

WHY IT TOOK UNTIL FEBRUARY '72
TO CATCH THE RECRUITING BLITZ

As my earlier comments have indicated, at the very moment of assumption of the job of Chief of Naval Operations and, indeed, during the interviews which had led to my selection, I was quite concerned about the ability of the Navy to maintain itself during an all-volunteer era and without the draft pressure that had brought us "volunteers" who did not want to serve in the Army, and I was, therefore, very conscious of the need to lend every effort to the acquisition of sufficient recruits in both quality and quantity. Admiral Charles Duncan, the Chief of Naval Personnel when I took over, and I had discussed the urgent need to improve the quality of the recruiting force and to provide the kinds of incentives and inducements - special programs and opportunities - which coupled with the advertising to get the word around would draw in the required numbers.

Subsequently, Admiral Duncan went to the Command of the Atlantic Fleet and his Deputy moved up to the job of Chief of Naval Personnel. Again Admiral Gwynn and I agreed that his highest priority was to make the all-volunteer force work. Beginning in the summer of '71, we began to fall short of our requirements each month. Faced with the overriding necessity to keep the Navy strength in order to man our ships which were busily fighting a war, we reluctantly began

to reduce the quality in order to get adequate numbers. The best advice we were receiving was that the shortages were a transitory phenomenon and would be made up later in the year. However, by February of 1972, much too late in retrospect, a matter for which I fought myself, it was quite clear that this advice was wrong and that the Navy was in real trouble with regard to its ability to achieve an all-volunteer force. I concluded that heroic surgery was necessary.

I settled on a program designed to accomplish the following things:

1. To bring new management to the command of the Recruiting Service and to the command of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, in both cases individuals in whom I had personal confidence with regard to their drive, innovation, and imagination.
2. To give absolute first priority in the assignment of quality personnel, both officer and enlisted, to the Recruiting Service and to require that all those responsible for order writing be aware of this.
3. To dedicate myself personally to the approval of money for advertising in order that many of the changes that had been initiated in the Navy could be better disseminated to the market we were seeking to attract - the young men and women.

As Chief of Naval Personnel, I settled on a lifelong friend with whom I had worked closely in several previous jobs and in whose professional confidence I had 100 per cent confidence, Admiral David H. Bagley. Admiral Bagley was the son of a Vice Admiral in World War II, Admiral David Bagley. He was the nephew of Ensign Worth Bagley, the only U.S. Naval Officer casualty in the Spanish-American War. He was the nephew of Fleet Admiral William B. Leahy, and a nephew of the former Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels. He has a brother who is a Four-Star Admiral in the Navy, Admiral Worth Bagley. Notwithstanding this distinguished background, Admiral Bagley had served in all the tough and hard jobs that a destroyer man experiences as he comes along and had most recently served as the Navy's Official Ombudsman as the Assistant Chief of Naval Personnel for people and knew first-hand the aspirations and problems as our young men and women saw them. As Director of the Naval Recruiting Service I brought in the man who had been my Chief of Staff when I was in Command of the Naval Forces in Viet Nam, then Captain Emmett Tidd who, when I became Chief of Naval Operations, had come with me and had headed the "Decision Coordination Office," the job that kept track of and insured that my decisions were carried out, and then upon being selected for Flag Rank had served as

a Destroyer Flotilla Commander where he had maintained his brilliant performance.

This combination of Flag Officers given carte blanche to collect talent from wherever necessary and to change any rules that needed to be changed in order to put emphasis on recruiting proceeded to resolve the problem and since the summer of 1972, the Navy has essentially been on track, meeting its quotas in both quality and quantity.