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OPERATION FLINT LOCK:
THE BIG-GUN ASSAULT ON THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

JANUARY 2000 VOLUME 33, NUMBER 1
DISPLAY UNTIL 2/29/00

Sea CLASSICS

**KARL
DÖNITZ:**
THE NAZI
ADMIRAL WHO
INHERITED HITLER'S
LEGACY OF SHAME

USS TURNER:
THE DESTROYER
THAT BLEW ITSELF UP

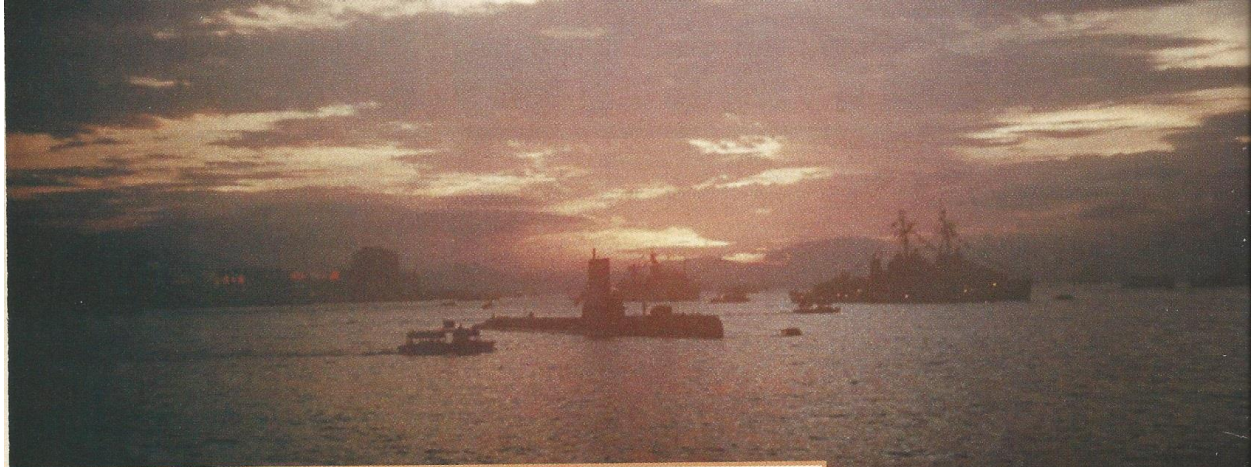
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A moody Asian sunset casts its glow over Hong Kong Harbor. Silhouetted in the foreground is the USS *POMFERT* (SS-391); behind it an unidentified cruiser of the Royal Navy.

En route to the Philippines, *TUNNY* prepares to launch its Regulus I in a firing demonstration staged before SEATO observers aboard the carrier USS *HANCOCK* (CV-19) in 1958.

Souvenirs purchased in downtown Hong Kong by *TUNNY* crewmen filled its Regulus I hangar on the trip home.



HAWAII-ALASKA

Everyone "turned to" in the preparation for the trip as well as the change of home ports. *TUNNY*, as with most all submarines, was in very good operational readiness and we all made sure our respective areas of responsibility were not the exception. The Captain announced that he would be conducting an inspection of each department before we left and fully expected everything to be 4.0. All the equipment that was the responsibility of the Engineering Department was checked and re-checked and Engine Rooms received a special clean up. For the inspection, we even pulled out our

evidently this one had broken free. This gave an opportunity for the "OD" to practice his skill in maneuvering *TUNNY* in a "man overboard" drill. It also gave the controllermen something to do aside from just watching the "amp" meters. It was very interesting to watch these people manipulate the "sticks" as the orders came down from the bridge; "All Stop," "Port Ahead Full," "Starboard Back One Third," etc. To keep up with the changes, sometimes very rapid, you had to know what you were doing, almost by instinct, and do it right the first time. *TUNNY* had a "single" cubical, as opposed to a "split" cubical, and it could

PART III CONCLUSION

In this concluding segment the veteran submarine TUNNY

USS TUNNY: EARLY ADVENTURES WITH THE REGULUS I MISSILE

(SSG-282) returns from Alaska only to learn her home port has been

cleanest, or best set of dungarees and then made sure our own name was properly stenciled in the appropriate place. At a previous inspection it was discovered that three individuals were wearing shirts with the same name stenciled on all three shirts. This was, of course, a violation of Navy Regulations, but they were going for appearance. Most of the electricians had acid holes in their dungarees and the enginemen's always looked dirty despite being recently washed.

When it came time for the inspection, the CO gave us all, as well as the spaces we occupied, a good looking over. Everything met the Captain's approval and we were ready to get underway. Several days later, with a number of people on the dock, we bid farewell to Port Hueneme and started heading west for Pearl Harbor. This trip proved to be very relaxing and at one point we even "hove to" and had a swim call.

One event of interest that occurred on this trip was when a lookout spotted a glass ball floating on the water. Japanese fishermen used these "balls" to support their fishing nets and

therefore be operated by one person, but that person had to have had a great deal of experience, this was a job that certainly required skill as well as concentration. At the end of the practice session, *TUNNY* was brought close enough to the "ball" and it was fished out of the water with a small net and boat hook. The Captain got a nice souvenir of our trip to Hawaii.

We finally arrived at our new homeport, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. On the way through the channel, those of us who were topside aft, received an interesting running commentary from a member of our crew who had been stationed at Pearl Harbor on that fateful day, 7 December 1941. Just before reaching the final-resting place of the *ARIZONA*, we made a turn to the starboard and headed toward the submarine base dock, "Sierra One," where *TUNNY* would be moored. Then Lt. Frank Slattery had the conn and made a picture perfect landing, bringing the "bull nose" to a dead stop within a foot or so of the bulkhead or seawall.

Later Cdr. Slattery would become the CO of the USS *SCORPION* (SSN-589) and was in command when

changed from California to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

BY STEPHEN EDDS

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UNLESS OTHERWISE CREDITED

SCORPION was lost with all hands off the Azores in 1968. Were it not for the fact I knew the Commander, I might not have given this unfortunate event much thought. However, as chairman of the "Ship's Reception Committee" for the Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Council of the Navy League, I had the opportunity to discretely ask questions about this loss since so many submarines visited Port Everglades after completion of exercises in the AUTEK range in the Bahamas.

I was somewhat surprised that no one really wanted to discuss the matter and one CO even told me that the loss of *SCORPION* was a subject that he could not discuss. This perked my interest even more. But, over a period of time, I managed to pick up scraps of information and when pieced together, some years later, led me to believe this loss might have been the result of; (a) A torpedo making a "hot run" within the confines of the boat; or (b) It was either rammed or torpedoed by another submarine. I subsequently read, or otherwise found out, that in the same time frame of this event that another country had also lost a submarine under mysterious circumstances in the Mediterranean. I am under the impression that there were a number of events, involving submarines, that were, and I guess still are, classified. I was also told that there was a case where the skipper of one of our boats had been awarded a medal for having accomplished something he was not allowed to divulge. All of these events reminded me of how dangerous

servicing in submarines could be and particularly so if the "other side" is inclined to be recklessly, "for peacetime," aggressive.

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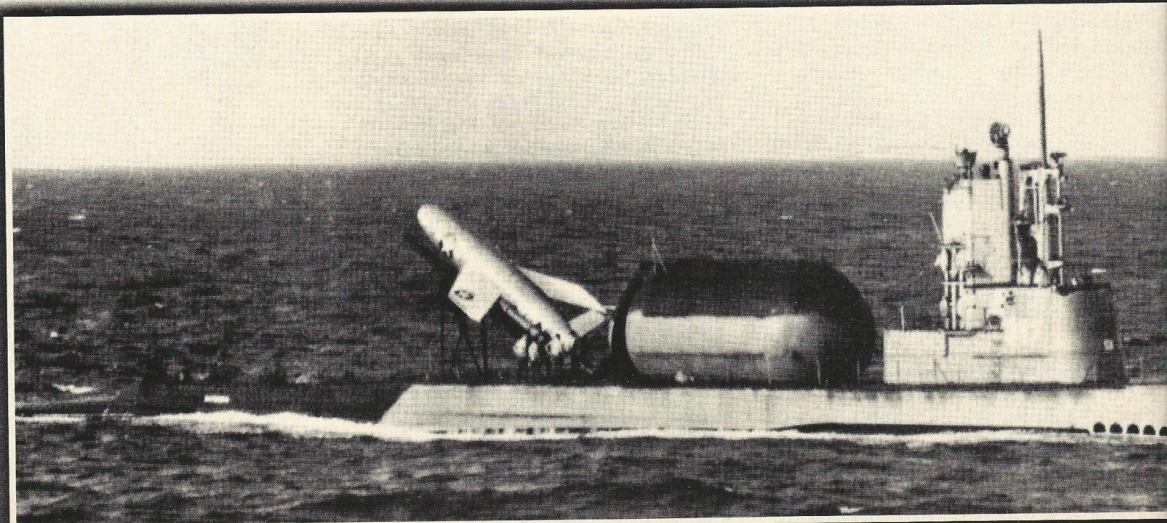
Upon getting *TUNNY* secured to the pier and getting the gangway set, the first person to come aboard was COMSUBPAC, Adm. Grenfel. It is interesting to note that the Admiral had been the first Commanding Officer of *TUNNY* when it went into commission in September 1942. I would imagine seeing his old command brought back, for him, some real memories of the war years. The only really visible changes in the submarines' appearance was that of the standard "GUPPY" conversion, excepting that the bow had retained the "Fleet Type Bull Nose," and, of course, the addition of the hangar and launching ramp aft of the sail area.

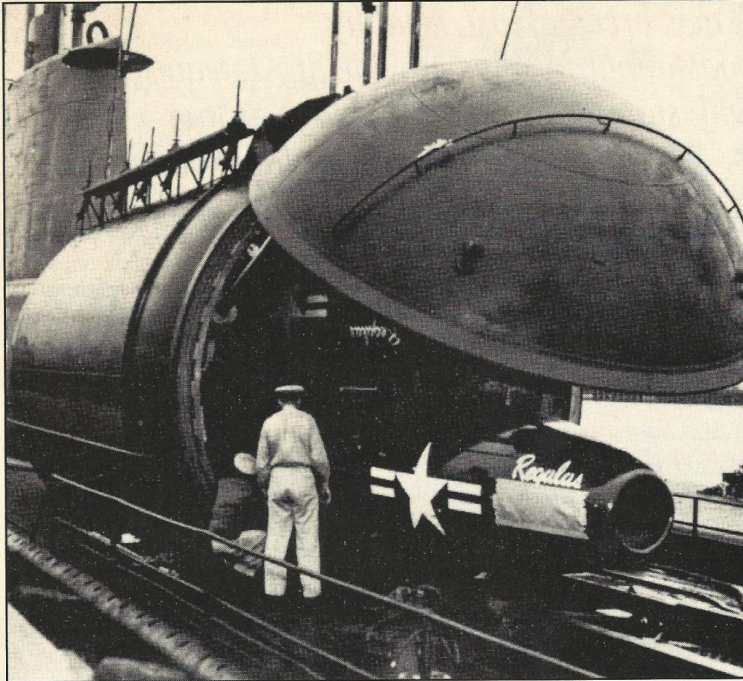
For the next few months we conducted operations in the Hawaiian waters and during this time had a number of changes in personnel. Some were transferred to new submarines that were equipped with the Regulus II missile, and others went to various schools. At one point we almost had a shortage of people and this became really acute in the Engineering Department. During this period I took and passed the exam for Engineman Third Class. When the results were announced, the Chief Engineman told me that I would now be standing "throttlemen" watches due to the shortage of qualified people.

Finally the time arrived for a "live shot" and we left Pearl for an undisclosed, at least I didn't know, location for the launch.

Subsequently I was told we would be just off the island of Molokai for the launch. Upon arrival in the designated area, we prepared for the "shot." There were no changes in our launching preparations and as always, when everything had been checked out, we went into the hangar, shut and locked the hangar door and waited for the launch. Things seemed normal; the usual noise from the jet engine and then the loud explosion when the boosters were ignited. Within 30 seconds of the launch word was passed that the "bird" had only gone about a thousand yards and had exploded into a "million" pieces. At this point we secured from battle stations and I went below to get a cup of coffee. I was in the crews' mess when word was passed that three of us were wanted topside. When I got there we were informed that as we were *TUNNY*'s "swimmers," we had been "elected" to go overboard and retrieve as many parts of the missile as we could find. Who ever said the missile was in a million pieces was right, we only found one thing that was worth salvaging, an air flask, everything else had either sunk or was in very small bits and pieces. After seeing it was fruitless to continue we were called back.

After spending time operating in local waters, the time had arrived for a maintenance period and this time it included putting *TUNNY* into a dry dock. The purpose of this



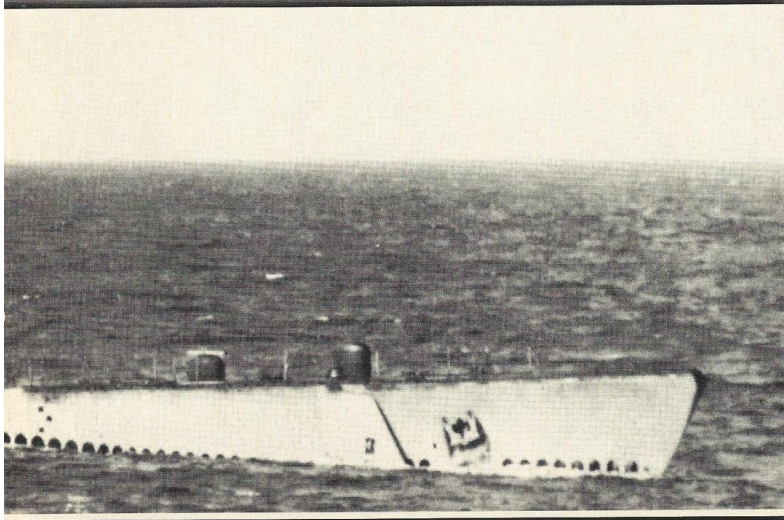


TUNNY carried Regulus I missiles in its cylindrical hangar. Operations with the Regulus I and II missiles paved the way for the soon to come Polaris missiles of the 1960s.

was to conduct a below the water line inspection and then to give this area a paint job. The painting was an all hands evolution; everyone participated except the Captain who took the topside watch. The Engineering Officer pulled me off the painting detail and we then conducted a ballast tank inspection. I had never been in ballast tank before and it was a very interesting experience. We went into every tank that was accessible, checked valve

seats and the linkage involved. The most remarkable thing I remember about this whole experience was the smell: It was incredibly bad and when we finished I tossed the dungarees and took a long hot shower.

The missilemen on board were very well aware of some of the developmental work that was in progress concerning missiles and particularly the efforts of improvement that were in various stages of being implemented for submarines. It was already known that Regulus I was



soon to be replaced by Regulus II and, in time, the Regulus was going to be replaced by a missile that could be launched while the submarine remained submerged. The name of this missile was "Polaris" and we also knew that a new class of submarine was under construction, the *George Washington*-class, to be the delivery platform. Aside from being able to launch the missile while remaining under water, Polaris eliminated the need of having continuous external guidance since, once programmed, it was capable of flying on its own to a given target. The method of launching was somewhat like firing a torpedo except that the missile was launched from a vertical tube. The evolution that had taken place since the end of the WWII and the acquisition of the technology, concerning missiles was rather slow, however, one event changed everything and all of a sudden development of missiles became a high priority. This event was when the Russians successfully launched and placed in orbit the satellite "Sputnik" in October 1957. We were at sea when this occurred and we all, at one time or another, stopped by the "Radio Shack" to listen to the transmissions, just a "beep-beep-beep," being sent back to earth from the small satellite. At the time this happened it was a remarkable achievement and it certainly woke up the United States, not to mention the world.

Time marched on and in January 1958, we got the news that we were going to make another trip North. This time we received a very stern warning that what we were about to do was absolutely confidential and not to be discussed with anyone — period. I'll never forget the day I came back to the boat and found the "topside gang" applying paint on the "sail" covering over *TUNNY*'s numbers. Very soon after this I went forward one day and found that "doubler hatches" were being installed.

I had never seen these before and in reply to my question, what are they for, I was given an answer I didn't really want to hear. I kept asking myself where could we be going that would require installation of these hatches. We made all the preparations and were ready to go.

Finally the day arrived for our departure and off we went. The first few days were quite pleasant, but

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Sistership USS BARBERO (SSG-317) became a running mate for the TUNNY in 1955. BARBERO is seen with her Regulus I in firing position.

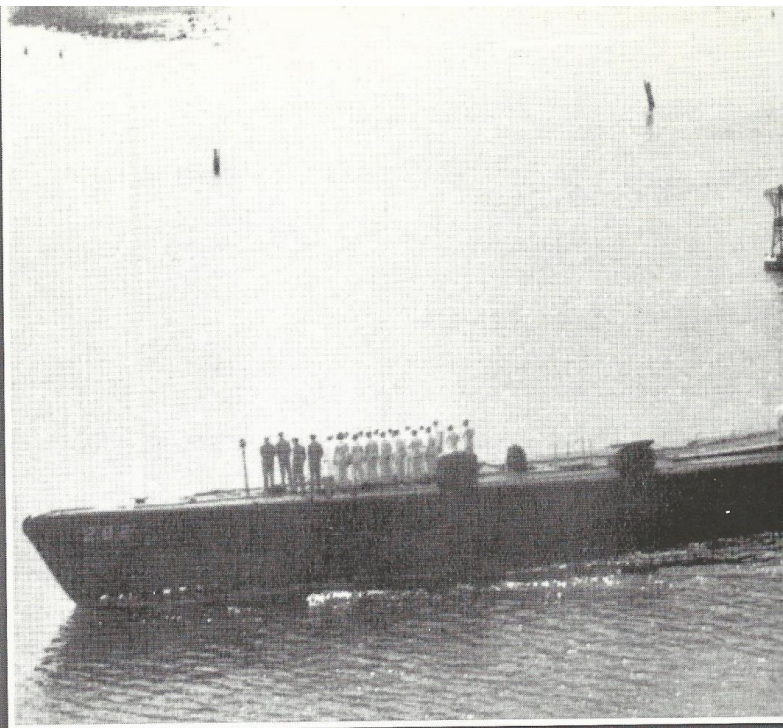
USS TUNNY

(continued from page 27)

the weather started getting bad, particularly the sea and we began to feel the effects of a rough ocean. *TUNNY* could ride the sea fairly well despite the added weight and "sail" area of the hangar. In the entire time we had previously spent in or near the Aleutians, we had been lucky and not run into any foul weather to speak of. Contrary to what some believe, older submarines, particularly of WWII-vintage, had not been built with a "test dept" much beyond three or 400 feet. If you were submerged at or near the boats' test depth and a wave of any size passed over, it could put you below test depth very quickly. Additionally, staying on the surface in certain situations could make detection more difficult.

Unlike our last trip, it became a guessing game as to where we were headed and what our objective was. "Scuttlebutt," although not always accurate, had it that we were going around the westerly end of the Aleutian Islands, Attu and then into the Bering Sea. This conclusion seemed as plausible as some of the other opinions I had heard. After entering the Bering Sea, we proceeded to conduct a number of drills in and around the ice, and at one point submerged for a short time under the ice. In time we accomplished what our assigned orders instructed us to do and then headed back into the Pacific for the return trip to Hawaii. At this point we were told that we would be participating in some "ASW" exercises and to get the boat "squared away" for this drill.

I hated these exercises and only for the fact it was my job to start up and secure from snorkeling. I'll never forget this particular exercise. I had the watch in the after engine room and I must have had to shut down and start up the engines seven or eight times. At one point I noticed that the engine temperature was getting high, into the "red" zone, and called the OD to report this and requested that we wait ten or 15 minutes before we started them up again. I was told that if it was necessary he would wait and to call the conn as soon as the temperature had dropped down to an acceptable degree of heat. It was within minutes that the chief arrived, took



a look at the gauge, called the conn and told them I had done the right thing, number three main engine was hot and number four was not far behind. We waited a few minutes and then started snorkeling again. I was really glad when my relief arrived to take the next watch.

We had avoided contact with the surface forces all night, but the next morning we were discovered, despite being deep, operating in silence and under at least one temperature gradient. I might be "brain washed," but I still believe, even more today than years ago, that if a submarine does not want to be found it will be difficult to find. There are two major changes that now make submarines very difficult to find: (1) The hulls are constructed with much improved steel enabling the submarine to go very deep and; (2) Nuclear power. In the above situation it seemed, at least to us, that the entire Pacific Fleet was on the "goal line" just waiting for *TUNNY*. We now "made turns" for Pear Harbor.

SUBIC BAY, PHILIPPINES-HONG KONG, CHINA-JAPAN

Our return to Pearl Harbor was unremarkable, except that one morning, at quarters, the Captain announced *TUNNY* was going to make a trip to Japan and on our

way would visit Subic Bay in the Philippines and Hong Kong, China. He also allowed that we would most likely be called upon to give a demonstration of our missile capability. I could not believe I was lucky enough to be making this trip and particularly so in my last few months of being on active duty.

The XO called me into the wardroom one morning and explained my options to me since *TUNNY* was not scheduled to return to Hawaii until after my active duty time was up. He first made a super effort to get me to "ship over" for eight years and go to Nuclear Power School. I explained that I really appreciated what the Navy was offering, but that I had given the matter a good deal of thought and had made the decision to go back and finish college. I also told him that I would only really consider staying in the service as a career if I were an officer. I told him that the experience I'd had in the Navy was as interesting and educational as one could possibly hope for and that I had thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it. Where else could a young person learn what I had, especially relative to responsibility, see half the world and on top of that get paid for it. He told me that I would be released from *TUNNY* when we reached Japan.



TUNNY (SSG-282) seen entering Pearl Harbor in May 1957. With the cancellation of the Regulus program in the early '60s TUNNY became a troop transport and commando carrier. Having served with distinction in WWII and in a multitude of postwar roles this very historic submarine became an APSS in 1966. She was broken up in 1973.

In preparing for our pending trip we ran into a major problem with the hydraulic system that operated the hangar door. The system had apparently gotten some air into it and when you tried to operate the door, it would uncontrollably shake. The auxiliarmen tried "bleeding" the system but nothing seemed to correct the problem. As we were about to leave, we took *TUNNY* over to the Navy Yard for assistance. They installed a special "arch" or "bridge"-like arrangement, using three "I" beams welded together and then to the deck, so that by using two chain falls, attached to the top cross-member of the "bridge" and to two "pad eyes" on the hangar door, the door could be opened. If there was ever a "jury rig" this was it. We made up several teams of people to operate this arrangement. With persistence and a lot of work, the Chief Auxiliaryman, after we were well on our way, was finally able to get the system to operate properly. A lot of *TUNNY* sailors were very much relieved when told their services would not be needed to operate the chain falls.

About a week or so after leaving Hawaii, we made contact with the USS *HANCOCK* (CV-19) and proceeded to demonstrate the process of launching a missile. We launched a "bird" and flew it around

showing our ability to "fly" it and then blew it up. The purpose of this "show" was to demonstrate our missile capability to a number of individuals, all on the carrier, from SEATO. As soon as this demonstration was completed we resumed the heading that would take us to the Philippines.

Upon arriving in Subic Bay we tied up at the base's main dock. We soon had *TUNNY* all cleaned up and most of us went ashore, some staying on the base others going into Olongapo, the town that was adjacent to the base. I wish we'd had more time, as I would have liked to have visited Corregidor, Bataan, and Manila. As always, we had work to do on board and this, to be sure, took precedence over any personal things I wanted to do on the "beach." As I was now a "short timer," I was becoming anxious to get underway to our next port of call, Hong Kong. After hearing all the stories about this place I, as well as everyone else on board, was really looking forward to this visit.

On our way to the assigned anchorage we passed a liner that had run aground and was now resting firmly against some rocks. We couldn't see anyone on board, but we had been told that the "locals" were in the process of stripping it of anything that would

generate cash. We passed this on our starboard side and proceeded to the spot where we had been directed to anchor. As soon as we were at anchor and the watch had been set, we were called to quarters topside. The XO then gave us a warning about the possibility of the "natives," in all kinds of boats, trying to board ships to sell their wares. This was of course, in our case at least, totally unacceptable and instructions were issued on how to deal with the problem if it arose. We were also advised to pair up ashore as being alone could invite trouble and we should wear our uniforms. We were also again reminded that what we did was confidential and not get involved in any conversations with anyone about what we did or anything else concerning *TUNNY*.

The next day several of us went ashore and at the landing were met by a Navy Chaplain who told us that the best way to see Hong Kong was in a van and driven by an individual he could vouch for. Even more appealing was the cost — almost nothing. We thought about this offer and concluded we should take advantage of the Chaplain's suggestion. I am sure that we saw as much, most likely more, than if we had hired our own guide and vehicle. We had a very enjoyable time and wound up the tour with a



The naval base at Yokasuka, Japan, seen from the *TUNNY* in 1958.

visit to the "Tiger Baum Gardens." This was perhaps one of the most interesting places on the island. Using "plaster of Paris," maybe cement, various figures had been created in appropriate settings that depicted different stories concerning Chinese philosophy and culture. We must have spent a couple of hours roaming around this rather amazing place.



TUNNY crewmen 'captured' an adrift glass Japanese fishing net float which became one of the skipper's most treasured souvenirs from their deployment to Hawaii.



A colorful Hawaiian lei adorns *TUNNY*'s sail as the first guided missile submarine arrives at Pearl Harbor.

One afternoon, several of us got a water taxi and went over to Kawloon on the mainland. We wandered around awhile but saw nothing of any interest, at least to us, and decided that it might be best if we went back to Hong Kong. What we had been warned about was always in the back of our minds and we didn't want to take any chances. We returned to the island, winding up in a local bar and grille. One topic of our discussion was how could a lot of the sailors we saw get so intoxicated and behave like such jackasses. Of those in our group, several had been to college and had reamed the art of drinking to stay sober. Aside from this, we all understood what the XO had reminded us of prior to our leaving to go ashore.

We had a great port visit and just about everyone agreed that Hong Kong would be hard to beat as a liberty port. One look in the hangar left little doubt about the money the crew must have spent; it was loaded with clothes and bicycles. We now upped anchor and headed toward Japan. This was a visit the crew, except the Chief Radioman, was looking forward to. (The Chief

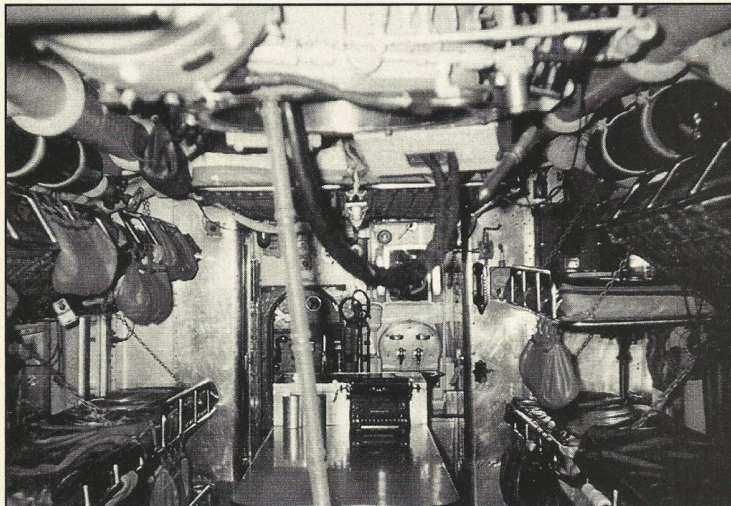
had been caught on Bataan and had survived the "Death March" and as a result did not want to see or be near any Japanese person or persons. Everyone respected his feelings and special precautions were taken when we arrived in Japan to avoid any possible conflict between the Chief and any of the Japanese workers when they were aboard. To the best of my recollection the Chief remained on board the entire time *TUNNY* was in Japan.)

We ultimately entered Tokyo Bay and proceeded to the naval base in Yokosuka. After getting the boat "squared away," just about everyone went into the city to have a cold one and to see if what we had been told about Yokosuka was at all accurate.

The next morning, as soon as we could, we took a train to Tokyo. This

Japanese people have toward their emporia. We then spent some time walking around and then went into one or two retail stores to see what one could buy. One store looked just like Macys in New York and from what we saw it appeared to be as well stocked with merchandise. After some more walking around we went back to the train station caught a train and resumed to Yokosuka and *TUNNY*.

The next morning, after chow, the Yeoman told me that all my paperwork had been done and that I could leave as soon as I wanted. I put on my "blues" and went about saying my goodbyes. It was with a lot of mixed emotions knowing I would most likely never see some of my shipmates again. I went into the wardroom and bid those present a fond farewell. All in all it was my



TUNNY's stern room. The large black cable looped by the overhead ladder connects *TUNNY*'s shore power.

was a eye opening experience. It was quite evident that the Japanese had worked hard on their railroad system. The trains were very clean and the operating personnel were very pleasant and helpful, even if they were not very conversant in English. But one thing stood out above all, and that was the trains were absolutely punctual, the trains ran according to the times published in the timetable.

We had been told that we should go see the Emporia's Palace, and so this was the first place we visited. This was an absolutely splendid looking residence and one couldn't help but feel the reverence the

feeling that most of the individuals, enlisted and officers alike, on *TUNNY* were very good examples of what is expected of the people that have chosen to "ride" submarines and defend America.

After departing *TUNNY*, I checked in at the "Receiving Barracks." I was told that I had been scheduled to be flown back to the States on a "MATS" plane but that this had been cancelled and that I would be going back on the USS *PHILIPPINE SEA* (CV-17). At this time I was told it would be departing in a week or ten days. I hadn't contemplated on this, but had to live with it.

The worst thing about this wait was that I had nothing to do but wait. One afternoon as I was minding my own business, a Chief came by and asked if I was "rated" and I said yes, I was a Third Class Engineman. He then informed me that he needed someone to be on "Shore Patrol" duty and that I was his man. I told him that I had never been a "Shore Patrol" person before and really didn't know what to. This didn't seem to disturb him and he said not to worry he would show me the ropes. I put on my "blues" and off we went in a Navy van to patrol the streets. During the time we were driving around we only stopped once and this was to investigate a group of Sailors who were standing on a street corner being very loud and appeared to be well on their way toward having a real hangover in the morning. When they saw us they dispersed and that was that. We finally resumed to the barracks and that concluded my one and only "SP" assignment.

Finally the day arrived and we were delivered to the *PHILIPPINE SEA*. After we were shown our berthing area word was passed that the ship was ready to get underway and I went topside to watch the ships' departure. Being on a carrier, after spending two years on a submarine, was a real experience. The first thing that happened was a sailor came up to me, gave me a "swab" and told me to swab down the compartment deck. I put on the best set of dungarees I had and started to swab the deck. The next thing I know the fellow is back and asks if I was rated and I replied a Third Class Engineman. He almost went into a panic and told me to please leave the compartment and he then explained that non-rated people only did this kind of work. I did not volunteer that on a submarine when there was work to be done everyone turned two, be it a Seaman, Chief, or anything in between. For the balance of the trip to San Diego, I found various places to relax and spent a fair amount of time in the ship's library. Eventually we arrived in San Diego, North Island, and the "mustering out" process began. It took about two weeks, but I was finally released and hopped a plane back to New Jersey. Thus ended two very interesting years of my life and I have never regretted the experience for one minute.

SC