

The "Wisdom" of Capt Boyle

By Robert French

CDR Boyle was an unusual guy to say the least. I disliked every day I served with him. He was on my case constantly. He would come down to the wardroom from the bridge for breakfast every day and start chewing me out about something. Then, he would rear back in his chair and guffaw and say: "Good morning, Pays" (Pay was the WWII nickname for Supply officers, but he added the "s" for some reason). It took me a couple of weeks before I could continue eating, but after that I just mentally ignored him and ate my breakfast.

One day around lunchtime, the 1MC blared out in the captain's voice: Supply Officer lay up to the bridge on the double. He met me and with his usual sarcasm said: Don't you serve the crew dessert? I said yes sir, of course. And he shouted, then why didn't my Messenger of the watch get any!!!??

I went flying down to the mess deck and coming up the ladder from it was a sailor holding a huge piece of strawberry shortcake with syrup dripping down his arm. I grabbed this poor kid by the arm holding up the dessert and said where did you get that? He said from the mess line, Sir, they're handing out seconds!! I said don't tell me, tell the Captain!! I forced him up on the bridge where I dragged him over to the CO and shook his arm in CO's face and said: We've got more damn dessert than they know what to do with and they're giving out seconds!! He dismissed this poor kid and then w/o saying a word he marched me over to the after ladder and practically shoved me down it.

I went into the wardroom and started screaming curses about him until finally the XO came out and said, Bob, I know you don't like the Captain, but don't talk that in the wardroom!! I left rather foolishly, but felt a lot better! About that time, the Bo'sn's Mate of the Watch came on the 1MC and requested that the SO report to the Captain in his Sea Cabin. My first thought was OMG, he's going to get me in there and beat the hell out of me with no witnesses.

He was sitting on his bunk and said: Close the door Pays. Do you know how you left my bridge?? I said: Well Captain I think you had to force me off. He said: Damn right. It's the only time in my career that's happened. I didn't know what to say or do when he started laughing and finally said: Well, you little bastard, you finally stood up on your feet and fought back. Good for you!! I didn't know quite what to do or say, when he said dismissed. I finally realized what he was trying to do.

A long way of saying it was one reason why I went regular Navy. He gave me the highest rating to do so. Fortunately, I didn't get any ulcers!!