

profitable experience outweighs retention

By LTJG L. R. Small

The low rate of first term reenlistment has been properly a subject of concern in the Navy. However, merely because 80 per cent of first termers do not reenlist, it does not follow that their military experience has been a failure, for themselves or the Navy. For young men, inexperienced with life and sustained effort, their experience can return them as more stable, mature individuals with the kind of motivation to make school or work a success.

It is wrong to say the Navy always loses when a good man departs for civilian life. In the long view, a stable, prosperous country and a successful Navy have converging interests.

Depersonalization is a result of large social units, along with the more serious ill of alienation. The military suffers these along with the rest of civilization. Large ships are particularly susceptible. These problems are rooted in human nature as much as in organizational structure. A small town in Iowa is separated from New York by the same gulf that divides DE from a CVA. The crowding of persons into confined areas is a further aggravating factor whose subtle effects on behavior are just being discovered. The solution of these problems is one of civilization's, and the Navy's, greatest challenges. The Navy will always wrestle with problems of limited space. Men will always chafe at group treatment. That these concepts are conceived as problems is a first step, on which should lead to thoughtful solution.

The problems of leadership are best measured by experience. The fallacy first to fall is that military leadership consists of giving orders. Because the military is not a machine, but a collection of individuals with human contrariness cranked in, leadership in the military is a consuming job. The businessman can give raises and bonuses. The politician can let the people lead him. While the military has some means of coercion at hand, this is not enough to create the enthusiasm and initiative needed. These can only be engendered by example.

The military life is more than another occupation, more than another profession; it involves a total commitment that includes the risking of life. Most men are

not stirred to such behavior except as an expression of personal faith, as expressed by the entering oath. Once it is made, the service has a need to extract compliance. Noncompliance, even by a single person, usually causes disaster. Further, some individuals respond only to force. While force is ultimately the least effective motivation, often there is no time for explanations, examples and exhortation.

Lack of cleanliness and hygiene are often a unit's most deadly enemy. The effect of the yard period on the cleanliness of the ship shows what a relaxation of standards can do. Until World War II disease usually caused more deaths than the normal enemy. To allow broad individualization of personal standards of appearance is to invite chaos and constant bickering over how far variations can go. Even in universities with broad rules concerning appearance and conduct, cries are heard individualism is being stifled. The truth is, in any group

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all not roses during refra

The Fleet Training Group observers expect Benno successfully complete her refresher training period June 13, but that doesn't mean the training went along without any problems.

Major problem areas as of June 5 included: Apparent lack of interest on the part of the lower-rated men; personnel unfamiliarity with damage control equipment, and poor communications.

"The lack of interest on the part of the lower-rated men is causing problems," explained DCI Donald Arbogast of FTG. "Many of them just aren't showing much interest."

About the problems of communication, Arbogast said those who man the sound-powered phones should stick to established telephone-talker procedures.

"At this point, the Bennington is a little below average in performance," Arbogast said, but noted that things seem to be developing toward a successful climax by June 13. "I'm sure Bennington will pass her final battle problem," he said.