

Our Carrier Based Strike Force

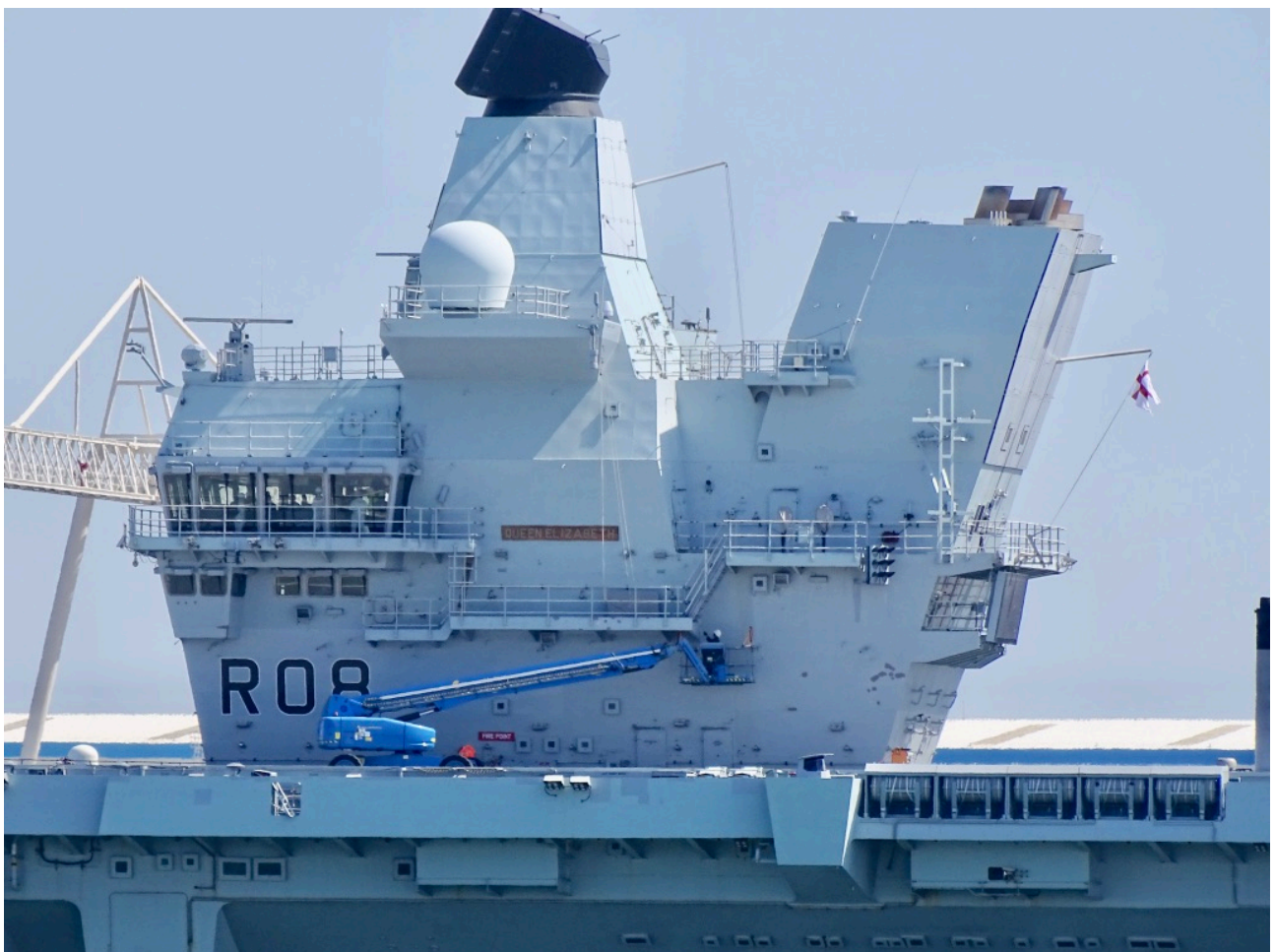
The BBC's Today programme was broadcast from the bridge of our latest aircraft carrier, The Queen Elizabeth, as she prepares for her first mission, leading a strike force to the Pacific. Inevitably, the use of the carrier as the backdrop to the programme led to much praise for its size and capabilities. I was so incensed by the profligate military expenditure and the aggressive nature of this deployment, that I decided to go to see the ship myself. I share these images with you, just to put some reality behind the protest that we may all contemplate around the time of the deployment (23rd May).

The American destroyer, USS The Sullivans, with a squadron of 10 US Marine Corps F-35B Lightning II aircraft will be part of the fleet, along with HNLMS Evertsen of the Royal Netherlands Navy. They will operate alongside six Royal Navy ships, a British submarine with Tomahawk Cruise missiles, 14 naval helicopters, eight RAF fast jets and a company of Royal Marines.

The project to build HMS Queen Elizabeth and sister ship HMS Prince of Wales cost more than £6bn.

The Queen Elizabeth (R08) and her sister ship, the Prince of Wales (R09), lie alongside in Portsmouth. The Queen Elizabeth is on the right.











I hope these pictures help bring some sense of the enormity of what we will increasingly hear in the coming days about this mission. When the government can't bring itself to reward the nurses appropriately, this military excess is really grossly obscene.

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