

British-built Pea-  
vessels are  
least £10 million  
1981 prices).  
to "Jane's  
Ships", but it is  
nated that they  
cost about £4  
ch.  
tions for their  
are underway.  
val personnel  
e need at least  
extra ships to  
area.  
peacocks are  
d ideal for  
g the area  
30 and 50 miles

offshore, and are slightly  
larger than the old  
minesweepers, Grainne  
and Fola, which they will  
replace.

The present patrol  
ships have to work  
extremely hard to cope  
with increasing poach-  
ing, and this puts a strain  
on the men who are  
forced to work long  
hours with little pay. One  
Naval serviceman put it  
eloquently: "The sea  
area we cover is actually  
five times the total area  
of the Republic of

Ireland, but our man-  
power is only the same  
size as Dublin Fire  
Brigade!

"And all the men are  
not at sea all the time.  
Almost one third are in  
training. It's a vicious  
circle — because we're so  
few, the demands are  
high on us. For every  
sailor at sea, in most  
other services you have  
between five and ten  
supporting him on land.  
We have only two.

"You have to give the  
men time off, too. If we

get the two new ships, we  
will need a total work-  
force of 1,200 men".

A major blow to morale  
is the embargo on  
promotion. Like the  
soldiers, the sailors have  
been reluctant to com-  
plain. "They don't  
mutiny — they just  
leave", according to a  
source.

The Naval service with  
a strength of 820 men, in  
operating well below its  
establishment of 1,277.  
Since June 1986, 114

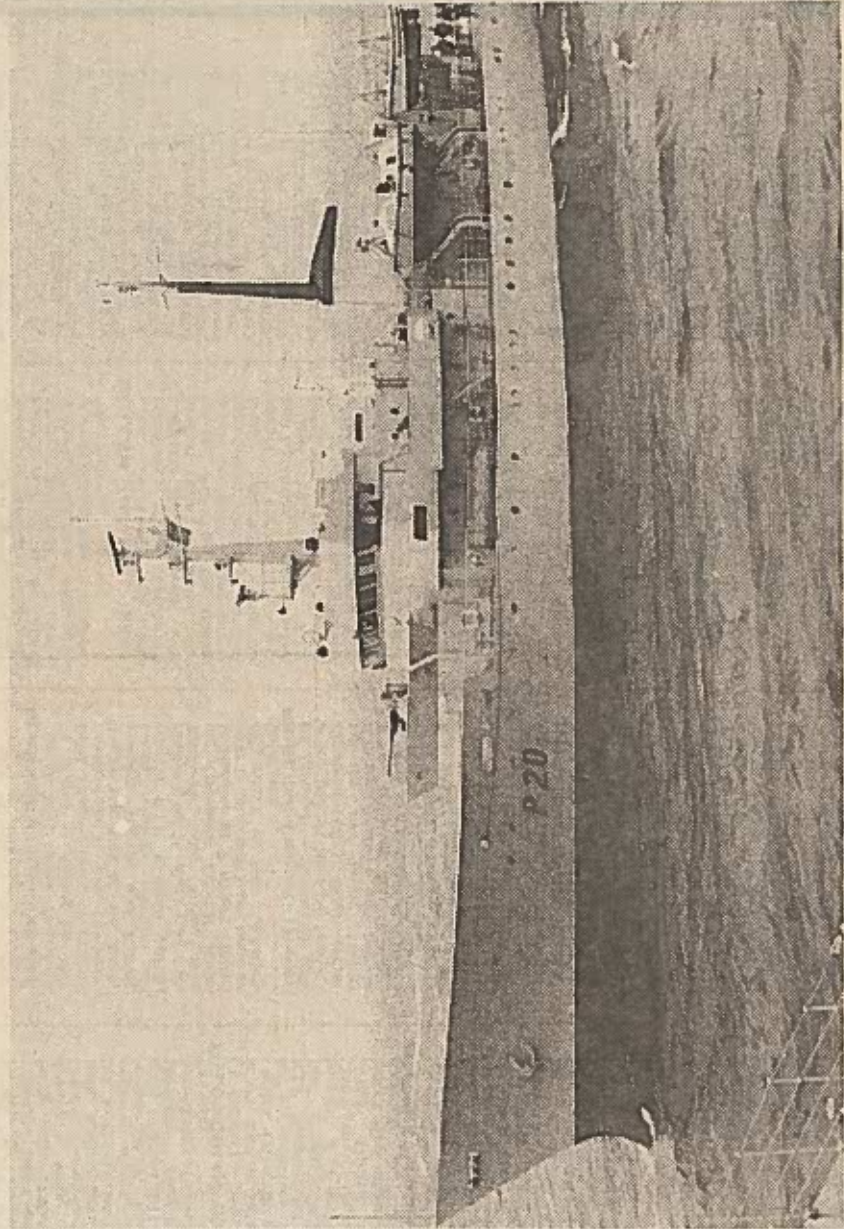
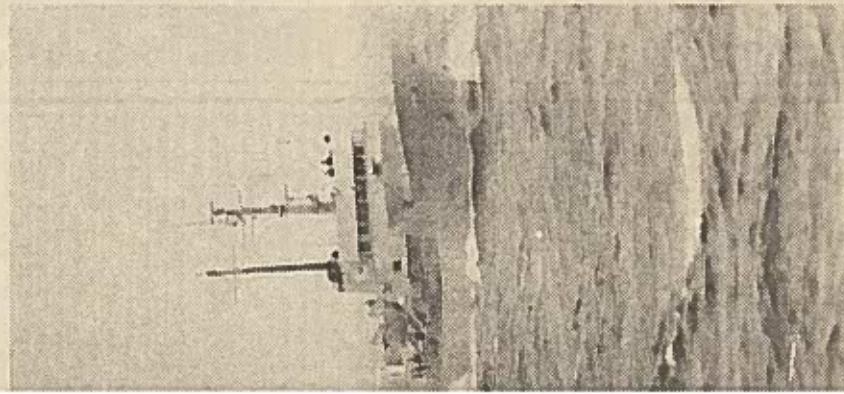
have left. On average, 75  
staff leave the defence  
forces each month.  
Experienced and highly-  
trained men are being  
replaced by young  
recruits.

It is estimated by  
Naval staff that at least  
£1 million is taken in  
each year in fines from  
arrested trawlers. They  
reckon that the two older  
ships, Emer and Deirdre,  
have already paid for  
themselves since they  
were built in the 1970s.

James lives in Cobh, within  
walking distance of the  
naval base.

A lot of men join the Navy  
"for adventure and because  
it is a good reference for  
another job", according to a  
naval source. "They sign on  
for four years and paid  
'signing-on' money. If they  
like it, they sign on for more  
years".

James says he likes the  
job, but finds the working  
hours hard. His take-home  
pay is £135 weekly. Unlike  
single men, married men do  
not have to pay for their  
food an cabins.



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area of the  
State. But our  
manpower is  
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Fire Brigade'.**