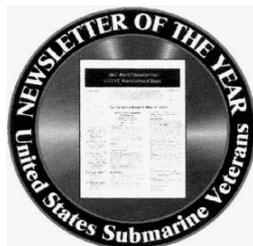


American Submariners Inc.
4370 Twain Ave.
San Diego, CA 92120-3404



The Silent Sentinel

JANUARY 2015



Our Creed and Purpose

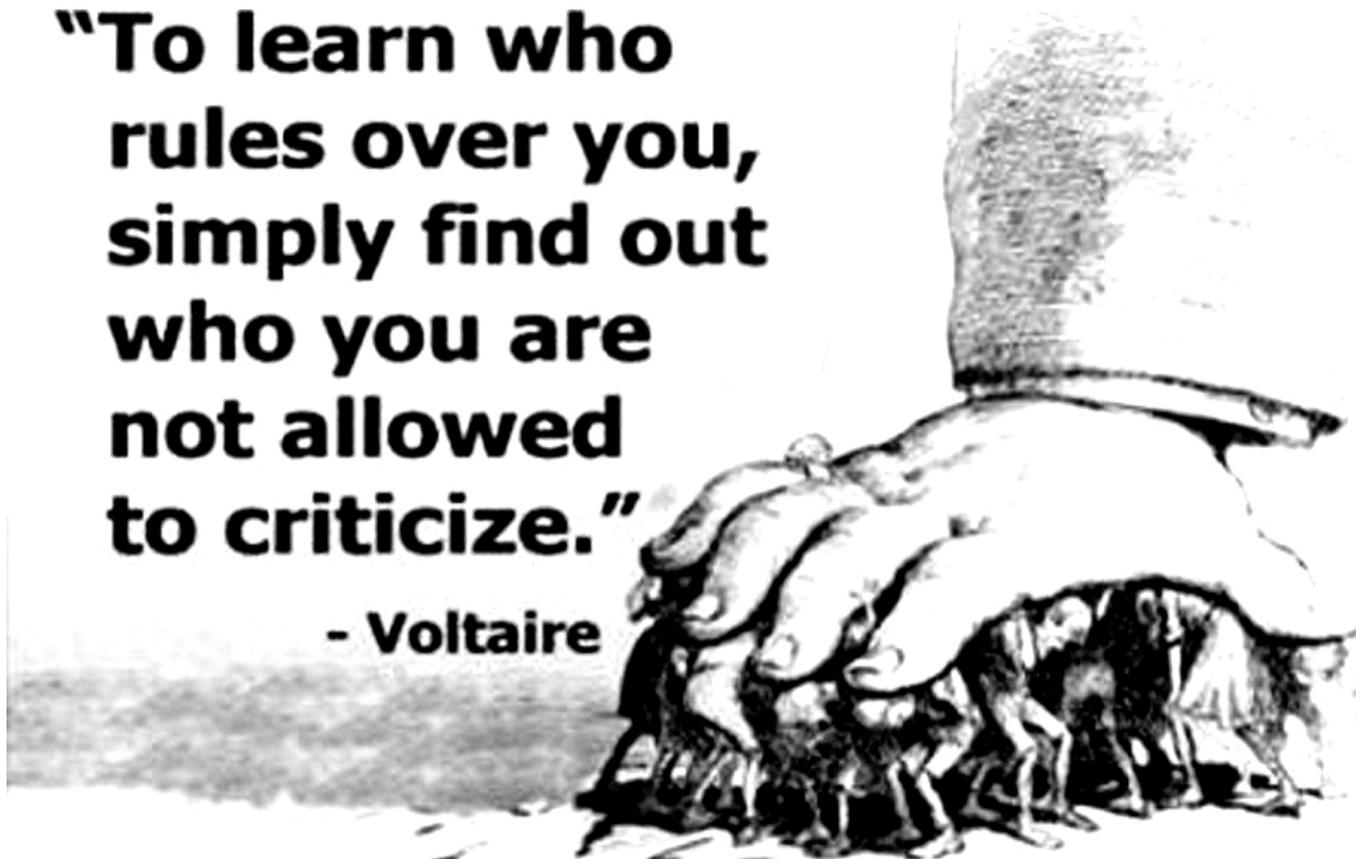
To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds, and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution.

In addition to perpetuating the memory of departed shipmates, we shall provide a way for all Submariners to gather for the mutual benefit and enjoyment. Our common heritage as Submariners shall be Strengthened by camaraderie. We support a strong U.S. Submarine Force.

The organization will engage in various projects and deeds that will bring about the perpetual remembrance of those shipmates who have given the supreme sacrifice. The organization will also endeavor to educate all third parties it comes in contact with about the services our submarine brothers performed and how their sacrifices made possible the freedom and lifestyle we enjoy today.

**“To learn who
rules over you,
simply find out
who you are
not allowed
to criticize.”**

- Voltaire



U.S. Submarine Veterans San Diego Base

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The Silent Sentinel via Email

To all of my Shipmates and families who currently receive our Great newsletter via the mail who would like it sent via email or continue to receive it via mail, please fill out the form and mail it to the base or myself. We are trying to cut the cost of the newsletter down from \$3700 to about \$1900 a year. By receiving the Silent Sentinel via email will cut down the printing and mailing cost. The other plus to receiving it via email is you can save it on your computer and not have the paper lying around the house.

A subscription to the Silent Sentinel newsletter will be available to surviving family members via internet email, at no charge, upon notification of the Membership Chairman. If a printed hard-copy is preferred, via US Post Office delivery, an annual donation of \$5.00 will be requested to cover costs.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____

TELEPHONE: _____

Would like the SILENT SENTINEL emailed: YES _____ NO _____

Robert Bissonnette
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USSVI Base Commander
c/o VFW Post 3787
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DUE TO LOGISTICS CONSTRAINTS, ALL INPUTS FOR THE SILENT SENTINEL MUST BE IN MY HAND NO LATER THAN *ONE WEEK* AFTER THE MONTHLY MEETING. IF I DO NOT RECEIVE IT BY THIS TIME, THE ITEM WILL NOT GET IN. NO EXCEPTIONS! MIKE

JANUARY Meeting

Our monthly meeting is held on the second Tuesday of the month at VFW Post 3787, 4370 Twain Ave., San Diego. Our next meeting will be on 13 JANUARY, 2015. The post is located one-half block West of Mission Gorge Road, just north of I-8. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. The E-Board meets one hour earlier at 6 p.m.

***Check us out on the World Wide Web
www.ussvisandiego.org***

BINNACLE LIST

Ron Gorence, Rocky Rockers, George Koury, Frank Walker, R.C. Thompson, John Grienberger, John Lester, Judith Addington, Frank Gomez, and Debbie Justo (Mother of Fred Fomby) on the binnacle list.

Submarine Losses in January

Originally Compiled by C J Glassford



USS Scorpion (SS-278)

Lost on Jan 5, 1944 with the loss of 76 officers and men in the East China Sea, on her 4th war patrol. It is assumed she was sunk by a mine.

USS Argonaut (SS-166)

Lost on Jan 10, 1943 with the loss of 102 officers and men off Rabaul, on her 3rd war patrol. While attacking a convoy, she torpedoed a Jap destroyer who along with 2 other destroyers depth charged her. As she tried to surface, the destroyers sunk her by gun fire.

USS Swordfish (SS-193)

Lost on Jan 12, 1945 with the loss of 89 officers and men somewhere near Okinawa, on her 13th war patrol. Probably was lost to a mine.

USS S-36 (SS-141)

Lost on Jan 20, 1942 with no loss of life, on her 2nd war patrol. She ran hard aground on a reef and radioed for help. The entire crew was rescued by a Dutch ship after they scuttled her.

USS S-26 (SS-131)

Lost on Jan 24, 1942 with the loss of 46 officers and men in the Gulf of Panama, on her 2nd war patrol. She was rammed by the USS PC-460 and sunk within seconds. The CO, XO and one lookout on the bridge, were the only survivors.



Minutes for Submarine Veterans San Diego Base 9 December 2014

1900 - Meeting of the Submarine Veterans Inc, San Diego Base was called to order by Base Commander Bob Bissonnette.

Conducted Opening Exercises:

Pledge of allegiance by Senior Vice Commander Bill Earl.

Chaplain Russ Mohedano lead us in prayer.

Conducted Tolling of the Boats for December.

Observed a moment of Silent Prayer for our lost shipmates.

Recognized past and present E-Board members and Officers present.

Secretary Ferguson announced 29 members and 1 guest (Mike Colombo) present.

The meeting minutes of 14 October 2014 were approved and the minutes of 11 November were approved with the following changes: 2nd line Minutes changed to Meeting. Binnacle list Debbie Justo changed to Sister of Bob Bissonnette and added "the Mother of Fred Fomby. Under good of the order change CAO to PAO.

Treasurer Ball announced \$18,505 in the bank of which \$2,314 are in the Charlie Marin Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Call for Committee Reports:

Chaplain Mohedano announced George Koury, Judith Addington, R.C. Thompson, Frank Gomez, Debbie Justo (sister of Bob Bissonnette), Ralph Walker, John Greinberger, Jack Lester, and the Mother of Fred Fomby on the binnacle list.

Members Harry William Feller and Burt Convey were on eternal patrol.

Parade Committee: No report.

Membership Committee: Ray Ferbrache - 279 members paid up. Members are reminded

that of 31 January unpaid members are dropped from the rolls.

Scholarship Committee: No report. Base Commander reminded members that deadline for applicant submittal is 15 March.

Nomination Committee: No report.

Storekeeper Report: Phill Richeson has new calendars for sale and books for members to borrow.

Breakfast Committee: Warren Branges - Last breakfast resulted in \$85.56 profit and next breakfast is 29 March. Chaplain Mohedano volunteered to stand on the corner of Mission Gorge and Twin Avenue that morning and drum up business.

52 Boat Memorial - Warren Branges - the first repaired marker (USS Triton) has been installed with the remaining markers to be repaired by the end of December and the installation schedule to be worked out by first of the year. Received a \$1000 donation to the memorial upkeep fund from the Navy Submarine League with a bit more expected in the future.

Float Committee: No report.

1928 Base Commander called for a break.

1937 Base Commander called the meeting back to order.

Unfinished Business:

Christmas Party Saturday 13 December 1330-1600 with dinner at 1400. \$20 each with choice of Cornish Hen or Roast Beef. Contact Jack Ferguson for reservations.

Base ByLaw Revision were published in the Silent Sentinel for all members to review. Motion to accept the Revised ByLaws was made, seconded, and passed with minor corrections to be made by the Secretary.

The Financial Review will be completed in December and brought to the membership in January for approval.

New Business:

A motion was made, seconded and passed for the Base to match all donations received thru February from members in the name of Al Strunk to the Scholarship Fund.

Phill Richeson is available to attend any local boat reunions wanting to purchase USSVI gear.

Good of the Order:

Bob Bissonnette mentioned that boat sponsoships renew in January and individuals can sponsor in the name of any local business that they believe would like to display the American Submariner magazine for their customers. He also displayed recruiting cards that are available.

Bill Earl reviewed his trip to attend the Australian Armistice Day and to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Australian Submarine Force. He mentioned that the USS Hawaii was in port for the celebration and he will loan out his copy of the book written for the 100th Anniversary.

Warren Branges mentioned the COMSUBPAC Sailor of the Year luncheon February 27th, the Old Timers Luncheon and Tolling of the Boats April 24th at the Naval Base Pt. Loma, the Submarine Birthday Ball April 25th, the Submarine Roundup in Laughlin April 26th and the USSVI National Convention in Pittsburg September 6-12, 2015.

The meeting was adjourned at 2003.

Jack Ferguson, Secretary

Sailing List for 9 December, 2014

David Ball	William (Unreadable)	Bob Bissonnette
Dennis Mortensen	Jack Ferguson	Ed Farley
Bill Earl	Al Varela	Bob Farrell
Mike Hyman	Russ Mohedano	Dennis McReight
Chris Stafford	Bud Rollison	James Pope
Phill Richeson	Russ Filbeck	Tom Polen
Jim Potts	Mert Weltzien	Jack Lester
Gino Rillamas	Warren Branges	Jim Harer
Joel Eikam	Ray Ferbrache	Jack Kane
Dusty Taylor	Andy Still	

Current News

“Plataginet, I will; and like thee, Nero,
Play on the lute, beholding the towns burn” (*Henry VI*, Shakespeare)

West ‘Must Rearm For New Cold War’

belfasttelegraph.co.uk, Jan 8

The West must rearm to take part in a new Cold War with Russia, a senior Conservative has said.

Lord Spicer, a former minister and chairman of the 1922 Committee of Tory backbench MPs, said that economic sanctions against Vladimir Putin had not worked.

His comments came as former head of the Royal Navy Lord West of Spithead warned Russia was building up its weapons and in a way that would have made people “terrified” during the Cold War.

Lord Spicer hit out at question time in the House of Lords at the effectiveness of the response to Russia’s occupation of Crimea.

“Is not the stark reality that so far diplomacy has failed, that economic sanctions have made Mr Putin more aggressive than less and that the West will have to be prepared to engage in a cold war with Russia and to rearm accordingly?” he asked Foreign Office minister Baroness Anelay of St Johns

Lady Anelay told him: “I don’t adopt your route to rearming and I’m not as pessimistic.

“Perhaps it is because I am ever hopeful and I am clearly impressed by the diplomacy delivered by our own Foreign and Commonwealth Office and by our colleagues throughout the European Union and the United Nations and the Commonwealth all of whom have a common view.

“Yesterday the Prime Minister met with the German Chancellor Angela Merkel and in his press release has made it clear we continue to stand by Ukraine.”

Labour peer Lord West, who was chief of defence intelligence from 1997 to 2001, and First Sea Lord from 2002 to 2006, said there had been a “huge increase in Russian defence expenditure”.

“In particular this whole nuclear triad, with brand new ballistic missiles, submarines, a brand new attack submarine with a new cruise nuclear weapon,” he said.

“It is running its nuclear trains again. All of the indicators that during the Cold War would have had me terrified as chief of defence intelligence.”

He said Mr Putin’s policy of de-escalation was in fact a policy of “nuclear escalation”.

“Is it not time to inject a real sense of urgency into these talks,” he said. “We are getting near misses constantly over the Baltic. Things are really, really very risky indeed.

“We need to have proper talks fully involving the Russians, who have a very real and proper interest in the Ukraine I believe.”

He added: “We need to get this going very quickly with everyone involved, the Russians involved, otherwise we might move towards a scenario that none of us would like.”

Lady Anelay said she sympathised and talks expected next week would involve the Russians.

“The Russians are feeling the brunt of sanctions, as they should, for their illegal occupation of Crimea and for what they are doing in sending in their troops in East Ukraine and making the humanitarian situation there worse,” she said.

“Diplomacy can be a strong tool - let’s make sure it is.”

Here’s Your Chance To Design A Logo For A Nuclear Sub

By Kelsey Campbell-Dollaghan, gizmodo.com.au, Jan 7

Nearly every government mission — from spy satellites to classified aircraft — has a mission patch, often designed by the crew itself. But even if you’re not a crew member on America’s new \$US2.3 billion nuclear sub, the USS Colorado, the Navy wants your designs anyways.

The USS Colorado, which was commissioned back in 2012 and is under construction right now in Connecticut — and it’s looking for a crest design. Brand New’s Armin Vit points out a design contest for the logo, which will grace official plaques and uniforms for the nuclear sub’s crew. It will also appear “other places where such an emblem is appropriate throughout the life of the ship”, possibly referring to crew tattoos. The contest is organised into a general submission category and a youngster’s category (after all, the kids’ designs are usually the best).

So what are they looking for, specifically? “Elements in the design of the crest should relate to what makes our state special,” explains a statement on the contest page, which also provides a hint: “One fact to consider is that Dolphins have a place in submarine lore.” Sure, dolphins have a place in submarine lore, but Colorado is landlocked, after all. To get the juices flowing, other more Colorado-appropriate totems might include pow pow, Casa Bonita, and obviously, legal weed.

The contest runs until March 1, so you’ve got a little time to run some focus groups and start sketching.

The Indian Ocean Zone Of Peace: Reality Vs. Illusion

By Abhijit Singh, The Diplomat, Jan 7

A recent proposal for the Indian Ocean leaves much to be desired.

Yogi Berra, the legendary American baseball player known for his pithy quotes, once remarked: “In theory there is no difference between theory and practice; but in practice there is.” India’s recent pitch for an Indian Ocean Zone of Peace (IOZOP) at the Galle dialogue in Sri Lanka is a classic example of theoretical propositions not always meeting the test of practical utility.

In principle, the proposal to declare the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) as a zone of peace is strikingly apposite. Increasing Chinese presence and the threat of PLA-N bases in the IOR, the growing interests of other major powers (U.S., U.K., Russia, France and Japan) in the region, and the many Chinese infrastructure projects in the region, create an imperative for India to actively limit the military maritime activity of external powers in the region. But attempting to do so through the IOZOP route will ensure that while no military activity is ever practically curtailed, Indian influence and credibility in the region will be severely eroded.

The trouble with the IOZOP proposal is its flawed premise: that by simply declaring the region a “Zone of Peace,” foreign military presence and activity can be effectively halted. Conceivably, the proposal has been triggered by the recent docking of a Chinese submarine in Colombo — an event India took grave exception to, even remonstrating with Sri Lanka for its insensitivity to Indian security interests. New Delhi also may have taken note of a recent media report that quoted a Namibian Ministry of Defence official suggesting that discussions were underway “at the highest levels” for Chinese naval bases in the Indian Ocean Region. Though it was subsequently denied, the report had sufficient sting to give Indian policymakers the strategic heebie-jeebies. Proponents of the proposal now believe that in the absence of military strength and influence to counter the growing Chinese presence in the region, India should use the multilateral route to create a consensus for preventing the military activity of external powers in the region. A study of the past would, however, enlighten ardent Indian Ocean peaceniks of the efficacy of such a proposal.

In a recent op-ed in *The Hindu*, T.P. Sreenivasan, India’s representative to the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean in the early 1980s, observed that the original 1971 proposal of an IOZOP was not so much about peace and tranquility in the IOR, as it was about circumscribing the presence of Western powers in the region. The Ad Hoc Committee, he points out, considered the various provisions of the proposal at length but none was found feasible

because members stood bitterly divided on the issues. Most permanent members – except China – were vehemently opposed to the suggestion of no bases in the IOR. The littoral and hinterland members, on the other hand, supported it. “The innumerable problems India has faced on account of the U.N. resolution and the U.N. Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean,” Sreenivasan perceptively points out, “must be recalled before we take any formal initiative in this regard.”

Opposition to the proposal from the major maritime powers is likely to arise this time as well; the only difference being that this time China too would likely join the chorus rejecting the proposal. With growing Chinese interests in the Indian Ocean, it is almost a given that Beijing would actively reject any suggestion that seeks to limit China’s military presence in the Indian Ocean. More worryingly, any such proposal would be detrimental to India’s own power-projection in the neighborhood. Sri Lanka’s original 1971 proposal, as Sreenivasan points out, was driven not only by the fear of extra-regional military presence but also by a perceived uneasiness about growing Indian naval power particularly in the aftermath of the 1971 war when the Indian Navy had launched an audacious attack on Karachi. In some ways, the IOZOP was an attempt by Colombo to buy some insurance against any possible Indian designs on Sri Lanka.

Paradoxically, it is India that has been dichotomous in its security approach to the Indian Ocean – opposing, on the one hand, extra-regional military presence and yet depending on U.S. naval power to underwrite regional security. As might be expected, the response to the revival of the IOZOP too has been fanciful on many levels. First of all, the Indian Navy might be a net-security provider in the region but it also honestly admits to a lack of capacity that renders assistance by other maritime players in the region a rank imperative. A principal precept of the Indian Navy’s maritime strategy is cooperative security and meaningful contributions in this regard have so far come only from the big naval powers in the region.

Second, the real danger from an Indian standpoint is not increased U.S. interest in the Indian Ocean Region but the lack of it. In the aftermath of the global financial crisis and the U.S. pivot to the Pacific, American interest in the Indian Ocean has been waning. With the shale revolution, the U.S. is losing interest in the Middle East. Consequently, its stake in securing the flow of energy from the Persian Gulf has reduced. Regrettably, U.S. naval retrenchment from the region also means a reduced ability to confront larger threats to peace and security in West Asia. This is one reason why many other states are rushing to fill the vacuum. The U.K.’s announcement that it would be reviving its maritime presence in Bahrain should be seen in this light.

While London’s decision to reopen its naval base in Manama is a cause for worry mainly because it implies a further militarization of the IOR, the fact is that the Royal Navy never really ceased to be a presence in the region (the RN has four mine-hunter warships permanently based at Manama, from which British destroyers and frigates in the Gulf are regularly supported). All that the U.K. is seeking now is to bolster the existing infrastructure at the Port, providing its navy with a forward operating base that would enable sustained security operations and the accommodation of its service personnel.

This does not mean that RN ships will be a regular presence in the broader security affairs of the IOR; much of the heavy-lifting in the Western and Eastern Indian Ocean will still need to be done by indigenous powers like India. The Royal Navy’s new base merely implies the U.K.’s desire to be able to tend to security hot-spots such as the Islamic State’s threat to the Middle East and the Levant – areas in which India might have no interest. Similarly, France, Japan and Australia are marginal players in the strategic affairs of the Indian Ocean, even though each contributes substantively to regional security. Circumscribing their space for operations by imposing a moratorium on maritime activity and presence is likely to damage the cause of collective security in the region.

An additional concern is that once a Zone of Peace is declared, Pakistan might revive its proposal for a denuclearized Indian Ocean – a proposition first raised in the aftermath of India’s nuclear test in 1974 and one that New Delhi strongly resisted. This could be a potentially game-changing move that needs to be understood in its entirety before endorsing a Zone of Peace. Pakistan’s nuclear efforts in the Indian Ocean are motivated solely by the presence of India’s strategic submarine capability (the Arihant). The Pakistan Navy (PN) does not quite need a ballistic missile capable submarine as it is not bound by “no-first use” and does not consequently need a survivable weapon. It does, however, feel compelled to counter India’s SSBN, which, it feels, has skewed the balance of power in the Indian Ocean. As a preliminary measure, the PN has invested in a naval tactical missile capability, but its aspiration to develop a strategic ballistic missile capable submarine has not proceeded beyond an expression of intent. Pakistan would, however, be happy to eschew naval tactical nuclear weapons if India were to take away its SSBN out of the equation. To compound matters, New Delhi’s backing of a ZOP in the IOR will leave it with no moral or political grounds to justify its opposition to a denuclearized Indian Ocean.

Lastly, while there is anxiety about China’s aggressive tactics in the South China Sea, many Indian Ocean states are not fully convinced that the PLA-N’s presence in the IOR poses an active threat to maritime security. It is highly unlikely – especially against the backdrop of Beijing’s proposal for a Maritime Silk Road, which has received enthusiastic backing from the Maldives and Sri Lanka – that other Indian Ocean states would be keen on a “ban” on Chinese naval activity in the region. Yet there is an almost universal acknowledgement of India’s contribution to the security and

well-being of smaller Indian Ocean states (a case in point being the “fresh-water” assistance recently rendered by the Indian Navy to Maldives).

In the event that a ZOP is announced, it is India that will stand to lose the most because its proposal will be seen as a “backdoor” maneuver to limit the Chinese presence and an effective abdication of leadership and responsibility in the IOR.

Abhijit Singh is a research scholar at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses and looks at Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean.

Type 096 Submarine Can Attack US Homeland From China's Coast

By WantChinaTimes.com, Jan 6

The Type 096, China's third-generation nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine, has given the PLA Navy the means to strike the continental United States from the Chinese coast for the first time, according to the Singapore-based Lianhe Zaobao.

China is estimated to have four Type 094 Jin-class second-generation ballistic missile submarines. Together, those four submarines can carry 48 JL-2 submarine-launched ballistic missiles and 200 nuclear warheads, which is 35% of China's nuclear arsenal. With an attack range of 6,000 kilometers, the JL-2 missile's threat to American forces is confined to the Western Pacific.

China is developing Type 096 Tang-class ballistic missile submarines to replace the Type 094 by 2020, according to a study from the Moscow-based Russian Military Analyst. By then, the PLA Navy is looking to have at least six Type 094 and Type 096 submarines operational. It will control 80 submarine-launched ballistic missiles with about 300 nuclear warheads.

The new ballistic missile designed for the Type 096 submarine is estimated to have a range of 11,000 kilometers. This would make the submarine capable of launching a direct nuclear attack against the continental US.

The new submarine reportedly even has the capability of firing its missiles through layers of ice, said an US expert. Under the escort of the Chinese surface combat fleet, it would be able to begin its attack from Hawaiian waters.

It is inevitable that more US targets will become exposed as China continues to advance its missile weapons technology.

12 Sailors Implicated In Submarine Shower Scandal

Navy Times, Dec. 11

Up to a dozen sailors are suspected of viewing secretly recorded videos of their female shipmates undressing in a submarine shower over a period of 10 months, according to a new investigative report obtained by Navy Times.

The scandal has marred the Navy's gender integration effort begun four years ago.

While it appears only one sailor has been implicated in the videos' production and distribution, 11 are suspected of watching them and failing to report the matter to their commanders.

It's unclear precisely how many women were recorded. Navy officials said they believe it's either three or four. All are assigned to the ballistic-missile submarine Wyoming, which is based in Kings Bay, Ga., and are among the first female sailors to serve in the submarine force.

Navy Times first exposed the scandal Dec. 3, just one day before the Pentagon released its annual report on sexual assault within the military. The recent, unclassified incident report informed the chain of command, including top Navy leaders, that the command investigation has wrapped up.

According to the second incident report, 12 male sailors are suspected of viewing the videos taken from August to November 2013 and March to June 2014. The videos were first reported to the command in mid-November.

Submarine Force Atlantic confirmed the second incident report, but a spokesman declined to elaborate about the command report's findings.

All of those implicated are petty officers, most of whom had seen or known about the videos but did not report it, said a senior Navy official familiar with the investigation. The official emphasized that only one sailor, a second class petty officer, is believed to have recorded and distributed them using a smart phone.

“This was not 11 guys, each with different” cameras, said the source. “It was really one guy doing the videography piece and then sharing it with other people.”

“We think the seven videos were shot with a cellphone,” he added.

Naval Criminal Investigative Service continues to investigate the potential legal violations in the filming and distribution, the Submarine Force Atlantic spokesman said.

The report will be forwarded up the boat's chain of command for endorsement before any punishment or adjudication is handed down.

The scandal is a major blight for a community that has touted an otherwise smooth effort to integrate women onto submarines, beginning four years ago with the first female supply and sub officers. Women first reported to the Wyoming in late 2011.

In a letter to submarine leadership, the fleet's top submariner insisted that the filming doesn't take away from the community's integration successes, noting that 59 female officers are assigned to three ballistic-missile submarines and four guided-missile submarines in Kings Bay and Bangor, Wash.

"The performance of these women and the crews to which they are assigned have been overwhelmingly successful," Vice Adm. Michael Connor said.

Female officers are due to join fast-attack submarines next year, with enlisted women joining crews in the following years.

A ballistic missile sub typically has 15 officers and 140 enlisted on board, with unisex showers in "officer country." When a woman is using the shower, for example, she puts up a sign to indicate it is in use by a female officer and men must wait to enter until it's unoccupied.

It's possible that the cameras caught both men and women showering, but the final incident report only cites women as victims.

U.S. Navy's Newest Addition To Fleet Could Be A Robotic Spy 'Fish'

Daily Press, Dec. 11

It's a fish. It's a sub. No, it's Nemo.

The Navy's newest drone is an underwater robot disguised as a fish — a tuna to be more specific, though the project has been dubbed Silent Nemo, after the popular Disney film about a clown fish.

Currently under testing by the Chief of Naval Operations Rapid Innovation Cell and Boston Engineering, the unmanned underwater vehicle is able to make tight turns and move through the water quietly, making it ideal for surveillance and reconnaissance missions. Once in the fleet, it could be used to inspect the hull of a ship, check waters for threats such as mines or protrusions, deliver payloads including sonar and guidance packages, and access otherwise denied areas.

Capt. Jim Loper, head of the concepts and innovation department at the Navy Warfare Development Command in Norfolk, couldn't say when Nemo would be fully integrated into the fleet. It could become operational as soon as next year, he said.

The 5-foot, 100-pound armature was modeled after a bluefin tuna and uses a rear caudle fin to move through the water just like the fish. The fin is about 10 times quieter than a rotating propeller.

"The idea is to take millions of years of evolution," said the project's manager, Marine Corps Capt. Jerry Lademan. "This fish has perfected itself by swimming around the water for millenia, so what we are trying to do with this project, the idea of biomimicry, is to reverse engineer what nature has already done to optimize design for us."

So the final product looks like a fish and swims like a fish.

"It looks alive," Lademan said.

On Thursday, the black robotic fish — also known as GhostSwimmer — glided through the waters at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek controlled by a joystick. It can swim autonomously, but that feature is in the early stages of testing and development.

Loper and Michael Rufo, director of the advanced systems group at Boston Engineering, which specializes in unmanned systems and robotics, said it would take only months to complete the technology for Nemo to swim on its own.

Rufo said the fish's combination of "efficiency, maneuverability and speed" make it relevant for naval operations. It can submerge up to 300 feet, he said, though it has not yet been tested at those depths.

While no weaponry has been developed for Nemo, Loper said the full scope of applications hasn't been exhausted.

"Let your imagination run wild," he said.

The Chief of Naval Operations Rapid Innovation Cell, or CRIC for short, picked up the project about a year ago after initial development by the Office of Naval Research in 2008.

Loper said CRIC's mission is not to bypass the typical military acquisition process, which is extremely costly and time consuming, but to speed up the testing of innovative ideas and get practical feedback from sailors at sea.

"We like to think of ourselves along the lines of a venture capital model," he said. "It takes years and years to get stuff from the drawing board out to the fleet. The CNO realizes that that time line needs to be compressed dramatically.

“What better way to do that than take the ideas that are coming from the young folks that are out there in the fleet and turn those around into prototypes and get them moving,” Loper said. “That’s where something like Silent Nemo comes.”

He called it “harnessing the brainpower of youth.”

Lademan, the Marine leading the project, is just 27.

Nemo is just one of about a dozen projects that CRIC is overseeing, Loper said. The cell provides management and overhead costs.

So far, the Nemo project has cost about \$1 million, according to Loper. Once fully developed and tested, CRIC works with private companies to see it produced then the Navy puts in its order.

Prosecutors: Egyptian Took Navy Job To Steal Secrets

Scott Daugherty, The Virginian-Pilot, Dec 11

A former Egyptian citizen told an undercover FBI agent earlier this year that he took a job with the Navy for the sole purpose of stealing military secrets and providing them to the Egyptian government, according to federal prosecutors.

Mostafa Ahmed Awwad – who worked as a civilian engineer at Norfolk Naval Shipyard until last week – told the undercover agent that it didn’t matter that he had surrendered his Egyptian passport. He said he still viewed himself as an Egyptian citizen and would do whatever he could to help his country: even hand over schematics to the aircraft carrier Gerald R. Ford and hide homing beacons on U.S. submarines.

“I went to this place just for this reason,” Awwad told the agent, who posed as an Egyptian intelligence officer.

According to prosecutors, Awwad said he turned down a job with Lockheed Martin because the lower-paying Navy job allowed easier access to classified information.

“I don’t know what is wrong with this government. They hire the Chinese. They hire the Russians. They hire us,” Awwad said.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph DePadilla argued in federal court Wednesday that Awwad should remain in jail pending trial.

“The evidence shows this man is a patriot for Egypt,” DePadilla told the court.

Magistrate Judge Douglas Miller ordered Awwad held, noting the strength of the government’s case.

Awwad – who received his security clearance four months ago – was arrested Friday on two counts of attempted exportation of defense articles and technical data.

The charges stemmed from a “false flag” operation orchestrated by the FBI and the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. According to an FBI affidavit that at times reads like a Tom Clancy novel, Awwad handed over 10 computer-aided-design drawings of the Ford.

During one of their conversations, Awwad told the agent where to strike the vessel with a missile to sink it.

“I want to give this technology to my country,” Awwad told the agent, the prosecutor said.

DePadilla told the court that Awwad had given instructions to his mother in Egypt to kidnap his two sons, ages 2 and 11 months, and raise them there if anything happened to him. Awwad described his wife as a “problem” because she did not know about his desire to help Egypt and would not support it.

During the hearing, his wife sat a few feet behind him. Awwad did not look at her before leaving the courtroom, a sharp contrast to his tearful pleas to her on Friday when he asked her to call his mother.

The wife declined to comment before leaving the courthouse with her mother and a friend.

DePadilla said Wednesday that the FBI contacted Awwad after he approached the Egyptian embassy and offered his assistance to their government. He described Awwad as an “accomplished hacker” and said he told the agent during their first encounter that he had been secretly collecting classified information from his work computer for months.

Prosecutors filed a notice Wednesday morning that said federal agents sought help from the secretive Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act court for unspecified electronic surveillance and physical searches in the investigation.

DePadilla said investigators recorded all of Awwad’s conversations with the undercover agent, as well as some conversations with his mother in Egypt.

The FBI affidavit also describes some of Awwad’s background. He was born in 1979 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He married his wife, a U.S. citizen, in 2007 in Cairo. After that, he moved to the United States.

Assistant Federal Public Defender Keith Kimball, Awwad’s defense attorney, said his client became a citizen in June 2012.

Awwad attended Old Dominion University from August 2010 to December 2013, according to the school’s registrar. He graduated last year with a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering.

The affidavit said Awwad was hired in February to work as a civilian engineer at Norfolk Naval Shipyard in the nuclear engineering and planning department. His security clearance, received in August, gave him access to classified information up to the level of “secret.”

Awwad had access to information concerning the design, arrangement, development, maintenance and repair of the propulsion plants the Navy uses on nuclear-powered ships and prototypes, the affidavit said.

Kimball argued Wednesday for his client to be released to the custody of his wife, who has lived in Canada and the United States since she was 1. He added that while his client allegedly said a lot of things to the undercover agent, the veracity of many of the comments remains in question. Kimball pointed to Awwad’s false claim of “top secret” clearance.

“There seems to be a lot of exaggeration,” he said.

Our Flagging Nuclear Forces

Providence Journal, Dec 11

In today’s U.S. military, ground wars and sophisticated counter-terrorism operations have become the prime focus. In contrast, guarding the nation’s nuclear arsenal, though supremely important, can be demoralizing work. Just how demoralizing has been made clear by two recent Pentagon reports.

Requested by outgoing Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, the reports paint a disturbing picture of poorly equipped crews, inadequate staffing, high turnover and a culture more preoccupied with bureaucratic minutiae than actual preparedness. Among the more damaging details: three separate installations were reportedly sharing a single wrench needed to attach nuclear warheads to intercontinental ballistic missiles. Crews in North Dakota, Montana and Wyoming were FedExing the wrench to each other, after years of ignored requests for their own tools.

The two reviews, one by senior Pentagon officials and one by a pair of retired officers, were sought after a spate of scandals in the Air Force and the Navy came to light. In both branches, personnel had been caught cheating on tests. Several top officers and dozens of sailors were expelled.

Citing system-wide problems, Secretary Hagel has pledged up to \$10 billion in new expenditures over the next five years to upgrade equipment and improve staffing, including at U.S. submarine bases.

Mr. Hagel has authorized a four-star general to be placed in charge of the three nuclear Air Force bases, currently overseen by a three-star general. This should help raise the profile of the mission. But more should be done lower in the ranks, to ensure that those who take these often tedious assignments have avenues of advancement. The retired officers’ report recommended greater recognition and special pay for some of the more responsible jobs, an approach worth trying.

The U.S. nuclear arsenal was assembled during the Cold War, and much of it has since been allowed to decline. Systems built during the 1950s and ’60s have gone without needed improvements. Secretary Hagel’s call for new expenditures is in addition to tens of billions already pledged by the Obama administration to update aging warheads and facilities.

Yet, while some new investment is clearly needed, more money alone will not fix what ails the nation’s nuclear forces. Waiting for an unlikely attack takes special patience, and can corrode the spirit if it goes on for too long. Military leaders must fully grasp this problem if they are to effectively overhaul the system, and keep our deterrent force viable.

