

government). Also dating from 1982, France has been divided into twenty-two regions. Each of these embraces several *départements*, so that they are huge. The Ile de France, for example, has a population as large as that of Austria or Sweden.

Opposite us the département Pas de Calais has a population of 1.5 million, virtually the same as East Kent. The arrondissement (sous-préfecture, with twenty-eight communes) of which Calais is the capital, has a population of 120,000; Dover District 110,000. This sounds like one more reason for retaining the status quo! Given our geographical situation the size of administrative units appropriate for cross-Channel contacts is very important.

The region Nord-Pas de Calais has a population of 3.8 million so that perhaps we could do with a regional authority for planning big projects, such as motorways and the Fast Rail Link. ◊

SHIPPING NEWS

The Jeremiah O'Brien —— BRUCE LILLEY

In July the *Jeremiah O'Brien* tied up in Chatham alongside the new Chatham Maritime, an ambitious dockside development with some office blocks already occupied. (Could this development be a pointer for Dover's Western Docks?)

On the day I went to see the *Jeremiah* the ship was attracting a good number of visitors, including holiday-makers, local people and many of the staff of a nearby insurance company, who were using their lunch hour to investigate this unusual addition to their normal dockside environment.

The *Jeremiah O'Brien* is the last of more than 2,750 Liberty Ships which were built by the end of 1945. She made eleven crossings from England to the Normandy beaches in support of the D-Day landings and she had returned to Europe to participate in the D-Day remembrance.

Her crossing from the United States to England this summer was of a more peaceful nature. The fifty-year-old ship was manned by a volunteer crew with an average age of 71 years and the whole venture had a budgeted cost of \$2 million.

That the voyage was made at all is an indication of what can be done when a group of dedicated people decide that something is worth saving for the education and enjoyment of future generations. The home base of the *s.s. Jeremiah O'Brien* is San Francisco to where she will return when her present deployment ends.

