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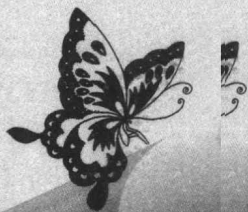
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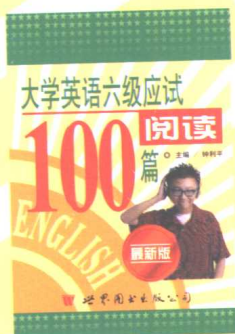
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Passage 1

The pride of the French Navy, the new aircraft carrier “Charles de Gaulle” can’t seem to shake off its run of bad luck, and now politicians are even starting to talk about conspiracy(阴谋) and damage.

Nobody wants to believe that the recent clean break of a 20-ton propeller of the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier was just another disaster in the long series of problems with the giant vessel.

Defence Minister Alain Richard is hard-pressed to come up with another explanation, and now a parliamentary(国会的) investigation is going to try to get to the bottom of things.

The latest controversy was triggered in November when, ironically, it was in the “Bermuda Triangle” that the aircraft carrier’s propeller broke and the Charles de Gaulle had to limp back across the Atlantic to its home port in Toulon.

Investigations so far apparently are indicating that when the propellers were cast, bubbles developed in the metal. These then caused the break in the propeller blade when it was put under the strain of the high rotational speed.

Engineers at the supplier company had already warned years ago about possible flaws in the metal alloys(合金) being used - but the warnings were ignored.

Now press reports claimed that a defective or only superficially examined ship propeller was intentionally delivered in order to avoid any further delays in finally getting the aircraft carrier in operation.



In addition, there was a mysterious fire in the offices of the factory in Nantes after the parliamentary investigation became public.

At the Defence Ministry, officials are outraged over the series of problems.

“Even if the constantly repeated accidents don’t kill, being the laughing-stock does kill,” said a ministry spokesman.

Previously, the biggest repairs to the Charles de Gaulle had been to extend the 195-metre long runway by about 4.5 metres so that the early warning “Hawkeye” planes could safely take off and land even in heavy seas.

In October there was the embarrassment of having to examine 6,000 pipes running through the 261-metre vessel with its crew of around 2,000 sailors because one pipe had sprung a leak.

Then people were laughing about the fact that the ship’s washing machines, all running simultaneously, were causing “unbearable” vibrations when they were in the rinse cycle.

More problematic is the use of the new “Rafale” jet fighters. So far, only five of them are ready for action—out of the originally planned total of 137—because of financial bottlenecks and construction revisions demanded by the navy.

Prior to the latest problem with the propeller, the Charles de Gaulle was to have been ready for action by year’s end. But now the navy must wait a further three to four months before the aircraft carrier, outfitted with a new propeller, can leave the drydock.

With the delays involving the Charles de Gaulle, France has actually been doing without any aircraft carriers since 1997.

Superstitious sailors aren’t at all surprised about the string of bad luck involving the Charles de Gaulle. They say it brings bad luck to change the name of a ship. Originally, the carrier was to



have been named “Richelieu”.

1. *What actually happened to the aircraft carrier when it was in the “Bermuda Triangle”?*
 - A. It arose public’s attention.
 - B. Its propeller in which possible flaws in the metal alloys were used broke and the Charles de Gaulle had to limp back across the Atlantic to its home port in Toulon.
 - C. It made a big mistake.
 - D. It fired at a nuclear submarine.
2. *In the sentence “The latest controversy was triggered in November when...”, the word “triggered” means_____.*
 - A. started
 - B. debated
 - C. ended
 - D. celled
3. *Why originally did the people want to get the aircraft into use?*
 - A. They wanted to show their pride.
 - B. They wanted to get more money.
 - C. They wanted to cancel the ceremony.
 - D. They did not want to delay the time when it should be put into operation.
4. *The problems appeared to the aircraft carrier were the following except _____.*
 - A. having to examine 6, 000 pipes running through the 261-metre vessel
 - B. the biggest repairs to the Charles de Gaulle had been to extend the 195-metre long runway by about 4.5 metres
 - C. there was a mysterious fire in the offices of the factory in Nantes



- D. the ship's washing machines
5. *Why aren't superstitious sailors at all surprised about the string of bad luck involving the Charles de Gaulle?*
- A. They say it brings good luck to change the name of a ship.
- B. The carrier shouldn't have been named "Charles de Gaulle".
- C. They say people should not change the name of the ship.
- D. The carrier was badly designed.

Passage 2

The publish of management books is unceasing. But are they teaching us the right lessons?

They promise to reveal the secrets of being a great change agent. Their prescriptions are usually pretty similar and seem sensible. They tell us successful managers set ambitious goals, build a sense of purpose, trust their people, invest in the future, and so on. They are also alike in tone, favouring the missionary, you-can-do-it style, pioneered by Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

But if there is one cause of scepticism, it is how bad these books have been in their choice of examples. The most famous example of this was the Peters and Waterman book, *In Search of Excellence*, which triggered the current publishing boom. They carefully chose the 40 firms that had been the most outstanding performers in the past decade and from this sample identified 12 golden rules of management. Unfortunately, a decade later, two-thirds of