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FOREWORD BY THE CHIEF NAVAL ENGINEER OFFICER

I take over the job of Chief Naval Engineer Officer at a time of change. Within our own service the old distinctions between mechanical and electrical engineering are no longer applicable and we are organizing ourselves to deal with engineering systems. But the need for specialization within the engineering branch remains and indeed with the rate of growth of technology showing no signs of decelerating it is more important than ever that we specialize in the most effective way. There is large agreement upon the broad divisions into air, weapons and marine engineering systems each with a substantial content of electrical and mechanical engineering, and again little argument about the need for some deep specialists within these broad divisions. But we must take care to ensure that we provide ourselves with the right kind of specialists trained to the depth we need and can use.

Within the profession of engineering in the U.K. there is a widespread feeling that all is not well. The Government has instituted an enquiry into the profession under Sir Monty Finniston and I will be surprised if this is not the precursor to change at the National level. Already two of the major engineering institutions have produced reports which certainly anticipate, and in my view probably foreshadow, what some of his committee's recommendations will be. The trend is to raise standards—to introduce a degree of elitism within the profession by making it more difficult to obtain recognition at all levels: technician, technician engineer, and professional engineer. I welcome this trend and am confident that our training within the schools and at Manadon will meet (indeed probably in large part already meets) the enhanced requirements.

In the Royal Navy I believe we have a tradition and a way of training mechanics, artificers and engineers which already meets in large measure what I expect the new requirements to demand. Indeed, in terms of professionalism at all levels and concern for the individual, we have much to be proud of and much to give. I shall feel satisfied if during my tenure as Chief Naval Engineer Officer I can maintain the high standards which have been passed on to us and demonstrate to the engineering profession as a whole the value of the Royal Navy's standards and approach to the practice of engineering.

L S Bryson