

Navy Plans Plush Quarters at Sea

By Jack Anderson

The admirals have been wringing their hands in despair over the deterioration of American sea power and the corresponding growth of the Soviet fleet.

We have now obtained some of their plans for strengthening U.S. ships on the high seas.

The officers' staterooms, for example, will be fitted with carpets, drapes, planter boxes, audio units, dimmer switches, air conditioning and other comforts "suited to the sociological, physiological and psychological needs of officer personnel."

The crews' quarters, not to be neglected, will also get new rugs, drapes, planter boxes and "tasteful paintings and pictures." The plans call for strict coordination of colors and patterns "to achieve effective color dynamics."

The enlisted men will also get new wardrobe space suitable for hanging "a peacoat plus two new uniforms and two outfits of civilian clothing."

It used to be that they folded their bell-bottoms and stuffed them into lockers under their berths. But they will soon start trading in their bell-bottoms for more spiffy uniforms. These not only will require hanging space but dry cleaning.

Accordingly, the dry cleaning facilities aboard surface ships will be expanded to "meet work load requirements necessitated by the latest change in enlisted uniform."

The Navy will increase the size of some crews, too. "Additional personnel are required," state the plans, "to operate the (dry cleaning) facilities to be installed."

New Navy Look

As part of the new Navy look, seamen are permitted to grow their hair longer, but they are still expected to keep their lengthened locks properly groomed. The new hair styles will be fashioned, appropriately, in more "decorative" shipboard barber shops—complete with "flush fluorescent lighting" and newly designed "barber chairs and barber shop accessories."

The improved dining quarters will offer everything from "ice cream and dessert bars" and "hot dog roll-a-grills" to "decorative heat retention lamps" for food display and "lighting controls to achieve environmental lighting keyed to meal moods."

The lounges, too, will be refurbished "to improve the environment for rest and relaxation." Indeed, even the ships' heads will be outfitted with fancy new china urinals, light-

ing fixtures, soap dispensers and electric hand dryers.

The cost for all these improvements, said a spokesman, hasn't been calculated. The preliminary plans, in our possession, indicate it will run high into the millions. But the spokesman said the estimates may be scaled down, depending on how many ships the Navy finally overhauls.

Free Pens—"Huge quantities" of pens, with propaganda leaflets attached, have been dumped on North Vietnamese forces in Laos. Apparently, this has provided Communist troops with a lot of free pens but hasn't impressed many with the U.S. message. Commented Ambassador G. McMurtrie Godley in a confidential message: "We suggest that it is highly doubtful that leaflets can ever be effective against well-educated, battle-hardened veterans." But he added hopefully that "less than 25 per cent of personnel in NVA units in Laos are veterans of more than one year service."

Herbicide Ban—U.S. forces were ordered to stop using herbicides to clear away foliage in Vietnam after May 1, 1971. However, the Pentagon has continued to receive reports, usually stamped "Secret," that some units found

"alternative means to herbicide use . . . to remove excess vegetation in the vicinity of fire bases and installations."

Don't Trust Danes—U.S. military observers in Copenhagen have warned that Marxist Socialists can gain access to military secrets because of parliamentary control over Danish defense intelligence. Reported the observers to the Pentagon: "Source is deeply concerned with the trend of current political developments in Denmark."

Secret Aid—The Republic of Malawi has kept secret from the other black African nations that it is receiving military aid from hated South Africa. "Knowledgeability limited to very few in Malawi govt.," states a secret report.

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