

I thought it was right before the instructions were issued on this paper to explain to the First Sea Lord what was happening. He had some research carried out into past practice, and it was evident from the comparison between the 1844 regulations and the 1906/1913 regulations that the predominant characteristic of the two books was that they were completely inconsistent. They showed that (a) ships might bear, carry, wear, display or fly a flag, ensign, etc., (b) flag officers etc. might wear, carry or fly a flag, and (c) a flag might be displayed, hoisted, carried or worn by the ship, or be flying in a ship, or worn by the flag officer.

In discussion with me, he agreed that there was certainly no justification for retaining in use such completely archaic terms as a flag officer wearing or carrying a flag. He was not, however, disposed to issue any special instructions on the lines proposed in this paper (and in particular would have deprecated anything which positively barred the use of the phrase "H.M.S. NONSUCH, wearing the flag of"), though he was not disposed to disagree with the principle that in the re-writing of Q.R. & A.I. a consistent practice should be adopted, nor had he any objection to the particular expressions on which the compilers of the new Q.R. & A.I. have been working.

After consultation with me, Fourth Sea Lord has now cleared the ceremonial chapter of Q.R. & A.I., which is on the lines described in this paper. What all this means in practice is that Q.R. & A.I. will be consistent, but that for a long time to come, and possibly for ever, the practice of the Fleet in using the old and well understood terms will continue. Nobody will be any the worse off

In view of the lapse of time, it would be preferable not to send a reply to the C-in-C, Mediterranean, especially as the present intention is not to interfere with current practice, nor should any Office Memorandum be circulated.

W.L.

20th November, 1954.

Referred for information. Does D.S.D. wish to detach S.D. 412/53, or can it remain with N.L. 3691/53?

*J.A. Williams
Vtd. N.L.
23/11/54.*

Secretary's decision noted.

2. With reference to Head of N.L. 23.11.54. D.S.D. suggests W.L. take over the paper.

A.D. Lee Gifford

~~Head~~ DIRECTOR OF SIGNAL DIVISION.

~~20th~~ December, 1954.

held.

As. Southern.

for Head of M.

31/12/54