

THE TECHNICAL SECTION OF THE NAVAL INTELLIGENCE DIVISION

BY

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When an officer is appointed to the Naval Intelligence Division, his friends in their imagination, tend to see him undergo some subtle metamorphosis. To their eyes he starts to sprout a small, black, pointed beard, some unseen hand places around his shoulders the metaphorical black cloak and into his grasp the indispensable dagger. His voice sounds clipped and his conversation seems enigmatic. He disappears for two years or so, during which time they think of him, if not exactly crawling under barbed wire entanglements outside Moscow in the dead of night, cracking innumerable codes, or in the arms of Olga Palovski's female descendants, at least on a nodding acquaintance with those who do these things. When, finally, he is dragged away to be placed in a slightly more prosaic appointment, they expect him either to be promoted immediately or relegated for ever to outer darkness, depending probably on the particular individual's personal reaction to Q.I.R.

Happily or unhappily, there is, of course, hardly a grain of truth in all this. It is true that office doors are fitted with Yale locks and that, after a time, guarding one's conversation becomes almost second nature, but apart from that, many officers in N.I.D. and indeed all the technical staff, lead a very average office-bound Admiralty life, the greater part of which is spent in paper work.

The Naval Intelligence Division forms part of the Naval Staff and exists mainly for the purpose of collating and evaluating raw information fed to it on foreign naval matters, and on matters which might affect the Navy, and then issuing considered reports and briefs, and lecturing to those who require to have the knowledge. The Director of Naval Intelligence works in close conjunction with the Director of Military Intelligence and the Assistant Chief of Air Staff (Intelligence) and they, together with members of the Joint Intelligence Bureau, the Director of Scientific Intelligence, the Foreign Office, and others, form the Joint Intelligence Committee, whose job it is to brief the Chiefs of Staff. Each Service Intelligence Director is of course responsible for keeping his own Service staff fully briefed on intelligence matters appertaining to that particular Service.

Each of the Service Intelligence agencies has within it a Technical Section, and the Heads of these sections, in conjunction with members of the Directorate of Scientific Intelligence, form the Joint Technical Intelligence Committee who brief the Joint Intelligence Committee on technical matters. It follows that a very close liaison between the various agencies is necessary and, so far as the technical sections are concerned, this is certainly achieved at all levels, a contributory factor in this case being that a number of the officers concerned are situated in one building outside the confines of their Service Ministries. On the technical side, also, there are various inter-Service Working Parties whose duty it is to cover certain specialized fields of intelligence.

