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The Silent Sentinel

December 2009



Our Creed

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 towards greater accomplishment and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution.



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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.

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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*

DECEMBER Meeting

Our monthly meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at VFW Post 3787, 4370 Twain Ave., San Diego. Our December meeting will be on 8 December, 2009. 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

*CJ Glassford
Charlie Marin
Mike Hyman
Chuck George*

Submitted by Mike Hyman

Submarine Losses in December

Submitted by C J Glassford



ALBACORE (SS 218) - 86 Men on Board:
Possibly Sunk, on 7 November 1944, by Japanese Mine, Off the Northern Tip of Honshu :
“ALL HANDS LOST“

GROWLER (SS 215) - 85 Men on Board:
Probably Sunk, on 8 November 1944, by Japanese Destroyer, Escort Vessel, and Coastal Defense Vessel, Off Mindoro :
“ALL HANDS LOST“

SCAMP (SS 277) - 83 Men on Board:
Sunk, on 11 November 1944, by Japanese Naval Aircraft, and Coast Defense Vessel, in Tokyo Bay Area :
“ALL HANDS LOST“

CORVINA (SS 226) - 82 Men on Board:
Torpedoed and Sunk, on 16 November 1943, by Japanese Submarine, South of Truk :
“ALL HANDS LOST“

SCULPIN (SS 191) - 63 Men on Board:

Damaged, on 19 November 1943, by Japanese Destroyer, and later Scuttled, North of Truk :
 “21 SURVIVED POW CAMP“

CAPELIN (SS 289) - 78 Men on Board:

Sunk, on 23 November 1943, by unknown Causes, Either by Japanese Aircraft, Minelayer, or Japanese Mine in the Northern Celebes, or perhaps a Hull Defect reported “Prior” to Her Departure from Darwin, Australia :
 “ALL HANDS LOST“



Base Officer Nominations

“Ahoy, shipmates” - Its time again to nominate officers for our Base. Nominate your favorite candidate and submit his name. Be sure he is willing to accept the nomination and that he will serve if elected. The term of office for all elected Base officers is two years. Currently the serving Base officers have submitted their names to run in the capacity they now serve. Elections will be held in February and elected officers will be sworn in in March and assume the duties of the offices upon being sworn in.

Send in your nominations to our Base address. I'll gather them up from time to time. See you at our next meeting. -
 Charlie

Veterans' Day Parade, San Diego







**CHRISTMAS GATHERING of SUBMARINE VETERANS
REPRESENTING
SVWW-II / USS SCAMP BASE / SAN DIEGO BASE**

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4370 TWAIN AVENUE
SAN DIEGO, CA

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or
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RSVP

WE DO ASK THAT YOU “RSVP” TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING NLT DECEMBER 2nd 2009

LEN HEISELT llenheiselt@verizon.net or BOB BISSONNETTE rbisson250@aol.com

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Snowe, Webb, Lincoln, Landrieu Announce Bill to Honor Cold War Veterans

November 5, 2009

Washington, D.C. -

U.S. Senators Olympia J. Snowe (R-Maine), Jim Webb (D-Va.), Blanche Lincoln (D-Ark.), and Mary Landrieu (D-La.) today introduced the Cold War Service Medals Act of 2009, bipartisan legislation to authorize the secretaries of the military departments to award Cold War Service Medals to American veterans. To date, no medal exists to honor the men and women who served and defended the United States during the Cold War.

"From the end of World War II to dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Cold War veterans were in the vanguard of the Nation's defenses," said Senator Snowe. "Although long overdue, this legislation will honor and recognize the American patriots who for nearly half-a-century defended the Nation against the advance of communist ideology in the form of the Cold War Service Medal. The commitment, motivation, and fortitude of these brave service members was second to none and their actions should be recognized in a long-standing military custom befitting their patriotism and service."

"The millions of Americans who served in uniform in the armed forces during the Cold War, spanning more than four decades, were the living embodiment of our nation's strategy of deterrence," said Senator Webb. "In their efforts to preserve peace, hundreds died during isolated armed confrontations when the Cold War flashed hot at remote locations around the world. This legislation will appropriately honor those who served in an effort that resulted in the largest single expansion in the number of democratically elected governments in world history."

"America's Cold War veterans deserve every honor we can bestow upon them for their hard work and dedication to keeping our nation safe," Senator Lincoln said. "The Cold War Service Medal would allow military service members, veterans, and their families to receive the recognition and honor they rightfully deserve. I will continue to work with my colleagues to ensure our veterans receive the support and care they and their families need. It's the least we can do as a grateful nation."

"For 46 years, we were engaged in a worldwide battle against communism," said Senator Landrieu. "During that time, there were countless heroes, who served in our nation's Armed Forces and played a critical role in America's triumph. These men and women, who sacrificed so much for so many, deserve to be awarded the Cold War Service Medal in recognized of their faithful service to their country and tireless defense of freedom around the world."

Specifically, the Cold War Service Medal Act of 2009 would allow the Defense Department to issue a Cold War Service Medal to any honorably discharged veteran who served on active duty for not less than two years or was deployed for thirty days or more during the period from September 2, 1945, to December 26, 1991. In the case of those veterans who are now deceased, the medal could be issued to their family or representative, as determined by the Defense Department. The bill would also express the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Defense should expedite the design of the medal and expedite the establishment and implementation mechanisms to facilitate the issuance of the Cold War Service Medal. The award of the Cold War Service Medal is supported by the American Cold War Veterans, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and other veterans' services organizations.

Navy Preps For Uncharted Arctic Waters

By Andrew Scutro, Navy Times, Nov. 22, 2009

Time to order some new parkas, wool watchcaps and warm gloves. As polar ice melts at the top of the world, more space to drive ships will open, meaning job opportunities for the surface fleet.

In the next four years, the Navy, Coast Guard and other government organizations will figure out what ships, training, equipment, rules and schedules they will need for a whole new operating area, through their "Arctic Roadmap" released on Nov 10.

"As the ice melts back, it is an ocean, and we as the United States Navy work in every ocean in the world," said Rear Adm. Dave Titley, oceanographer and navigator of the Navy, in a telephone interview. "The Arctic is a challenge; it's not a crisis. Nothing is in danger today but it's some-thing we realize we're going to have to take a look at."

The Navy expects to contend with increased maritime traffic combined with international disputes over passage rights, sovereignty, and access to oil, minerals and natural gas.

Titley said that by the late 2030s, if melting continues at the current rates, the Arctic will be "ice-free for at least a period of several weeks each summer."

That means young sailors and officers today need to get familiar with uncharted waters. "When the ice really starts melting back and we really have to be up there," he said, "the officers and senior enlisted of that Navy, if we do our jobs right, will have experience working in that environment."

Today, only U.S. submarines regularly cut across the top of the globe and train beneath the ice,

Over the next four years Task Force Climate Change, under the oceanographer's office, will have figured out what it will take for arctic fleet operations, including communications and logistics, down to how well forecasters can tell a ship captain if he should expect ice ahead.

In the meantime, sailors will get more chances to see how other navies deal with extremely cold conditions and ice-choked seas.

Titley said some 2nd Fleet sailors rode to the Arctic with the Canadian Navy this summer for Exercise Nanook. They learned, for example, those ship crews shut down and drift at night to avoid driving into undetected ice.

Training exercises organized by Fleet Forces Command and 2nd Fleet tentatively chalked for the coming years will also provide planners with lessons for the decisions ahead.

By the end of 2011 several assessments should determine, among other things, how to strengthen hulls and communications to operate in cold, hostile conditions.

The Arctic remains largely unknown because the water has been inaccessible.

"Because it's been ice, right now the best estimates are that 5 percent of the Arctic Ocean has been charted to modern standards," Titley said.

Submariners already know about the biennial ICIX trips to the Arctic, when the chosen subs poke through the ice near a hasty research camp for a week or so of experimentation and torpedo shoots in frigid conditions. But as part of the roadmap through climate change in the Arctic, exercises Northern Eagle, Arctic Edge and Arctic Care, among others are identified as opportunities to learn the area. In Northern Eagle 2008, for example, the frigate Elrod trained with Russian and Norwegian forces in the Barents Sea, south of the Arctic Ocean.

China's Noisy Nuclear Submarines

By Hans M. Kristensen, FAS Strategic Security Blog, Nov. 21, 2009

China's new Jin-class ballistic missile submarine is noisier than the Russian Delta III-class submarines built more than 30 years ago, according to a report produced by the U.S. Navy's Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI).

The report, which was first posted on the FAS Secrecy News Blog and has since been removed from the ONI web site, is to my knowledge the first official description made public of Chinese and Russian modern nuclear submarine noise levels.

Force Level

The report shows that China now has two Jin SSBNs, one of which is based at Hainan Island with the South Sea Fleet, along with two Type 093 Shang-class nuclear-powered attack submarines (SSN). The Jin was first described at Hainan in February 2008 and the two Shangs in September 2008. The second Jin SSBN is based at Jianggezhuang with the North Sea Fleet alongside the old Xia-class SSBN and four Han-class SSNs.

The report confirms the existence of the Type 095, a third-generation SSN intended to follow the Type 093 Shang-class. Five Type 095s are expected from around 2015. The Type-95 is estimated to be noisier than the Russian Akula I SSN built 20 years ago.

Missile Range

The ONI report states that the JL-2 sea-launched ballistic missile on the Jin SSBNs has a range of ~4,000 nautical miles (~7,400 km) "is capable of reaching the continental United States from Chinese littorals." Not quite, unless Chinese littorals extend well into the Sea of Japan. Since the continental United States does not include Alaska and Hawaii, a warhead from a 7,400-km range JL-2 would fall into the sea about 800 km from Seattle. A JL-2 carrying penetration aids in addition to a warhead would presumably have a shorter range.

Although the ONI report states that the Julang-2 can target the Continental United States, the range estimate it provides is insufficient to reach the lower 48 states or Hawaii.

Alaska would be in range if the JL-2 is launched from the very northern parts of Chinese waters, but Hawaii is out of range unless the missile is launched from a position close to South Korea or Japan. The U.S. Defense Department's 2009 report to Congress on the Military

Power of the People's Republic of China also shows the range of the JL-2 to be insufficient to target the Continental United States or Hawaii from Chinese waters. The JL-2 instead appears to be a regional weapon with potential mission against Russia and India and U.S. bases in Guam and Japan.

Patrol Levels

The report also states that Chinese submarine patrols have "more than tripled" over the past few years, when compared to the historical levels of the last two decades.

That sounds like a lot, but given that the entire Chinese submarine fleet in those two decades in average conducted fewer than three patrols per year combined, a tripling doesn't amount to a whole lot for a submarine fleet of 63 submarines. According to data obtained from ONI under FOIA, the patrol number in 2008 was 12.

Since only the most capable of the Chinese attack submarines presumably conduct these patrols away from Chinese waters – and since China has yet to send one of its ballistic missile submarines on patrol – that could mean one or two patrols per year per submarine.

Implications

The ONI report concludes that the Jin SSBN with the JL-2 SLBM gives the PLA Navy its first credible second-strike nuclear capability. The authors must mean in principle, because in a war such noisy submarines would presumably be highly vulnerable to U.S. or Japanese anti-submarine warfare forces. (The noise level of China's most modern diesel-electric submarines is another matter; ONI says some are comparable to Russian diesel-electric submarines).

That does raise an interesting question about the Chinese SSBN program: if Chinese leaders are so concerned about the vulnerability of their nuclear deterrent, why base a significant portion of it on a few noisy platforms and send them out to sea where they can be sunk by U.S. attack submarines in a war? And if Chinese planners know that the sea-based deterrent is much more vulnerable than its land-based deterrent, why do they waste money on the SSBN program?

The answer is probably a combination of national prestige and scenarios involving India or Russia that have less capable anti-submarine forces.

The Hunt for Lost WWII 'Samurai Subs'

By Ki Mae Heussner, ABC News, November 16, 2009

With more time, military experts say, a fleet of revolutionary Japanese super-submarines could have changed the course of World War II.

Some were designed to launch bombers on kamikaze missions against New York City, Washington, D.C., and the Panama Canal. Others were thought to be twice as fast any other submarine used in the war.

None had the chance to execute their stealth missions against the U.S. mainland or critical targets in the Pacific during the war.

But after the war ended and the U.S. Navy seized and surveyed the vessels, it made a drastic decision: Each submarine was taken off the coast of Hawaii in 1946 and shot down to the ocean floor to keep the technology from falling into Soviet hands.

For years since, divers have scanned the depths of the Pacific to recover the subs and their technological secrets but to no avail.

Until now.

A National Geographic Program premiering Tuesday documents a team of researchers' successful hunt for the super-submarines, which have not been seen by human eyes for more than 60 years.

Retired Navy Captain Has The Goods On Sunken Subs Story

By Diane Bell, San Diego Union-Tribune, November 17, 2009

The recent national news about two sunken Japanese submarines from World War II discovered near Hawaii came as no surprise to San Diegan Jo Dee Jacob.

In 1946, Jacob's father, retired Navy Cmdr. Allen "Buck" Catlin, was in charge of scuttling the fast-attack subs, along with three larger ones designed to carry aircraft in nearly 3,000 feet of water.

Jacob, who retired as a Navy captain after 27 years and now heads the San Diego-Imperial Council of Girl Scouts, has displayed some equipment from the submarines in her home for years.

Jacob's father gave her and her husband, Glenn, also a retired Navy captain, a couple of navigational instruments, including armillary spheres, a clock and a sextant; a torpedo firing valve, which was turned into a bottle opener; and his samurai sword.

The sword was presented to Catlin as a sign of friendship by one of the sub skippers on the day Catlin left Japan to escort the five submarines to Hawaii. After an analysis of their capabilities, the subs were sunk by torpedo in May and June of 1946, in part to prevent the Russians from acquiring the advanced technology.

While the Hawaii Undersea Research Laboratory had a record of four Japanese subs returning to Pearl Harbor, Catlin informed the lab that there were five, and had the photos to prove it. Catlin said he was the last person aboard all five. As he left, he removed periscope name plates and presented them to the Naval Submarine Base in Groton, Conn.

A film crew from the National Geographic Channel went to Catlin's home in Fullerton to interview him for a special on the submarines, so he borrowed his souvenirs from his daughter. There wasn't time to mail them, so Catlin, 92, sent someone to San Diego to pick them up.

The National Geographic Channel is airing "Hunt for the Samurai Subs" at 4 and 9 p.m. today, and at 4 and 11 p.m. tomorrow.

"I was glad they found the subs," Catlin said. "It's a historic note we lost sight of because the atomic bomb overshadowed everything."

Medvedev Plans 'Fundamental Refit' Of Navy By 2020

Reuters, November 16, 2009

SINGAPORE - President Dmitry Medvedev promised on Monday to increase naval spending and widen his country's presence in the world's oceans even as the global financial crisis is biting into the budget.

The naval spending rise is part of a planned "fundamental refit" of the armed forces between 2011 and 2020 that will replace up to 90 percent of the equipment in some parts of the armed forces, Medvedev said.

Russia has one of the largest navies in the world, including a submarine fleet second only to that of the United States.

The navy has held high-profile exercises in the Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean and the Mediterranean in recent years in a bid to reassert itself after the decade of decay that followed the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

"Our task, so that our fleet and our flag appears in various locations, is to invest as many resources as possible in the development of the navy," Medvedev told Russian Pacific Fleet sailors on board a missile cruiser docked in Singapore.

"We have a rearmament program ... and this program will continue to grow," said the president, who attended a regional summit in the Asian city-state over the weekend.

Despite a significant increase in Russia's military budget in recent years, its fleet remains plagued by accidents.

On Friday, an arms depot run by the navy in the city of Ulyanovsk, about 800 kilometers (500 miles) southeast of Moscow, caught fire, killing two people and forcing thousands to flee their homes.

Last year, 20 people died during a sea trial of a Russian submarine when a fire-extinguishing system was erroneously activated, releasing deadly chemical gases into the air.

Medvedev promised that military budgets would not be cut as a result of the global economic crisis, which has caused a sharp fall in Russian economic growth, putting pressure on the national budget.

"The influence of the crisis on the defense sphere will be minimal," Medvedev told the sailors.

Questions Linger About U.S. Submarine Operation In Arctic

By David Pugliese, Ottawa Citizen, November 13, 2009

The Canadian government won't say whether the U.S. informed it in advance about a nuclear-powered submarine which recently surfaced near the North Pole.

The U.S. Navy has noted that the submarine, USS Texas, recently completed its Arctic mission. The 7,800-ton sub, with a crew of 134, completed what some U.S. media outlets are calling a historic month-long exercise near the North Pole since it became the first of the new Virginia-class submarines not only to operate in the Arctic, but also to surface through the ice.

It is unclear exactly what route the submarine took and whether the U.S. requested permission from Canada to operate in any waters claimed by Canada. Before being elected prime minister, Stephen Harper complained about U.S. submarines operating in Canadian waters without permission and he vowed to put an end to that.

Defence Watch asked Defence Minister Peter MacKay for comment but that request was passed on to Foreign Affairs.

In an email late Friday night Foreign Affairs spokesman Alain Cacchione stated that information about submarine operations is considered secret. He noted that Canada permits shipping through Canadian Arctic waters provided vessels respect Canadian controls "related to safety, security, the environment and Inuit interests."

There are safety protocols in place under NATO that provide for the exchange of information on allied submarine movements, Cacchione added.

Defence sources, however, note that the Pentagon does not ask Canada for permission if its submarines need to operate in Arctic areas that Canada claims sovereignty over but the U.S. considers as international waters. That includes the Northwest Passage.

The Canadian government has noted an increase in Russian activities in the North. Both MacKay and Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon have taken a hard-line in regard to excursions by the Russians into the Arctic. Earlier this year, MacKay accused the Russians of sending military aircraft too close to Canadian northern airspace. He vowed that Canadian Forces CF-18 fighter aircraft would intercept every Russian aircraft each and every time they come near the country. Cannon told reporters that Canada "will not be bullied" by a Russian plan to create a new security force for the Arctic. Canada has its own plans for a new response force for the Arctic.

In the past, U.S. Arctic submarine exercises have included firing unarmed torpedoes to test their performance in frigid waters. The U.S. Navy did not release details on what, if any, weapons tests were performed by the Texas.

The sub remained on the surface for 24 hours. “Words cannot describe how impressed I am with my crew’s performance and professionalism,” Cmdr. Robert Roncska, the Texas’ commanding officer, said of the Arctic mission. “The ship performed extremely well in the cold under-ice environment, and I am honored to carry on the tradition of Arctic operations by our awesome submarine force,” Roncska added in a recent release by the U.S. Pacific Fleet submarine force.

Report: Lax Leadership Led To Hormuz Collision

By Andrew Scutro, Navy Times, November 16, 2009

The navigator was listening to his iPod during a critical evolution.

Watchstanders were known to sleep on the job.

Stereo speakers were rigged for music in the radio room.

An informal atmosphere – along with crew complacency, a “weak” command and inferior submariner skills – are named as contributors to the March 20 collision between the attack submarine Hartford and the amphibious transport dock New Orleans in the Strait of Hormuz.

And according to a heavily redacted 102-page Judge Advocate General Manual investigation obtained by Navy Times through a Freedom of Information Act request, what turned into a major embarrassment for the submarine fleet was entirely “avoidable.”

The collision happened just after midnight in calm seas as Hartford was at periscope depth and southbound, crossing the strait bound for a port call in Jebel Ali, United Arab Emirates.

New Orleans – 70 days into its first deployment – was westbound, exiting the surface transit lane of the strait. The state-of-the-art gator was entering the Persian Gulf as part of the Boxer Amphibious Ready Group.

The ships crashed as they intersected. Fifteen sailors on Hartford were hurt, none more seriously than during a typical swim call, according to the boat’s corpsman. No one on New Orleans was injured.

The crew of New Orleans “bears no fault” for the accident, the report said.

When it was all over, Hartford would take one month to limp home to Groton, Conn., on the surface, its captain and chief of the boat both fired. Today, Hartford is still undergoing extensive repairs to its bent sail, internal components and damaged bow planes at General Dynamics Electric Boat in Groton. Industry experts estimate the bill to be more than \$100 million.

New Orleans suffered a 16-by-18-foot gash in its hull. It would spend 53 days in Bahrain undergoing \$2.3 million in repairs while stranding embarked leathernecks from the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit.

Problems At The Top

Blame for the whole debacle lands squarely with a command team on Hartford that tolerated an “informal” atmosphere on the ship, the report said.

Cmdr. Ryan Brookhart was detached for cause and chief of the boat Master Chief Electronics Technician (SS) Stefan Prevot was reassigned to Submarine Squadron 4 in the aftermath. The navigator, executive officer and weapons officer underwent nonjudicial punishment, as did 10 sailors. Also, administrative action was taken against three direct support element members assigned to Naval Information Operations Command in Georgia as well as a fleet intelligence specialist based near Washington, D.C. The report did not explain what role they played.

The report’s final endorsement, by Fleet Forces Command head Adm. John Harvey, called the accident the result of “nearly 30 tactical and watchstander errors” in the hour before the collision. He also noted that the command failed to hold subordinates accountable, “and a high price has been paid for that shortcoming.”

Harvey also directed the submarine force to review all collisions back to the attack sub Greenville’s fatal crash into a Japanese fisheries training boat in 2001 near Hawaii.

Vice Adm. Jay Donnelly, Submarine Force commander, spoke candidly about the mishap Oct. 28 during the annual Naval Submarine League meeting in McLean, Va.

He said the crew had just finished an intense operational phase of its deployment and “everybody let down their guard” for what was actually one of the most challenging phases, crossing the strait at periscope depth.

He also noted that more or better technology would not have helped the situation, as the sub crew knew New Orleans and another ship were nearby

A Bigger Issue

The collision illustrates the force’s larger problem with contact management. An internal message sent by Submarine Force Pacific commander Rear Adm. Douglas McAneny less than a month after the collision urged commanders and commodores to boost crews’ ability to track surface contacts.

“Over several months” prior to the incident, hundreds of watchstanders were tested in their ability to understand how to analyze the movement of surface contacts. The exams yielded results of 10 percent to 15 percent passing grades among enlisted watchstanders and 60 percent of officers.

“Given the attention I have personally placed on submerged contact management in briefing the waterfronts, this is unacceptable,” McAneny wrote in the message obtained by Navy Times.

Not Up To Standard

At the time of the collision, the sub was southbound at periscope depth, periodically raising and lowering its periscope.

When the ships collided, the New Orleans crew felt “a shudder and rumbling.” That bridge team slowed to 3 knots and launched a small boat to look for damage. The big amphib had flooding in ballast and fuel tanks and listed “1.5 degrees to starboard.”

On Hartford, the crash caused the door of the control room to be jammed shut by a battle lantern, a fuel leak in the machinery room, and “light smoke” in that space and in the torpedo room.

The bow planes were not working and the periscopes would not rise. The towed array was retrieved and baffles cleared before conducting an emergency blow and surfacing 3,000 yards from New Orleans. It took the crew nearly four hours using “wedges and a portable hydraulic jack” to pry open hatches up to the bridge.

Blame is on Brookhart for failing to plan the “strait transit and crossing evolution,” for failing to communicate the plan, and leaving watchstanders without “the heightened risk that should have been foremost on everyone’s mind.”

But the watchstanders were not up to standard to begin with, according to the report.

Control room understanding of contact management was found to be poor enough that crewmembers “routinely failed to critically evaluate the validity” of computer-generated contact information with “raw sensor data.”

But as McAneny urged commanders to get their crews up to standard, the causes of the collision point to leadership. Brookhart, the executive officer and COB were together tagged with setting a command climate that lacked a “questioning attitude” that is expected in the submarine force and for fostering a “general level of complacency.”

It was felt by even the youngest sailors. Helmsmen – always the newest crew – told investigators they often would “slouch in their seats with one hand on the controls,” and would “take off their shoes while driving the ship.”

Sailors also reported a lax attitude in the sonar division about taking breaks.

On the night of the crash, sonar operators chatted “for the majority of the time [in the hour before] the collision.” An officer of the deck did not look through the periscope prior to the collision after taking over contact management duties.

The navigator, off-watch, was found to have been taking an engineering exam in the wardroom “while listening to his iPod,” despite the hazardous evolution underway.

Brookhart was never in the control room during any time crossing the strait, the investigators found.

Prior to the accident, speakers had been installed in the ultra-sensitive radio room “that allowed music to be played from an iPod while on watch. This was hidden from the Chain of Command.”

Perhaps most shocking was this revelation: “Many crewmembers stated there were numerous ‘known’ sleepers [five specific names were reiterated by the majority of those crewmembers interviewed]. Those personnel would routinely fall asleep [‘nod off’] on watch, and no disciplinary action was taken.”

Two of the known sleepers were on watch during the collision, the report states.

The investigating team does make a point at the end of the report to say most of the sailors on the ship were of an “absolutely superb caliber” now “hungering for effective leadership” and “eager to restore their ship’s standing.”

Navy Releases RFP For Next-Generation Countermeasure For Submarines

By Dan Taylor, Inside the Navy, November 16, 2009

The Navy has released its final request for proposals for a next-generation countermeasure system for submarines that the service hopes will be a significant leap forward in how it is able to handle the more sophisticated torpedoes in use today.

The Nov. 5 Federal Business Opportunities notice includes a statement of work from earlier this year describing a three-inch diameter, 39.5-inch long expendable acoustic countermeasure “which can be employed either as a hover or flight mobile device to be launched from the internal countermeasure launcher” and the countermeasure launch system installed on submarines. The system is dubbed acoustic device countermeasure (ADC) Mark 5 Mod 0.

“It will utilize adaptive countermeasure technology, developed under the Office of Naval Research future naval capability program, to provide variable acoustic modes of operation, including stationary broadband jamming, spot jamming, echo repeat and mobile decoys,” the document states. “It is designed to increase submarine probability of survival against threat acoustic-homing torpedoes.”

The Navy hopes to field the countermeasure – which would be used on all submarines – in fiscal year 2013 or 2014, with full operational capability to follow a few years later, Alan Baribeau, a Naval Sea Systems Command spokesman, said in an October e-mail.

“The search for the next more capable countermeasure is one more step in the ongoing evolutionary cycle of increasingly sophisticated weapons being designed to counter increasingly sophisticated countermeasures (or the other way around),” Baribeau said. “The concept for this countermeasure has been around for a while, but not until recently has the technology been able to provide the capability at a reasonable cost.”

He declined to discuss details on how the system would work, but said the countermeasure will give the Navy a “great deal of flexibility” in countering sophisticated methods used by torpedoes.

“This is in sharp contrast to the current arsenal of legacy torpedo countermeasures,” he added.

China Admits Secretly Salvaging British Submarine HMS Poseidon

By Julian Ryall, Daily Telegraph (United Kingdom), November 13, 2009

China has admitted secretly salvaging a British submarine sunk in an accident in 1931, but claimed there was no sign of the remains or personal effects of the 18 men who were entombed in HMS Poseidon when it went down off the former naval base of Weihai.

Beijing has only confirmed that it raised and scrapped the Poseidon in 1972 after its fate was reported by The Daily Telegraph shortly after the anniversary of the sinking on June 9.

But China’s claim that the hull of the vessel contained no human remains, identity tags, watches, rings or other personal items has provoked anger among relatives of the men who died.

“It was a shock to discover the Chinese authorities’ claims and I’m deeply upset and disappointed,” said Penny Lewis, whose grandfather, Able Seaman Frederick Tolliday, died in the accident.

“And that is not only for myself, but especially on behalf of my father and grandmother who were both still alive in 1972 when the Poseidon was recovered,” she said.

“The Royal Navy has always maintained that a large number of the crew never escaped from the vessel, including my grandfather, but this conflicts with the Chinese saying no remains or personal effects were discovered. Who is telling the truth?” said Mrs Lewis, 51, from Stevenage, Herts.

In a statement, the Ministry of Defence said it “takes very seriously the issue of the sovereignty of United Kingdom maritime graves.”

Chinese authorities informed the ministry that “due to the long time that has passed and the lack of effective record keeping during that turbulent period of Chinese history, they have no more information that that which appears on the Shanghai Salvage Bureau’s web site.”

It was this brief reference to the raising of the Poseidon during the Cultural Revolution that caught the attention of American maritime historian Steven Schwankert. Subsequent inquiries led to evidence that the Chinese salvaged the vessel without informing London in order to test the skills of their naval special forces and newly formed underwater recovery units, as well as to clear a fishing area of a hazard that had been damaging fishermen’s nets for four decades.

And while it is accepted that little more can be done to protest the raising of the vessel, there are hopes that China might be encouraged to conduct a new investigation into the remains of the crew, which experts believe would have been recovered.

After all, they point out, the CSS Hunley, one of the first submarines ever built and sunk in 1864 during the American Civil War, contained eight skeletons that had been almost perfectly preserved when it was recovered from Charleston harbour in April 2004.

“There is no doubt in my mind that there would have been human remains on board, and that means that either the people who raised the submarine lied to the Chinese government, or they are lying to us,” said David Clarke, whose grandfather survived the sinking.

Petty Officer Reginald Clarke spent more than three hours inside the submarine before managing to escape using the then-new Davis Submerged Escape Apparatus, a rudimentary underwater breathing system designed to lift sailors to the surface. Eight men managed to leave a bow section compartment, although two failed to reach the surface and another died later.

“The answer the families have been given from the Chinese is completely unsatisfactory and not at all believable,” Mr Clarke added.

The question of the fate of the crew of the Poseidon was raised in Parliament in June by Dr Julian Lewis, the shadow defence minister, who believes that an opportunity still remains for both the families and the Chinese naval authorities to benefit from the situation.

“It is understandable that the Chinese authorities are sensitive about any remains that may have been discovered, but I do hope that they will check their records a little more thoroughly,” he said.

“This is because they have a real opportunity to do something positive, by reaching out from their modern navy to the descendants of sailors in our inter-war navy, to strengthen bonds and perhaps even invite the relatives to an appropriate ceremony in Weihai to rebury any remains they have found,” he added.

Report: Pakistani President Suspected Of Graft In Submarine Sale

South Asia News, November 10, 2009

Paris - Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari is suspected of having received millions of dollars in kickbacks from the 1994 sale of three French submarines to the Pakistani Navy, the daily Liberation reported Tuesday.

In addition, investigators believe that the non-payment of the full amount of the agreed kickbacks may have led to the deaths of 11 French nationals in a 2002 terror attack in the city of Karachi.

In the report, Liberation says it acquired documents that allegedly show that Zardari received 4.3 million dollars in kickbacks from the sale of three Agosta 90 submarines for 825 million euros (currently 1.237 billion dollars).

The documents were sent to the Pakistani National Accountability Bureau (NAB) by British authorities in April 2001 and indicate that Zardari received several large payments into his Swiss bank accounts from a Lebanese businessman, Abdulrahman el-Assir, in 1994 and 1995.

According to a former executive of the French naval defence company DCN, French authorities chose el-Assir to act as intermediary in the deal.

He allegedly deposited a total of 1.3 million dollars in Zardari's bank accounts between August 15 and 30, 1994, one month before the submarine contract was signed, and then 1.2 million dollars and 1.8 million dollars one year later.

According to DCN employees who testified in the terror attack investigation, the kickbacks to Pakistan in the deal totalled 10 per cent of the purchase amount, with 6 per cent, or 49.5 million dollars, going to the military and 4 per cent, or 33 million euros, being funneled to political circles.

In 2001, former Pakistani Navy chief-of-staff Mansour Ul-Haq was arrested for his part in the deal and forced to repay 7 million dollars, the daily says.

Legal proceedings against Zardari were dropped in April 2008, several months before he was elected president. However, the husband of the assassinated former Pakistani president Benazir Bhutto was imprisoned from 1997 to 2004 on corruption charges unrelated to this affair.

The Pakistani president is one of his country's richest men, with a net worth estimated at 1.8 billion dollars.

The ongoing investigation in Paris into the May 8, 2002, terrorist attack that killed 11 DCN employees in Karachi may shed new light on the submarine purchase and his part in it.

The victims were in Karachi to complete work on the three submarines. According to French media, the magistrate looking into the bombing has rejected the theory that it was the work of al-Qaeda.

He is now considering the possibility that it was carried out by Pakistanis, either because only 85 per cent of the agreed kickbacks to politicians had been paid or because of negotiations carried out by French authorities to sell submarines to India, Pakistan's enemy.

In any case, some French parliamentarians are now demanding to be allowed to look into how the submarine contract with Pakistan was negotiated and executed.

Sagem Modernizes The Navigation Systems On France's Nuclear Attack Submarines

Defence Professional, November 9, 2009

Paris | French naval shipyards DCNS* has placed an order with Sagem (Safran group), on behalf of the French navy, for a new series of Sigma 40XP inertial navigation that will be used to modernize France's SNA class nuclear attack submarines.

The French navy's decision was largely based on the performance of the Sigma 40XP, demonstrated during operational trials at sea, and during long operational patrols by the Saphir nuclear attack submarine, which is fitted with one of these navigation systems.

Two inertial navigation units will be integrated in each submarine's combat system. The Sigma 40XP calls on Sagem's state-of-the-art technologies, including very-high-performance laser gyros and advanced digital filtering techniques. The Sigma 40XP is designed for use even in extreme operating environments.

The Sigma 40XP capitalizes on Sagem's extensive experience in high-precision navigation solutions. Sagem's navigation systems are used on more than 300 ships deployed by 31 navies worldwide, including surface vessels and submarines with nuclear, air-independent and conventional propulsion.

Sagem also supplies the optronic, electronic warfare and radar mast system on the French navy's nuclear attack submarines, intended for use in surface actions.

DCNS is acting on behalf of the fleet support department in the French navy.

The Chinese Navy Is Going Blue Water

By Xiaoxiong Yi, Asian Defence, November 6, 2009

Harvard historian Paul Kennedy, in his "The Rise and Fall of Navies," wrote, "Those faster-growing economies can afford both guns and butter." China's tremendous economic growth has been accompanied by a quantum leap in China's naval build-up.

Today, more than 1,000 Chinese commercial ships and oil tankers are sailing through troubled waters every day, and China's commercial sea-borne trade volumes have escalated dramatically. China's commercial maritime interests exceeded \$800 billion by the end of 2008, and more than 60 percent of its oil imports transported by sea.

As Chinese cargo ships and oil tankers are becoming all the time more vulnerable on the high seas, Beijing sees it as vital to safeguard China's sea-lanes. Last week, the Chinese government vowed to make "all-out efforts" to rescue De Xin Hai, the Chinese ship hijacked by Somali pirates in the Indian Ocean northeast of the Seychelles.

What is perhaps more important, however, is Beijing's political-strategic ambitions. Chinese rulers are good students of the late Chairman Mao, who once said, "Power of government comes out of the barrel of gun." As Chinese rulers are becoming more confident and assertive, to modernize China's People's Liberation Army (PLA), especially the PLA Navy (PLAN), has become one of Beijing's top priorities.

China's defense spending has increased by an average of 16.2 percent a year since 1999. It now is the second-highest in the world. The PLA's official military budget for 2009 is at \$70 billion, but the U.S. published estimates show that China's military spending as high as \$150 billion. In its first annual report to Congress under the Obama administration, the Pentagon has charged China with hiding its real military spending and expressed concern over why China would increase its military expenditure with no apparent external threats. "China's failure to be transparent about its rapidly growing military capabilities," according to the report, "has created uncertainty and risks of miscalculation. Much uncertainty surrounds China's future course, particularly regarding how its expanding military power might be used."

A major factor that contributes to China's rapidly growing military expenditure is Beijing's long-harbored ambition of possessing a blue-water navy, not only to safeguard China's commercial sea-lanes, but also to advance China's off-shore territorial claims. Such considerations have ensured the PLAN to receive top priority in China's military modernization, with a generous budgetary allocation estimated at more than 30 percent of the PLA's total defense budget.

To build a blue water navy, no expense has been spared. Earlier this year, Chinese defense minister Liang Guanglie confirmed Beijing's plan to build a new generation of large destroyers and aircraft carrier. From the Yellow Sea to the South China Sea, Chinese shipyards are running flat out. According to the U.S. Congressional Research Service, "By 2010 China's submarine force will be nearly double the size of the U.S., and the entire Chinese naval fleet is projected to surpass the size of the U.S. fleet by 2015."

Strategically, China's leaders have long been saying that the Indian Ocean is not India's Ocean. Beijing's new "Pearl Necklace Strategy" is designed to put Chinese naval bases along the shores of the Indian Ocean, and the maritime routes to Malacca: Marao in the Maldives, Coco Island in Burma, Chittagong in Bangladesh and Gwadar in Pakistan. China also is creating coastal bases in Africa, now widely open to Chinese investment.

Beijing sees the Pacific to be the next major strategic contending field in coming decades. Here, China foresees two rivals: Japan and the United States. Beijing has already tested Tokyo's readiness by repeated submarine incursions. PLAN vessels also are confronting U.S. Navy ships in the Pacific. The Chinese ships jostled with a U.S. Navy surveillance ship in the recent South China Sea confrontation sends a strong signal to countries in the region that they may no longer be able to depend on the U.S. in a conflict with China in the Pacific theater.

One hundred fifteen years ago, Qing Dynasty China's shiny new armada, North Sea Fleet, was crushed by the Japanese Imperial Navy in the Battle of Yalu. The humiliating defeat accelerated the decline of China. Today, China is flexing its new naval muscle at sea. The Chinese naval build-up still is in its early stages, and it may be years before Beijing has a navy to match that of the U.S., but the trend is clear: Beijing is determined to challenge American hegemony on the high seas and to re-address the postwar balance of power in the Pacific and Indian Ocean.

A Merry Christmas,

A Happy Chanukah,

And a Safe, Prosperous, and Healthy New Year,

To the Men of the United States Submarine Service,

Past, Present, and Future.