

LETTERS

Please address correspondence to:
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BOOMING

Sir, Amateur radio is booming; the G6 series is, at the time I write, almost completely issued. There are long waiting lists for morse tests, the Home Office has been berated for not being able to meet the demand for A and B licences after each exam time. Now someone wants a novice licence... I am truly amazed that anyone would think there is a need for one.

I, like thousands of others who are now licenced, have no background in electronics. The RAE studies were hard for me but I wanted a G ticket. When I met with amateurs to learn as much as I could from them, they all said "If you want the licence enough, persevere and you will get it."

CW next: the same applies; only working at it will get a pass.

Anyone who is really interested in amateur radio will be prepared to work to get the licence.

A recently licenced amateur in my area sat the RAE seven times before he passed. He told me he persevered because a G ticket was something he believed was worth the effort.

I would be interested to know how many amateurs and SWLs are *against* a novice licence.

A B WHITTAM G6HAH

My personal feelings are that a novice licence would serve no purpose other than to devalue the hobby — Ed.

INAPPROPRIATE

Sir, Amateur radio is a means of encouraging goodwill between people in all countries of the World. It is therefore totally inappropriate for the Patron of the RSGB to declare publicly that he is in favour of nuclear weaponry. He should take the earliest opportunity to retract his statement.

P THOMPSON

(The patron of the RSGB is the Duke of Edinburgh, who made a speech in favour of keeping a minimal nuclear force — Ed.)

MYOPIA

OM, Regrettably, I find myself in disagreement with some of my fellow-countryman's comments regarding the "American Woodpecker" (June HRT). To refute any kind of political bias in the matter, might I state that I am a holder of a temporary EI call, and a frequent and welcomed visitor to Des's 'neck of the woods'.

I certainly would not consider his opinions to postulate "undesirability", but they do, unfortunately, indicate some degree of myopia. My own opinions would be the same if I held an F, DJ, OE, W, VE or whatever call.

If only all the world's governments — and peoples — were imbued with the 'Ham Spirit' we could all, thankfully, happily and multilaterally, dispense with the ghastly paraphernalia of war — including 'woodpeckers' and 'cacklers' — East and West.

Unfortunately, realism tells us that we do not live in that kind of world. Without sounding 'trite', I suggest that freedom still demands the same sacrifices as those of 40-odd years ago.

Regarding this much-maligned world, might I direct Des's attention to page six of the same issue? I doubt if some of our fellow-enthusiasts could demand the same consideration from their own 'powers-that-be' — if they did, I fear that many of them would find themselves /A or 'silent keys' for their temerity!

JOE BEATTIE G13NQH

Taking that last point a bit further, it's interesting to note the difference in attitudes between Western governments. When we ask questions of the UK government — ie. the Home Office, or as in this case the Ministry of Defence — they usually try and fob us off with any old rubbish. Sometimes they claim things are classified, in spite of them having already been published. More usually they don't even return our phone calls. Let me assure you, Government bodies treat amateur radio topics in a manner little short of contempt.

Contrast this with American practice after the Freedom of Information Act. For example, when we asked the US Air Force about the Conus over-the-horizon radar system, not only did they answer all our questions willingly, but also sent us photographs and technical data of the installation, without even being prompted. And this is a brand new system designed to give early warning of a nuclear attack. Imagine getting that sort of treatment if you asked the MoD about Fylingdales! — Ed.

SIMPLE HF AERIAL

Sir, With reference to the March issue, and the article by Malcolm Healey G3TNO entitled *A Simple HF Aerial*, I have installed this aerial in my loft and can vouch for the author's comments about it, but could you please tell me where I can get the necessary six-way six-pole switch, and the two-way four-pole switch from? I have written numerous letters to advertisers in

this and other magazines but always get the answer "Sorry Sir" not in stock and cannot advise you where to get them.

Hoping you can solve my problem, so that I can construct the switching unit and thus make a good antenna even better.

D STEPHENSON

You will need to assemble the switches out of ceramic switch wafers. These are a bit difficult to get hold of — I suggest you keep your eyes open for them at rallies — Ed.

RUBBER DUCKS

OM, regarding your article on VHF/UHF aerials, I cannot fully agree with you on your comments on the hand portable aerials. No doubt you can get some improvement by using the aerial you suggest but surely the whole object of the hand set is to be small and easy to use. If you are going to add large aerials to it you may just as well use a mobile rig.

I use an FT208 which I find a superb rig on both transmit and receive, and using the rubber duck aerial I have had QSOs from the centre of Petersfield to a fixed station in Chichester, and a mobile station with which I held a QSO all the way from Petersfield to Headly Down.

My other hobby is walking, and I always take the FT208 with me and get very good results with the rubber duck aerial.

I would also like to comment on the silly article you have, to be an April fool joke, I cannot understand why you have to have this and waste paper. As this was in the issue that I purchased on 30th March and was dated May, I think the joke was on you.

Otherwise I consider your magazine to be very good with plenty of interesting articles, and the equipment performs rather than just being rows of performance figures.

I look forward to future issues with great interest.

G E R DENMAN G3MEW

What silly article? — Ed.

400W LINEAR AMP

Just a couple of quickies on that 400 watt HF Linear Amplifier in the May edition.

By all means, use everything possible from the junk box, and search the rallies for anything especially required, but be really careful about any component which might be at all doubtful — such as condensers (sorry, capacitors!).

If using normal valve-holders for the 4CX250s, it would be advisable to drill them out as much as possible, as one of the reasons for using the standard (and very