

DISCUSSION

- 20 It would be unwise if firm suggestions for an improvement were made on the basis of observations during a short visit. However, a number of points are made in this section which, if investigated or followed up by staff at H.M.S. GANGES, might well reveal the best course of action to take in solving the problems of severe breakage rates and losses. It should also be pointed out that the system inaugurated in the central dining hall had only been in use for a limited period when the visit was made and it is possible that the position is less serious now. On the other hand, it is considered desirable to modify certain of the existing practices in order to ensure against a return of what may be in fact "teething troubles".
21. Improved efficiency in the dining hall organisation and a reduction in the breakage rate would result, in the opinion of the investigators, if there was a clearly defined responsibility for crockery and cutlery. It would appear that such responsibility ought to be a function of the Supply and catering side; if this is so then it falls naturally that the Supply side should also be responsible for the scullery and its equipment and staff. Introducing such an arrangement would enable a clear cut line of demarcation, such as is not sufficiently evident at present between the responsibilities of the Executive and Supply staffs briefly, the former would be responsible for marshalling boys in and out of the dining hall and for maintaining orderly conduct during the meal time, whilst the latter would be fully in charge of all those aspects of the preparation and cooking of meals and the care of utensils for which they are specialised. That is, it would become the duty of the Supply side to be responsible for the issue and return of all crockery and cutlery and for checking where losses and breakages occurred, either in the dining hall, galleys, serving counters or scullery.
22. It was stated that the main reason for introducing the present method of serving meals i.e. with server boys, was to encourage the boys in a group or team spirit and a family atmosphere, of the kind they would experience during later years in the Service. There are good grounds for approving such an ideal, but from the observations made in the dining hall it seemed unlikely that much encouragement of this kind was actually effected. Boys were expected to fill up tables just as they marched in so that any boy might quite easily sit at four different tables during four consecutive meals with four different sets of boys. The only guarantee was that any boy would be sitting alongside fellow boys of a division 240-strong.