



Comdr. Beckmann Gives the Word to Lt. Comdr. Hyatt

THE HULL DEPARTMENT

The duties, responsibilities and problems which confront the officers and men of the hull department may try all but competent, professionally-trained and combat-tried personnel. A ship the size of the **BENNINGTON** is a complex maze of hull systems. Knowledge of her twelve-hundred compartments, drainages, firemain, ventilation and compressed air systems, and the proper functioning of all hatches and watertight doors are only some of the many-fold tasks that men in the red hats perform to insure the safety and comfort of the hundreds of men aboard.

All hands aboard know that Commander A. G. Beckmann, USN, in his capacity as First Lieutenant and Damage Control Officer, literally had to "grab the bull by the horns" to whip a virtually 90% green crew into damage control consciousness. His doctrine has been: "Keep the ship afloat—put out those fires—control list and trim—keep her fighting." This policy has enabled the **BENNINGTON** to pass severe tests and take her well deserved place among the major units of the battle fleet.

The job of First Lieutenant and Damage Control Officer is two-fold and of tremendous proportions. His department is responsible for the berthing and messing of officers and men alike, and for the upkeep and cleanliness of the ship. They direct all the hazardous and difficult line-hauling whenever the ship goes alongside a dock or another vessel.

The Hull Department gang stream the paravanes, inspect for darken-ship at night, maintain the ground tackle, the ship's boats and execute all line-handling pertaining to mooring and

decking the ship. Painting and otherwise keeping the ship in good repair is done under the supervision of this department, as are all hull inspections.

Damage control duties and problems are just as complex, varied and equally important. Should "that" time ever come, this gang would have the most difficult, rugged job aboard. They are responsible for the organization and direction of all the ship's repair parties, maintaining the ship on an even keel and controlling list and trim. All this consists of the methods necessary to preserve watertight integrity, stability and maneuverability.

The prime objective is the maintenance of the ship's offensive fighting power. They must effect rapid repairs of material, provide adequate protection against fire and chemical agents. They must also instruct and indoctrinate the crew and officers in the newest and most effective methods for combating fires, for counter flooding, and for facilitating the care of wounded personnel.

These functions are directed on the **BENNINGTON** deep down in the compartment known as "Damage Control." Here, arranged in a fashion suggestive of a stock market quotation board, and just as amazing, are the panels, switches, controls, diagrams and gauges that tell the story of the entire carrier—a story that is as complex as anything could be—and yet always at the reach of the watch officer in charge. Diagrams consist of deck layouts of the ship from the gallery to the double bottoms, phone circuits, fire

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