

ANDY BRIERLEY'S BLOG

Hello Shipmates,

I was bemused by 'media frenzy' at the Russian carrier group's transit down the channel - all anxious to point out faults of age, chipped paint work, or lack of experience in their chosen art, Every newspaper carried a picture of some smoke issuing from the carrier's funnel. All reports so similar one could smell M.O>D.- P.R. department dishing out propaganda bulletins.

Junior school taught us that such remarks are, generally, made by people who, falsely, estimate their own worth.

That this 'carrier' has lost the bloom of youth is no secret. That it can operate at 50° below has been demonstrated - currently in the eastern Med. where the water is warm - with an air strike group of 10 x S.U.35s, 4 x Mig 29s, absolute brutes to operate off a 'short take off' - 'arrested deck landing' deck.

I cannot find a disparaging remark for this vessel or its escort. If it smokes they live upon lakes of oil and can afford it. Bear in mind reports of major R.N. vessels 18 months ago running on one engine as an economy measure to conserve fuel, and our Billion pound a copy destroyers, with engines unable to function in warm Med. seas, let alone at 50° below.



Our carrier Illustrious was also in the eastern Med. over Christmas, not a opportunity to rejoice, with a Turkish tug hauling it to their breakers, a site with much experience having broken both her sisters in recent times.

Just published is the cost of 'Ocean' refit at £65 million, then it was decommissioned, not unlike £316 million spent on 'Diligence'

refit before it's decommissioning, - flippant waste of £81 million. But it's only money, yours!

A recent question in the House of Lords about constant cuts to the R.N. brought this response from Earl Howe; quote "I do not share the noble Lord's perception of the R.N suffering cuts, if anything, it is very much 'on the up' ". Perhaps the belted earl is referring to Shitcreek.

M.O.D.- R.Ns voracious appetite for inflated rhetoric extolling non-existent virtues, refusal to re-organise, managerial and political incompetence is cast in concrete. To



expect change is 'howling at the moon'. The Daily Times 23rd of December says laptops, computers and data sticks containing sensitive information, go missing from that place at a rate of more than one per day. Since the election a reported 759 laptop/computers have been stolen, plus 328 CDs, D.V.Ds and U.S.Bs

The K.G.B. and Chinese equivalent must feel they're on an all-expenses paid holiday to visit a comic opera. I did ponder whether I had the M.O.D's true function wrong on learning they have 2,145 'major expensive works of art'. Imagine the security effort plus 'climate controlled' conditions to safeguard that lot in storage to prevent loss/theft. Far more important than expendable military personnel, who are prevented from giving their own evidence at hearings of the 'abuse gravy train' in Iraq and Afghanistan. Do you feel the House of Commons is in paralysis to allow such conduct to continue?



Short break then for a 'cuppa' and returned wondering if I've said all this before!



Above photos are of the Russian carrier in question, Kunetsov, taken about 5 miles from Murmansk in Kola Inlet five years ago, the naval memorial, in hill behind that town plus a memorial to the 'Great Patriotic War' nearby. The size lets you know how I feel about that! It faces towards northern Norway where the Germans

were as little as ten miles away.

On a lighter note is me-self with those King Penguins we brought from the Falklands for the Miami zoo. They loved those round tins of Pusser's herrings in tomato sauce, then Mess 8 (I think, memory lapse!), asdic and torpedo rates with Chief of Department, a lovely person whose service certificates I once got a look at, submarines all the way. How he survived WW2 must have been pure chance!



Tatty Bye Well!

