



WITH DAVID ON BOARD 'THE OCEAN SABRE'

Talking to David on board the "Ocean Sabre" was, at times, very like trying to hold a conversation with a Jack-in-the-Box!

Every time he heard cries of "David! David!" outside, he'd leap up from the low settee where we were sitting in the lounge and rush out on deck to wave at the girls speeding past on one of the Thames pleasure boats.

"Aren't they just wonderful!" he exclaimed on one occasion, as he bent down to pick up a dozen or so autograph books that had cascaded on to the deck. I was a little surprised to see the worried look on his face as he flicked through a couple of the books. . . . I thought maybe he was getting fed up with signing this endless stream of autographs, and I certainly wouldn't have blamed him!

But he put me right on that at once:

"Just checking that I've got names and addresses to send this little lot back," he smiled. "We've had a few anonymous ones land on board . . . and what am I supposed to do with those? Maybe they reckon that I wait here till the boat makes the return trip and then just pitch them out and hope for the best!"

The boat-load of ecstatic girls had now disappeared into the distance on its way down towards Greenwich and, as we strolled back inside into the lounge, I asked David why we didn't simply stay put on deck.

It was a beautiful sunny day and it would mean that he'd be right there on call when the next boat passed by.

"Yeah, it would be tremendous," he agreed. "But you see, Pat, the River Police have asked me not to stay out on deck for more than a few minutes at a time. It seems a bit crazy—especially in this wonderful



weather—but seems like it's all got something to do with security. And they've been so good since I came aboard the yacht that I'd rather play it the way they say.

"They don't mind at all if I come out now and again and wave to those wonderful ladies on the shore over there. We can even shout across to each other sometimes—mostly in the evenings when things have gotten to be a bit quieter. So it's been really great compared to last year.

"Of course," he continued, as he selected a savoury from the platefuls on the table in front of us. "It was the same old story at the airport. I managed to see a few of the girls who'd come all that way to welcome me, on my way through to Customs . . . and then I did my best to wave to them out of the car window. But the police wouldn't let me. There I was leaning out of the window and this big policeman comes along with 'Get back in the car, will you. You've already cost one

riot; we don't want any more!"

"I ask you now, what sort of riot am I going to cause by waving out of a window? But, then, I guess it's just a part of my life that I've got to learn to live with."

While David made another fast exit onto the stern deck to greet some more delighted fans, I glanced around the lounge where we were sitting (naturally enough, my eyes had been otherwise occupied while David was in the room!) and I was impressed by the beautiful gilt mirrors on the walls and the luxuriously comfortable furnishings. When he came back, smiling, I asked him how the 'mod cons' of the yacht compared with the Dorchester, because they looked pretty good to me.

"Yeah, the yacht's terrific," he enthused. "I love it—I love everything about it! We've got our own kitchen with a staff who've been coming up with some food miracles for us. And then down below there are the bedrooms and bathrooms and all that. I've got a swell suite—but why don't you come and take a look for yourself!"

Small Kitchen

He led the way along the corridor leading out from the lounge and we took a quick glance into the kitchen as we went past. It was fairly small, but seemed to be very well equipped indeed.

"Mind the stairs," David warned me, as he started down, "They're terribly steep and narrow and we don't want you to go breaking your neck!"