

GRAMPAW PETTIBONE

Take A Sight

The following is quoted from a bureau conference with a *Liberator* squadron commander upon return from the Pacific:

- Q. "How heavily did your navigators lean on electronic devices?"
A. "We used it for convenience, but as to leaning on it, no. It was *sun lines, star sights and DR* that got us back."

Nothing to Worry About

Shortly after take-off on a group ferry flight in the Western Pacific, an SB2C-4 pilot attempted to switch to his droppable wing tanks. No matter how hard he concentrated, however, he couldn't remember where that particular valve was, nor could he locate it.

Not one to be easily discouraged, this young pilot did a bit of rapid calculation and figured out he had sufficient fuel to reach his destination. It might be a close shave and, unfortunately, there weren't any alternate atolls enroute, but it was a good chance to practice operating at maximum fuel economy. And think of the ribbing he would get if he turned back!—Besides, he would have plenty time on the way to find that drop tank gas valve. So-o-o-o, he continued with the formation.

Two hours later, they approached a weather front and climbed to 11,000 feet to clear it. They all climbed, that is, except this pilot who was nursing his gas. He lagged behind and below, attempting to circle the front. A short



while later, he notified the flight he had lost contact. Upon receipt of this message, the leader directed the next senior pilot to take charge while he turned back to find our hero.

Radio communications were excellent, but visibility conditions prevented the two planes from rendezvousing, even by radar. The lost pilot finally found a light spot in the front and flew through at 200 feet altitude.

Soon thereafter he made radio contact with the island for which he was heading. When he explained that he was lost, he was instructed to turn on his emergency IFF. In his excitement,

however, he **DETONATED** it instead. He then was told to transmit on a medium high frequency. The tower took a bearing on his transmission and gave him his heading to the island. The dark clouds all disappeared and everything seemed rosy again when he sighted the island about 20 miles away.

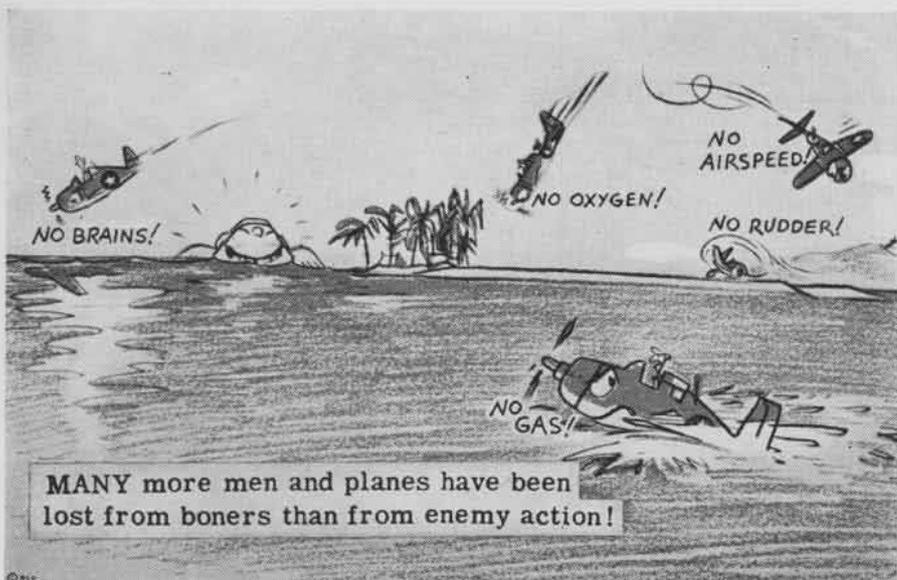
Five miles later, his engine sputtered and stopped. He still didn't know how to shift to his drop tanks [the report never cleared up why he hadn't requested radio advice on this point]. He evidently didn't know how to prepare for ditching either. Even though he was at 7500 feet when his engine quit, his shoulder straps still were loose when he landed. The fractured jaw he received, plus other contusions and abrasions, left him too dazed to assist his radioman get the life raft out of the plane before it sank.

They still had their life jackets, however, and were floating pretty, fifteen minutes later, when a PBY, sent by the island AIR-SEA RESCUE SERVICE, dropped a life raft close aboard. They didn't even have to paddle ashore; a minesweeper picked them up.

Grampaw Pettibone Says:

Not a few casualties have resulted because pilots were unfamiliar with some seldom-used switch, lever or piece of special equipment not essential to a check-out flight. The accident board made a potent recommendation regarding this: "each activity prepare a standard checkout procedure, peculiar to its own needs, placing special emphasis on these seldom-used accessories."

Whether you follow the recommendations of this board or not all depends on your attitude. If you want to string this war out as long as possible and lose a lot of your friends, you'll be satisfied merely to show your pilots which way to bend the throttle for take-off (Some of them are bound to get through!). But if you want to get this damn thing over with as soon as possible, you won't be satisfied to turn 'em loose until you're sure they know how to operate every switch, knob, lever, button and gadget in the cockpit.



Combat Strike Group of F6F's returning from mission circles its home base before landing. Planes in first division get ready to break and feed into landing circle as LSO lands plane aboard deck. Second of three divisions in flight also has four craft, one being hidden from camera by lead plane in the center of this group.



Why Wear Parachutes

Shortly after an intense fire broke out in the bow compartment and pilot's cockpit of a PB4Y at 6500 feet, the airplane went into a spin and crashed out of control. Of the 13 aboard, there was only one survivor. He was the only man who had been wearing his parachute harness during the flight.

In his report of the accident, the survivor said that he was sitting in the waist compartment without earphones when suddenly he smelled smoke and saw the navigator running aft calling to all hands to bail out. Hearing the warning, this man snapped on his parachute and made ready to jump.

The airplane apparently already was in the spin because he was forced to exert a great deal of strength in order to pull himself out of the hatch. (He was seen to clear the plane at approximately 5000 feet.) Just before leaving the plane, he saw the remainder of the crew scrambling around trying to find and get into their 'chute harnesses. One parachute was opened accidentally inside the plane.

► **Comment**—Small wonder that under such circumstances the other occupants of the plane were unable to get set to bail out!

Protection for flying personnel against such emergencies has been provided—in the form of parachutes and in the order contained in article 6-112 of BuAer Manual requiring that they be worn.

This order has been repeated in Aviation Circular Letter 16-45 which also outlines the pilot's responsibilities in the matter. These are to see that:

- a. All persons aboard wear parachutes or harnesses.
- b. Harnesses are properly fitted.
- c. A 'chute is convenient to each individual.
- d. Each person knows how to use his parachute.
- e. Each person knows the location of emergency exits and how to open them.
- f. The "abandon ship" signal and procedure are known and understood by all occupants.

Responsible squadron commanders and pilots will insure that these common-sense directives are complied with.

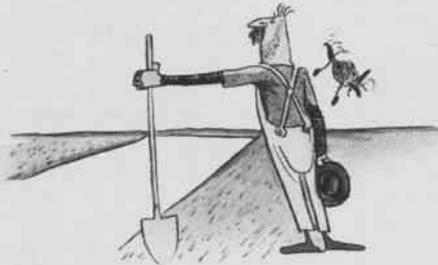
Perfect Confidence

A TBF pilot was directed to take his flight to an outlying field for field carrier landing practice. Upon arrival, he circled the field several times before he could spot the landing signal officer. He finally located his man near the end of the runway, made a carrier break-up and started his first approach.

He received no signal from the LSO during his cross-leg. Coming into the groove, he got a "fast" signal and slowed down. He continued to see the "fast" signal, so he continued to slow

down until he stalled and mushed into the ground on his right wheel and wing tip.

Fortunately, the pilot did not lose complete control and was able to regain flight, but not before his right wing tip was crushed, the main spar sprung and his right aileron damaged. Also, his abiding faith in the infallibility of LSO's was badly bent, for, as he staggered into the air, he was chagrined to note that the man at the end of the runway was only a civilian workman at "parade rest."



Handling an Emergency

An unusual example of cooperation between the pilot and crew of a TBM-3 recently occurred in an emergency during towing operations while carrier based.

The pilot raised his wing flaps when difficulty was being experienced in streaming the target. The increased airflow forced the tow reel impeller lock aside, whereupon the impeller rotated. The blades snapped off and came through the fuselage severing both the elevator and rudder tab control rods and fraying the rudder cable. Some concern was felt at attempting

GRAMPAW'S SAFETY QUIZ



ALL AVIATORS should know the answers to these questions. In the air, the penalty for not knowing may prove fatal. If you miss an answer on the ground, penalize yourself by looking up reference.

1. Unless specific local instructions to the contrary are in effect, in which direction shall aircraft circle an airport before landing?
2. In case of structural or control damage in flight as the result of a failure or collision, what piloting procedure should be followed?
3. When are life jackets required to be worn?
4. Are BuAer Technical Orders mandatory?
5. If anoxia symptoms are noticed by a pilot on an oxygen flight, what should he do?

Answers on Page 48

to land the plane aboard ship with no tab control.

Upon being advised of the situation, the flight leader instructed the pilot to make a practice landing approach at 5000 feet with the two crew members working the tabs under direction from the cockpit. Upon completion of this test, the pilot decided that he could bring the plane aboard, operating the tab controls in this manner.

A good landing was made but the two crewmen, who were standing up operating the tab controls, were slightly injured when the plane suddenly decelerated on deck.



Grampaw Pettibone says:

A good job all around!

Torpedo plane squadrons will be interested to know that BuOrd is working on a new brake design for this impeller; a band brake on the impeller shaft.

Some of you may wonder why we are so stingy in giving credit to units and individuals by name. Mainly because there isn't room to publish all such snappy actions and, therefore, to mention only a few names would smack of favoritism.

The same thing applies to the boners which are published for the edification of all hands. Here again, no one is favored by being named; the cases are merely cited as horrible examples.

Too Soon

A Corsair pilot recently made a mistake during a parachute jump over water, which almost cost him his life.

He used the correct procedure during descent to prepare for his water landing—he sat well back in the sling and unfastened his leg and chest straps, crossing his arms around the main sling to keep from falling out. However, when he got near the water—about four feet, according to his estimate—he JUMPED from the sling.

THAT was the mistake. When he jumped, the lanyard from his life jacket to the parachute tore loose, allowing the life raft to drift out of reach before the 'chute collapsed. The initial jerk on the lanyard had also ripped the life jacket and made it useless, thus leaving the pilot without any life saving equipment.

Fortunately for this pilot, help was near at hand; even so, he nearly drowned before a PT boat reached him.

► **Comment**—While you should, if possible, be all set to leave your 'chute the instant your feet touch the water, there are two excellent reasons why you should never attempt to jump the last few feet:

1. Danger of losing your life-saving equipment, as in the above case.
2. Danger of jumping too soon and being knocked unconscious or killed by the impact. This actually has happened in several cases due to the difficulty of accurately judging the combination of height above the water and the rate of descent.