canadian officer rejoining the Canadian Navy after the sort of training outlined above, is (unless he is a remarkable personage) not equipped for the task which he is called upon to perform. Whatever lessons in leadership, in Naval tradition and in seamanship are learned at Royal Roads can only be regarded as scanty and insufficient. Whatever training an officer may have received in these branches of essential knowledge in the Royal Navy can only be considered remote from the Canadian scene and somewhat alien to the Canadian method of life. It is not within our purpose nor our competence to offer well-founded criticisms on the Tri-service training at Royal Roads. It is in any event a new experiment under observation and trial. In view of the particular problems of the Navy, of the peculiar and almost unique relationship between officers and men at sea, it is not unfair to state that Naval training, as such, has received greater disadvantages and less advantages from the institutions of the Tri-service system than any other branch of the Armed Services. While it has been the pride of both the Canadian and British systems that practical application of mathematical and navigational principles should be founded upon a thorough basic knowledge of theory, a greater effort should be made, if it is feasible, to integrate theory and practice in professional training throughout the year.

While we are not always impressed by the technical refinements of the professional psychologist, we believe also that a good deal more can be done to teach

officers more that they at present learn, of the duties, the responsibilities, the principles and the practice of disciplinary leadership. The same observations apply to the University training that is given to those officers in the Canadian Navy who are trained outside Royal Roads at other educational institutions. We would like to make this further observation also. The educational opportunities which are given the young men at Royal Roads are expensive, exclusive and privileged. We were surprised to hear that there is no definite obligation upon those who enjoy these advantages to make a career in the Navy, the Army or the Air Force. Every man who enters Royal Roads thereby excludes another potential entry. No man, in our opinion, should be allowed to receive the advantage of this training at the expense of the State unless he is obliged to make the proper and expected return in the form of patriotic and professional service in the defence of Canada. Royal Roads was established for officers of the Navy, Army and Air Force and not for lawyers or business men.

F – NEW ENTRY TRAINING

It was generally admitted too, that the new entry training is unsatisfactory. There were many shortages of uniforms and kits, especially at Esquimalt. It must be recognized of course, that there are difficulties, at the present time, in obtaining large supplies of naval uniforms and various accessories as manufacturing firms are apparently able to obtain a quicker and larger profit by applying their resources to the production of civilian goods. Some of the evidence received at headquarters indicated that there would be alarming shortages if war broke out. Evidence was given to us that there were no Seamanship Manual available. This was due to conditions in the United Kingdom and the lack has since been remedied.

We also noted from substantial evidence that there was no continuous and constant attempt to teach new entries the traditions and customs of the Navy and the place of the Navy in the defence of our civilization. Little was done either to stimulate pride in the Navy or a sense of national service. We propose to recommend below the printing of a new manual and the institution of some new courses. Many officers, and some petty officers also, stated that in their opinion life in the ‘new entry’ barracks was not, as they expressed it “tough enough”. There are those who advocate that in “new entry” training establishments on shore living should be, if anything, harder than life at sea. We believe that the wiser procedure is to see that life in such training establishments is a fair reflection of life at sea and that new entries should be taught, as far as possible, to learn to meet the conditions of service in ships. There was also, in our view, a lack of special training in the case of officers and instructors who are called upon to deal with new entries.

We wish to emphasize once again that many of these lacks and shortages are due to the process of quick turnover from war to peace. They are thoroughly recognized by those in charge and will inevitably improve in the course of reasonable time.

We regret that we were unable to visit *Cornwallis* at Digby, Nova Scotia. We are informed that it is in many ways superior to *Naden*, the establishment at Esquimalt.

G – SELECTION OF OFFICERS

It is admitted that the panel of officers available is not, perhaps, large enough and

that the multiplicity of administrative duties in Ottawa and elsewhere restricts the number of able, trained officers available for sea duty. Admitting these difficulties, we are still of the opinion that the selection of Captains and Executive Officers has not always been as careful as it should have been. The conveniences of the Service have been given, in some instances, greater consideration than the necessity of providing the best for the ship. The effect has been that the most suitable man was not always chosen. With a sincere wish to be fair to the conscientious and hard-working Executive Officer of *Crescent*, we cannot but feel that the selection for his difficult task without prior experience, was haphazard, causal and unwise.

H – RESERVE OFFICERS TRAINING IN R.C.N.

We have already referred to the inadequate training of officers and particularly those who have transferred to the R.C.N. from wartime reserves. In this matter there is some lack of direction from Naval Headquarters and a reprehensible tendency of certain senior officers of the R.C.N. to condemn transferees as “not of the same stuff as we are, or were”.

I – RELATION BETWEEN PETTY OFFICERS AND OFFICERS

The position of chiefs and petty officers is not what it was in the pre-war Navy nor what it should be in the post-war Navy. They have a feeling that officers have not the old confidence in them and fail to back them up in the work they do and to punish men whom they designate for disciplinary action. One of the most experienced high ranking officers who appeared before us offered this observation:-

“I have heard several complaints – and that’s the only thing I have heard – told me by Chief and Petty Officers, that apparently now they just don’t matter, they are ignored, so there you have the middle of the string sagging; you have a void in your connection with the men. The backbone, you well know, is the Petty Officer. That is the only way you find out what is going on – Those fellows are useful, but not unless they get the support of the Officer.”

There was much evidence to justify this complaint.

J – RECREATIONAL FACILITIES ON SHORE

Recreational facilities ashore are grossly inadequate, particularly at Esquimalt. There, attempts to improve them have been consistently shelved on the ground of economy. Inasmuch as most men know of the magnificent American centres at places such as Seattle, there is an additional need for an improvement in this form of morale-building. When we come to our recommendations, we shall partially base them on our visit to the American Naval establishment at Seattle.

K – RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AT SEA

Recreational facilities afloat are also unsatisfactory. We shall make recommendations for their enlargement and particularly for an improvement in the quantity of the films shown on board ship.

L – PUBLIC RELATIONS OF NAVY

We are of the opinion also that notwithstanding the very able work done by the

directorates concerned, public relations of the Navy are unsatisfactory. There is occasional suppression of stories of public concern with result that exaggerated versions and incorrect rumours appear in the Press. The Navy is traditionally the "Silent Service". The result of this tradition is that many senior officers, not aware of the change in conditions which has been brought about by the war, are not sufficiently conscious of the necessity of good relations with the press and the public. In peace time, at least, a prompt statement of the plain truth is the public's interest and right.

M – HEADQUARTERS' STAFF

During our discussion with Headquarters' Staff at Ottawa, we were impressed by the fact that the tri-service policy with its multiplicity of committees and its mass of "paper work" had placed an undue burden upon the small number of Naval officers available. Practically everyone of them seemed to be overburdened with detail and were not left enough time to shape policy, which should be their first main function and to see that the policy was carried out, which should be their second main function. Officers were also assigned to work without special qualification and several important administrative departments were treated as though they were temporarily refuges for temporary misfits, rather than as fields of endeavour for the best available experts. In the administrative department, as in ships, there was a tendency to make many swift changes as a result of which officers were appointed away from important duties just about the time when they had become familiar with them.

The above criticism should not obscure the high character and competence of other officers who helped us so much with their evidence and constructive proposals.

N – DIVISIONAL SYSTEM

The organization of what is known as the Divisional System is provided for in the Regulations. The object of the organization is to ensure that officers, chief petty officers and petty officers are enabled to develop to the fullest extent their powers of command and leadership and to keep in close and constant contact with those under their command. The number of men in a division varies. The outlined objects of the organization are to decentralize command and the responsibility for discipline, ship work and welfare. It is provided that divisional officers shall study their men's interests sufficiently to be well acquainted with their conditions of living both on board and ashore. It is also provided that whatever possible men work under their own officers, chief petty officers and petty officers. It is the duty also of the divisional officer to encourage and supervise games, sports and other forms of recreation. He is also to keep close touch with his men and be ready to advise and help them to the best of his ability. He is also charged with responsibility of receiving requests and representations and submitting them to higher authority when required. He is charged with special duties in respect of advancements, with assisting a man who is charged with default, for a higher rating and to recommend men worthy of advancement. He is required to submit names of men in his division who from zeal and ability deserve favourable consideration. He is charged with the payment of particular attention to the training of those inferior to him in rank, to check harshness and irritating language, to correct bad habits and carelessness and generally to act as a

guide, philosopher, friend, father-confessor, reformer and superintendent of the men, their welfare, their living space and their working conditions.

The regulations dealing with the matter are admirably and fully drafted. To carry out the regulations in a manner worthy of their wording requires for the performance of the defined duties men of high character, men of ability, and above all, men of experience and training. There appeared before us many young men of high character, many of considerable ability; unfortunately we met few with wide experience and sufficient training. Many witnesses said baldly and frankly that the divisional system had fallen down. It is a pity if the admirable scheme so clearly and ably outline cannot be made to work. There is only one cure for lack of experience and lack of training and that is wider experience and more training. We shall deal with these matters when we come to our recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We now proceed to make a series of recommendations:

We would like to emphasize that many of these recommendations, as in fact many of our observations, were suggested and offered by the conscientious and able men whose evidence made this report possible. We have been advised that a number of the recommendations which we are making actually being considered by those responsible to the Navy, either before or during our deliberations. Some of them, we are told, have since been reduced to final drafts. We have not thought it necessary to obtain from Naval Headquarters particulars of these decisions, but this part of our report should perhaps be read subject to whatever action has already been taken.

1. *Preliminary*

It is our opinion that the Navy should be given a breathing space for essential training and the strengthening of its men and ships. The shape of our peacetime Navy is now outlined. There is a widespread feeling that the available manpower and material have been stretched too far and too thin to meet the requirements of a fighting convoying and anti-submarine force. As soon as possible, no doubt at an early date, the Naval complement will be reviewed to decide whether it should be increased. If it were so increased, more trained men would be available for training others.

2. *Training Ships*

We have recommended elsewhere that serious consideration be given to extending and intensifying the academic and professional course for officers in the Executive Branch. In order that all officers may be better trained, we suggest the establishment of one or more Canadian training ships so that those who will assume command in the Navy may become used to Canadian conditions and the handling of Canadian men. Practically every witness stated that the commission of one or more training ships would do a great deal of good. Most of these witnesses expressed themselves in favour of a cruiser as the first unit. The training ships should be staffed by specially selected officers who are known to be successful in their relations with inferior

officers and the men.

Time and time again throughout the evidence, a special tribute was paid to one or two Canadian officers whom both their colleagues and the men under them considered almost ideal. Many junior officers also stated how much they would value a period of apprenticeship under recognized and admired leadership. We therefore recommend for your consideration the institution of a training ship commanded and staffed by officers specially selected both for teaching and for learning.

3. *Recruiting*

In recruiting, what is sometimes called the “bed of roses” approach and what is sometimes called the “beer and skittles” approach should be eliminated. Naval officers themselves should be invited to take far more interest and a much greater part in recruiting campaigns. Neither the design nor the content of publicity should be left to commercial advertisers. Every naval officer examined criticized what has been done. While their criticism may be fair, their abstention from this activity in the past placed an unjust burden upon those whose duty it was to shape the programs. A consultation between Naval authorities and officers of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police would probably produce some good ideas. In any event, we have sufficient faith in the youth of Canada to believe that they will not shrink from rigours if they know they are essential to national service. Nor do we think either, that they need to be molly-coddled before they will offer themselves in their country’s needs. In the picturesque phrase of our journalist who wrote about the Navy, they will not run away from the sea if they realize that “the Navy is a challenge and not a chesterfield”. If they are told that the Navy, while treating its men and their dependents fairly, and paying them good wages giving them wholesome food, is nevertheless a career for a “man”, hard to enter but honourable, patriotic and adventurous, we do not believe that young Canadians will fail to respond to the appeal of their country.

We have already made reference to the recruiting programs. We would recommend in addition that more training be given recruiting officers and petty officers specializing in this activity. Standardized recruiting literature, thoroughly examined and checked by the highest Naval authorities, should be issued from Naval Headquarters to all recruiting officers. No literary efforts originating locally should be published unless they have been approved in every particular by the high officers of the Navy.

We also draw attention to the fact that the method of examination into the past of would-be recruits is unsatisfactory. We do not believe, of course, that because a young man has through a misguided sense of adventure or inadequate parental control, engaged himself in questionable or even illegal pursuits, he should be thereby necessarily disqualified from service in the Navy. “Bad boys” often make good sailors, as youthful waywardness is often the obverse of manly virtue. At the present time, however, inquiries are made through the police before recruits are admitted. The inadequacy of the present system can best be illustrated by an example. A young man of nineteen, who has lived for eighteen years and nine months of his life in a prairie town, moves to Vancouver. He has been a resident in Vancouver for three months when the Vancouver police in his district are asked if they know anything to his disadvantage. When they

reply that they do not, this is not sufficient. If any inquiries are considered necessary, they should, of course, be directed to the police in the town where the young man has spent most of his life.

We recommend, therefore, that if inquiries are to be made, they should be thorough and systematic and not unless and casual as they are in many instances at present. An unfavourable answer should not, however, settle the matter. The sea has often been the cleansing and wholesome influence in the lives of men.

4. *Communal Entry*

We recommend that the Service examine the advisability of classifying all new recruits as ordinary seamen. The branch of service, whether of stoker, electrician, et cetera, might be selected towards the end of the period of new entry training. This right of selection would be founded on a combination of the following three factors: the aptitude shown by the new entry as determined by competent selectors; the preference of recruit himself; the necessities of the Service. This is the system used in the United States.

5. *New Entry Training*

We will list our recommendations under this heading in various sub-headings:

(a) It is essential in our opinion that all new entries be fully equipped with uniform and kit. When we took evidence, we were surprised at the shortages at Esquimalt. No doubt many of these have been made up, but at the time of the Inquiry, there seemed to be small prospect of obtaining six months' supplies in advance to take care of new additions to the Navy and renewals of equipment and kit. We do not need to underline the necessity for so-called "stock-piling" if there is a danger of war.

(b) We would like to see a greater emphasis placed, in the training given on the traditions of Naval Service, the customs of the Navy and the Navy's place as a weapon of democratic defences. There are so many things in Naval history to interest young men, and on the lips or pen of a skilled narrator their recital could hold the fascinated attention of new entries. Even in the matter of general education, we were not impressed by the literature prescribed for reading and examination. There is a fine literature of the sea which might very well be drawn upon for the instruction and enjoyment of new recruits. It would be far better for the new entries to read one or two great sea stories like "Moby Dick" or "The Ship" than to busy themselves as they now do with a string of unrelated "snippets" by a variety of authors.

We feel, too, that a far greater effort should be made to develop in the recruit an understanding of his own importance to the Navy, however humble his task may be. He should be made to understand what patriotism and service to one's country means. In this form of training, as in all other Naval training in Canada, the length of the course should be increased. The evidence is that the new entry training is too short and that some of the most essential subjects are given one or two hours.

(c) As we have already recorded, greater effort should also be made to

make living conditions in new entry barracks a fair reflection of life at sea. While this is perhaps not the place to make the observation, we do recommend also the restoration of the old custom by which officers in charge of new entries and men generally took a much closer interest in their charges, especially in the playing of manly games with the rating. It may be that the automobile and the golf course and the fact that officers marry much younger in these days than they used to do, have brought about great changes. But many experienced Navy men regret the fact that officers and men do not play manly games together as frequently as they did in the “good old days”.

(d) We are most anxious also to encourage in the new recruit, and in fact throughout the Service, a greater appreciation, not only of the short but glorious history of the Canadian Navy, but also of Naval customs still surviving, of the picturesque Naval terms and their meaning, and of the conditions under which men live at sea. A booklet should be published in addition to the Seamanship manual, which is usually available to new trainees.

The United States Navy, with its usual thoroughness and desire to “Americanize” the men of many racial strains who compose its personnel, has issued a publication entitled “Your Navy”. Its manner and matter would not suit our Canadian character, but it does appear to us that a publication dealing with the great traditions of bravery and chivalry at sea that belong to all seagoing peoples, would suit our Canadian pattern.

Our men also belong to many races. Very many of them are of the class and type and sometimes referred to as “New Canadians”. They may not all respond to the inspiration of memories such as this:-

“The spirit of your fathers
Shall start from every wave
The deck it was their field of fame
And ocean was their grave.
Where Blake and mighty Nelson fell,
Your manly hearts shall glow
As ye sweep through the deep
While the stormy winds do blow.”

but they would all be interested in the recorded traditions of the British Navy, the American Navy, the French Navy, the Dutch Navy and, in fact, of any Navy in which the deeds of the brave have been immortalized. Our own annals may be short and not as rich as those of other nations, but the history of the Canadian Navy in the last war is something to make young men proud, especially if it is interwoven with a recital of the stark deeds at sea which, in the words of Mr. Churchill, “warm the cockles of men’s hearts”.

(e) There should be the greatest care in the choosing of officers-in-charge of new entry training. In our opinion, they should know something about the art of teaching before taking up their appointments. They should also have additional experience, either through special courses directed to them, or by observation of the training system of other Navies. That observation should include experience of the American Navy as well as that of the British Navy.

(f) The Divisional System should also be more fully explained to all trainees. They should learn how they are to air grievances and discuss their problems. They should be given a thorough exposition of some of the Regulations. In our opinion the major Regulations should be reduced to simple language and not left in their present legal or legalistic form. For men untrained in the language of law, they are hard to understand.

(g) In our opinion also it would be a good idea if Welfare Committees were carefully organized and operated in new entry training centres on shore in the same manner we propose to recommend that they should be organized and operated aboard ship.

(h) On conclusion of the new entry training period, all recruits should be given what is known in the United States as "Boot Leave". This is a leave period of two weeks or more, depending upon the distance the recruit has to travel to get home. The following is an extract from the publication of the United States Navy entitled "Training". It expresses in a homely and simple way the reasons which we have for making these recommendations:

"This particular Tom Foster is one of those who has nearly completed his Recruit Training. The initial stage is just about over for him. Tomorrow or the next day, he will go home for a few days to be his folks. This, by the way, is pretty important to Tom. For one thing, it may be a long time before he gets home again and then, too, the folks will get a chance to see him in his uniform for the first time. Tom probably feels that the Navy has wrought considerable change in him as an individual . . . he has a certain sense of accomplishment and more, he feels he now belongs, that he is part of something – something big. So he will enjoy being with the folks when he is on leave and talking to his friends. Not that he has any idea of 'putting on the dog' or 'talking big', it is just a good satisfying feeling to look forward to letting the folks back home see him as he now lives and is."

6. *Royal Roads*

Our recommendations in this particular are anticipated in sub-section E on page 37 above. They are, briefly, as follows:-

There is a strong argument that the needs of the Navy as such, would be best served if this establishment were used for Naval training alone. We realize, however, that there are strong arguments for the Tri-Service system and that in any event it is at present under trail. We do recommend, however:-

1. That the period of training at Royal Roads be lengthened;
2. That practical and theoretical work be more closely integrated than they are at present;
3. That the raining at Royal Roads should be followed by experience on Canadian training ships and that if Canadian ships are not available, a partial diversion to American ships should be considered;
4. That Canadian officer entries should begin their practical duties as Commanding Officers with a background of experience and education not inferior in quality, narrower in experience or shorter in time than the training which is given British and United States officers.

6A. *Training of Chiefs and P.O.'s*

During the course of our hearing it was continually observed by officers and experienced petty officers that the relation between officer and petty officer and man had deteriorated from the standards formerly established. Those who had experience of lengthy Naval service stated that, in their opinion, the weakening of this most essential link in ship's efficiency and Naval discipline was perhaps the most regrettable feature of the modern Service. It is to be observed that this deterioration is not peculiar to the Canadian Navy. Continual reference is made to similar conditions in documents published both by the Royal Navy and the United States Navy. In the United States Naval Institute Proceedings of June, 1948, under the title "Our Vanishing Petty Officers" many vigorous observations are made. Amongst them are to be found these sentences: "The burden of making good petty officers rests ultimately upon their Divisional Officers. Upon the Divisional Officers of the Navy must be placed the blame if our petty officers remain ineffectual and ill-trained". It is almost an axiom that the efficiency of the fleet can be measured by the qualities of its petty officers. We have already quoted and extract from the evidence of a high-ranking retired officer of the Canadian Navy identifying deterioration of the old relationship between officer and petty officer as the most important single factor contributing to present disciplinary weakness. We also found considerable evidence not only of lack of adequate training for the petty officer but also of the absence of the traditional sense of responsibility amongst many of the junior petty officers. We recommend, therefore, that improved and extended divisional training for chiefs and petty officers be established immediately in the hope that the former type of petty officer may be evolved once again in a Navy that needs him more than ever.

7. *Change to Civilian Clothes on Going Ashore*

We received very many complaints that owing to the absence of facilities at both coasts men were frequently obliged to rent a room or space at a Halifax and Esquimalt where they could leave their civilian clothes and make the necessary change into them when going ashore for leave. Though this appears to be an unnecessary and unfair burden on naval personnel, we realize there are many other considerations and recommend that accommodation for locker space at east and west coast ports be considered by the appropriate authorities.

8. *Canadian Naval Service Benevolent Trust Fund*

This Fund, which is responsible for much good work, is not receiving financial support from ships and establishments generally. Every effort is being made to impress serving personnel with the advantages of the Fund and they are encouraged to make voluntary contributions out of the proceeds of canteen sales. So far it is evident that these efforts have not succeeded. In our opinion, the wartime Reserves have made a very valuable capital contribution to the moneys available which more than offsets the current contributions that should be made by men in the Service at present who will benefit thereby, even after conclusion of the service. If the Fund is not strengthened by greater voluntary contributions and encouraged by greater interest within a year from now, we recommend that the authorities consider regulations requiring canteens to contribute to the Fund a fixed per cent of canteen profits. This is the practice in the R.C.A.F. and should become the practice of the Navy, if other means of enlarging the Canadian Naval Service Benevolent Trust Fund are not found to be available.

9. *Confidential Reports on Officers and Men*

(a) *Officers*

The confidential report on officers is known as Form S 206. At the present time, while laudatory findings are not known to the officer concerned, the practice is to underline unfavourable remarks in red and to read them to the officer concerned in accordance with the instructions on the form.. We recommend that the practice be made mandatory and included in King's Regulations for the Royal Canadian Navy.

(b) *Men*

The confidential reports on men are made in a form known as S 264. We received evidence that in certain cases, complaints had been made against men who had been unable to discover what the complaints were and had been prejudiced in their career because they had not been given the opportunity of meeting or answering criticism. We recommend that men should be placed in exactly the same position as officers and that the regulations should specifically provide that unfavourable S 264's should be read to the men within a reasonable time before they leave their ships. This would give them an opportunity to make any representations they wish in connection with the criticism offered. Every man is entitled to believe he is doing well, unless he is told to the contrary.

10. *Laundries*

We received most vigorous evidence concerning the absence of proper laundry facilities at Esquimalt. The situation, in our opinion, demands immediate action. In spite of frequent representation by responsible officers, over a period of years, no laundry yet exists in Esquimalt.

There is a naval laundry at Halifax. Esquimalt should be given the same facilities immediately.

11. *Living Conditions in Ships*

At the present time, admirable experiments are being made on board H.M.C.S. Sioux. They are designed to improve living conditions at sea and the necessary structural alterations are being made on board. They include the provisions of bunks instead of hammocks, a cafeteria system and improved laundry facilities. While these improvements can only be gradual, we recommend that those which prove practical and desirable be extended as soon as possible throughout all the ships of the Canadian Navy.

12. *Barrack and Married Quarters*

In view of the justifiable complaints voiced before us, we recommend the quickest possible advance in the construction of adequate barrack accommodation on both coasts. While there was evidence of protracted and perhaps inevitable delays, there is an indication that some improvement has taken place. The happiness of the Navy depends not only on good living conditions at sea, it depends also upon good living conditions ashore. Good married quarters are essential, as no single factor has a greater bearing on the morale of married officers and men than the knowledge that their wives and children are comfortably and decently housed ashore.

13. *Administration Generally*

The needs of the modern Navy, in general, and the mass of administrative detail, paper work and committee work involved, have placed upon valuable Navy officers an undue burden of administrative detail. In Britain the Navy commands the services of a number of high-ranking and competent Civil Servants. Although difficulty may be encountered in creating civilian positions of high enough level and salary to attract the most desirable entrants, we feel that there would be a considerable improvement in efficiency and a substantial saving both in money and in valuable manpower if the British system were followed.

The infiltration of Civil Servants of higher rank would also ensure continuity in expert service. At the present there are far too many changes owing to the necessity of transferring officers to other spheres of service at sea or ashore. Greater emphasis should be placed upon the importance of planning in all fields of endeavour. Officers should be chosen for this vital work who are especially suited for it, and here again a continuing nucleus of trained Civil Servants would be of the greatest advantage.

14. *Announcement of Policy*

We received much evidence, particularly at Esquimalt, that changes in policy, appointments, the movement of ships and the organization of cruises are announced in the press or on the radio before official notification is given from Naval Headquarters. We heard many complaints also that authentic news was known in beer parlours before it came through proper channels to the sailors themselves. We believe that there is considerable grounds for this complaint and we recommend that press and radio releases should immediately follow and not precede official intimation to the officers and men of the fleet.

15. *Liquor on Board Ship*

It was inevitable that questions were asked and answers given concerning the use of liquor on board Canadian ships. It may be pointed out that the system of wardroom privileges for officers and the daily issue of rum to the men or cash payment in lieu thereof are age-old customs in the British Navy and an inherited tradition in the Canadian Navy. During tropical cruises, the custom of making an issue of beer to the men has been occasionally followed. The Australian Navy issues beer to the men and allows officers to purchase other alcoholic beverages at shore prices. The American Navy has, since the secretaryship of Josephus Daniels, been dry. American shore establishments are fully licensed. Several witnesses advanced a number of proposals including the following:-

- A – The total abolition drinks on board Canadian ships;
- B – Adoption of the Australian system; and
- C – Abolition of all alcoholic drinks in ships while they are at sea.

It is generally argued by advocates of the present system that it has long been accepted by and acceptable to all ranks; that it has not been abused; that it is a fair reflection at sea of the privileges of men on shore and that it helps to strengthen the self-discipline of officers and men. The American system, on the other hand, is alleged to contribute to law-breaking at sea and to over-indulgence on shore. On the other hand,

evidence was offered that the differential privileges of officers and men occasionally but infrequently are met with a measure of dissatisfaction on the lower decks and that the issue of alcohol was responsible for many of the disciplinary troubles on board ship. We do not feel that we are in a position to make any recommendations in this matter other than the following:-

We believe that if any changes is to take place, it should not be imposed by an outside authority but should be the result of a careful assessment of all factors by the Navy itself. We recommend, therefore, that the Naval authorities be invited to consider this question in the light of present conditions and to report thereon to the Minister.

16. *Kit Upkeep Allowance*

At the present time a payment of \$60 is made to men of the Navy to cover renewals of kit and clothing. Hitherto in the Army and Air Force, renewals of clothing have been free and no allowance has been paid. There are arguments for both systems. We understand that all three services are examining this matter and we recommend that the practice be made uniform.

17. *Free Transportation*

We recommend that one free transportation warrant for officers and men should be made to the place of residence of the officer or man for the purpose of annual leave. Many officers and men live in the central provinces, nearly all of them, with the exception of a few located in Naval Divisions and at Headquarters, are assigned to duties on the coast or at sea. The expense of travelling home on leave is beyond the means of most men, unless their passage is assisted by their relatives.

18. *Medical Care*

We recommend that there be Service Medical Care for the immediate dependents of officers and men at greatly reduced cost. We submit that the Naval Service deserves special treatment in this regard, as men are frequently absent for long periods from young families. This is the system in the United States. We were very much impressed by the hospital facilities at Seattle. There, for example, the wives of officers and men who had given birth to children were received into fine maternity wards side by side and given the best medical care at the lowest possible cost.

19. *Dependents' Allowance*

At present only a Marriage Allowance is paid. A single officer or man who is supporting or partially supporting his parents should, in our opinion, receive an allowance based upon the degrees of dependency allowed in the United States Navy.

20. *Pay for Good Conduct Badges*

Prior to October, 1946, allowances were paid at the rate of five cents a day for the first badge, 15 cents a day for the second, and 20 cents a day for the third badge. Although the amount is small, it adds some prestige and real advantage to the possessor of a good conduct badge. It makes the holder more careful to ensure that badges are not lost through misconduct. Such a system will, therefore, contribute to morale and the maintenance of discipline. We recommend the reintroduction of this practice.

21. *Responsibility Allowance*

It was until recently the rule to allow a special rate of twenty-five cents a day for "charge money", payable to men who are responsible for complicated machinery in the engineroom. All witnesses in the Engineering Branch, especially the officers, were strongly of the opinion that the payment of this charge money to the men should be reintroduced. After hearing the evidence, we concur that the arguments were well-founded and recommend accordingly.

22. *Welfare Committees*

We recommend a revision of the rules and regulations affecting the Welfare Committees. We think that the necessary amendments should be made to permit free discussion between officers and men under the Chairmanship of the Executive Officer. It should be made quite clear that the discussion should cover all matters of welfare including all living conditions within the ship or establishment concerned. Welfare should be more widely defined than it is at present and should include any matters within the ship that are within the decision and discretion of the Captain or his Second-in-Command. In our opinion, there should be as few restrictions as possible on the subjects which may be introduced. If there are conditions of which the cure is beyond the powers of the Captain or his Second-in-Command, they should explain this to the representatives adding that steps will be taken to pass on the suggestions to the appropriate authorities. Minutes of Welfare Committees with the action taken in each case should, of course, be carefully kept and posted on the Notice Board in ships.

Far more attention should be paid than heretofore to the election of representative of the men on Welfare Committees and every step should be taken to see that elections are by ballot, regularly and properly held. It is our suggestion that the Minutes of every Welfare Committee in every ship and establishment should be sent to the Director of Service Conditions and Welfare at Naval Headquarters. They should be carefully examined and the subjects tabulated and given regular and thorough consideration. It is also recommended that the Captains of ships be encouraged to hold occasional "Town Hall" meetings. The institution of such "Town Hall" should be discretionary and not obligatory. In both Welfare Meetings and Town Halls it is, of course, understood that they can only succeed if they are dignified, orderly, serious and constructive. On the whole, it is our belief that a series of questions, answers and discussions as ample and free as possible will result in an improvement and not an impairment of discipline in its best and highest sense. The system will help to build a foundation of true obedience based upon fair conditions and will in no small measure operate to prevent the repetition of incidents similar to those which we have been investigating. We repeat that it must be apparent that all the incidents could probably have been avoided had their growing causes been known to the Captain and Executive Officer of the ships concerned.

23. *Ship's Routine*

Many references will be found in this report to complaints concerning frequent changes in ship's routine. In all three incidents, especially investigated, there were many complaints on this ground. Comparisons were frequently made between routines followed in different navies and different ships of the same class in our own navy and in

ships of different classes. In our opinion the routines for each class of ship should be standard throughout the navy and the nature and details of the routines made known clearly and unequivocally to the crews. It is, of course, essential that the Commanding Officer should have authority to alter such routines but such alterations should only be made when the necessities of the time required this to be done. Where there are changes, the reasons for the changes should be made known to the crew by the Commanding Officer. It was also noted that there were discrepancies between routines on the east and west coasts. Men should know what to expect regardless of their location. Nothing is more harmful for morale than to have one Canadian ship with a strict routine lying alongside another Canadian ship in which routine is easier. The difference can only result in criticism, often unfair, of the officer who is doing his strict duty. We are advised that experts are now inquiring into working methods in the Navy. If this results in the abolition of unnecessary "flummery", unless parades and pointless mustering, and a greater attention to the essential work of a ship, a most useful and necessary purpose will be served.

24. *Officer-Man Relationships*

It has been observed from the facts which we have found and the observations which we have made that there is a notable lack of human understanding between officers and men. The complexities of human nature probably make this true in every age and every Navy. It is also true that modern political, social and economic conditions and the restlessness of a post-war world have disturbed this relationship as they have distracted so many others. Nevertheless, the most thoughtful of our witnesses, whether they were officers or men, emphasized this fact and regretted its existence. The personal causes are difficult to determine and spring no doubt from faults in the officer whose duty it is to command as well as in the men whose duty it is to obey the commands. In a Naval paper filed before the Board, written by an R.C.N. officer, leaders are subdivided into three groups:

- (a) Those who maintain their position mainly by virtue of their established social prestige attaching to their office;
- (b) Those who maintain their position mainly by virtue of their personal capacity to impress and dominate their followers;
- (c) Those who maintain their position mainly by virtue of their personal capacity to express themselves and persuade their followers.

Many officers receive their early training with the Royal Navy. They do not in all cases appreciate that the Royal Canadian Navy seaman presents a different problem from the Royal Navy seaman. While no doubt conditions have changed in the Royal Navy as they have elsewhere, differences of speech, of education, of social environment, have generally made it easier for Royal Navy officers to exercise command and at the same time easier for ratings to accept it. We have few officers in the Canadian Navy who maintain their position by the social prestige attached to their office. Until recently, Canadian Naval officers have received their first five years' training in the Royal Navy. As the writer of the memorandum relates, during this time they have had superimposed upon them a type of life and a style of leadership not only foreign to themselves and their own social background but also to the social background of the men whom they command. There is no form of artificial superiority which Canadians resent more than

the variety imported from another land.

The author proceeds to observe that his view the particular type of leader best suited to Canadian conditions is Type (c). It is not possible for a Canadian Navy officer to succeed if he relies on the fact that he will be accepted as a natural leader merely because he has carried out his training and received his commission. The qualities of leadership are still as they were when they were outlined by John Paul Jones, the Scots-American Admiral, 1776 – “The Naval Officer should be the soul of tact, patience, justice, firmness, charity and understanding. No meritorious act of a subordinate should escape his attention or be left to pass without reward, even if the reward be only one word of approval. He should not be blind to a single fault in any subordinate; at the same time he should be quick to distinguish error from malice, thoughtlessness from incompetency and well-meant shortcoming from heedless and stupid blunder. As he should be universal and impartial in his rewards and approval of merit, so should he be judicial and unbending in his punishment or reproof of misconduct”. We venture to suggest that the words of the old Admiral of the 18th Century cannot be improved upon, whether in form or substance, in the 20th Century. We were constantly impressed by the words of humble witnesses who, in their own way, said the same things as John Paul Jones. Many of them regretted that while men were reprimanded for work badly done, they were very rarely ever commended for work well done.

Our recommendations, therefore, are that Canadian Naval officers, before they are called upon to take command, should be instructed far more frequently and intensively in what constitutes the qualities of leadership. The instructions should not be in words only, and particularly should not be confused by the jargon of the professional psychologist. Opportunities should be given to young officers to observe the conduct and to profit by the example of senior officers who are recognized as the ablest and most acceptable leaders throughout the Navy. We have elsewhere observed that the names of especially gifted individuals were constantly mentioned in evidence with approval by both officers and men. As many young officers as possible should be given an opportunity of learning from those whose success in this most important sphere is generally admitted. It is hoped also that with a wider and more diversified training at Royal Roads and particularly from there on, the Naval Cadet will find the way to leadership clearer and straighter. It is obvious that our recommendation that training ships be established is closely linked with our observations under this heading. It is also obvious that the improved training of men in seamanship, in conditions of life at sea, and not least, in Naval history and traditions, is of equal importance. No country has available for its service a finer, stronger young manhood than Canada. In order that part of it may be welded together in a happy and efficient Naval community of officers and men, we wish to repeat the discipline is the most important element in the whole fabric. Perhaps we may use here a sentence which we have included at an earlier stage in this report: The only discipline which in the final analysis is worth while is one that is based upon pride in a great service, a belief in essential justice, and the willing obedience that is given to superior character, skill, education and knowledge. Any other form of discipline is bound to break down under stress.

25. *Training in “The Humanities”*

We would also like to refer to a lack in training which struck us with increasing

emphasis as evidence was unfolded before us. We refer to a lack of training in what is known as “the humanities”. This pregnant word, which has survived in the Scottish Universities and at Oxford under the name of “Literae Humaniores”, embraces the general study of the literary, artistic and social influences which have affected human life and touch it in so many vital places. “I am a man and consider nothing which belongs to humanity foreign to me” was the boast and epitaph of the greatest Roman dramatist. It is increasingly recognized in universities that no training for a medical degree or for a scientific degree can begin to be complete without some knowledge of the so-called humanities. We therefore recommend that some additional instruction be given in literature and in history in order that a wider experience of men may be joined to a deeper knowledge of human affairs from the recorded pages of history and literature. We have already observed that, in our opinion, the young Canadian Naval officer is not as well educated as his British and American contemporary. This condition should not be allowed to continue any longer.

26. Canada Badges

We have already referred to the almost unanimous desire on the part of the men for some form of clear Canadian identification on their uniforms, at least when they are serving outside Canada. The desire is the natural outcome of pride in their identity as Canadian sailors and of a strong resentment against the recurrence of international incidents in which they are insulted by ignorant citizens or service men belonging to other peoples, who seem to rejoice jeering at those whom they believe to be British. Since we began to meet, the Naval authorities have approved the wearing of some badges in which maple leaves form part of the design. Even the most ignorant member of another race can probably read the word “Canada”. A design of maple leaves, however artistic, means little or nothing to such an individual. We recommend that the words “Canada” or “Royal Canadian Navy” be used as shoulder flashes on the uniforms of all ranks. In the case of the Canadian army, the word “Canada” appears somewhere on all uniforms. In the case of the R.C.A.F. the wearing of Canada patches within Canada is a matter of choice. Outside of Canada the wearing of the patch is obligatory. The only other alternative to the decision which we recommend would appear to be the design issue, and wearing of a distinctive Canadian uniform. There are many objections to this change, which need not be detailed at this time. As collateral to the recommendation above, we wish to refer to the painting of maple leaves on the funnels of H.M.C. ships. During the war, Canadian ships were so distinguished. After the war, maple leaves were no longer painted on the funnels. The Board feels that this practice should be reinstated and has recently learned that Naval Headquarters has so ordered.

27. Income Tax

It is the general Canadian practice that the value of any accommodation and food given to any person is included in his basic income on which tax is paid. The same principle has been introduced in the Canadian Naval Service. The value of accommodation varies from \$70.00 to \$54.00 according to rank. This principle of tax payment on this allowance has hitherto been applied in the Navy to all officers and men both ashore and afloat. There has always been a strong objection to the imposition of tax on the value of the restricted accommodation and food provided at sea, which has

admittedly not been equal to that provided on shore. During recent months, as a result of representation by the Naval authorities, the value of accommodation in ships for income tax purposes was reduce for all men to \$22.50. The imposition of this tax and its justification have never been thoroughly explained to the men. Whatever reason there may be for its original imposition, it is vexatious and small in amount. It is generally felt, too, that as men are bound by their terms of service to go to sea and as accommodation at sea is of necessity inferior to the accommodation on shore, a good case can be made out, not only for differentiation for taxation purpose between allowance payable at sea and ashore but also for the elimination of any tax in respect of accommodation allowance. While the reduction in the income tax rates will probably have eliminated most of this obligation, we believe that it could well be removed altogether. We recommend accordingly. If such recommendation cannot be accepted, a far more thorough explanation should be given to the men affected than has hitherto been the case.

28. *Recreational Facilities Afloat*

Men who live with other men in a confined space where there is little change of food, of company or of scene, are generally and easily subject to boredom. There should be, every opportunity for men to engage in games, in sing-songs, in pleasant tasks not connected with their ship's work, and in as much co-operative merry-making as possible. In general, the officer-in-charge of recreational activities is the newest recruit who probably knows nothing of the organization of sports and concerts. Now and again of course, a genius at the job emerges. We were much impressed with the universal and proud commendation of a ship's circus organized by the First Lieutenant on board *Magnificent*. We would recommend, if possible, that in all larger ships there be a trained director of community recreation. Far more ample libraries should be provided, a much greater selection of gramophone records and if at all possible a ship's band on each of the major ships and a male chorus under expert direction.

In the ships of the United States, hobby shops similar to those organized on shore are provided on board. This enables men possessing or desiring special manual skills, to spend part of their leisure time in the fashioning of useful and ornamental objects. We realize that space may not permit of these things at present, but we hope that in all future designs there will be made room.

We would like to see also a series of illustrated film lectures organized for the benefit of men at sea. In every ship there must be officers and men who have had many interesting adventures and journeys and who possess expert and out-of-the-way knowledge. We feel sure that if such officers and men were given an opportunity of exercising their talents, they would be assured of attentive and interested audiences.

29. *Recreational Facilities Ashore*

Shore facilities for the recreation, entertainment and education of Canadian sailors are very inadequate, especially on the west coast. They are somewhat better at east coast. Many of the men are aware of what the United States authorities do for the officers and men of their Navy. We had the privilege of visiting the Seattle Naval Air Station Recreational Building at Seattle. When we compared the magnificent facilities for the

playing of games, for the carrying on of hobbies, for sea bathing and for reading at Seattle with the dingy surroundings, the poor quarters and the lack of equipment at Esquimalt, we could not be anything but envious for our country's sake. In Canada a young sailor would probably find his greatest excitement and temporary comfort in the clatter of a pool room or in the blatancy of a beer parlour. In the United States, the ordinary seaman can play his games, read his books, work at his hobbies or refresh himself with food and drink in surroundings no less attractive than those of the most exclusive club.

It does not require any emphasis from us to prove what such surroundings can do to advance morale, esprit de corps, pride in service and that general feeling of what sailors call "happiness" on which disciplined efficiency so strong depends. The United States authorities have set it out as a principle that the fighting forces are committed to a paramount obligation to the parents of their servicemen. They have deliberately set out to duplicate the wholesome influence of the home and the community as far as is practicable under the conditions of national service. At Seattle we saw how this has been done. Sailors and their wives and children were given facilities to bathe in the sea and to rest in the sun under perfect conditions. There was provision for every game that a man might wish to play. There was a large hobby shop under skilful directors. There was a sunny hospital where the babies of the wives of officers and men were born in lovely surroundings, at a minimum cost for medical and nursing services. We could not help thinking of the men at Esquimalt without laundries, without lockers, lacking not only the little luxuries of American life but some of the necessities of ordinary, decent, civilized life. The Seattle Recreational Building, which accommodates approximately 2,000, was constructed in 1941 at a cost of \$425,000. The United States authorities estimate that the cost today would be \$710,000. We recommend that institutions similar to the one at Seattle be established at the earliest possible moment at both Canadian coasts.

The experience of the American authorities is most valuable and to judge by the courtesy and completeness with which our enquiries were answered, the fullest information and assistance would be willingly given by the American Navy in case our recommendation is adopted. Apart from improved education and training, we believe that nothing would contribute more to the improvement of morale, esprit de corps and discipline than this constructive advance in the welfare and well-being of the young Canadians on whom our Naval defences depend.

30. *Films at Sea*

While our observation and recommendation in this regard involve no criticism of the officer in charge of film issue, as he, in our opinion, has done his best with limited resources and limited material, we believe that far greater attention should be paid to the issue of films and that, if necessary, the cost should be subsidized from public funds. There is no doubt that the best and latest films are available both for the Royal Navy and the American Navy. The administrative officers of both navies regard, as we do, the supply of recreational films as an essential part of the welfare organization of the Fleet. In Great Britain, the film industry foregoes profits in its dealing with the Navy. We recommend that the whole question of films for the Canadian Navy be reviewed and that initially a strong committee be appointed to consider the improvement of the service.

This committee might well contain among its membership civilians experienced in the film business having no connection with the Government of Canada or with the Navy. We believe that if negotiations are undertaken at the highest level with film distributors in Canada, there would be a very early improvement in the present unsatisfactory service.

Much greater use, in our opinion also, could be made of the National Film Board, although the ordinary educational films are not popular with men at sea. Many of them told us, however, they would be interested in travel films and particularly in films depicting life in countries to be visited on their various cruises.

CONCLUSION

As we approach the end of this report, we wish to reiterate that, in our opinion,

(a) The incidents which we were asked to investigate were technically “mutinies”, although apart from the barring of mess decks doors in *Athabaskan* and *Crescent*, no force was used. Nor was there any open defiance of a high officer’s order.

(b) There was no justification and could be no justification for the mutinous incidents nor for any form of mass insubordination.

(c) There was justification for some of the complaints on which part of the dissatisfaction was founded.

(d) Many of the complaints and the likelihood of some form of “trouble” were known to some Petty Officers and Leading Seamen, whose clear duty it was to report such conditions promptly and fully. The report were not made.

(e) In addition, some divisional and other officers had strong suspicions or should have had a strong suspicion that things were not well within their ships.

(f) Had the various Captains and Executive Officers been fully informed, the incidents might well have been prevented.

(g) In any event, if Welfare Committees had been properly constituted and allowed to function, it is probable that none of the incidents would have happened.

(h) The two foregoing facts contributed to what may be called the “tragedy” of these incidents which were subsequently sincerely regretted by so many who took part in them.

(i) There was a connection between the incidents in *Ontario*, *Athabaskan*, *Crescent* and *Magnificent* and each succeeding incident received some pattern and some encouragement from its predecessor.

(j) In future, insubordination should be most severely punished.

(k) In the meantime, immediate and thorough consideration should be given to a reform of the procedure governing the airing of general grievances and to the strengthening and widening of the organization of Welfare Committees.

(l) We do not believe that there are any so-called “subversive” forces at work in the Navy or that any such elements were responsible for the incidents. Like many other similar happenings, they passed through the usual phrases of discontent, exaggeration of grievance, folly and thoughtless action.

(m) The legitimate grievances which we have outlined in our report should be promptly and sympathetically investigated and remedied.

We have dealt at length with changes in the Service, which we believe should be made, and have particularly stressed the training and education of officers, petty officers and men. We have also recommended a number of reforms and additional facilities designed to improve morale and so to strengthen the best and truest form of discipline.

We have also sought to interpret the wishes of the great majority of men by stressing the need to “Canadianize” our navy. In so doing, we wish to record that in common with most thoughtful Canadians, we have an abiding admiration and respect for the grand traditions and institutions of the Royal Navy and for their continuing beneficent and steadying force wherever British and Canadian ships may sail. We hope that all that is good in these shared traditions will remain with us and that only what is inefficient and inconsistent with our national need, character, dignity and special conditions will disappear from the Navy of Canada.

Many of the facts and circumstances which brought forth our requested criticism, as recorded in these pages, will be automatically remedied by the growth of experience and the passage of time.

We hope that wherever action is required our deliberations and our recommendations will contribute in some measure to the making of a happy, efficient and well-disciplined Service. No one could sit face to face with the hundreds of young Canadians – officers and men – who told us the truth as they saw it, without a pride in the clean, strong manhood with which this land is blessed. We thank you, Mr. Minister, for the trust which you placed in our hands and have the honour to remain,

Your obedient servants,

(Signed) E. R. MAINGUY,
Chairman.

(Signed) L. C. AUDETTE,
Commissioner.

(Signed) LEONARD W. BROCKINGTON,
Commissioner.