

## ANNUAL DINNER

The Seventieth Annual Dinner of the Institute was held on Friday, 9th March 1973, at Grosvenor House, Park Lane, London, W.1., and was attended by 1549 members and guests.

The President, Vice-Admiral Sir George Raper, K.C.B., was in the Chair. He was supported by the Chairman of Council, R. L. Rawlings, Esq.

The official guests included: His Excellency Mr. Erling Kristiansen, the Danish Ambassador; His Excellency Mr. Paul Koht, the Norwegian Ambassador; His Excellency Mr. Antonio de Faria, the Portuguese Ambassador; His Excellency Tilak E. Gooneratne, the High Commissioner for Sri Lanka (Ceylon); Tom Wilhelmsen, Esq.; R. Munton, Esq., C.B.E., B.Sc., Past President; His Excellency Dr. the Honourable Carel de Wet, Ambassador of the Republic of South Africa; His Excellency Mr. Nicolaus Broumas, The Greek Ambassador; M. A. Sinclair Scott, Esq., C.B.E., Past President; His Excellency Mr. M. Rasgotra, the Acting High Commissioner for India; Mon. Gerard Mesmet, O.M., Defence Attaché representing His Excellency the French Ambassador; J. C. Bradford, Esq., Commercial Secretary—Manufactured Goods and Services, representing His Excellency the High Commissioner for Canada; Vice-Admiral G. F. A. Trewby; Sir Gilmour Jenkins, K.C.B., K.B.E., M.C., Past President; Captain, 1st Rank, V. Krushokov, Naval Attaché representing His Excellency the Ambassador for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; Mon. Francois Nordmann, Attaché, representing His Excellency the Swiss Ambassador; T. A. L. Paton, Esq., C.M.G., F.R.S., Chairman, Council of Engineering Institutions; Sir Alfred Sims, K.C.B., O.B.E., R.C.N.C., President, The Royal Institutions of Architects; J. L. Rampton, Esq., Secretary (Industrial Development), Department of Trade and Industry; D. F. Hubback, Esq., C.B., Deputy Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry; Dr. Simon Archer, Vice-Chairman of Council (President-Elect); J. Arkell, Esq., C.B.E., Chairman, British Institute of Management; J. S. Bevan, Esq., M.A., M.Sc., President, Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions; T. W. Bewsey, Esq., Chairman, British Marine Equipment Council; Anthony Buck, Esq., Under Secretary of State for Defence for the Royal Navy; J. Calderwood, Esq., M.Sc., Honorary Member; The Reverend L. E. M. Claxton, M.C., M.A., A.R.C.M., Rector, St. Olave's, Hart Street, London, E.C.3; J. W. Common, Esq., President, North East Coast Institution of Engineers and Shipbuilders; I. Denholm, Esq., President, The Chamber of Shipping; A. C. Grover, Esq., Chairman, Lloyd's Register of Shipping; R. le G. Hetherington, Esq., President, The Institution of Civil Engineers; D. Hodge, Esq., President, Diesel Engineers and Users Association; Dr. R. Hurst, G.M., Director of Research, The British Ship Research Association; A. J. Marr, Esq., C.B.E., Chairman of The Research Council, The British Ship Research Association; C. H. Parker, Esq., B.Sc., Chairman, The National Association of Marine Enginebuilders; R. L. Rawlings, Esq., Chairman of Council; I. W. Robertson, Esq., Past Chairman, Social Events Committee; R. Rutherford, Esq., Chairman, Salvage Association; Commander W. R. Symon, R.D., R.N.R., Master, The Honourable Company of Master Mariners; D. M. Tree, Esq., Chairman, Social Events Committee; Robert T. Young, Esq., President, American Bureau of Shipping.

*The Loyal Toast having been duly honoured,*

MR. TOM WILHELMSSEN, proposing the toast of The Royal and Merchant Navies of the British Commonwealth, said: When I arrived at Heathrow today I was a bit disconcerted by the system used for passport control. The passengers were asked to line up in three queues: one queue for United Kingdom passport holders, the second for EEC passport holders, and the third was for Others. It did not take long for me to see that I was with the Others. As a Norwegian shipowner—indeed, as a Norwegian I should have liked to step into the EEC queue, for a number of political, military, economic and cultural reasons. After the grave error we made at the beginning of the 19th century, when we

rather disastrously happened to find ourselves on the Napoleonic side against you, we made it a thumb rule for Norwegian foreign policy to follow Britain. The benefits may not have been mutual, but it paid off fairly well for us.

I happen to remember a single line from Richard II, the description of England as, "this precious stone, set in the silver sea which serves us in the office of a wall against the envy of less happier breeds". It would indeed have been a great event to cross the silver seas along with you, now that Britain has decided to take part in a joint venture with the "less happier" European breeds. Norway has always been a country which has liked and been dependent on international contact. Indeed, it started more than a thousand years ago when our Vikings visited your country at regular intervals. What they had in their minds were some few and simple pleasures. Each spring when they discovered that their supplies of Gallic wines and Britannic virgins were exhausted, Erik the Bloody and Knut the Restless loaded their longships with courage-boosting toadstools and set sail. At that stage of our history we must admit the Norsemen's idea of international co-operation was not so advanced. Contemporary tales do, however, reveal that at least some nuns did not put up all the resistance expected when attacked by the Vikings, but real international co-operation came at a much later stage. When it came, however, it was still the sea that provided the possibilities.

By and by Norway found herself dependent on international co-operation, and ideas of isolation never struck roots in this country, which is not surprising when you consider the alternatives. It is, indeed, my conviction that the Western European countries can only tackle the challenges they are confronted with through a very close co-operation. It is the case for Norway, as for other countries in question, that this need for a closer co-operation will not diminish during the years to come; it will increase. Our industry's general attitude to this question and the concrete goals we have tried to achieve are therefore unchanged. We feel that an active, co-ordinated approach through the extended EEC will have a considerable importance in the shipping policy field by creating a stronger basis for the promotion of the principle of the freedom of choice in international shipping to which our countries are committed.

The referendum which took place in September last year—it was completely silly, really—has made it necessary for Norway, at this stage, to opt for a more limited co-operation with the Community. I should like to emphasise that the referendum should not be regarded as the final word in connection with Norway's participation in the European process of economic and political integration. I remember my father once told me about a captain on a Norwegian ship whose charts were in a miserable condition. On a crossing of the Atlantic the skipper was very worried about hitting the dangerous sandbank Sable Island outside Nova Scotia, and he studied the chart carefully. Finally the captain uttered to his mate, pointing to a spot on the map: "If that is the product of a fly" (I think he used another word) "we are quite safe, but if it is Sable Island we are in serious trouble".

You will wonder why I tell this story. I should like to draw a parallel to the present situation of Norway in connection with the Common Market. If the referendum should be regarded as the final word in connection with Norway's participation in the European process of economic and political integration, we would be in serious trouble. But if the outcome of the referendum can be easily wiped off the chart of Norway's history, like the product of the fly, to enable us to take our place among the other nations of the Community, I would be most happy. Your decision was taken by a Government in favour of entry, with a majority of the electorate against. Our present position is exactly the reverse: A Government opposing entry, with a majority of the electorate now in favour, according to the latest opinion poll. With the combined attitude of your Government and our electorate we hope to be with you in a not too distant future.

In the years I have been concerned with shipping policy matters it has always been a pleasure meeting representatives of

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United Kingdom shipping. I have many friends within that community, and they will remain so until my old age. Within the framework of OECD, Consultative Shipping Group and the Committee of European Shipowners' Association, we act upon the basic principle of free international shipping. And of course the many informal contacts made between United Kingdom and Norwegian shipping are highly appreciated. We know we have a competitor in your shipping industry, but we are not afraid of fair competition. This competition is beneficial to us both; it leads us to further improvement in our services, which of course is what serves the world trade best.

It is a great honour for me, gentlemen, to be asked to propose a toast to the Royal and Merchant Navies of the British Commonwealth, especially in this distinguished company. Although I have so far been concerned with the Merchant Navy, I have no lesser esteem for the Royal Navy. Our thankfulness for what was done for us during the Second World War by the British cannot be emphasised strongly enough. It should not be necessary for me in this company to explain the all-important role played by the Royal Navy during the war. This close relationship, stemming from the war years, is certainly not a thing of the past.

In our own troubled time British and Norwegian naval forces are operating together within the framework of NATO, in the common task of securing the peace and the freedom of the seas—so vital to both of us. Norwegian shipowners have always had the greatest respect for British shipbuilding, engineering and science connected with ships. It is therefore with deep regret that we have to acknowledge the fact that whereas in former days Britain was the greatest supplier of ships to Norway, this is not the case any more. Some time ago I was contacted by a firm of British consultants engaged by the British shipbuilding industry, and they wanted to have an interview with me which they expected would last several hours. The purpose of their visit was to find out why Norway did not order more ships in Great Britain. I told them we did not need several hours to explain this, because, in spite of the fact that we have the greatest respect for British shipbuilding, it is all the strikes and the consequent uncertain deliveries of the newbuildings that scare us away. I hope, and indeed am sure, that these difficulties will be overcome in a not too distant future, when I am certain that the British shipbuilders will see us as their customers again.

The British and Norwegian merchant marines are among the world's greatest. Our problems are many and the present currency situation does not make them easier. In any case, the shipping industry is a very competitive one. A result of this competition is the constant looking ahead; our costs are so high and the competition so strong that we always have to be somewhat ahead of time. To achieve this we need know-how and help, and we are indeed grateful to have your distinguished Institute which so willingly lets us benefit by the tremendous amount of know-how which you possess.

It is my sincere hope that shipping will flourish in England as it has always done and that Norwegian shipping can have the privilege of competing with you in the same spirit as hitherto. May I therefore ask you to join me in a toast to the Royal and Merchant Navies of the British Commonwealth. May they always be ahead of time! (*Applause.*)

VICE-ADMIRAL G. F. A. TREWBY, C.Eng., M.I.Mar.E., Chief of Fleet Support, in reply, said: I am sure that you will agree with me when I say that we have just listened to a toast which has been proposed with great fluency and charm by a man whose native language is not English. I confess that I find it hard enough to make a speech in my own language. Like the young husband on his wedding night, I think I know roughly what is required, and I have a vague idea how to set about it, but I find myself continually groping around on how best to achieve the performance. But first I should like to thank Tom Wilhelmsen for the kind things he has said about the navies and merchant navies of the British Commonwealth and about British shipping. I have not had the privilege of meeting Tom Wilhelmsen until this evening, but to a fighting service the gaining of intelligence is important and I have therefore tried to find out certain facts

about him. I am assured that technically he is one of the great shipowners of our time. He knows as much about design, engine room layout and cargo handling as anyone, but he never uses his unique technical ability to the detriment or disadvantage of his technical advisers. I also unearthed a lot of very fascinating and interesting things which he personally denied strongly before the dinner, so I do not think I am in a position to go further on this subject tonight.

In your speech, Sir, you emphasised the close ties between the warships and merchant ships of our two countries. From personal experience I know that our ships and sailors have always received a particularly warm welcome in Norwegian ports; and, as you mentioned, Norwegian warships now form part of a combined NATO force known as the Standing Naval Force Atlantic. It consists of warships from the navies of Norway, Great Britain, the United States, Netherlands, Canada and the Federal German Republic, and they operate together as a team. This is a unique effort which has been a great success both as an operational squadron and in bringing together the sailors from many NATO nations in the leisure activities ashore.

Of course, operating with other navies can sometimes cause problems, as I know from personal experience. Many years ago my ship and one from another nation came into Hong Kong after a period of exercises. The sailors from both ships went ashore together and all went well until late that night, when a British sailor took his colleague from the foreign warship into a tattoo parlour. I never found out exactly what happened, but when the foreign sailor emerged he had the words, "England for ever" tattooed across his chest!

So far as the Norwegian Merchant Fleet is concerned, I think that some of us here tonight have somewhat mixed feelings. We are at one in our praise and admiration for the magnificent professional expertise of the Norwegian Merchant Shipping, but, although as you said, Sir, competition is stimulating, we sometimes wish that you were not quite so good as you are at shipping and maritime affairs. But our worries on that score are small compared with those of our forbears who as you described must have seen the magnificent Viking ships descending from Norway on our Eastern shores—and, thanks to your explanation, I now know exactly what they were after. But, seriously, anyone who has visited the Museum of the Viking Ships at Oslo cannot but admire these splendid ships, a thousand years old, with their soaring sweep of prow and stern and a hull line of such intense dramatic beauty. I think I can say without any fear of contradiction (and it is a fact that the more senior I get in the Navy the less I fear contradiction) that the seafaring traditions of Norway can stand comparison with any in the world. You come from a country, Sir, with an outstanding maritime record and a tradition going back for a thousand years or more.

But I think it is important to remember that traditions by themselves are no more than testaments to the success of our predecessors. It is not enough merely to boast of past tradition; we must make some new and good traditions ourselves of which our successors will be proud. You have achieved this in Norway and we must do the same in Great Britain.

When I was asked to speak at this dinner tonight it slowly dawned on me that I might be in a unique position to respond to this toast, which I believe is one of the few occasions where the two great maritime services, which so obviously share a common heritage, are linked together in this way. As a member of the Admiralty Board I have a corporate responsibility for the Royal Navy; and my particular post—that of Chief of Fleet Support—not only involves superintendence of the Royal Dockyards, the Naval Air Repair Yards and the various armament, stores and fuel depots, but most important, so far as responding to this toast is concerned, I am the Board Member directly responsible for all the Royal Navy's non-warlike vessels, which amounts to a Merchant Fleet in its own right. There are 41 Royal Fleet Auxiliaries which fly the Blue Ensign. To show that I am right with this, the number includes the tanker "Gold Rover" which I saw launched at Swan Hunter's the day before yesterday. The RFAs are, for all practical purposes, merchant ships and tankers with special facilities both for supplying the Fleet at sea and for operating helicopters. Compared with the

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total tonnage of the large tanker fleets, the RFA may not be impressive, but it is an extremely professional organization and I am very proud to be at its head.

Then there are the 800 or so vessels of the Royal Maritime Auxiliary Service and the Navy's Port Auxiliary Service. These two categories comprise everything from ocean going tugs and salvage vessels down to small harbour launches. They are kept busy, and in salvage alone, recently, the Royal Navy has dealt with the recovery of 21 aircraft and 23 surface casualties, including three long tows. So, having the responsibility both for warships and for running of what is virtually the Royal Navy's Merchant Fleet, I have a foot in both camps, and in addition I have also been personally responsible over the years for supervising the training of marine engineer officers from seven different Commonwealth Navies. These are my qualifications for speaking tonight, and, in considering the Royal and Merchant Navies, I am often concerned that the similarities are played down while the differences are given undue emphasis. This applies both to the designs of ships and machinery and to the men who man them.

So far as marine engineers are concerned it does not make much difference whether you are in a merchant ship or a warship, when you have to repair awkwardly sited equipments in the bilges during a force 8 gale; both face the same problems and both probably use the same language! In the unhappy event of a collision the immediate reaction of any marine engineer, whether in the Royal or Merchant Navies, is to ensure that his log book records that the engines went full speed astern exactly when the telegraph moved—although this may sometimes involve stretching the truth to a limited extent. It is surprising how often marine engineers are blamed for collisions—

"If in danger or in fear

Always blame the Engineer."

One of the sadder things about becoming older and more senior in the Royal Navy is that one no longer goes to sea to enjoy at first hand the magnificent spirit and teamwork which exists in ships. In fact, I spend most of my time glued to a desk in the Ministry of Defence at Whitehall. Working in this great building has been likened to making love to an elephant. It is difficult and can even be dangerous if you do not know what you are about; you seldom get results, and even if you do there is a wait of several years before there is anything to show for them; and all in all it really involves more frustration than satisfaction!

I must now get back on the rails and concentrate on the toast I was asked to propose—that of the Institute of Marine Engineers, coupled with your President. I have personally been a full member of the Institute for some 25 years and I am proud and grateful for this privilege. I am particularly grateful to the Institute for giving me a platform, starting about twenty years ago, from which to state my strong convictions that gas turbines would inevitably supersede steam turbines and Diesels as the best means of propulsion for surface warships. At the time I did not realise how foolhardy I had been in making such firm predictions about the future, which would be printed in the *Transactions* for all the world to read. Fortunately, the predictions came true: gas turbines have been fitted in many of our major warships for over 10 years, and more recently, under the expert guidance of your President, the policy of going for complete gas turbine propulsion in all future surface warships of the Royal Navy has been announced.

On a slightly lighter note, I am also grateful to the Institute for introducing me to the first, and only, lady marine engineer I have ever met. This occurred at the 1962 International Conference; and she was a Russian and as I am sitting next to the Soviet Naval Attaché, I would like to assure him that I consider his country leads the world in this respect. If lady engineers are ever to serve in our merchant ships it would surely be important that they should not hold the post of third engineer, because I imagine that the chief engineer would require them for other duties during the afternoon and middle watches.

I am well aware of the difficult problems which face all engineering institutes and institutions at the present time. But this Institute in particular has a challenging and vital role ahead

because the mobility of our navies and our merchant navies is entirely in the hands of marine engineers, and the importance of this cannot be overstated either in the field of defence or in the tremendous contribution which our merchant fleet makes to the balance of payments in this country.

It is comparatively easy to see what the general policy should be, which is to provide each member with the highest possible quality of professional services relevant to his needs, at a price which he can afford to pay. But I am well aware of the many practical difficulties involved in achieving this policy in practice. It is rather like the story of the grasshopper who asked a wise old owl how he could keep warm in the winter. "The answer is easy," said the owl, "all you have to do is to turn yourself into a dormouse and hibernate all winter." "What a good idea," said the grasshopper, "but how do I do it?" "Don't ask me," said the wise old owl, "I only make policy decisions; you will have to work out the details for yourself."

But, in following the theme of my speech, I think it is particularly important for the Institute to concentrate on those problems which are common to both the navies and merchant navies throughout the Commonwealth.

One obvious problem in this area is pollution, by which I mean how to develop means of preventing the discharge of fuel or waste products of any kind into the sea or harbour. In the next decade a lot of money will have to be spent to overcome this problem and its solution lies largely in the field of marine engineering. I am therefore very glad to note that one of the sessions in IMAS 73 will cover this.

Another important subject close to my heart is non-destructive testing, which in simple terms is the technique of finding out the true state of machinery and equipment without having to open them up and hence cut into operating times. One of the major reasons, certainly so far as the Royal Navy is concerned, of refit overruns in time and cost is unforeseen work. Non-destructive testing aims to eliminate this, but it is expensive at present and the full potentiality will not be achieved until machinery and equipments are designed to include their own self-monitoring arrangements for rates of wear, corrosion, etc.

A third common area is automation. This is an important development. I cannot say a new development, for I remember that in the early 1930s the Royal Navy had a battleship, HMS "Centurion", which was not only fully automated, but the entire crew could be evacuated and the ship remotely controlled from a destroyer stationed some 15 to 20 miles away. You could even ask the battleship whether the water level in its boilers was all right and it would tell you. So automation at sea is not new by any means, but both the navies and merchant navies still have a long way to go to make the best possible use of this new technique.

I spoke earlier on the subject of tradition and the importance of us marine engineers making new and good traditions ourselves, which will be held in high esteem by our successors. The Institute has a great part to play in all this. It is no use living in the past and we must look to the future, if for no other reason than we shall have to spend the rest of our lives living there. When your President and I joined the Royal Navy it was the largest navy in the world and its fleets and squadrons roamed the seas from South America to China.

It was on the China station, incidentally, that the famous story originated about the Admiral who asked that a signal be made summoning his Chinese washerwoman aboard to launder his white uniform. Unfortunately, the signalman made an error and the message went out as, "Please send Admiral's woman onboard". Of course the Admiral was furious and asked for a correction to be made at once; so the following signal was sent, "Referring to my previous message, please insert 'washer' between 'Admiral' and 'woman'."

Now the toast I am about to propose is to the Institute but is coupled with the name of your President. I have known your President as a brother naval officer for over 42 years and I can assure you most sincerely that he is held in the very highest esteem throughout the Royal Navy, not only for his exceptionally wide experience in marine engineering, but also for his wisdom and compassion in dealing with human problems, which are

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probably more important in the long run than the technical ones.

Gentlemen, I have spoken for far too long. I am proud to be a member of this Institute and it is with great pleasure that I ask all the guests assembled here to rise and drink the health of the Institute of Marine Engineers, coupled with your President, Vice-Admiral Sir George Raper. (*Applause.*)

THE PRESIDENT, in reply, said: On behalf of the Institute, I thank Admiral Trewby most sincerely for coming tonight and for proposing the toast to the Institute in such a splendid way, and thank you all for your response. Admiral Trewby has particularly emphasized the common interest between the Royal and Merchant Navies and the role which the Institute can play in fostering further communication between members of each. I certainly back this sentiment wholeheartedly and hope that my own term as President has to some extent furthered that particular intention. I should like to return the compliment that Admiral Trewby has kindly paid me, because his reputation as a naval engineer is second to none, but I fear we shall qualify for an organisation invented by Admiral Le Fanu FOMAS: the Flag Officers' Mutual Admiration Society. FOMAS washes whiter!

One is in slight danger of confusing the issue with IMAS—which has not yet been declared to be the International Mutual Admiration Society, but is, in case you have forgotten it, the International Marine and Shipping Conference. I think that this, as the principal event of the Institute this year, comes at a time when one has both to take stock of the past and to look to the future.

In the last ten years there has been the most astonishing increase of activity in the use of the sea. The Soviet Navy has grown to a world power exercising all over the world. The trade carried by sea has actually doubled in the last ten years in terms of tonnage. There is a great upsurge in the offshore activities in exploration for oil and exploitation of the resources of the sea, and growing interest in what happens at depths beyond the Continental Shelf. And then there is the realization which has come about in the last ten years that the sea is not entirely able to cope as a self-cleaning sink, nor indeed are its resources completely inexhaustible. Man cannot be concerned any longer with keeping only his own frontdoor step clean. He is in fact on the way to mucking up his whole world in a kind of irreversible way. Our sons may have been, or still be, worried about atomic bombs and our grandsons, I would suggest, are already starting to be haunted by more modern problems—a kind of universal petty irresponsibility which one might term plastic pollution, or deterioration into detergent deserts. As I see it, the problems of marine engineering, the needs for marine engineering expertise to face the problems of the future, have really taken off in the last ten years. We need to engage the interest and help of a vastly expanded circle of engineering. Perhaps the rise in membership of the Institute in the last ten years, which has gone from about 16 000 to about 22 000, is an indication also of increased interest in maritime problems.

I would suggest that so far, as marine engineers, we have done fairly well in the rising sophistication of systems of ships, new concepts of ships' machinery for propulsion, cargo handling, refrigeration, atmospheric control, the storage of high-pressure gasses and so on. The pace of development has been extremely impressive. But the pace of demand for solutions in fields much wider than shipping or shipbuilding is increasing and our knowledge of what the sea can do to men, materials and mechanisms has to be allied to that of all sorts of engineering for shore side civil engineering structures and plant if this country's industry is to meet the demand for answers to all our offshore and ocean engineering problems.

When the pace of development and application of science in a new environment hots up in this way there is a danger that the still small voice of accumulated engineering wisdom in the marine field will be submerged in the scramble. This, I believe,

is something in which the Institute can help—in organizing discussion, in engaging the interest of acknowledged experts in appropriate fields, in creating a forum for the meeting of a variety of expertise to concentrate its effort on maritime problems. In this sort of situation one cannot claim the position of an authority; one can only earn it, and in a field of engineering as wide as I have mentioned the Institute can perhaps aspire to be an authority at least on where to go for any particular development or industrial expertise.

It is in this context of rapidly expanding interest in marine engineering matters that the Director and Secretary, Mr. Stuart Robinson, has recently accompanied the Chairman of Council for most, and myself for a part, of a tour round the world, visiting India, Ceylon, Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the U.S.A., in order to find out whether the Institute is providing what its members need and to sound out people about its future development from the Institute branches and divisions in these foreign parts. The opportunity was also taken for brief discussions with fellow societies on co-operating on dates of conferences and so on. In this context we have to thank our Director and Secretary very much for the way in which he has organized this tour.

To me the discussions were very reassuring for the present, so far as the Institute is concerned, in that the publications and the activities of the Institute were said to be of very real practical value to the members. Indeed, it was said that no other society or institution really covered the requirements for marine engineers in the same way. One slightly disconcerting fact is the wide disparity of the burden which a common, worldwide subscription imposes on individuals. In some places people would be happy to pay more and to get more Institute activities, but in other countries the annual subscription represents a month's pay for a member and a fair number of younger men are seriously discouraged from joining by the subscription. We are indeed faced by a generation gap and I think this is one of the things which have to be tackled. There is a fairly widespread feeling of being rather isolated as a marine engineer even in countries with plenty of engineering industry. People seem to feel that very few others understand the problems of the sea environment. It is, I believe, in this field that the future development of the Institute's branches and divisions abroad can certainly be of much help to its members. There is of course one other point about institutes and institutions which I think was put in a couplet by Ogden Nash—

"Children aren't happy when there's no one to ignore,

That's what parents were invented for."

No mean part of the bearing of all the responsibility that we have has been taken by our Director and Secretary, Mr. Stuart Robinson, and a large part of the credit for the value which is put on their membership by members at home as well as overseas is due to him. This year we celebrate his 25th year of service of the Institute, and I believe it is a suitable occasion on which to pay tribute to his very valuable service, to his very constructive ideas, his acumen in devising ways of increasing income without putting up membership charges anything like proportionally and for being the head of a devoted, very hard working and excellent staff. One can even say, I think, that the hard work of the Council and Committees owes a certain amount to the service of problems to them which he initiates for the future benefit of the Institute.

Before sitting down I should like to welcome all our guests, particularly the Ambassadors of Norway, Denmark, South Africa, Portugal and Greece, the High Commissioner for Ceylon and the Acting High Commissioner for India. We are very flattered that they have made time to attend this dinner; we welcome them very heartily indeed and hope they will come back again. I should like to thank particularly Mr. Wilhelmsen and Admiral Trewby for their excellent, diverting and entertaining speeches which also contained much good sense; and to thank everyone who has come here in spite of all the discouragements which our disjointed rail service could offer. (*Applause.*)