

to commission in 1970 so that there will have been a gap of six years in the replacement programme."

This was all deleted. The substitution read—"The special committee was briefed on ship construction last year."

This change was not remarked upon at the preview and I would not have consented to the change. The fleet consists of 23 destroyers. If they have a twenty to twenty-five year life it is necessary to have a building programme which brings into being on the average one replacement each year. Over six years we are getting four ships which would, of course, be 16 ships in 24 years for a long term reduction from 23 to 16. In my opinion the removal of this part of the text deprived the Committee of an essential opinion, and I did not wish to leave the impression that I was satisfied with the current replacement programme numerically. It will also be remembered that the cancelled frigate programme was for a total of eight ships. I would not have consented to this change.

8. The eighth change was connected with the manpower section of the brief. Pages 21, 22, 23 and 24 of the original were virtually re-written, and appeared as pages 18 and 19 of the altered text. No comment had been made at the preview that the original text was unacceptable to the Minister. I was more upset by this change than any other because I felt the substitution deprived the Committee of essential information to give them a true assessment of the personnel situation and its effects for Maritime Command. Moreover, I felt it was an alteration designed deliberately to deprive the Committee of information and that it was morally wrong to have made the changes.

You will see from that, I had clearly indicated I was alarmed by the failure of senior men to re-engage. I was greatly alarmed by the lack of recruits. I was seriously concerned that if the rundown of personnel was not halted almost half our destroyer fleet would be inactive for want of personnel. This meant we would not be meeting our NATO and Canada/US commitments; it meant that our ability to exercise reasonable control in sea areas of interest to Canada would be seriously prejudiced. I felt strongly that the Committee should have my observations on these matters and be given the necessary information to be able to question me on the subject from a brief but clear background. Three slides which accompanied the original text were also excluded because the altered version did not include their use. It was with reference to this section that the Minister told me the changes had been made because he wished a positive approach taken on personnel matters and mine was too negative. In my opinion, it would have been more appropriate to say my brief was so enlightening it might have brought the Committee to its senses on the parlous state of the Command in personnel matters.

I have placed photostats of the removed slides as Appendices E, F and G. Appendix G is particularly important because it shows graphically the continuing and increasing disparity between actual strength and requirements.

9. The ninth change removed a sentence on the employment of West Coast Forces. The sentence read—"West Coast forces are similarly committed to strenuous and exacting major exercise programmes." This disappeared completely. I believe this was a secretarial error which passed unnoticed, and happened, not by design, but by accident. I have no other comment on this change.