

Greetings Shipmates,

What strange times we live in; was looking through our 'Brian's **Crossed the Bar**' page on our website. It made me think the old adage is true: I would sooner have one hundred friends than one hundred dollars.

Confined to the corner of the conservatory it would not increase my well-being one jot if the mattress was stuffed with bank notes.

Just read the *Daily Mail's* collection of ghastly news.

APPEAL DISMISSED !

Close to our interests is the young wren 'raped with violence' who, on discovery that she was pregnant, quietly appealed to her senior officer for help in an abortion - it fell on deaf ears.

I imagine a room full of macho males asking "How provocative was she? How close to the bloke she obviously seemed to trust?" All that is a load of horse feathers for a junior who, after all, is thrust into an alien environment - not altered since Henry V111th in basic outlook or thought, whose knowledge of lifemanship would fit on the back of a postage stamp, as far as the lower deck is concerned.

Against the background of a wider family in the dark about her predicament you may feel she is in a major mental muddle, in dire need of help. Her divisional officer is her 'manager'. True to the English way this daft, clueless twat, with incomplete knowledge of his charges is rightly able to ask his Captain "Permission to speak Sir" and say, without interruption, "This girl is in dire straits Sir and I know you can muster the influence required to reach an equitable solution". Too simple eh, only us lot add complication.

The Senior Service has pull all over the nation and should be able to just do it. The 'Serve her right' attitude steaming serenely along, but I ask you, isn't our brotherhood meant to look after each other?

Given half an hour I will modify the opinion voiced above. Do remember Mother Nature makes the procreation rules amongst homo sapiens, who are in life's prime. Another old adage says, and rings true, 'It will drag you further than gun powder can blow you'.

It must be two weeks since I wrote the above, sounds like a Sunday sermon or morality lecture.

The other side of the sex coin is injudicious spending of one's pocket money ashore. Later, back on board, the Doc reveals gonorrhoea is your purchased infection- he is sworn to secrecy as his S.B A's are and doing his darndest with the latest medication to ensure the infliction 'stays on board', keeping his family safe and in the dark.

That smacks of one rule for one section of the community and another for the other. I feel sure a resolution will not appear in the short term.

Perhaps you have an opinion and it would be nice if you let us know what it is.

I notice the M.O.D. has released, to our forces, the armoured fighting vehicle they have been throwing millions of pounds at, for the last twelve years. The 100 dollar question now is, will the procurement agency rush to get it issued to the army; they think it old hat and injurious to its crew. Further information reveals the M.O.D. are aware they exceeded their budget by countless millions so have taken action for a drastic cut - if that's not enough to make your cat laugh they have hired a couple of hundred more consultants.

You can bet all will be on six figure salaries and unsackable. The days of professional politicians is done and gone, their appetite for cash (yours) will prevail.

I feel the heads of these departments deserve to be in court for sheer incompetence with an open public purse.

Further example of lack of grip on new frigate programme, they will be built for - but not fitted with - latest weapons radar and AA rocketry. I would say recall attrition of frigates at Falklands.

We have vessels in the Far East - O.S. stood for 'off shore' when launched, naval P.R. department now refer to them as 'overseas' vessels, very lethal, one 30 mm machine gun mounted on fo'c'sle, okay for bursting red balloons at about 800 yards.

These are the five fisher protection '*River Class*' built only to provide work for B.A.E on Clyde, a politic need.

Sorry to be such a moaner today, maybe because I am hungry and waiting for my dinner.

Keep taking your pills Shipmates, and good health.