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

The Silent Sentinel
January 2014

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.

U.S. Will Start Cutting Its Submarine Missile Launchers Next Year

Rachel Oswald, Defense One, Jan 7

The United States next year is slated to begin reducing launch tubes on each of its Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines, a new independent report states.

The elimination of four operational launch tubes on each of the 14 submarines that make up the Navy's Ohio submarine fleet will be the first substantial reduction in U.S. strategic weapon delivery capability since the 2011 New START accord went into effect, according to Hans Kristensen, who co-authored an assessment on the current status of U.S. nuclear forces. The report was published in the January/February edition of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.

Nearly three years after the New START pact with Russia entered into force, implementation of the treaty has "been going very slowly," Kristensen said in a brief Monday phone interview.

The treaty requires Russia and the United States by 2018 to each reduce their fielded stockpiles of strategic nuclear warheads to 1,550 and to cut their arsenals of long-range delivery vehicles down to 700 apiece, with an additional 100 systems allowed in reserve on each side.

(Related: To Save the Submarines, Eliminate ICBMs and Bombers)

"The way that the U.S. military has approached implementation of the New START treaty so far has not done anything that has actually affected the actual number of nuclear [delivery vehicles] that are in the war plan," said Kristensen, who directs the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists.

Instead, the Pentagon has focused on reducing the nuclear-delivery capability of selected vehicles, such as heavy bombers, that have already been retired, he said.

The Defense Department has the latitude to pursue that approach because the treaty allows so many years — seven, specifically — before each side must carry out all mandated reductions, Kristensen said.

Once all of the Ohio-class submarines have had their launch tubes capped at 20 each — a project that is to take place in the 2015-to-2016 time frame — the United States will be able to deploy no more than 240 submarine-launched ballistic missiles at any time, according to the report written by Kristensen and Robert Norris, who is also with the Federation of American Scientists.

The submarine set to replace aging Ohio-class vessels — dubbed "SSBN(X)" — is expected to have only 16 missile tubes, which will reduce further the number of sea-launched ballistic missiles that the United States can deploy. The replacement fleet is also envisioned to be smaller — only 12 submarines instead of the current 14. The Navy is not expected to begin building the first boat before 2021, and could field the vessel a decade later, according to the Bulletin report.

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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*

January Meeting

Our monthly meeting is held on the second Tuesday of the month at VFW Post 3787, 4370 Twain Ave., San Diego. Our next meeting will be on January 14, 2014. 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

Al Strunk, Benny Williams

ETERNAL PATROL

Admiral McKee

Submarine Losses in December

Originally Compiled by C J Glassford

GRAMPUS (SS 4) - 16 Men on Board:
Main Engine Fuel Explosion, on 10 Dec 1910 :
" 1 MAN LOST "

CARP (SS 20) - 19 Men on Board:
Sunk, on 16 Dec1917, after Collision with USS F – 3, (SS 22), off the Coast of San Diego, California :
"ALL HANDS LOST "

S – 4 (SS 109) - 39 Men on Board:
Rammed and Sunk, on 17 Dec1927, by Coast Guard Cutter Spaulding, Off Provincetown, Massachusetts, * Later Salvaged:
"ALL HANDS LOST "

SEALION (SS 195) - Duty Section on Board:
Severely Damaged, on 10 Dec 1941, by 2 Bombs, during Air Attacks at Cavite Navy Yard, in the Philippines. Later Scuttled on 25 Dec 1941: " 4 MEN LOST "

MINNEAPOLIS-SAINT PAUL (SSN-708) – 110 Men on Board:
Heavy Seas, on 29 Dec 2006, Washed 4 Crewmen Overboard in Plymouth, Sound England, while exiting Devonshire, England, on the Surface, After a Port of Call :
" 2 MEN LOST " – " 2 MEN RESCUED "

Minutes for Submarine Veterans San Diego 10 December 2013

1900 - Meeting of the Submarine Veterans Inc., San Diego Base was called to order by Base Vice Commander Bill Earl.

Conducted Opening Exercises:

Reading of Our Creed:

Pledge of Allegiance: Lead by Manny Burciaga

Chaplain Jack Lester lead us in prayer.

Conducted Tolling of the Boats for December

Observed a moment of Silent Prayer.

Base Vice Commander recognized past E-Board members and past Officers.

Secretary Ferguson announced 35 members and 2 guests (Skipper; Cdr. Andy Peterson and COB Joey Hundley from USS Oklahoma City) present.

Treasurer Report: David Ball reported $2,414 in checking and account total of $17,665.68 in the bank.

Minutes of 12 November were approved by the members present.

Call for Committee Reports:

Binnacle List: Al Strunk, Tommy Cox, Frank Walker, and Benny Williams. Chaplain Lester reminded the members to advise him of any members they know that should be on the binnacle list and also when they should be removed when health regained.

Parade Committee: Joel Eikam reported a good year, a few modifications will be made next year to the float.

Membership Committee - No report

Scholarship Committee - Paul Hitchcock reminded those present of the March deadline for submittal of applicants.

Storekeeper Report - Phill Richeson reported 2014 calendars available for $8 and new hats are in stock.

Breakfast Committee - Vice Commander Earl announced the next breakfast on 29 December and a Breakfast Committee Chairman volunteer is needed to replace Fred Fomby.

Float Committee - David Kauppinen stated that modifications to the float will likely be made in January for flags and banners.

Bill Earl introduced the Skipper of the USS Oklahoma City, Cdr. Andy Peterson who presented a very interesting and well received discussion about operations from his homeport of Guam. All new facilities have been built, families are living there, and some Marines from Okinawa have been relocated to Guam. At present the USS Oklahoma City, USS Key West, and USS Chicago are homeported in Guam as Submarine Squadron 15 and the USS Houston, USS Corpus Christi and USS Buffalo are soon to be on station there. More Submarine Squadron 15 information and news can be obtained on Facebook pages of SubRon15.

1935 Base Vice Commander called a break.

1950 Base Vice Commander called meeting back to order.

Unfiinished Business:

Christmas Party is 21 December 1:30-5PM with dinner served at 2PM. Food and door prizes. See Bill Earl to sign up.

Need a volunteer to take over as Breakfast Chairman.

Captain Ishee, ComSubRon11 is asking for Submarine Veterans who have stories of duty here in San Diego during 40s to 70s to participate in a Boat history to be part of the Maritime Museum. Contact George Bisharat (619) 442-8220 email GeorgeB658@aol.com.

The E-Board is obtaining prices for new American and Base Flags to be used at parades and on the float.

New Business:

A budget committee for next year will likely be nominated at the January meeting.

Good of the Order:

Lester - the three nation get together has been canceled.

Rocky - Next years Veterans Walk should be bigger and he hopes to see more SubVets attending.
This year they raised $11,000 for the Chula Vista Veterans Home. Also, in November 2014 the Military Fair will be heldon the deck of the Midway Museum to help support the American Legion, VFW, FRA, and SubVets organizations.
Ball - Smile Amazon.com gives 1/2 of 1% of your purchase prices to the charity of your choice.

Base Vice Commander Bill Earl adjourned the meeting at 2010.

Jack Ferguson, Secretary

Sailing List for 10 December 2013

Jack Ferguson	Jack Lester	Manny Burciaga
Bill Earl	David Ball	Bob Farrell
Warren Branges	Rocky Rockers	Joel Eikam
Larry Dore	Chris Stafford	David Kaupinnen
Richard Smith	Mert Weltzien	Phill Richeson
Phillip Richeson	Bud Rollison	James Pope
Jim Harer	David Martinez	Tom Polen
Joe Acay	Paul Hitchcock	Bill Fernstrom
Mike Cosgrove	Dennis Mortensen	William Johnston
Jack L. Addington	Roy Bannach	Cliff Britt
Alfred Varela	Dave Lemly	Jack Kane
Mike Hyman	Bob Welch	Cdr. Andy Peterson (guest)
MCPO Joey Hundley (guest)		

Commander's Corner

Hello All,

Happy New Years and hope everyone had a Great Christmas holiday!! Connie & I want to wish everyone and your families a very happy & safe 2014! For all those who could make it to the Christmas party, hope you all had a great time and enough to eat. The VFW Ladies Auxiliary put out another fantastic meal as always. Thank you ladies and Gus. Well now that the big holiday season is over and all the hustle and bustle is done, we can get back to business.

As you all know we need to pass our budget and get our EOY report to National. For the folks who are annual dues members, please get your dues into Ray so we don't get dinged on my National or the WRD. If you have any questions about dues or membership, please contact Ray or myself

and between the 2 of us, we can get you the answer!! Speaking of membership, each member should try to bring in a new member this year. Wear your submarine ball cap or t-shirt proudly and let people know about our organization and what we are about. Print up a few copies of our new letter or grab a few at the meeting and give them out. I always have a few in my truck to hand out to people I meet or just drop off in the doctor's office. They are a great tool for recruitment. Give them our web site info and Nation web site info. Invite them to one of our meetings. The other day I was in Home Depot and I ran into a gent who served on SSBN's, and SSN's. He mentioned parking by my truck with submarine stuff on it and seen my SUBVETs hat and we started chatting. The smile and happiness I seen on his face when he was talking about his days on the boats. Good old SEA stories....we all have them and need to share them.

Brings up the next thing I want to talk about...Our news letter. We have over 300 members in our base (give or take a few from month to month) and no one has a few good stories we can put in the news letter to share with everyone. Dirty ones, clean ones, or some that are like those old fishing stories that are stretched out a bit. We could all use a little laughter in life because life is just too short. Hey when was the last time you called an old shipmate up to say HELLO and see how he & his family are doing? A phone call goes a long way.

Our next big event for 2014, besides our breakfast on the 30th of March, is the Submarine Birthday Ball and Old Timers Luncheon. I will get the information soon and get it out to the members. I would like to see a good turn-out from our SO-CAL SUBVET Bases. Then our parades season kicks off in March-April time frame and ends in November with the Veterans Day Parade. I would like to see us get back into the Partners in Education Program and the Kaps for Kids program. We need a few folks step-up and take charge & run with these program. Just another way to get USSVI recognized in the community.

We are looking for a few good men with Short Order cooking skills. Gus & Linda are going to retire from being out breakfast cook and helper. We need at least 3 folks in the kitchen for cooking, serving/toast person, & food preparer. We also need folks to Serve the food/order takers, clean-up, & pour coffee. I would like to see 2 teams of 3-4 people in this group. Folks, the 4 or 5 breakfasts we have each year helps cover most of our expensive. So please help out when you can. I'm working with the VFW to get another food handling class together. More info to follow.

This past year, 2013, was a good year and we lost a few great shipmate and heroes. Lets not forget about them or their families and all the things they have done for you and with you and our organization. I think 2014 is going to be another good year if not better. One personnel note, please pray and think of my son Chris (the one who helps out at the annual picnic), he had a stroke on 6 Jan while at the gym. He is stable and the doctors are running test to determine the cause. Chris is 39 yrs old. Thanks in advance and I'll see you at the next meeting!!!

Sincerely your shipmate,

Bob Bissonnette

Base Commander

Current News

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

Lasers Could Prove Crucial To Navy Survival in the Western Pacific
Loren Thompson, Forbes, Jan 6

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Navy's Pacific Fleet is swimming against the tide of history in the East Asian littoral. After three decades of double-digit growth China has emerged as the world's preeminent industrial power, greatly out-producing America in everything from steel to smart phones. Now it is seeking to translate its burgeoning economic might into military power, and the Pacific Fleet is in the way.

Chinese military leaders view development of stealthy strike aircraft, long-range missiles, and undersea warships as defensive moves after centuries of weakness and vulnerability. U.S. military leaders have a different take, viewing the same programs as "anti-access" and "area denial" capabilities that threaten to drive U.S. forces from the region. Both sides are right: the Chinese are pursuing greater regional influence in much the same manner that other rising nations have in the past, but their goal can only be achieved by reducing American influence in the Western Pacific.

This isn't just a regional issue for Washington, because East Asia has become the industrial heartland of the new global economy. If China continues growing its local military power and political influence, it could come to dominate not only the region but much of the world's productive capacity. Growing realization of what China's rise meant led the Obama Administration to announce in early 2012 that the United States would shift the main locus of its military planning to the Western Pacific after a dozen years of counter-insurgency warfare in Southwest Asia.

Naval forces will necessarily be the main agent of this shift, augmented by long-range air power. But therein lies the central dilemma that the Pacific Fleet faces. How can 200 warships and a thousand aircraft possibly hope to compete with the world's greatest industrial power on its home turf?

The Seventh Fleet comprising the Western Pacific component of the force is operating many thousands of miles from the U.S. homeland. China's military is operating so close to home that it doesn't even need a first-class Navy to become the dominant regional power.

For Pentagon planners, this challenge breaks down into a series of specific operational issues, the most important of which is how U.S. warships in the area can be protected against large-scale Chinese attacks once the People's Liberation Army acquires the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities to direct its increasingly precise weapons against high-value targets. Aircraft carriers and other U.S. naval assets are not easy to find when operating on a war footing at sea – the Western Pacific is a very big place – but China is working hard to solve the problem.

Once the targeting problem is solved, the small number of warships that America's Navy operates near China could potentially be subject to barrages of anti-ship missiles – both air-breathing and ballistic – in a future war. The Pentagon's most recent assessment of Chinese military capabilities states that the People's Liberation Army is making rapid progress in deploying long-range cruise missiles and ballistic weapons with maneuvering warheads that can be used to disable warships far from Chinese shores. The cruise missiles can be launched from aircraft, warships and land bases, while the ballistic missiles can be carried on mobile launchers that are hard to target.

The U.S. Navy has developed layered defenses for intercepting such systems before they can reach their targets at sea, but there is a practical limit to how many defensive weapons can be carried. In addition to space constraints aboard U.S. warships, the defensive weapons cost a million or more dollars each, with the most advanced missile interceptors currently carrying price-tags of $9-15 million. Thus, a single shoot-look-shoot engagement against a maneuvering anti-ship ballistic warhead might cost over $20 million, and the Navy will have to plan for hundreds of such engagements in a major conflict.

This presents a compelling case for putting more of the Pacific Fleet's capabilities on submarines, since China will probably be unable to track and target them. The Navy is developing a module for insertion into the current Virginia class of nuclear-powered attack subs that will greatly increase their capacity to strike surface targets from ocean sanctuaries using cruise missiles – thereby making them the weapon of choice in many Pacific scenarios.

But the Navy's surface warships can't simply abandon the Western Pacific as Chinese anti-ship missiles proliferate. They need active defenses that can improve the cost-exchange equation for defenders by greatly reducing the cost of successful engagements. Some senior officials, including apparently the Chief of Naval Operations, think lasers might be the answer. Lasers are tightly focused beams of electromagnetic energy that hit targets at the speed of light, while costing only a few dollars per engagement. The Navy has proven it can hit fast-moving targets with them even in turbulent weather and high seas.

(Disclosure: Most of the U.S. companies developing laser weapons, including Boeing, Northrop Grumman and Raytheon, contribute to my think tank.)

Ronald O'Rourke of the Congressional Research Service, probably the most influential naval analyst in Washington, has written a series of reports highlighting the advantages of lasers in maritime warfare, among which he includes low marginal costs per shot, deep magazines, fast engagement times, tunable effects, reduced risk of collateral damage, and "ability to counter radically maneuvering air targets." My Lexington Institute colleague Daniel Goure also has written extensively about the potential of lasers as low-cost defensive weapons.

Like any other weapon, lasers have limitations. They can't shoot around obstructions because electromagnetic energy travels in a straight line, and they require potent sources of electrical power. Their beams tend to be absorbed or scatter over long distances due to interaction with the atmosphere, especially when weather is bad. And although there are several options for generating laser energy at sea, scaling devices up to a point where they are effective against hardened attackers is a challenge.

The Navy currently spends about $40 million annually researching laser weapons, and this year for the first time it will deploy an operational device on a ship in the Persian Gulf to evaluate its potential. The Persian Gulf is an especially stressful environment for using defensive lasers because local atmospheric conditions degrade beam power and Iranian forces have many options for attacking warships from speedboats to rockets to unmanned aircraft. However, Navy officials say they have largely licked the problem of beam degradation in conducting close-in engagements, and tests have repeatedly proven the lethality of lasers against all the types of weapons Iran might use.

The main engineering challenge in adapting laser weapons to a Western Pacific environment is scaling power outputs up to a level that can address threats in an affordable fashion. For instance, so-called free electron lasers are safe to operate aboard ships, scale well, and can be tuned to the optimum wavelength for prevailing atmospheric conditions. However, there are only a handful of vessels in the Navy's 30-year shipbuilding program that could accommodate a system with the dimensions of a free-electron laser, and the costs of integration would be imposing.

With chemical lasers off the table for safety reasons, that appears to leave more compact solid-state lasers as the most viable near-term option. Solid-state lasers (thus named because of their solid crystalline lasing medium) do not scale as readily as other technologies, but recent progress in beam control and other features indicates they will soon be effective against most attacking weapons at ranges of 1-10 miles. At the very least, therefore, they can supplement costly interceptor missiles in the naval arsenal, leaving the latter weapons for the most difficult engagements.

The likely advances in survivability and affordability are not trivial. A single laser weapon could pay for itself many times over in a battle against Chinese forces if it permitted expensive interceptor systems to be held in reserve for the worst threats. Remember, it only costs a dollar or so to generate the power for a laser shot, and the devices can cope with a wide array of attacking systems at close-in ranges. When combined with the reach of naval air power and other available defenses, lasers could make the difference between saving and losing many billion-dollar surface combatants in a big conflict.

But the Navy can't buy just one laser weapon. It needs to equip many warships with lasers if the weapons are to be available where they are needed, when they are needed. As of today, the policy debate within the service is lagging behind the technical progress in making defensive lasers operationally viable. The service established a steering group two years ago to formulate a roadmap for pursuing the technology, but it still doesn't have a program of record for developing an integrated, deployable, affordable solution.

The real question here isn't whether lasers can make a useful contribution to ship defense. That question has already been answered. The question is what the Navy is going to do to sustain its role in the Western Pacific as China leverages its geographical advantages in pursuit of regional military dominance. Recent trends are not encouraging, and the current approach to protecting the fleet probably can't succeed in a major conflict if the People's Liberation Army solves its reconnaissance problem. The U.S. Navy needs a game-changer, and lasers are looking like one of the few credible options available.

Four Days of Events Mark Confederate Sub Anniversary
Bruce Smith, Navy Times, Jan 6

CHARLESTON, S.C. – Four days of events will be held in February marking the 150th anniversary of the Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley becoming the first sub in history to sink an enemy warship.

The hand-cranked sub and its crew of eight set off a torpedo that sank the Union blockade ship USS Housatonic off South Carolina in February of 1864 as the Confederacy tried to break the Civil War blockade of Charleston.

The Hunley never returned from the mission. The wreck was finally located off the coast in 1995, raised five years later and brought to a lab in North Charleston where it is being conserved. The plan is for the Hunley to eventually be displayed in a museum in North Charleston.

The four days of anniversary events begin on Valentine's Day and continue through Feb. 17, the 150th anniversary of the night the crew set off on its mission from Breach Inlet between Sullivans Island and the Isle of Palms northeast of Charleston.

There will be an honor guard and period re-enactors at the North Charleston lab from Friday, Feb. 14, through Sunday the 16th. That Friday, active and retired military personnel will be able to tour the lab for $6, half the usual admission price.

On Saturday and Sunday, the first 150 visitors will receive a replica of the $20 U.S. gold coin credited with saving the life of Hunley commander, Lt. George Dixon, at the Battle of Shiloh in 1862.

Dixon's life was saved when a bullet hit the gold coin in his pocket. He carried the coin, on which he had inscribed "Shiloh April 6, 1862 My life Preserver," in his pocket on the Hunley mission.

There will be a $50-a-ticket reception at the lab on the evening of Saturday, Feb. 15 including a talk by genealogist Linda Abrams, who researched the backgrounds of men of the Hunley crew.

On Monday, the anniversary of the mission, tickets for lab tours are only $1.50. Re-enactors will gather that evening at Breach Inlet for a memorial service honoring the Hunley crew and the five Union sailors who died when the Housatonic sank.

Why the Hunley sank is still a mystery, although scientists think they are close to solving the riddle.

Last year, scientists announced it appears that the charge that sank the Houstonic was attached to the 16-foot spar at the front of the sub. That means the sub may have been close enough for the crew to be knocked unconscious by the explosion and the crew may have died before awakening.

Historians originally thought the Hunley was farther away from the Housatonic and speculated the crew ran out of air before they could crank the submarine back to shore.

U.S. Special Operations Command Leases Submersible
Michael Fabey, Aviation Week Intelligence Network, Jan 6

WASHINGTON – U.S. Special Operations command recently leased the Lockheed Martin S301 Special Operations Forces dry combat submersible.

In late 2013 the command awarded Lockheed an estimated $10 million sole-sourced lease of the S301, a commercially-classed dry submersible vessel, to support risk mitigation research, development, test, and evaluation in support of SOCOM's long-term dry-combat-submersibles program objectives.

Navy Seals have been seeking a safe submersible since the Advanced Seal Delivery System (ASDS) suffered fires due to battery problems.

The initial lease is for 18 months. But during an exclusive tour of its Panama City, Fla., facility where the sub is being developed, Stephen Froelich, director and general manager of mission and unmanned systems, said the deal could be extended.

Estimated to weigh 13-15 tons, the miniature submarine can accommodate six special warfare operators and two people to operate the vessel.

Froelich notes, "This is a dry submersible. In a lot of previous submersibles [special operators have] been wet the entire time. They're in the elements. But here they stay dry."

It will be easier to continue working longer when dry, he says, and teams will also be more prepared for combat when they cross the shoreline because they haven't been exposed to the elements for several hours.

"The special warfare guys can park on the bottom," he says. "They can flood the compartment. They have a lockout chamber."

The submarine is also small enough to fit into hangars aboard larger "mother" submarines as well as other naval docking bays.

Lockheed will also help special operators acclimate themselves with the S301.

Lockheed is partnered with the Submergence Group for the sub's light and medium development and production.

On This Day: U.S. Raises Nuclear Stakes by Testing First Submarine-Based Polaris Missiles from Deep Under the Sea
Julian Gavaghan, Yahoo News, Jan 6

The first nuclear missile to be launched from a fully submerged submarine was tested by the U.S. Navy on this day in 1960.

Polaris ensured America could attack the Soviet Union without having to rely on its costly deterrent of a permanently airborne fleet of B52 bombers circling the Arctic.

At the time, neither the U.S. nor its bitter Cold War enemy had land-based missiles with long enough ranges to strike each other's main cities from home territory.

The development also triggered the terrifying new spectre of annihilation being unleashed anywhere on earth by hidden submarines.

A British Pathé newsreel shows the USS George Washington, which was equipped to carry 16 missiles, testing two of its "wonder weapons" off the Florida coast.

After being fired from 50ft below the surface, the rockets burst into the air and were filmed trailing high into the sky before hitting unconfirmed targets 1,100 miles away.

Neither the nations had land-based missiles with long enough ranges to strike each other's main cities from home …

The technological revolution came five years after the Soviets tested the first ever submarine-borne missiles – albeit ones that had to be launched on the surface.

Polaris – two-stage, solid-fuel ballistic missiles - were also lighter, less volatile to store and far more potent than the communist state's weapons.

[On This Day: Britain invades uninhabited Island in bizarre Cold War drama]

Each warhead contained the equivalent of half a megaton of TNT, making them 33 times more destructive than the first nuclear bomb that levelled Hiroshima in 1945.

In 1962, the U.S. agreed to sell Polaris missiles to Britain, which had become the world's third atomic power after developing its own nuclear weapons in 1952.

In 1962, the U.S. agreed to sell Polaris missiles to Britain. (Getty)

The current Government promised to continue the £2.4billion-a-year programme. (Getty)

President John F Kennedy also offered them to France but Charles de Gaulle was wary of American influence and chose maintain their own programme.

The French president feared this deal had turned Britain into a Trojan horse that would allow America a voice in Europe.

[On This Day: Concordski flies at twice the speed of sound]

As a result, he twice vetoed the UK's application for membership of the European Economic Community – the precursor of the EU - in 1963 and again in 1967.

Britain armed four nuclear submarines, all based on the Clyde in Scotland, and continued patrolling with Polaris until 1996.

It was then fully replaced by Trident, another submarine-based missile technology, which now remains Britain's only nuclear deterrent.

[On This Day: The Battle of Verdun – the longest engagement in WWI - ends]

And, despite repeated calls to disarm following the end of the Cold War, the current Government has promised to continue the £2.4billion-a-year programme.

The U.S. also still arms 14 submarines with Trident, despite having two types of land-based nuclear missiles that travel over 6,000 miles among its stockpile of 7,700.

Admiral McKee Obituary

Admiral Kinnaird R. McKee passed away on December 30, 2013 in Annapolis, MD at the age of eighty four following an extended illness Admiral McKee, a Distinguished Graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, was known for his extraordinary submarine career, his leadership as Superintendent of the United States Naval Academy and as the man who took the helm of the U.S. Navy's Nuclear Power program after the retirement of Admiral H.G. Rickover.

Admiral McKee was born on August 14, 1929 in Louisville, Kentucky. After being raised in Memphis, Chicago and Dallas. His family moved to Gulfport Mississippi where he attended the Gulf Coast Military Academy and first learned to sail. From GCMA, he was accepted to and entered the Naval Academy in 1947 with the class of 1951. Still an avid and competitive sailor, he was on the varsity sailing team.

After his graduation and Navy commissioning in 1951, he was assigned to the destroyer USS Marshal (DD-676) where he served during the Korean War. Following his duty on the Marshall he met and married Betty Ann Harris from Montgomery Alabama, and began his submarine career.

After serving on diesel-powered submarines Picuda (SS 382), Sea Cat (SS 399) and Marlin (SS T2), then-Lieutenant McKee took command of the experimental hydrogen peroxide-powered submarine SS X-1 as officer in charge. He subsequently was accepted into the 2nd nuclear power school class and later assigned to the commissioning crew of USS Skipjack (SSN 585), the first of a class of high-speed, highly maneuverable attack submarines. As Skipjack's engineer, he worked closely with the Royal Navy in the nuclear training of the Royal Navy's first nuclear submarine, HMS Dreadnought.

Lieutenant Commander McKee followed this tour with assignments as Executive Officer of USS Nautilus (SSN-571) and USS Sam Houston (SSBN-609).

Commander McKee was later assigned to the Office of Naval Reactors working for Admiral Rickover. Upon completion of this assignment Commander McKee took command of the nuclear submarine USS Dace (SSN 607), earning for Dace a fleet-wide reputation for exceptional performance over the next 3 years..

With orders to the Navy Staff in Washington, then-Captain McKee founded

the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Executive Panel and became its ?rst Director, charged with providing the CNO with expert outside advice and a systematic method for setting future Navy policy and goals. While in this job, he was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral.

RADM McKee was next assigned command of Submarine Group 8 and NATO's submarine forces in the Mediterranean, during a time when U.S. submarines maintained a critical role in monitoring Soviet Mediterranean Fleet operations in such crises as the 1973 Yom Kippur War and the Cyprus Conflict of 1974.

RADM McKee then assumed command of the United States Naval Academy as the 48th Superintendent in 1975. As Superintendent, RADM McKee refined the diverse curriculum and provided leadership for successful entry and integration of the first women midshipmen at the Naval Academy. During his time in Annapolis, he was promoted to Vice Admiral.

VADM McKee assumed command of the Third Fleet in Hawaii followed by duty on the Navy Staff as the first Director of Naval Warfare, quickly followed by his reassignment as the Director of Naval Reactors following the retirement of Admiral Hyman Rickover. McKee was awarded his 4th star at this time and spent the next 7 years leading the Navy's program for development and maintenance of the nuclear power plants in all US Navy aircraft carriers

and submarines. Design work for the SEAWOLF class of fast attack submarines was initiated and funded during his tour.

In 1988 ADM McKee completed his extraordinary 41 year naval career and retired to the Eastern Shore of Maryland, where he pursued his love of sailing, and boat model building. His post Navy career included serving on the board of directors of PECO and ENTERGY corporations and providing engineering and management consulting services to several major engineering firms.

Following the death of his first wife Betty Ann in 1997, ADM McKee met and married Patti Bailey Kirkpatrick in 1999. ADM and Mrs. McKee continued to live in Oxford and Easton on the eastern shore of Maryland until the summer of 2013, when they moved to Annapolis, MD.

Admiral McKee was honored in 2006 as a Naval Academy Distinguished Graduate. The Navy Submarine League also honored him in 2011 with the Distinguished Submariner Award.

ADM McKee is survived by his beloved wife Patti Bailey McKee, his son James H. McKee of Easton, MD, daughter Anne A. McKee of Burke, VA and Mercer Trapp of Augusta, GA, as well as Patti's children Patti Kirkpatrick of Phoenix, AZ, Mac Kirkpatrick of Glenmore, PA, Lynn Demast of Santa Barbara, CA and Andrew J. Kirkpatrick of San Jose, CA and 14 grandchildren.

A Memorial Service will be held at 1pm on Tuesday, 28 January 2014 in the Main Chapel at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Admiral McKee's name may be made to the U.S. Naval Academy Foundation at 410-295-4115.

The Submarine Race in Asia
The New York Times, Jan 7

Most Asian nations have been expanding their military budgets and capabilities in recent years. Now there is a new rush by Southeast Asian countries to acquire submarines because they have the money to pay for them.

On Jan. 1, Vietnam received its first of six Russian Kilo-class submarines. The last one is expected to be delivered in 2016. Myanmar intends to create a submarine force by 2015. Thailand plans to include the purchase of submarines in its soon-to-be-announced 10 -year armed forces development proposal. Thai officers are already enrolled at submarine training schools in Germany and South Korea, two potential submarine suppliers.

Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia have submarine fleets and plan to procure more. Malaysia paid a Franco-Spanish consortium $1.1 billion for two submarines in 2007 and 2009. Indonesia expects to replace its two aging submarines and expand its fleet to 12 with submarines from South Korea and possibly Russia by 2020. Only the Philippines, among the big nations, has not acquired new submarines yet.

These countries are not arming against each other. The arms expansion is a reaction to increasing uncertainty about the distribution of power in the region, caused largely by the extension of Chinese naval power into the South China Sea and Indian Ocean. But Chinese naval expansion is not likely to be halted by these submarine fleets. China will simply augment its anti-submarine capability. Each expansion only adds to regional suspicion and tension.

It is not at all clear that China would be more restrained with its aggressive claim if these nations possessed more military power. Japan's substantial military power, including an advanced submarine fleet, has not stopped China from acting on its territorial claim against Japan in the East China Sea. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations needs to act collectively to negotiate with China to prevent further destabilization, instead of each country dealing separately with China.

Much of this arms competition is propelled by growing wealth in Southeast Asia, which is tied to the 21st-century global economy. These countries and China should realize that increasing their armaments can only undermine their security as well as the stability that nurtures their economies.

Taiwan's Sub-launched Harpoons Pose New Challenge to China's Invasion Plans
Wendell Minnick, Defense News, Jan 6

TAIPEI — Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense has acknowledged the Navy took delivery last year of long-awaited submarine-launched Harpoon Block II anti-ship cruise missiles, a new complication to any Chinese invasion plans.

The delivery included 32 UGM-84L encapsulated all-up rounds, two UTM-84L exercise missiles and two UTM-84XD certification and training rounds, said Fu Mei, director of the Taiwan Security Analysis Center.

These will be divided between Taiwan's two Dutch-built diesel-electric attack subs, the 793 Hai Lung (Sea Dragon) and the 794 Hai Hu (Sea Tiger), acquired from the Netherlands in the 1980s. Taiwan also has two World War II-vintage Guppy-class subs used only for training, but sources said neither has been at sea for years.

Though Taiwan has a wide array of anti-ship cruise missiles, including land-based and ship-launched Hsiung Feng 2/3 missiles, and ship-launched and air-launched Harpoons, the submarine-launched Harpoons will give it a greater opportunity to stealthily strike Chinese targets, including land-based coastal targets.

The "L" designation on the UGM-84L indicates it has a littoral suppression capability that allows limited coastal target attack, such as upon ships inside a harbor, harbor infrastructure, power grids, invasion staging grounds, and command-and-control centers, a Taiwan defense industry source said.

"In this sense, the introduction of the sub Harpoon could be seen as providing Taiwan with a small measure of asymmetric counterforce capability," Fu Mei said.

The Harpoons incorporate the inertial measurement unit of the joint direct attack munition, as well as the software, mission computer and GPS/ inertial navigation system from the standoff land attack missile-expanded response, the Taiwan defense industry source said.

The Harpoons will allow Taiwanese submarines to strike targets farther north and south along China's coastline. This would include Shanghai, Zhoushan, Xiazhen and Sandu in the north, and Shantou, Zhanjiang and the new nuclear submarine based at Yulin Naval Base on Hainan Island to the south.

"The sub-Harpoon capability will certainly be meaningful in a cross-strait conflict, particularly one involving an amphibious invasion scenario," Fu Mei said.

The missile's nominal maximum range of 150 nautical miles would substantially expand potential targets for Taiwan's submarines, which are limited to about 30,000 yards, or about 15 nautical miles, by their SUT torpedoes.

"That is a roughly 100-fold increase in the area that could be covered by each submarine so armed," Fu Mei said.

The threat posed by such capabilities would further complicate the fleet air defense problems faced by the People's Liberation Army Navy, (PLAN) which already has to deal with Taiwan's arsenal of domestic and imported anti-ship missiles.

"The ability to detect, quickly track, designate and assign weapons to engage pop-up targets like submarine-launched [anti-ship cruise missiles] will now be an even more essential requirement for PLAN's shipboard integrated air defense and combat direction systems," Fu Mei said.

The main integration challenge Taiwan's Navy has faced is developing a long-range targeting capability to fully exploit the missile's range.

Over the past decade, Taiwan has been working to integrate a data link terminal on its two Dutch submarines so they can receive targeting data from offboard sensors and shore-based command-and-control facilities while underway. The terminal would use a mast-mounted antenna that could be raised with the sub running at periscope depth. This is believed to be tested and operational, sources said.

The data link feeds into the advanced harpoon weapons control system (AHWCS), though the latter is apparently not integrated with the combat direction system of the Dutch submarines, Fu Mei said. The AHWCS can direct complex Harpoon missile attacks, including way-pointing and simultaneous arrivals of multiple missiles from different axes.

The normal load of torpedoes on each sub will be sacrificed for more missiles, but sources said the tradeoff will force China to rethink its invasion plans.

Russia's Navy to Buy 40 New Vessels
Jaroslaw Adamowski, Defense News, Jan 6

The Russian Navy already operates two Borey-class nuclear submarines, including the Yuri Dolgorukiy, and will acquire at least one more in 2014, the service's deputy commander said.

WARSAW — With the aim of modernizing and overhauling its fleet, the Russian Navy plans to acquire 40 new vessels in 2014, said Rear Adm. Viktor Bursuk, the Navy's deputy commander.

The procured vessels will include a Borey-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine, a Varshavyanka diesel-electric submarine and the search-and-rescue ship Igor Belousov, Bursuk told local news agency RIA Novosti.

The admiral, who is responsible for the Navy's arms procurements, said that at least two diesel-electric submarines are to be added to the Black Sea fleet. The Navy already operates two Borey-class submarines.

Bursuk did not disclose the value of the planned acquisitions.

The procurements will be part of Russia's plan to spend US $650 billion on new arms and military equipment for its armed forces by 2020.

In December, Russian President Vladimir Putin said that strengthening the Navy's presence in the Arctic is one of Russia's top defense priorities for the future. The announcement was made at a meeting of the Russian Defense Ministry's board.

Vietnam Receives its First Russian Kilo-Class Submarine
WantChinaTimes.com, Jan 6

Vietnam's first Russian-built Kilo-class submarine, known as the Hanoi, recently arrived at the Cam Ranh Bay located in southern Vietnam and it may be used to confront China's maritime expansion in the South China Sea, according to Duowei News, an outlet operated by the overseas Chinese.

The Kilo-class submarine may become a significant threat to the Liaoning, China's first aircraft carrier, if a conflict between Vietnam and China were to take place over the disputed Spratly islands — which consist of more than 750 reefs, islets, atolls, cays and islands in the South China Sea. They are claimed in whole or in part by China and Vietnam, but also Malaysia, the Philippines, Brunei, and Taiwan.

Vietnam signed a contract worth of US$2 billion with Russia to purchase a total of six Kilo-class submarines in 2009 when Vietnam's prime minister, Nguyen Tan Dung, paid a visit to Moscow.

The Hanoi was built at Admiralty Verfi Shipyards in St Petersburg, and was transported to Vietnam by the Rolldock Sea, a Dutch heavy-lift vessel. The submarine arrived at the Cam Ranh military port on Jan. 3, the report said.

The Kilo-class submarine is capable of operating at a maximum depth of 300 metres and at a range of 6,000 to 7,500 nautical miles for 45 days and nights with 52 crewmembers. In addition, it is said to have the quietest engine in the world.

As China and Vietnam continue to be locked in a territorial dispute over the Spratly islands, the chance for a potential conflict escalated when the Liaoning entered service in the PLA Navy last year, the report said. Observers also claim that China's aircraft carrier could play an important role in projecting PLA forces into the disputed region.

Meanwhile, the Liaoning returned to its main base in Qingdao in eastern China's Shandong province last week after completing a 37-day sea trial in the South China Sea. Observers told Duowei that Vietnam will receive two more Kilo-class submarines, the Ho Chi Minh and Haiphong, within this year to face China's growing presence in the region. Aside from the navy, Vietnam has also spent another US$1 billion to purchase 12 Su-30MK2 fighters from Russia for its air force, which has increased the total number of Vietnam's fourth-generation fighters to 29.

Japan Looks to Buy Drones, and China Goes Ballistic
Katie Spence, Motley Fool, Jan 5

The relationship between China and Japan is continuing to rapidly deteriorate. So it's no surprise that Japan approved a budget that'll increase defense spending for the second consecutive year, and "build a comprehensive defensive posture that can completely defend our nation."

More importantly, Japan's defense budget calls for an increase in intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, or ISR, which could include the acquisition of three of Northrop Grumman's (NYSE: NOC) Global Hawk drones. One of the reasons Japan wants to improve ISR? China is building nuclear submarines, capable of launching a ballistic missile.

Submarines and drones

According to Defense News, a draft report from the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission found that China's sea-based nuclear deterrent is nearing initial operational capability. Further, Defense News reported that China is building "two new classes of nuclear submarines — the Type 095 guided-missile attack submarine (SSGN) and the Type 096 SSBN. The Type 096 will likely 'improve the range, mobility, stealth, and lethality' of the [People's Liberation Army Navy's] nuclear deterrent." In other words, China is building nuclear submarines capable of firing ballistic missiles.

Additionally, the International Institute for Strategic Studies, or IISS, states, "Between 2001 and 2011, real annual increases in [China's] defense budget averaged 10.3%." Further, in 2013, China's defense budget was second only to the United States. Consequently, Japan is taking action.

According to Japan's 2014 defense budget overview, Japan's objectives include "strengthening ISR capabilities; responding to attacks on remote islets; responding to ballistic missile and guerilla/special force attacks; responding to cyber attacks." To help, The New York Times reports, "Japan will station more early warning aircraft in Okinawa and buy three unarmed Global Hawk drones for surveillance." That's great news for Northrop.

In addition to the drones, Japan plans to upgrade its Airborne Warning And Control System, or AWACS, which benefits Boeing (NYSE: BA) , and purchasing Lockheed Martin's (NYSE: LMT) next-generation F-35A.

What to watch

The deteriorating relationship between China and Japan is no laughing matter. Further, Japan stated that "China is attempting to alter the status quo by force in the skies and seas of the East China Sea and South China Sea and other areas based on assertions that are incompatible with the established international order." That's why Japan is responding by strengthening its own military. Where this will end is anyone's guess, but the good news is U.S. defense contractors are likely to see a number of orders for their products. So while it's not good that China and Japan are at adds, it's still beneficial to defense contractors — specifically Northrop Grumman, Boeing, and Lockheed.

Japan and China could crash and burn, but these stocks won't Dividend stocks can make you rich. It's as simple as that. While they don't garner the notability of high-flying growth stocks, they're also less likely to crash and burn. And over the long term, the compounding effect of the quarterly payouts, as well as their growth, adds up faster than most investors imagine. With this in mind, our analysts sat down to identify the absolute best of the best when it comes to rock-solid dividend stocks, drawing up a list in this free report of nine that fit the bill. To discover the identities of these companies before the rest of the market catches on, you can download this valuable free report by simply clicking here now.

IDF Remembers 69 [Submariners] Who [Died] on Board INS Dakar
Tova Dvorin, IsraelNationalNews.com, Jan 1

Memorial service for the 69 sailors of the INS Dakar held at Mount Herzl. Gantz: 'We do not stop our quest to find missing soldiers.'

A memorial service for the 69 sailors of the INS Dakar was held at Mount Herzl Wednesday, marking 46 years since it sank into the Mediterranean.

The submarine disappeared in 1968, while en route from Scotland to Israel. After a decades-long search, the wreckage was found between Cyprus and Crete in 1999. The submarine had sunk to a depth of 2900 meters, just 500 kilometers from the Israeli coast. An investigation indicated that the cause was technical failure - not an attack - but this has never been fully confirmed.

The ceremony was attended by IDF Chief of Staff, Major General Benny Gantz; Head of the Israeli Navy, Major General Ram Rothberg; Navy officers and soldiers; and members from the bereaved families.

Gantz stressed the importance of the Dakar incident as an illustration of the IDF's dedication to its soldiers.

"Dear families: this promise - to return all missing and captive soldiers to their homes, and not to give up searching for them - stands before us in the present as much as it has in the past," Gantz stated. "Even today, we do not stop our the quest to find missing soldiers."

"At this very moment special teams are at work whose goal is to locate missing persons - from the establishment of the state until now - who left their homes and their base to defend our people and were never seen again," he continued. "We are committed to continue efforts to find missing persons."

Gantz's remarks follow IDF statistics released earlier Wednesday, which included mention of 5 missing Israel soldiers who are still unaccounted for, and 179 soldiers killed in action whose burial sites have not been located. Reports indicating new quests to find missing soldiers Ron Arad (missing since 1986) and Guy Hever (1997) surfaced in late 2013, reminding Israelis that despite the length of time since their disappearances the IDF has not yet given up on them.

Vietnam's First Submarine Docks at Military Base

The submarine, named Hanoi, arrived at Cam Ranh base naval late Tuesday after 45 days in transit, Viet Nam News agency reported.

The submarine is the first of six Kilo-class diesel-electric submarines Russia will provide under a 2.1-billion-dollar deal signed in 2009.

The next two submarines, named Ho Chi Minh and Haiphong, are expected to be handed over to Vietnam this year.

"The arrival of the first of six enhanced Kilo-class submarines in Cam Ranh Bay marks a major milestone in the development of Vietnam's national defence capabilities," said Carl Thayer, expert on Vietnam and South-East Asia at the Australian Defence Academy.

Vietnam now joins a group of South-East Asian nations that deploy submarines, including Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia.

Cam Ranh is a deepwater port 300 kilometres north of Ho Chi Minh City. The port was used as a US military base during the war and later as a maintenance centre for Russian warships.

The Secret Base of Hanoi Submarine
Vietnamnet.vn, Jan 2

VietNamNet Bridge – The Hanoi Submarine – the first attack submarine of Vietnam will anchor at the Port of Cam Ranh, which is considered as one of the world's best military ports.

Military experts admit Cam Ranh's position of great influence to the global geo-strategic map. In 1888 a Russian naval ship named "Knight" anchored at the Cam Ranh Port during its around-the-world journey. Since then, Cam Ranh became the military port where big countries stationed in the past 100 years. During the Russia - Japan War in 1905, more than 100 vessels of the Pacific Fleet N0. 2 of the Russian Navy gathered in Cam Ranh.

In 1935, the French began to build a naval base at Cam Ranh. In 1940, Cam Ranh fell into the Japanese's hands, becoming a springboard for Japan to invade Malaysia and the colonial islands of the Dutch (Indonesia at present).

On October 18, 1946, President Ho Chi Minh and the French High Commissioner D' Argenlieu met in Cam Ranh. The meeting was held on the Suffren battleship, with the presence of French generals and foreign journalists.

From 1965 to 1972, the U.S. built Cam Ranh Bay into a giant military base that was considered "sacrosanct" as the entrenched fortification to supply fuel and weapons for the war and to control the Pacific western corridor.

In 1969, Lyndon B. Johnson came to inspect the base and it was the first visit by a U.S. president to Vietnam. At that time, the U.S. air base at Cam Ranh Bay was very large, including two airports for jets and an airport for helicopters, each airport could host more than 100 aircrafts at the same time. The U.S. also bored the Cam Ranh mountain to build an aircraft storage and upgraded the runway to serve B52 bombers. The Cam Ranh military airport used to be the airport with the highest landing and take-off frequency in the world.

In 1972, the Americans handed over the base to the Saigon regime and three years later, the Vietnam People's Army liberated Cam Ranh. At the time of takeover, Cam Ranh was completely destroyed.

Admiral EI Prokopievich, the final Russian who went aboard the Xakhalin 9 vessel to leave Vietnam in 2002 as the Commander of the 922 material and technical supply station of Cam Ranh said that the former military base of the US in Cam Ranh attracted the attention of the Soviet Union by its geographical location, which is - in terms of all aspects – pre-eminent for the deployment of a naval base.

It allows control of the Strait of Malaysia and the Philippines, electronic reconnaissance of the East Sea, the Philippine Sea ... even of the Pecxich bay area or the northern Indian Ocean. The Cam Ranh peninsula covers the two bays of Binh Ba and Cam Ranh, which are not affected by the weather phenomena, with the appropriate area and depth for the anchor of any kind of warships, including the carriers.

Since the 60s of the last century, the Soviet Union Navy began its presence on the ocean. Its warships, submarines and naval aircraft were deployed on the ocean for the purpose of stabilizing the world.

The expansion of the scale and the the activities of vessels and the air force at sea required a wide naval logistics network. Since it did not have overseas military bases, the Soviet Union built technical and material supply stations in the territory of the countries which had friendly relations with it and Cam Ranh was a bright spot.

In late 1978, a group of Russian naval generals flew to Vietnam for the signing of a memorandum of understanding on the construction of such a station in Cam Ranh on December 30.

On May 2, 1979, the governments of the Soviet Union and Vietnam signed an agreement on the use of Cam Ranh as the station providing technical and material inputs for the Pacific Fleet of the Soviet army over 25 years.

Under the terms of the Agreement, from 8 to 10 Soviet warships, 4-8 submarines and up to 6 escort vessels can simultaneously anchor at the Cam Ranh military port.

At the same time the Cam Ranh military airport could accommodate from 14-16 missile aircraft, 6-9 surveillance planes and 2-3 transport aircraft. Depending on the specific situation, the numbers of aircraft and ships could be increased by agreement between the two Defense Ministries.

In May 1979, Soviet warships began entering into the waters of Cam Ranh. The next summer the K - 45 torpedo nuclear submarine was anchored at Cam Ranh. A short time later, naval aircraft of the Pacific fleet began landing here.

In December 1979, the Soviet Navy commander, Admiral X. Gorskop went to Cam Ranh and he spent a day observing the bay, just like the way US President Johnson did 10 years ago.

The first detachment of the Pacific Fleet consisting of 54 people came here in April 1980 and in August of that year the number increased to 78.

Cam Ranh became the largest naval base of the Soviet Union abroad, the only base in the East Sea, which is 2,500 nautical miles from the closest port of Russia.

From the autumn 1983 to August 1991, the mobile squadron 17 deployed at Cam Ranh, from August 1991 to December 1991 it was replaced by the mobile squadron 8 and then the squadron 119.

In February 1984, according to the proposal of Vietnam, the Soviet government decided to restore and to build a series of works in Cam Ranh base. The construction at Cam Ranh entered a new phase, when temporary structures were replaced by solid works.

On the basis of the Agreement signed between the Soviet Union and Vietnam dated 20/4/1984, the two sides signed a contract to build a complex of radar stations in the form of non-refundable aid. From 1984 to 1987, Russia built a total of 28 housing and specialized works in Cam Ranh. At that time up to 6,000 Russian, including workers, lived in the base.

As agreed in Section 71 of the Agreement signed on 20/4/1984, these construction works would be handed over to Vietnam. The first works were completed in December 1987 and used by the Soviet experts in the form of free rent.

When leaving Cam Ranh, the Russians transported 588 people, 819 tons of cargo, including 50 special vehicles, 190 tons of diesel oil, 133 tons of oil of all types, weapons and ammunition, as well as documents, by both air and sea. At the same time, the Russians handed over to Vietnam 57 buildings and construction works, 85km power transmission line, 62km power cables, 25km of underground works, 250m wharves, airports and warehouse systems.

UX Ivanovich, a Russian veteran in Cam Ranh, recalled that until 1992, when the Soviet Union disintegrated, the entrance-exit procedures at Cam Ranh were managed by Vietnam.

The Cam Ranh naval base today is considered one of the largest bases of Vietnam Navy. It is also selected as the base of the Hanoi Kilo submarine and maybe other submarines. The Cam Ranh military port is increasingly proving its strategic importance.

[Editor's note. Just a clarification. When reporting news, please note that a story's inclusion does not suggest that I—as editor—agree with or celebrate the event itself. Take for example, the newly created submarine force from Vietnam—a despotic regime which was solely responsible for the deaths of almost two and one-half million South Vietnamese civilians after American forces left the region (http://www.hawaii.edu/powerkills/SOD.CHAP6.HTM***). My feelings on the matter—and this includes my sentiments concerning the successor(s) to the "former" Soviet Union—can be summed up in one sentence: "Er zol vaksn vi a tsibele mit dem kop in drerd," a Yiddish expression meaning that 'It should grow like an onion with its head in the ground!* **Mike Hyman]**

'Bangladesh Finalises Deals With China for 2 Submarines'
India.com, Dec 20

DHAKA – Bangladesh has finalised a deal to buy two submarines from China as part of its plans to develop a three-dimensional navy, according to a media report today.

The two Ming-class submarines are expected to strengthen the navy's ability to protect maritime resources and territorial waters, the New Age newspaper quoted unidentified officials as saying.

"The state-to-state deal would cost Bangladesh Taka 1,600 crore or USD 203.3 million to procure the two Ming-class submarines," the report said.

Officials from the navy or military's media arm were not immediately available for comment but the report came four months after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina announced the government's plans to procure submarines.

In August, Hasina told a navy ceremony that, despite economic constraints, her government is committed to building a modern and balanced three-dimensional naval force for safeguarding interests in the high seas and littoral regions.

According to earlier reports, the Type 035G diesel-electric submarines were scheduled to be delivered in 2019. The navy decided to make payments to the Chinese state-owned firm that makes the submarines from the current fiscal to 2017-18.

The navy said 17 officials had been trained to operate submarines and it had acquired land on Kutubdia Island in southwestern Cox's Bazaar to set up a submarine base.

"We need to have a robust maritime presence as a strategic nation," Maj Gen (retired) A N M Muniruzzaman, a defence analyst, told a news agency.

The Indian Ocean has become the "most strategic maritime theatre" with India, China and the US being the key actors, particularly after America's maritime policy began focussing on the region, he said.

The submarine deal will be the second major defence agreement this year. Bangladesh earlier finalised a USD 1 billion deal with Russia to procure Mi-17 helicopters, combat trainer aircraft, armoured personnel carriers, anti-tank missiles and pontoon bridges.

Analysts have said this deal appeared to be a diplomatic shift as Russia was not a traditional source of weapons. The Bangladeshi military is more familiar with weapons from China and the US, they said.

Christmas Cake Left Uneaten by Sailor Lost at Sea Tells Poignant World War II Submarine Story
Culture24 Reporter, Dec 20

An uneaten Christmas cake, left to the Royal Navy Submarine Museum by the sister of a sailor lost at sea in World War II, has been re-examined by archivists in Gosport more than 30 years after it was handed over unopened.

Bert Smith cherished Christmas cake, but his service on the submarine HMS Osiris, in the Mediterranean, saw him denied a slice of his sugary present in 1939.

Even a brief return to the UK - "the wanderer returned for brief spell still in one piece", as he told his family in a brief telegram - failed to see Smith have his cake or eat it. He was swiftly dispatched to Scotland, where a mission on the HMS P33, en route to Malta, met a counter attack by three enemy torpedo boats of a ferocity which forced the vessel to dive below normal operating depth for safety.

Sadly, the repaired P33 met a mysterious fate. Intercepting an enemy convoy off the coast of Lybia, the vessel may have succumbed to a sustained depth charge heard by the crew of HMS P32, a vessel operating in an adjacent area whose Commanding Officer made an unsuccessful attempt to contact the P33. A mine could also have scuppered the submarine.

"Using contemporary correspondence between the Museum and [Bert's sister] Mrs Flo Burbage and archive movement records, we finally discovered the full story," says George Malcolmson, the museum's Archivist.

"The Christmas cake is a poignant and timely reminder of the feeling of separation so keenly felt at Christmas time by service men and women of Royal Navy."

Israel Navy's Submarine Service – For the Best, But Not For Everybody
Judy Siegel-Itzkovich, The Jerusalem Post, Dec 19

'One doesn't have to know how to swim, but a good sense of humor is important,' says top recruiter.

• By For the time being, there is no chance for young Israelis to become astronauts, but young men who are highly motivated and intelligent, able to withstand long bouts away from civilization, suited for combat duty, capable of reacting immediately to orders and not disturbed by being cooped up for weeks on end in a small space are invited by the IDF and Israel Navy to apply for military service in a submarine.

A 13-month-long preparatory course for the difficult but meaningful job has just been completed. Two such courses are held annually after very careful screening of candidates.

Lt.-Cmdr. Yohai Zeidman, a psychologist who left the IDF after his initial service and education and then joined the professional army, has been responsible for selection of submarine crews for the last two-and-a-half years and is based in Haifa.

The navy currently has three Dolphin submarines, following the use and retirement of British-made subs that were introduced into service in the late 1950s. They were called INS Tanin and INS Rahav by then-premier David Ben-Gurion, based on relevant references in the Bible.

Three more subs, made in Germany, will join the fleet in the next few years. Around 60 meters long, the Dolphin subs are packed with equipment, with no room to spare, and every square meter is utilized to the maximum.

As there are very close quarters and no room for a women's lavatory, only men are accepted for this job, but there are females serving on more roomy navy ships, Zeidman told The Jerusalem Post in an interview on Thursday

Except for the sub commander, who has his own bed, the rest of the crew of a few dozen make use of available accommodations on the "hot bed" routine. As there are not enough for all, whenever somebody gets out of bed to go to work, another soldier can sleep in it.

As it is so demanding, all members of the crew volunteer for this service; no one is assigned to a submarine without wanting it.

Even the ship's cooks and physician are carefully screened to make sure that they can live in such crowding and without contact with the outside world for some time.

Soldiers serve for four-and-a-half years, with 18 months as part of the professional army. They must naturally be happy working as a member of a team.

"We look for people who enjoy being with others. They can't call home. There is no Internet or TV, but there are video movies, chess matches, books and other things for their leisure time.

Zeidman noted that obviously, no young man suffering claustrophobia (fear of being enclosed in a small space) can be a candidate to work on a submarine. One doesn't have to know how to swim, he added, but a good sense of humor is important and welcome.

"I don't recall anyone with claustrophobia – or indeed agoraphobia [fear of large spaces], because such people usually have other anxieties as well – applying for the job."

Other valued qualities are being organized, meticulous (but not compulsive), able to get along with people, free of moodiness, intelligent, good at studying, and technical abilities.

"We look for very special people," said Zeidman.

"A submarine is not for everybody. Errors cannot be made, because of the lives at stake, the important work, the cost – some half-a-billion euros per submarine – and even the diplomatic importance. Doing the wrong thing could lead to a declaration of war on Israel."

While the IDF and the navy do publicize the submarine service somewhat openly as well as quietly, "it is not well known to young people.

Some may be very suited, but they are not familiar with the submarine service. The air force's school for pilots is much better known."

The kitchen is kosher, and the navy tries to hire very imaginative good cooks.

"Having enticing food can make an excellent voyage, while having bad food can make it a disappointment," Zeidman said. "There are religiously observant crew members as well, and their needs are met. Religious men on a sub are about in the same numbers as their proportion in the population."

The selection process begins with questionnaires, exercises and interviews. Those found unsuitable, or candidates who learn more and think they are not suited, are let go. Those who are chosen for the course go to a special submarine school in Haifa, visit a submarine docked in the harbor, go through simulations and more. Their teachers come with a lot of experience serving on subs.

There are underwater communications for the use only of the commander in operations, and a public phone when the sub is above the surface.

"At home, the crew [members] are used to using cellphones, computers and social networks, and it's hard being out of contact, but they get used to it."

The sub commander must be a leader; he has to decide things largely on his own and be able to make decisions in a courageous and sensitive way.

"If not, he could sink the ship," said Zeidman.

He must be honest and reliable and always report the truth to his superiors. If the crew members are going to a friendly country abroad for a cooperation exercise, they may go on land to visit, but certainly not if they are on a secret mission.