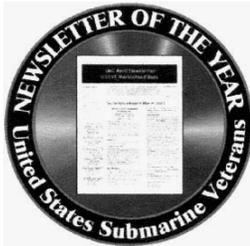


American Submariners Inc.  
 4370 Twain Ave.  
 San Diego, CA 92120-3404



# The Silent Sentinel

## JUNE 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.

IN MEMORY OF

BOB MILLER



*Out of the darkness, fretted sometimes in its sleeping,  
 Jets of sparks in fountains of blue come leaping  
 To sight, revealing a secret, numberless secrets keeping.*

*Sometimes the darkness trapped within a wheel  
 Runs into speed like a dream, the blue of the steel  
 Showing the rocking darkness now a-reel.*

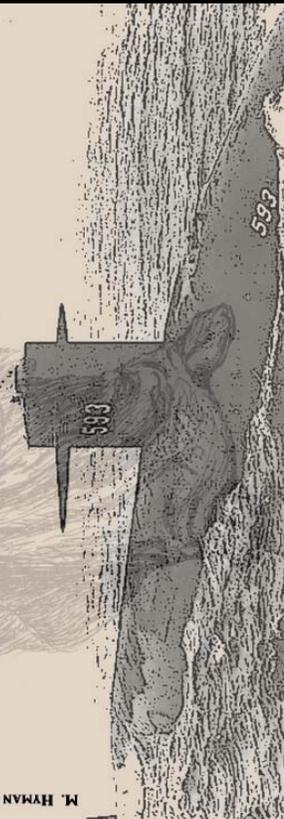
*And out of the invisible, streams of bright blue drops  
 Rain from the showery heavens, and bright blue crops  
 Surge from the under-dark to their ladder-tops.*

*And all the manifold blue and joyous eyes,  
 The rainbow arching over in the skies,  
 New sparks of wonder opening in surprise.*

*All these pure things come foam and spray of the sea  
 Of Darkness abundant, which shaken mysteriously,  
 Breaks into dazzle of livings, as dolphins that leap from the sea  
 Of midnight shake it to fire, so the secret of death we see.*

The Mystic Blue by D.H. Lawrence

M. HYMAN 2015



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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 \_\_\_\_\_

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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**

## ***June 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 9 June, 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**

George Koury, Frank Walker, R.C. Thompson. on the binnacle list.

## ***Submarine Losses in June***

Originally Compiled by C J Glassford



### **USS Herring (SS-233)**

Lost on June 1, 1944 with the loss of 83 men near Matsuwa Island. Herring was on her 8th war patrol and was conducting a surface attack when a shore battery spotted her and made 2 direct hits on her conning tower and causing her loss. Before being sunk, she had sank a freighter and a passenger-cargoman. Herring was the only US submarine sunk by a land battery.

### **USS R-12 (SS-89)**

Lost on June 12, 1943 with the loss of 42 men near Key West, FL during a practice torpedo approach. The cause was probably due to flooding through a torpedo tube. The CO and 2 other men on the bridge survived, as did 18 crew members on liberty at the time of the accident.

### **USS Golet (SS-361)**

Lost on June 14, 1944 with the loss of 82 men. On her 2nd war patrol, Golet was apparently lost in battle with antisubmarine forces north of Honshu.

### **USS Bonefish (SS-223)**

Lost on June 18, 1945 with the loss of 85 men when sunk near Suzu Misaki. Winner of 3 Navy Unit Citations, Bonefish was on her 8th war patrol. After sinking a passenger-cargoman, Bonefish was subjected to a savage depth charge attack.

### **USS S-27 (SS-132)**

Lost on June 19, 1942 when it grounded off Amchitka Island. She was on the surface in poor visibility, charging batteries

and drifted into the shoals. When she could not be freed and started listing, the captain got the entire crew to shore (400 yards away) in relays using a 3-man rubber raft. The entire crew was subsequently rescued.

#### USS O-9 (SS-70)

Lost on Jun 20, 1941 with the loss of 33 men when it foundered off Isle of Shoals, 15 miles from Portsmouth, NH.

#### USS Runner (SS-275)

Lost between June 26 and July 4th with the loss of 78 men. Runner was on her 3rd war patrol probably due to a mine. Prior to her loss, she reported sinking a freighter and a passenger-cargoman off the Kuriles. This boat's last known ship sunk happened on June 26th, so she probably hit that mine on or after that date but before July 4th, when she was scheduled back at Midway.



## San Diego Base, United States Submarine Veterans Inc. Minutes of Meeting - 12 May 2015

1900 - Base Senior Vice Commander Warren Branges called the meeting to order  
Conducted Opening Exercises - Pledge of Allegiance lead by Secretary Jack Kane  
Senior Vice Commander Warren Branges lead prayer and conducted Tolling of the Boats lost in the month of May.  
Senior Vice Commander recognized Past Commanders and dignitaries, welcomed Guests and new members.  
Secretary Jack Kane announced 26 (25 members and 1 guests) present.

The minutes of the 14 April 2015 meeting were approved as published in the Sentinel with two changes.

1. Good of the Order – Seymour Phillips is moving to Los Angeles vice Seattle.
2. Good of the Order – Add: Benny Williams is 87 next Saturday.

Treasurer David Ball gave his report. Checking Balance \$5560.12 with total assets of \$20,803.22 which includes \$1905.00 in the Charlie Marin Scholarship Fund. A copy of the Treasurer's Report will be filed with these minutes.

Base Commander Called For Committee Reports

Secretary Jack Kane reported for Chaplain Russ Mohedano the following on the Binnacle List: George Koury, Frank Walker, R.C. Thompson, Mike Hyman, Jack Lester and Russ Mohedano.

Parade Chair Joel Eikam announced the next parade is 16 May in Ramona starting at 10:00 am. We need everyone who can possibly attend to ride the float this weekend.

Membership Chair Ray Febrache announced 281 members.

Scholarship Chair Paul Hitchcock announced two \$500.00 scholarships will be awarded. Presentation will be done at the June meeting. Paul thanked the committee for their work picking the awardees

Storekeeper Phil Richeson has new magnetic ribbons for sale.

Breakfast Committee and 52 Boat Memorial Chair Warren Branges reported the Breakfast held 29 March netted \$381.50 serving 96 patrons. Next Breakfast is 31 May 2015.

Warren reported that the 52 Boat Memorial plaque replacement is going slow due to availability of the installer. The Memorial Committee is pursuing the paperwork to convert the Memorial to a 501.3(c) Charity. Next Full Flag Day will be 16 May. The SUBVETS of WWII donated \$500 to the Memorial. Those funds represented the balance of funds remaining for Laughlin Roundup when the SUBVET of WWII disbanded.

1936 - Senior Vice Commander called for a break.

1944 - Senior Vice Commander called the meeting back to order. 50/50 was held. Shipmate Ron Gorance won the cash prize and donated his winnings (less a beer) to the Base Operating Fund.

1935 - Unfinished Business

Senior Vice Commander reported on the Laughlin Roundup. Eighty-Five submariners attended. The Tolling of the Bells ceremony was held at the American Legion. It was well attended. The Commanding Officer of USS San Francisco was the Guest Speaker at the Roundup. Next year's Roundup will held 1-6 May 2016. Hotel cost is the same, \$30.99 per night.

Senior Vice Commander reported the Tolling of the Boats and Old Timers Luncheon was well attended. The Submarine Float was a hit and he thanked Shipmate Joel Eikam for setting up the Submarine Float as a static display.

Senior Vice Commander reported on the Submarine Birthday Ball. Attendance was over 400. Scamp Base member and WWII vet George Kennison was honored as longest submarine qualified. Benny Williams and Colly O'Gorman were close behind.

Senior Vice Commander reported that WWII SUBVET Benny Williams was invited to; and he and his wife were sponsored at the SUBALL by the San Diego Base with a contribution from Doug Smay Base. WWII SUBVET George Kennison was sponsored by Scamp Base.

Senior Vice Commander invited Juanita Williams to say a few words about her experience at the SUBALL. Juanita thanked the base for the sponsorship and expressed her pride in being able to attend the Ball. Benny Williams noted that he was so proud to be

invited that he took a bath before he attended. It was noted that the other 399+ attendees were glad he did.

Senior Vice Commander reopened the discussion about Fund Raising and asked for suggestions from the floor. New suggestions were: Gun Raffle (FL Base had success), fishing tackle raffle and aluminum recycling. Shipmate Ron Gorance noted he had several bicycles and two motor bikes that were available for donating if someone wanted to pick them up, rehab and resell or recycle them. Fund Raising was referred to Ways and Committee for further discussion and implementation.

Seymour Phillips noted that if SUBVETs couldn't use the bicycles there were other organizations that would.

1950 - New Business

Senior Vice Commander Warren Branges noted that San Diego Base would support the Scamp Base at Memorial Day Ceremony on 25 May. The Ceremony will be held at the Roncador Memorial on Naval Base Point Loma (fka Sumarine Base Point Loma). Phil Richeson will look into having his son take the wreath to sea.

Senior Vice Commander announced that the Annual Picnic would be held at Smuggler's Cove on Naval Base Point Loma from 0900 til ????. Boat Tour availability To Be Determined.

Senior Vice Commander reported that Base Access was being controlled very closely. Any member who has a retired or active id card can escort up to ten people on the base. Others need to be on the base access list. San Diego Base will maintain a running list to be sent to Naval Base Point Loma at least two weeks ahead of an event. If you need access for Memorial Day or the Picnic send your information to Warren Branges as soon as possible. We will work on alternate schemes such as having volunteers at the gate to act as escorts later in the month.

Senior Vice Commander gave a short brief on Honor Flight. Those flights take WWII Veterans to Washington DC for a three day excursion. Those Veterans visit the WWII Monument and other monuments on the Capital Mall. Seymour Phillips and Benny Williams were recent participants.

Senior Vice Commander invited Seymour Phillips to say a few words about his recent Honor Flight. Seymour opined that this was great experience that went entirely too fast. He had a great time visiting the monuments in DC. The hotel accommodations were excellent and their escorts were extremely helpful and courteous. He thought the whole trip was superb, but the most exciting part was the reception they received upon their return to Lindbergh Field in San Diego. A crowd of approximately 2500 greeted the flights return. Many service organizations, active duty sailors, marines, airman, a band or two and a couple local TV and radio outlets were in attendance. The crowd waved banners, shouted greetings and the bands played on, honoring the wartime service of these most deserving veterans.

Senior Vice Commander announced that Scamp Base Member and WWII Veteran Colly O'Gorman would be taking an Honor Flight to DC in May. His flight returns to Lindbergh Field at 7:45pm on Thursday, 21 May. Everyone is encouraged to put on their SUBVET Vest and meet Colley's return flight. More details will be sent via email and will posted on the USSVI San Diego Website.

Senior Vice Commander introduced the Wreaths Across America program which is currently active at both Rosecrans and Miramar National Cemeteries. More information will be forthcoming – looking forward this may be an organization San Diego Base may want to become involved with.

2013 – Good of the Order

Shipmate J.J. Lynch gave a short brief on activities of Sea Poacher Base, their memorial support and their recent scholarship fund drive.

It was announced that this was Seymour Phillips last regular meeting before his move to Los Angeles. He was given a fond farewell and the assurance that he was a welcome guest an any future meeting.

The Hot Dog concession netted \$51.00.

***Jack Kane, Secretary***

***The Meeting was adjourned at 2030.***

## **Sailing List for 12 May 2015**

Fred Fomby	Warren Branges	Phil Richeson	David Ball
Benny Williams	Juanita Williams (Guest)	Ed Farley	Bud Rollison
William Johnston	Mert Weltzien	Jessie Taylor	Jack Kane
Bill Earl	Chris Stafford	Seymour Phillips	Peter Lary
Paul Hitchcock	R. L. Febrache	Ron Gorence	W.J. (Joe) Sasser
Dennis Mortensen	Manny Burciaga	Mike Cosgrove	Joel Eikam
J.J. Lynch	Bob Farrell	Larry Dore	Dennis McCreight

## WWII Submarine Veteran Returns to San Diego

by Warren Branges, Staff Writer, The Silent Sentinel

May 21, 2015 - One of our own, Colly O’Gorman, was recently welcomed at Lindbergh Field by a few of his Brothers of the ‘Phin. Colly was returning to San Diego from Washington, DC after touring the memorials which honor our nation’s veterans. A SVWWII, USSVI Life, Holland Club and Scamp Base Member, Colly qualified in 1945 on USS Balao SS-285. Colly also served on USS Ling SS-297 before leaving the Navy in 1946 as a QM2(SS).



L to R: Jim Potts, Doug Smay, Colly O’Gorman, Ray Ferbrache and Rocky Rockers. Photo by Warren Branges

Colly was the guest of Honor Flight San Diego, the local hub of the Honor Flight Network, an all-volunteer non-profit organization created to recognize and honor America’s veterans for their service and sacrifice. The veterans selected are flown to our nation’s capitol to visit their memorials at no cost to these American heroes.

Two other WWII SubVets, George Kinnison (Scamp Base) and Benny Williams (San Diego Base) were also recent participants in Honor Flights to Washington DC.

Be sure to ask Colly, George and Benny about their Honor Flight experiences the next time you see them. Remember: Nobody tells better Sea Stories than a Submariner!!

For more information or to apply for Honor Flight San Diego, go to <http://www.honorflightsandiego.org/>

### Current News

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

#### Lawmakers Poised For Fight Over Nuclear Missile Subs

John M. Donnelly, Roll Call, June 2

Congress is girding for a showdown over how to pay a looming bill of at least \$139 billion for acquiring new nuclear-missile submarines.

The fight over these subs, which sailors call “boomers,” could erupt as soon as Tuesday, when the House Appropriations Committee marks up the fiscal 2016 Pentagon spending bill. The row will continue throughout the summer and will probably keep raging for years to come.

The proximate issue is whether to pay for these subs and perhaps other assets via a dedicated fund within the defense budget. But more than how to pay the tab, the size of the bill itself may increasingly become an issue. The boomers are one of several new

types of enormously expensive weapons that will start humming off production lines in the next two decades - bombers and ICBMs, upgraded nuclear warheads, more than 2,400 F-35 fighter jets and more.

Creating special funds may or may not help the Pentagon fit all of this into a large but essentially flat-growth defense budget. But it won't prevent a bare-knuckle brawl between the military services and among competing constituencies in Congress over the money.

"We have to find room in the budget to do it," Defense Secretary Ashton Carter told the House Armed Services Committee in March, shortly after his confirmation, referring to the boomer program. "And there are going to be tradeoffs there. They're not going to get alleviated by calling the money this or that."

The new class of boomer subs, called SSBN(X), will make as big a splash in the Pentagon's budget as the 20,000-ton vessel itself will make when it first hits the water around 2030.

The Navy wants to buy 12 SSBN(X) subs to replace 14 Ohio-class subs that have plied the oceans since the 1980s.

Procuring the new boomers will cost an average of \$19 billion a year from fiscal 2021 through 2035. If the Navy's shipbuilding budget remains at its traditional amount, the service would have to forego construction of 69 other ships to build the boomers, experts say.

The Senate Armed Services Committee is already citing the SSBN(X) bill as justification to start spending money now, rather than later, on additional ships such as destroyers.

Congress took action last year in an attempt to address the coming Navy budget crunch. The fiscal 2015 defense authorization law created a special account to fund the subs - the National Sea-Based Deterrence Fund - and placed it outside the Navy's ship budget.

The argument for doing so was that the vessels are "national" assets, not just Navy ones. The fund, supporters say, will provide a mechanism to pay for the program without shortchanging the rest of the fleet. They compare the account to the Missile Defense Agency budget, which supports projects for all the services.

"It's really about putting this in a different priority or category in the Pentagon as a national security asset, just like we did with missile defense," says Joe Courtney, D-Conn., a member of House Armed Services from one of the states where the boomers are built. "You're basically increasing the Navy's share of the pie."

To critics, however, the new account represents an invitation to uncontrolled spending for assets that many say have declining utility in today's conflicts anyway.

The account's existence has led other programs to call for their own special funds, they say. Such funds reduce pressure to control costs by moving the programs outside the services' currently capped budgets, these observers say.

And, they point out, the Navy managed to keep a fleet full of surface ships and submarines going during the periods when it built the first four classes of boomer subs, so it can probably pull it off again.

The pressures on the Navy's shipbuilding budget are "self-inflicted," says Jacob Marx, a defense analyst with the Project on Government Oversight. The service can field the same number of warheads on fewer subs and can find savings elsewhere as well, but it is less likely to come up with tradeoffs if it doesn't have to find offsets for added funds, he says.

This year, congressional appropriators have weighed in for the first time on the new account - and they have rejected it. The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, in its fiscal 2016 spending bill for the Pentagon, approved in May, would bar movement of money into the fund. Appropriators say it would reduce their ability to oversee the spending.

Proponents of the fund are ready to punch back. A skirmish could occur at this week's markup. But appropriators will probably leave intact their provision blocking use of the fund and leave the fight to the House floor.

There they will meet resistance. Courtney, for one, promises to file an amendment to block the House appropriators move if their bill hits the floor as currently written.

On the other side of Capitol Hill, Sen. Jack Reed, D-R.I., a member of Armed Services and Appropriations in whose state many workers who build the sub reside, vows to stave off attempts to restrict or kill the fund in the Senate's defense spending bill. Chip Unruh, a spokesman for Reed, said the senator is already talking with his Senate Appropriations colleagues about the House subcommittee's provision.

The issue before Congress is not whether to build the subs. America still relies on nuclear deterrence, and the subs are the least vulnerable part of the U.S. military's so-called triad of nuclear assets, which also includes bombers and land-based nuclear missiles. Under the New START Treaty, boomers will soon carry most of the U.S. warheads, up from about 50 percent today.

Rather than whether to build the subs, the questions are whether to build all 12 in the class and how to pay for them without breaking the rest of the shipbuilding budget.

The \$139 billion figure is the Navy's estimate of the cost just to acquire, not maintain and operate the subs. The Congressional Budget Office thinks the Navy's cost projection could be low by about 17 percent.

Nor does that number include the cost of extending the lives of the missiles and warheads that the boomers would carry.

The Congressional Budget Office says the nation could do this differently and save some money by fielding eight boomer subs instead of 12 and allocating more missiles and warheads per sub. That option would save \$21 billion over the next decade alone, the budget office says.

Advocates of the new boomer subs will have to defeat such suggestions. The proponents also need to fend off behind-the-scenes Air Force arguments in favor of spending some of the money meant for boomers on additional purchases of new-model bombers and ICBMs. In addition, a host of other defense priorities will be clamoring for money.

Already, the Air Force has suggested that it, too, could use its own separate fund for nuclear modernization programs.

"We're looking to see how we can do something like that," said Lt. Gen. Stephen Wilson, commander of Global Strike Command, at a press breakfast in January.

Some analysts worry that the floodgates will open to such pleas for special treatment, now that the boomer program has its own fund.

The Armed Services panels are confirming some of the critics' concerns as they look to expand the account's uses.

Both the defense authorization bills - the House-passed version and the Senate Armed Services measure - would permit the Pentagon to fill up the boomer fund with money not just from the regular boomer account in the Navy shipbuilding budget, as it now can, but from anywhere in the Defense Department budget.

But the House measure would go much further in extending how the fund could be used. The House bill would enable the fund to

also pay for building nuclear-powered aircraft carriers and attack subs. The bill also would permit the fund to be used for manufacturing Navy vessels before they are authorized by Congress and for bankrolling warships incrementally instead of paying for them in their entirety in one fiscal year.

What's more, House authorizers want money from the fund to pay for not just ships but also what the bill calls "incentives for investments in critical infrastructure" at nuclear-capable shipyards and even at those yards' subcontractors.

The House authorizers' proposals for expanding the fund are anathema to appropriators such as Republicans Harold Rogers of Kentucky, chairman of House Appropriations, and Rodney Frelinghuysen of New Jersey, who chairs the Defense panel.

Appropriators traditionally recoil at anything that they think reduces their ability to clearly track programs or that only partially funds major assets and so puts future Congresses on the hook for them.

Jennifer Hing, a spokeswoman for the House Appropriations Committee, said the pending Pentagon spending bill fully backs the administration's \$1.39 billion request for developing the new boomer sub in fiscal 2016 - but does so via traditional funding mechanisms, not the special fund.

### **U.S. To Help Vietnam Bolster Maritime Security**

Ankit Panda, The Diplomat, June 2

[Who says God doesn't have a sense of humor? Mike]

U.S. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter announced \$18 million in U.S. funding to help Vietnam beef up its coast guard.

The United States will help Vietnam bolster its maritime security by providing \$18 million to Hanoi for the acquisition of coast guard patrol vessels. The initiative marks the first major development on defense cooperation between the two erstwhile enemies since the partial lifting of the decades-old U.S. arms embargo against Vietnam late last year (the embargo still excludes lethal arms). Carter's visit comes just weeks after the 40th anniversary of the fall of Saigon, the event that marked the end of the Vietnam War.

U.S. Defense Secretary Ashton Carter remarked that he hoped the U.S. financing offer would lead to a growing security partnership between the two countries: "After 20 years there is more we can do ... [to] enhance our capabilities and the capabilities of Vietnam," he noted.

In Vietnam, Carter became the first U.S. defense secretary to be given a tour of a Vietnamese military vessel; he boarded Vietnamese Coast Guard ship CSB-8003 in the Vietnamese port of Hai Phong. The visit exemplified the growing ease with which U.S. and Vietnamese leaders are willing to broach the issue of bilateral defense cooperation. For the United States, Vietnam is increasingly being seen as a critical partner as it seeks to moderate China's assertion in the South China Sea. Vietnam is currently undergoing a wave of military modernization - with a focus on its navy - in the interest of safeguarding its waters from outside interference. Last year's episode involving a Chinese state-owned enterprise's oil rig in disputed waters highlighted the urgency of maritime security for the Vietnamese leadership.

Secretary of Defense Ash Carter tours the Vietnam Coast Guard ship CSB-8003, in Hai Phong, Vietnam, May 31 2015. Carter is on an 11 day trip to the Asia-Pacific to meet with partner nations and affirm U.S. commitment to the region.

Secretary of Defense Ash Carter tours the Vietnam Coast Guard ship CSB-8003, in Hai Phong, Vietnam, May 31 2015. Carter is on an 11 day trip to the Asia-Pacific to meet with partner nations and affirm U.S. commitment to the region.

However, despite the United States' recent overtures toward Hanoi on military technology, a few factors inhibit a major surge in Vietnam purchasing technology from the United States. As a result of the 40-year embargo, Vietnam has built almost all of its military around Russian systems. It's ongoing adoption of improved Russian Kilo-class submarines highlights this. Adding U.S. technology into this mix may be inadvisable for Hanoi, particularly given the higher cost of most U.S. systems compared to their competing Russian counterparts. For Vietnam, like other budget constrained states, purchasing older-generation used equipment from the U.S. may be one option.

Secondly, selling arms to Vietnam is far from a politically anodyne topic in the United States. Some, like U.S. Senator John McCain, are in favor of lifting the arms embargo and permitting the sale of lethal arms to Vietnam. Meanwhile, many in the U.S. remain critical of Vietnam's troublesome record on human rights, arguing that the United States ought to use arms sales as an incentive for Vietnam to change its ways at home (Human Rights Watch's John Sifton outlined the difficulties in *The Diplomat* some months ago).

The Vietnamese government has rejected this idea, noting that the U.S. shouldn't link arms sales to rights issues. Defense Minister Phung Quang Thanh, during a press conference with Carter, noted that the decision to lift the embargo would be "in line with the interests of both countries. And I think we should not attach that decision to the human rights issue."

The optics of the U.S. defense secretary's visit and the announcement of U.S. assistance for Vietnam are particularly pronounced given that Carter traveled to Vietnam shortly after speaking out against China's land reclamation activities in the South China Sea at the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore. In his Singapore speech, Carter rejected the validity of China's claims that it had a right to construct facilities and man-made islands in disputed areas of the South China Sea. The United States' ongoing convergence with Vietnam is part of the country's rebalance to Asia - a broader strategic and military readjustment toward Asia.

Vietnam, meanwhile, is seeking defense partnerships both within and beyond its immediate neighborhood. A week before Carter visited Vietnam, Thanh was in New Delhi, signing a series of memorandums of understanding with his Indian counterpart. In New Delhi, Thanh received assurances that India would continue to support Vietnam's maritime security interests. Over a month ago, reports emerged that Vietnam was purchasing anti-ship missiles and other equipment from Russia.

### **4th Sailor Faces Court Martial In Shower Recordings Case**

Staff, Associated Press, June 2

A fourth Navy sailor faces a court-martial in connection with the recording and sharing of videos that showed female officers and trainees undressing for showers aboard the submarine USS Wyoming.

A hearing is scheduled for Tuesday afternoon.

Officials say seven sailors stationed at Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base on the Georgia coast have been charged in connection

with the videos. Navy prosecutors say the videos were traded by sailors “like Pokemon” cards for energy drinks and other items. The case has been a blemish on the Navy’s integration of women into the U.S. submarine force, which had been all-male until 2011.

Three sailors pleaded guilty last week.

### **No Margin For Error As Navy Builds New Nukes: Tofalo**

Sydney J. Freedberg Jr., Breaking Defense, May 29

CAPITOL HILL – There is zero room for error in the Navy’s \$80 billion plan for nuclear missile submarines, a senior sub admiral said this morning. “We have effectively skipped an entire SSBN generation,” said Rear Adm. Joseph Tofalo, “but in doing so we have consumed the entire margin for error.”

America’s first nuclear missile submarine, the USS George Washington, began its first deterrence patrol in 1960. The first of the current Ohio class began its first patrol two decades later, in 1981. The first of the future Ohio Replacement Program submarines will begin patrolling in 2030, half a century later, Tofalo said. If that dates slips and the first Ohio Replacement sub is late, the Ohios will just be too old to keep going.

What breaks first? It could be any number of things. “As a submariner you’re at 300 feet; you’ve got high pressure hydraulics, a nuclear reactor, nuclear weapons. There are a lot of things that you think about, [and] there’s no margin for error,” Tofalo said this morning at a Capitol Hill Club breakfast. “You worry about all of them equally because any one of them could be the end of you.”

Tofalo in particular has to worry because he’s moving from the Navy staff, where he’s director of submarine warfare, to be Commander of Naval Submarine Forces, responsible for keeping subs seaworthy. The four oldest Ohios have already been converted to non-nuclear missile platforms (SSGNs) as the nuclear deterrence force downsized post-Cold War. (They’ll be retired by 2028). But the remaining SSBNs average 24 years old, Tofalo said, and they’ll average 37 years old – unprecedented for a serviceable submarine – by the time the first Ohio Replacement sub arrives. And since it’ll take time to build enough replacements, the Ohios will have to hang on for a total of 42 years.

Any interruption in funding delays the Ohio Replacement, disrupts Ohio maintenance, or both. “We are still overcoming previous years’ fiscal cutbacks and shortfalls, [e.g.] sequestration, government shutdown,” Tofalo said. And when one submarine gets stuck in unscheduled maintenance, the submarine it was supposed to relieve has to stay on station longer, putting strain on sub and crew alike. “In this past year, USS Pennsylvania [SSBN-735] was extended a record 140 days due to maintenance issues on another submarine,” he noted.

“Sequestration is the real threat to the long-term capability of the Navy,” Tofalo said, arguing that the Navy actually needs a larger budget to afford the Ohio Replacement on top of the conventional fleet.

Since the Ohios can’t last any longer, and the very expensive Ohio Replacements can’t arrive any earlier, why not let the SSBN fleet shrink? Dovish Democrats have proposed exactly that, with Sen. Edward Markey and Rep. Earl Blumenauer reintroducing legislation that would cap the fleet at eight (as well as deferring a new bomber and nuclear missiles).

Fleet size is another place there’s no more margin, Tofalo responded.

“We have to cover two oceans at once and all of the targets that go with each of these oceans,” Tofalo said. “Our SSBN force size is driven basically by three things: geography, survivability, and target coverage. Note that I did not say the words, ‘number of warheads.’” Putting the same number of warheads on a smaller number of submarines might be cheaper, but it doesn’t give you the same coverage, because each sub on patrol can only hit targets so far away. Deterrence derives from the number of targets you can threaten, not the number of times you can make the rubble bounce by striking the same target with multiple warheads.

“The combatant commander says that number is ten, ten operational SSBNs,” Tofalo said. “Eight just wouldn’t do it.”

Since the first generation of SSBNs, “we have wrung out every ounce of efficiency on this program,” he said. “We have gone from 41 SSBNs to 18 SSBNs to 14 SSBNs, and now we are headed to a force of 12.” It’s possible to get down from 14 Ohios today to 12 Ohio Replacements because the new subs will have 42-year reactor cores that don’t require elaborate refueling at mid-life, he said, and that alone saves \$40 billion over the program’s life. But even Ohio Replacements will need maintenance, and the Navy needs 12 to keep 10 operational at all times – the minimum strategists consider necessary.

### **Putin's Spy Submarines Target Clyde Defences**

Ben Borland, Express UK, May 30

Francis Tusa spoke out after a number of senior RAF figures revealed that Vladimir Putin's navy is monitoring our Trident submarines as they emerge from the Clyde.

The Sunday Express also understands that the number of submarine-hunter Type 23 frigates operating off the west of Scotland has recently been increased from one to two as a direct result of the Russian threat. There were also fresh warnings of a new fishing boat tragedy, after a number of near-misses where trawlers nets snagged on mystery underwater objects.

The furore began when five retired senior officers urged the Government to replace Britain's axed Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft.

They said: We know that Russian submarines are monitoring the area from which our nuclear missile submarines emerge from the Clyde.

Without maritime patrol aircraft surveillance, opportunities for intelligence-gathering by such intruders can only prejudice the security and effectiveness of our strategic deterrent.

Indeed, it would be surprising if valuable intelligence had not already been acquired by the Russian Navy since the Nimrod force was grounded in March 2010.

The letter to the Daily Telegraph was signed by Air Marshall Sir John Harris, Air-Vice Marshall George Chesworth, Air-Vice Marshall David Emmerson, Air-Vice Marshall Andrew Roberts and Air Commodore Andrew Neal.

### **Why China's Submarine Force Still Lags Behind**

Franz-Stefan Gady, *The Diplomat*, May 28

China is fielding an impressive fleet of conventional and nuclear submarines. According to the Pentagon's Office of Naval Intelligence, the People's Liberation Army Navy's (PLAN) underwater force consists of five nuclear attack submarines (SSN), four nuclear ballistic missile submarines (SSBN), and 53 diesel attack submarines (SS/SSP).

The Pentagon in its annual report to the U.S. Congress on Chinese military developments estimated that by 2020 this force will likely grow to between 69 and 78 submarines.

The bulk of China's conventional sub armada consists of 13 Song-class (Type 039) diesel-attack subs and 13 Yuan-class (Type 039A) air independent-powered (AIP) attack submarines with an additional 20 Yuan-class vessels planned for production.

The submarine force's main mission remains anti-surface warfare (ASUW) along major sea lines of communication (SLOC). Weaknesses in anti-submarine warfare and land-attack capabilities persist in the PLAN's submarine fleet, according to a recently published report by the RAND Corporation.

One of the major structural weaknesses of the force is Chinese propulsion engineering, or the lack thereof, since the majority of engines used in Chinese subs are imported foreign technology, often license-built in the country.

A recent U.S. conference on the Chinese Navy's capabilities at the U.S. Naval War College elaborated on this issue, as *Defense News* reported this week.

According to the conference host and Naval War College professor Andrew Erickson, propulsion engineering remains a work in progress in the PLAN's underwater force:

Here's where things become more demanding for them (...) They're going to want to be able to build a significant number of [attack submarines] whose reactors are efficient, long-lasting, reliable, and quiet enough. There's no way to compensate for quietness if you don't have it.

Diesel-electric subs are usually significantly stealthier than their nuclear counterparts, mostly due to diesel engines that are specifically designed to minimize vibration and noise in order to evade sonar detection. For example, both the Song- and Yuan-class attack submarines are equipped with German-made state-of-the-art diesel engines — the 396 SE84 series — designed by MTU Friedrichshafen GmbH of Friedrichshafen, Germany.

"They are the world's leading submarine diesel engines," according to an experienced submarine engineer. Each Song- and Yuan-class vessel is equipped with three such engines, which have been built under license by Chinese defense contractors since 1986. The Yuan-class is also said to have incorporated quieting technology from Russian-designed subs and to be equipped with Stirling air-independent propulsion technology.

"They want the ability to be quiet and not to have to surface to charge the batteries. They have achieved that with a Stirling capability in the Yuan class. But technology is always moving ahead. And in AIP, even if you've mastered it, is a highly complex system," Erickson explained.

China has also been experimenting with lithium-ion (Li-Ion) batteries, power sources that offer much higher energy density and longer dive times. "Chinese researchers clearly see Li-Ion batteries as the wave of the future for conventional submarine propulsion. They're not there yet, but they are determined to get there," Erickson noted. Erickson said China was discussing putting Li-Ion batteries "on a new generation of conventional subs sometime between now and 2020, but there is no indicator as yet of the type of submarine that might be."

Chinese submarine technology is still generally considered to be a generation behind the West. For example, the much talked about new Type 095 nuclear-attack submarine SSN will, in all likelihood, be more on par with 1980s NATO nuclear-powered fast-attack submarines (i.e. roughly three decades behind current Western sub technology), rather than with the new U.S. Virginia-class vessels. Overall, Erickson emphasized that the PLAN's modernization efforts will not immediately translate into increased capabilities:

A lot of activity is occurring, there's a lot of effort, they're making achievements, but in this complex and difficult field it takes a lot of achievement to be accrued before that translates to a major increase in actual capability. They are far from hopeless, they are moving ahead, but it is a long and rocky road.

### **Activists Afloat Attempted to Stop Nuclear Submarine**

Jim Camden, *The Spokesman-Review*, May 27

The protesters were ready for a watery rendezvous with the huge vessel coming to the Northwest. They would take their boats out into Puget Sound and, like many Davids confronting an approaching Goliath, try to block the embodiment of the greatest danger they saw to continued life on the planet.

The Coast Guard warned them to stay clear of the path of the oncoming ship. But with news media — and, they said, the world — watching, when the word came they would get in their boats and try to stop it.

In this case, "it" wasn't an Arctic oil drilling platform but the USS Ohio, the nation's newest nuclear submarine.

A generation before "kayaktivists" paddled out into Elliott Bay to protest Shell Oil's Polar Pioneer, another group of determined protesters rowed and motored their small crafts into a different part of Puget Sound intent on stopping the nation's first Trident nuclear submarine on its way to its new home at Bangor Naval Station.

It was summer 1982. Ronald Reagan was presiding over a rapid buildup of the nation's nuclear forces to up the ante with the Soviet Union.

The Ohio was the first Trident submarine, the newest — and arguably deadliest — weapon in the nation's nuclear arsenal. A behemoth the length of nearly two football fields, when submerged it was said to be undetectable. It would cruise below the surface for three months at a time, then slip back into its home port to change out crews, restock food and supplies, and go out again.

It carried up to 24 intercontinental ballistic missiles, with each of those missiles having as many as eight independently targeted warheads holding an explosive force of 300 kilotons of TNT, or about 20 times the power of the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.

The nation had ordered 24, and the first was coming to a home in Washington state.

The call went out from Ground Zero and other peace groups, and in early August protesters came by the dozens to the shore along Oak Bay, about 20 miles south of Port Townsend and just north of Hood Canal, the waterway to Bangor.

Most were from the Seattle area but others from across the country and a few from as far as Australia, the home base of the Pacific Peacemaker, a 54-foot ketch that anti-war activists from that nation sailed to Puget Sound in time for the "blockade." For several days, the Peacemaker and a trimaran from British Columbia, the Lizard of Woz, practiced towing smaller boats out into the inlet where they hoped to form a line that would force the Ohio to at least pause on its way to Bangor.

Seattle's Catholic Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen, an outspoken critic of the nation's nuclear buildup, visited the camp and blessed the boats.

The Coast Guard, too, practiced its maneuvers and told protesters they would not be allowed within 1,000 feet of the submarine when it arrived. Violating the restricted zone could mean a \$10,000 fine and 10 years in prison.

A Soviet trawler, the Gavril Sarychev, dawdled in the Strait of Juan de Fuca most of the summer, ostensibly fishing but reportedly listening for some sonar pattern that would help its military track the elusive sub. A U.S. Navy destroyer kept watch on the Soviet watchers.

Kitsap-area residents who supported the Trident and the Bangor base protested the protesters, hanging "Welcome USS Ohio" signs from decks. A few called the encamped anti-war folks epithets like "hippie slime." But the two sides generally coexisted while they waited for the sub, whose arrival was kept secret by the Navy, which would only say the Trident would be in homeport "sometime this summer."

Unlike the three-story Polar Pioneer, the Ohio was not easy to track. Ground Zero got reports from a spotter when it went through the Panama Canal, but after that, its progress was generally unknown. Protesters waited, and practiced.

About 5 a.m. on Aug. 12, the Coast Guard declared Hood Canal a security zone and instituted the 1,000-foot restricted area for the Ohio when it would arrive. Cries of "Full Alert" filled the protesters' camp as they readied their boats. The media rushed to local sailboats and fishing boats they had rented to get a closer look at the action. At 6 a.m., the Coast Guard announced it had closed the inlet and Hood Canal under a previously unmentioned 1946 maritime law, and the protesters would not be let out of Oak Bay.

When the ketch and the trimaran continued forward, Coast Guard vessels intercepted and boarded them, ordered the crews to lay face down on the decks, where they were handcuffed while guardsmen stood over them, automatic rifles at the ready. The smaller boats in the flotilla began circling the seized boats and shouting at the captors. When some protester decided to try tying up to the Coast Guard vessel, a Coast Guardsman turned a fire hose on that small boat, and then on some of the others circling the arrest scene.

While the Coast Guard had the protesters occupied, the Ohio came out of the slowly lightening mist and glided silently past like a giant gray sea monster.

A short time later it arrived in Bangor to a brass band and dignitaries welcoming the crew to their new home.

The Lizard and Peacemaker were towed to Bangor. More than a dozen protesters were arrested, appeared in U.S. District Court in Seattle that afternoon, were released without bail, and left the courthouse to the cheers of supporters.

Both sides claimed victory. The Coast Guard because the Ohio got to Bangor without interruption and without any protesters getting hurt or drowning in the Sound. The protesters said they called attention to the nuclear arms buildup and the world's deadliest weapon.

Within a week all charges against the protesters were dropped. The Ohio put to sea with its nukes for its first tour in October, and when the USS Michigan arrived in Bangor in 1983, no protest flotilla greeted it.

Bangor remains the home port of the Ohio as well as eight Tridents with nuclear missiles and another modified like the Ohio. But they can remain at sea for a year or more. They come and go without much fanfare.

### **White Paper Outlines China's Ambitions**

Wendell Minnick, Defense News, May 26

TAIPEI, Taiwan – China released its first white paper on military strategy Tuesday, just two weeks after the release of the Pentagon's annual report to the U.S. Congress on China's military and security developments.

Neither report appears to take blame for the rising tensions in the South China and East China seas. The Chinese report, "China's Military Strategy," indicates "some of its offshore neighbors" have taken "provocative actions" and reinforced their military presence on China's reefs and islands "illegally."

Without mentioning the U.S., it says, "some external countries are also busy meddling in South China Sea affairs; a tiny few maintain constant close-in air and sea surveillance and reconnaissance against China."

No mention is made of the recent warning to a U.S. reconnaissance aircraft flying near Chinese controlled areas of the South China Sea. China has not fully explained massive land reclamation efforts that will turn some reefs and islets into airbases and port facilities.

The Pentagon's "Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2015" notes that officially China "seeks to ensure basic stability along its periphery and avoid direct confrontation with the United States in order to focus on domestic development and smooth China's rise." However, Chinese leaders in 2014 demonstrated "a willingness to tolerate a higher level of regional tension as China sought to advance its interests, such as in competing territorial claims in the East China Sea and South China Sea."

Tolerating "higher levels of tension" includes the fact that "China's military modernization has the potential to reduce core U.S. military technological advantages."

The Chinese government report does make it clear that the military is implementing strategic guidelines of "active defense" in new maritime scenarios.

"In line with the evolving form of war and national security situation, the basic point for PMS [preparation for military struggle] will be placed on winning informationized local wars, highlighting maritime military struggle and maritime PMS."

The Chinese report states that the maritime environment is now a critical security domain. "The traditional mentality that land outweighs sea must be abandoned," it says. China will develop a "modern maritime military force structure commensurate with its national security and development interests, safeguard its national sovereignty and maritime rights and interests, protect the security

of strategic SLOCs [sea lines of communication] and overseas interests, and participate in international maritime cooperation, so as to provide strategic support for building itself into a maritime power."

Taiwan appears doomed in both the Pentagon and Chinese report.

The Chinese report states that " 'Taiwan independence' separatist forces and their activities are still the biggest threat to the peaceful development of cross-Straits relations ... the root cause of instability has not yet been removed."

The Pentagon report indicates that the primary driver of Chinese military modernization is a conflict over Taiwan. The self-ruled democratic island has resisted China's threats since the end of the Chinese civil war in 1949. The report indicates that Taiwan's multiple military variables to deter Chinese aggression are eroding. In the past, these have included China's inability to project sufficient power across the Taiwan Strait, the Taiwan military's technological superiority and the inherent geographic rewards of island defense.

Russian weapons sales to China such as the Su-35 fighter and the S-400 surface-to-air missile

In addition, the land-based Russian S-400, which has a range of 400 kilometers, will give China its first capability to command the skies over the entire island. At present, China's Russian S-300 only allows it to reach the coastal regions of the island's northwest.

The Chinese government report dedicates only one paragraph to its strategic missile and nuclear force. It states that it will press forward on independent innovations in weapons, enhance the effectiveness of missile systems, improve the force structure of both nuclear and conventional capabilities, and "strengthen its capabilities for strategic deterrence and nuclear counterattack, and medium- and long-range precision strikes."

The Pentagon report is far more detailed and ominous. China is developing a robust anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) punch that includes short-, medium- and intercontinental-range ballistic missiles, anti-ship ballistic missiles (ASBM), destroyers bristling with cruise missiles, and nuclear-armed submarines, according to the Pentagon report.

The report says the DF-21D ASBM would be capable of holding at risk an aircraft carrier within 900 nautical miles of the Chinese coastline.

This would keep U.S. ships at a distance too far to be effective in a Taiwan scenario.

To supplement the road-mobile nuclear DF-31 ICBM, China also is developing the road-mobile nuclear DF-41, which will carry multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles.

Oddly, the Chinese report indicates the country is not involved in outer space weapon efforts.

"Space has become a commanding height in international strategic competition," according to the Chinese report. In opposition to other "countries" developing their "space forces and instruments" for the weaponization of outer space, "China has all along advocated the peaceful use of outer space, opposed the weaponization of and arms race in outer space, and taken an active part in international space cooperation."

The Chinese report makes no mention of a series of anti-satellite tests beginning in 2006, when U.S. government officials reported China temporarily blinded a U.S. observation satellite with a high-power laser.

Those tests include 2007, when China fired an SC-19 missile and destroyed an aging Fengyun weather satellite. In 2010, China fired an SC-19 missile that destroyed a moving target. And in 2013, China conducted a test launch of a Dong Neng-2 anti-satellite interceptor.

The Pentagon report makes a disturbing entry about an event that occurred in May 2013 and one that Beijing refuses to explain:

"China launched an object into space on a ballistic trajectory with a peak altitude above 30,000 km. This trajectory took it near geosynchronous orbit, where many nations maintain communications and earth-sensing satellites. Analysis of the launch determined that the booster was not on the appropriate trajectory to place objects in orbit and that no new satellites were released. The post-boost vehicle continued its ballistic trajectory and re-entered Earth orbit 9.5 hours after launch. The launch profile was not consistent with traditional space-launch vehicles, ballistic missiles or sounding rocket launches used for scientific research. It could, however, have been a test of technologies with a counterspace mission in geosynchronous orbit."

According to the Chinese report, long-range, precise, smart, stealthy and unmanned weapons and equipment are becoming increasingly sophisticated. The Pentagon report appears to give a more alarming prediction of what the media often refers to as a coming "drone war" with the United States.

The report says acquisition and development of long-range UAVs will "increase China's ability to conduct long-range reconnaissance and strike operations" and that "estimates indicate China plans to produce upwards of 41,800" UAVs between 2014 and 2023.

In 2013, according to the report, China began incorporating its UAVs into military exercises and conducted reconnaissance patrols over the East China Sea with the BZK-005 UAV. In 2013, China unveiled details of four UAVs under development – the Xianglong, Yilong, Sky Saber and Lijian. The last three are designed to carry precision-strike weapons. The Lijian is China's first stealthy flying wing UAV.

