

# SLEEPING SAFELY AT NIGHT

“We sleep safely at night because rough men stand ready to visit violence on those who would harm us.”

- Winston S. Churchill -



The Year 2030: The impossible had happened. Iran completed their nuclear program after an American administration change in 2028 that reinstated the Obama era Iranian deal allowing the religious zealots in Tehran to complete their nuclear program. Now armed with long range nuclear tipped missiles, Tehran's sword rattling threatened wholesale destruction of countries in the Middle East and across the vast expanses of ocean.

Iran's ally, nuclear-armed North Korea, armed with its own long range missiles, was cantankerous as ever and threatening the civilized world with a missile strike unless their demands were met for a 1000% increase in financial aid. North Korea's absurd nuclear blackmail had skyrocketed since one of their torpedo boats had been sunk by American aircraft after firing on and sinking an unarmed Japanese merchant ship in international waters. North Korea claimed the unarmed merchant vessel had fired first.

Military coups in a financially weakened China and crop failures in Russia had placed both nuclear armed nations in the dubious hands and unstable minds of men who considered nuclear war the next practical step to gain attention to their plights, the 'or else' threat backed by nuclear missiles.

Radicals and terrorists from every offshoot religion and banned political movement across the globe had been secretly entering the U.S. under the guise of exchange students or any number of lies to obtain residence in America.

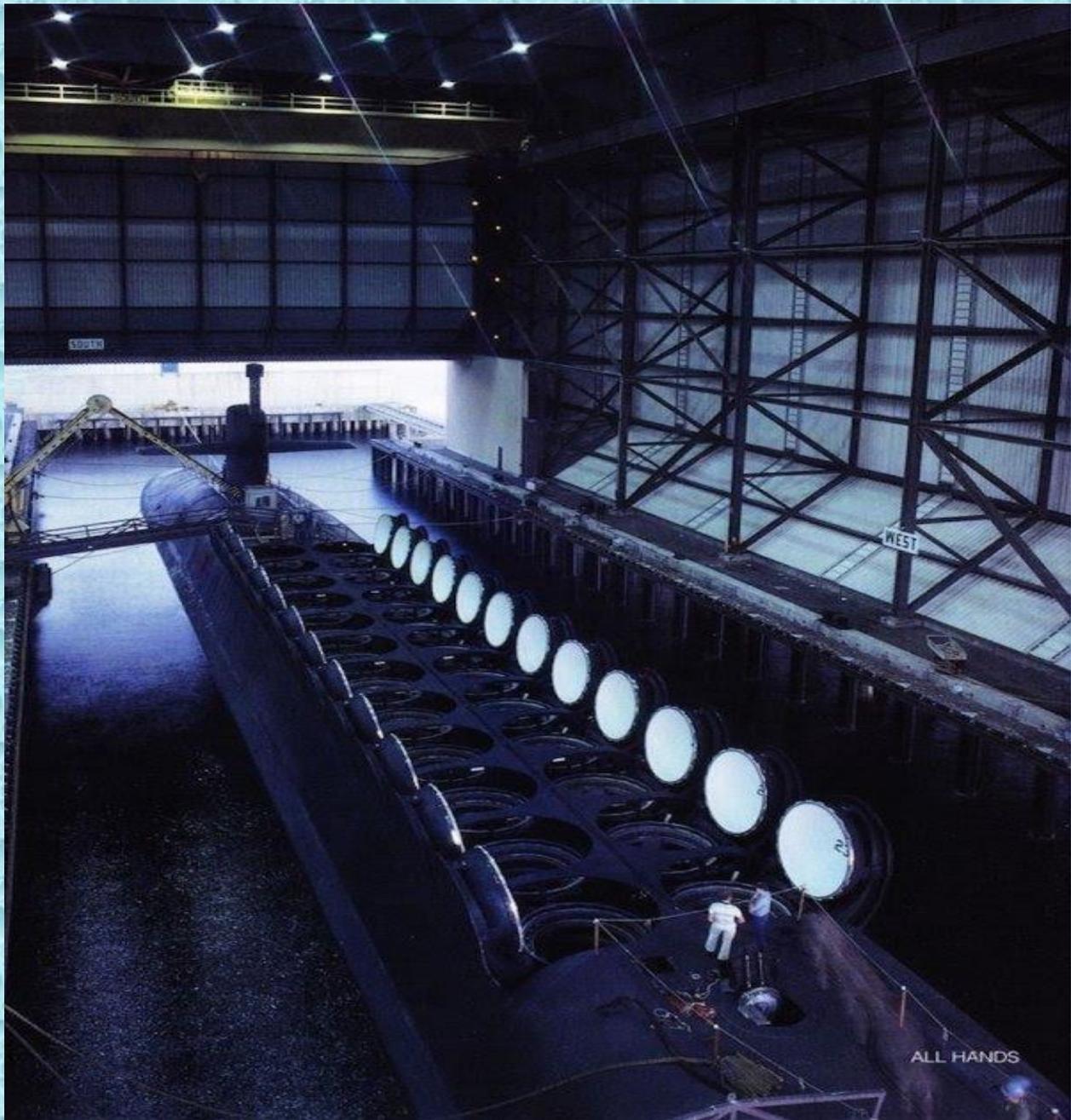
Collectively, their scheme for America's destruction took on an Arabic appellation: Al Nihayiyān Almahlul (The Final Solution), purposely adopting the slogan for Adolph Hitler's massacre of the Jewish people during WWII. As with the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the planning and training for Al Nihayiyān Almahlul had been meticulous and completed in the upmost of secrecy. So thorough was the planning, that retaliation by the United States was considered nil.

When the assault came, all American radar stations and first alert bases worldwide were overwhelmed and demolished simultaneously, the same time that all airbases were raided, combat airplanes destroyed, and the aircraft that managed to get airborne were downed by shoulder-fired air-to-air missiles fired by terrorists hiding near the end of runways. It held the same for American navy bases harboring warships. Then came the missiles. Every major city in American was reduced to a big bright glow. The destruction was total. The enemy had won. The United States was no more, with no means of retaliation.

Not quite.

Lurking in unknown waters at unknown depths were 18 of the most deadly and feared weapons ever created, and all 18 were red, white, and blue American. The U.S. Navy's Ohio-class subs, also known as "Trident" subs since they are a part of America's 'Nuclear Triad', make up the FBMs (Fleet Ballistic Missile subs).

Compared to the American submarines in WWII, the Ohio-class submarine is a Great White Shark versus a Small Mouth Bass. It travels faster underwater than on the surface. The underwater speed is classified, but reported to be as high as 30mph. This underwater giant is powered by an internal S8G PWR nuclear reactor that drives the sub's two turbines. She has unlimited range, never needs refueling, yet her range is limited by only one factor: the boat's supply of food for the crew. However, except for food, the Ohio-class sub produces her own oxygen and life-saving water.



The Navy also deploys smaller attack subs, but both subs are virtually impossible for an enemy to locate. Albeit, potential adversaries know one thing: 18 of the most deadly weapons in America's inventory are lurking somewhere around the world.

World War II submarines used an unreliable torpedo called the Mark 14, but by the end of the war the Mark 14 had become a reliable weapon and remained in service for 40 years. The Navy provided its submariners with the best of food, but life aboard a WWII sub was testy, at best. The crew had about one foot of personal storage space, showered every 10 days or so, and the boat smelled of diesel fuel, sweat, cigarettes, hydraulic fluid, cooking and sewage. The World War One S-sub subs were even worse, including mold, mildew, and large cockroaches that seemed impossible to eradicate.

The Ohio-class submarine, however, has spacious room for its crew, great food, and lacks the odors generated by both world war subs. Offensively, it's a world-ending weapon. She has 4 Mark 48 torpedo tubes with effective torpedo range 'greater than 5 miles', travels at speeds reaching 63mph and detonates via a proximity fuse when the torpedo 'senses' an adversaries' vessel.

Fourteen of the giant Ohio-class submarines are SSBN (Ballistic Missile Submarines) and four have been converted to SSGN (Guided Missile Submarines). And what exactly can these boats launch at an enemy? The 8 older SSBNs carry 24 Trident I/C4 nuclear missiles with a 4,600 mile range; the 10 newer SSBNs carry 24 II/C5 missiles with a range of 7,000 miles. Each missile has MIRV, Multiple Independently targetable Reentry Vehicles. Simply put, one missile carries from 8 to 12 thermonuclear warheads, and once launched can hit individual targets.

The firepower: The largest atomic bomb “Fat Man” dropped on Japan at the end of WWII had a total of 21 kilotons (a single kiloton is equivalent to 220.4 million pounds of TNT). The older SSBNs carry 24 missiles and can hit 8 targets with a single missile with the destructive power of 100 kilotons. The newer SSBNs carry 24 missiles with 12 MIRVs on each missile, with 475 kilotons of TNT.



A single missile equals 1,256,634,893,400 pounds of TNT, as in one trillion two hundred fifty six million pounds of BIG GLOW, as in, ya don't wanna mess with a Trident submarine. And the four they have been upgraded to Guided Missile Subs? Twenty two

tubes of W/7 Tomahawk Cruise Missiles for a total launch capacity of 154 Tomahawk Missiles. And, yes, they can be equipped with thermonuclear warheads.



In addition, the SSGNs can deliver UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) plus convert 2 of its 22 tubes into swimmer lockout chambers which provide a dry dock for Navy Seals or Marine special operations teams. The two dry dock tubes are large enough to house a Navy Seal SDV mini-sub.

The submarines are members of the 'Silent Service', their lives depending on silence and stealth. In the worst case scenario, these men of the deep could be America's last hope to strike back at an adversary. These are brave sailors, traveling dark depths at unheard of speeds in boats armed to the teeth with nuclear weapons.

On a personal note, I joined the Air Force for good reason, at least in my way of thinking. The prospect of going down in a crippled B-52 from 45,000 feet just didn't seem as terrifying as going down in a crippled submarine to the bottom of the sea. I had nor have no desire to visit Davy Jones' Locker. I don't mind flying 'over' an ocean, I just didn't want to cross the oceans in a Navy ship. Main reason, there be sharks down there!

As the Scottish poet and author Tobias Smollett penned in '*The*



*Adventures of Peregrine Pickle'* published in 1751, "This same Davy Jones, according to sailors, is the fiend that presides over all the evil and spirits of the deep, and is often seen in various shapes, perching among the rigging on the eve of hurricanes, ship-wrecks, and other disasters to which sea-faring life is exposed, warning the devoted wretch of death and woe."

To my brothers and sisters of the Navy, all Interservice rivalry aside and in good fun, I'll fly, you dive. Either way, America sleeps safely at night because of the men and women on land, sea, and air. May God be with us, everyone.

