

of doing it in-house. This out-sourcing has resulted in a great reduction in the quality of technical documentation and drawings needed to troubleshoot and repair malfunctioning equipment, because the manufacturers are loathe to include what they consider proprietary information.

This inadequate training and inadequate technical documentation has adversely affected the ability of ship's crews to troubleshoot and repair their own equipment, and has caused increased reliance on technical specialists from various engineering commands who must go to the ship (often at great expense) to assist the crew with repairs which, 10 or 15 years ago, would have easily been within the crew's ability to handle on their own. In wartime, it may not be feasible to bring in outside talent, and the delay in effecting repairs could have disastrous results for the ship and the campaign ("... for want of a nail ...").

Requirements for national defense

Those who would slash "overhead" must remember that the entire defense establishment is overhead on the national economy. The first bullet and the first pair of boots are overhead. Like the fire department, we hope we do not need to use them, but they must be ready at all times to combat an emergency and be able to sustain themselves for the duration of that emergency.

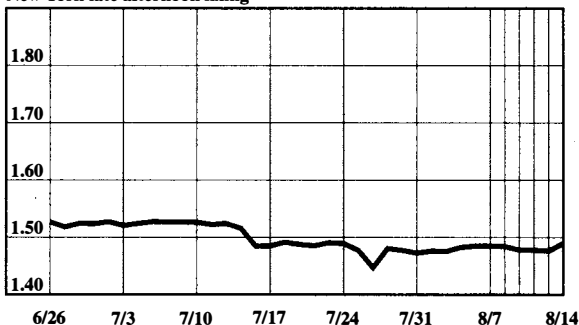
The size of the fleet is expected to shrink to about 340 ships by the time the "downsizing" has stabilized. With a much smaller fleet, each individual ship becomes that much more valuable. Modern warships are very expensive and take a long time to build, fit out, and work up the crew. It would take years, and a massive investment, to increase U.S. shipbuilding capacity to that of World War II. It is therefore imperative that we keep the ability to maintain our ships in fighting trim, and repair damaged ships as quickly as possible, if we get into a naval war. Officers plan military operations to minimize friendly casualties and maximize enemy casualties, but the first casualty in battle is usually the plan, and we must expect that military operations will result in damage to our ships (two ships were badly damaged by mines during the Gulf war). The collapse of the Soviet Union did not negate the need for a large U.S. blue water fleet. The world is neither kinder nor gentler, and is in fact more unstable. While we may have the biggest and best Navy in the world, an alliance among smaller nations and modern weapons could still negate much of that advantage.

LCDR Anamosa enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1965, serving in the Pacific Fleet, Vietnam, and Japan. He was commissioned as a Surface Line officer in 1975. He has held a variety of shipboard assignments in the Engineering and Operations departments in six Pacific Fleet ships, and spent two and one half years on the staff of the Canadian Maritime Command. He retired from the Navy in 1990 and has worked as a contractor on Navy maintenance staffs.

Currency Rates

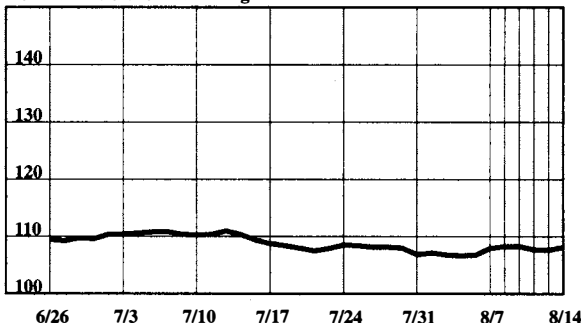
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



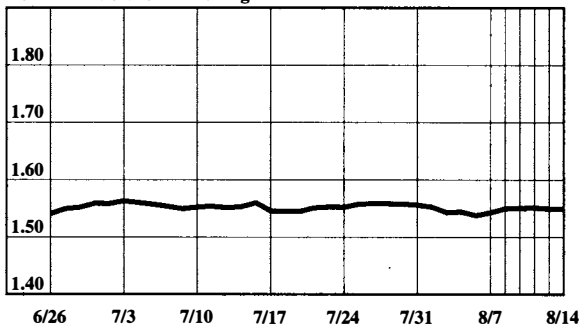
The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing

