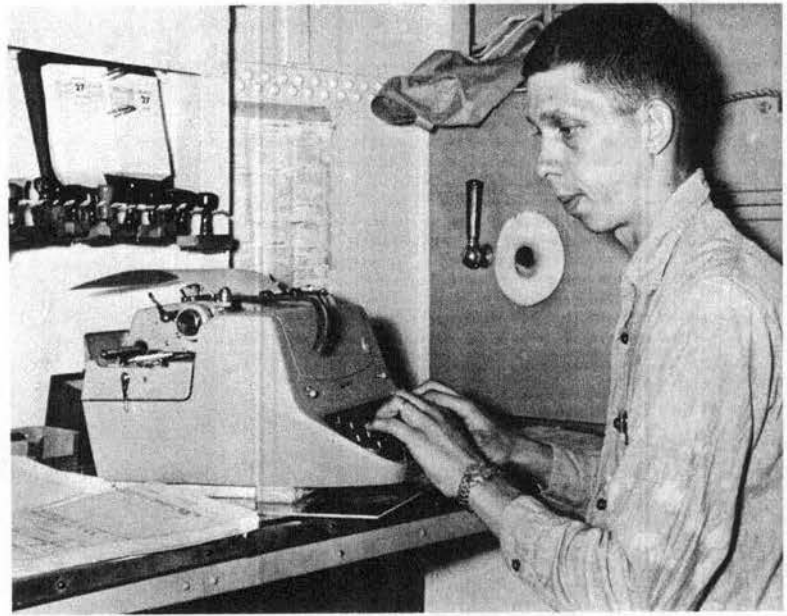


... work with hands and arms,



Now commence ship's work...



or arms and bodies



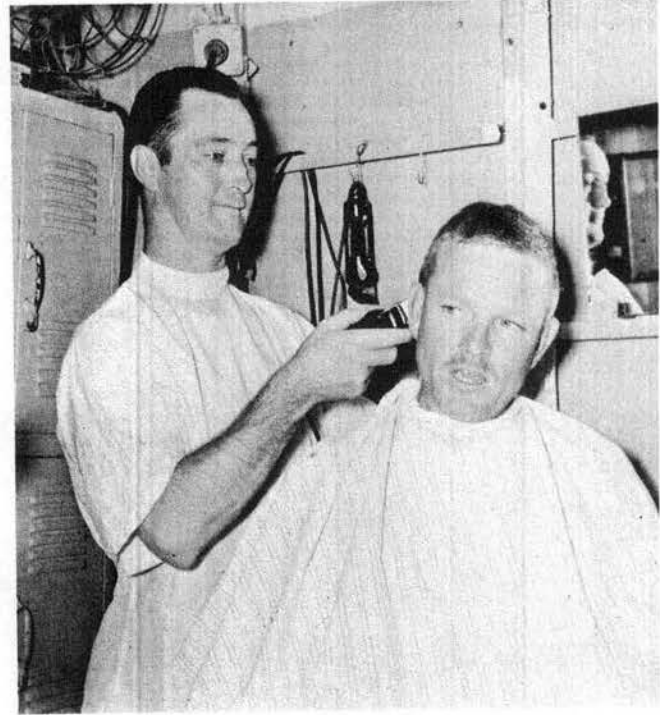
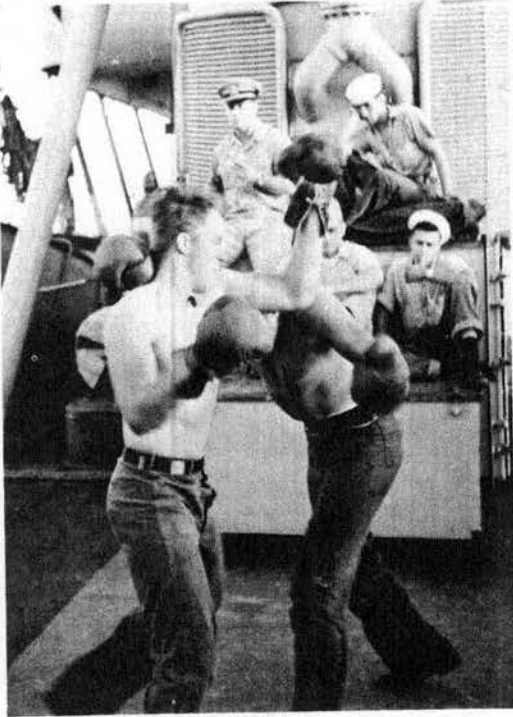
knees and hands

or, like Huckleberry Finn, with bare feet.

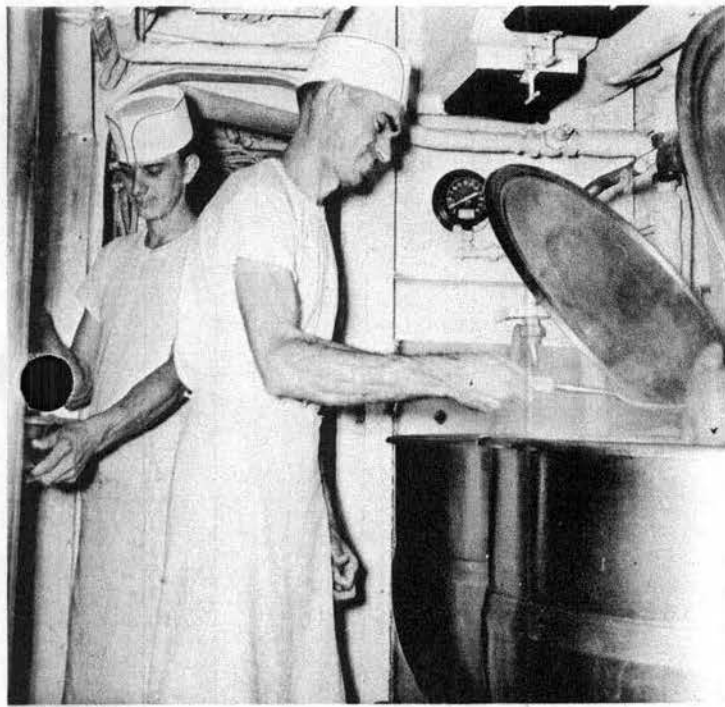


and the traditional Navy hairc

the blows of the glove to the ear



the sound of music to the ear



With the routine occupations comes the breaks—eating and perhaps, if you're lucky, sleeping.

This isn't exactly like the food that Mother used to make.



The messcook isn't exactly like Mother either . . .

in the warmth of the sun or a fluorescent tube.



*And with the day's work done, rest and relaxation
are the rewards.*





in the lounge . . .



. . . or even in the rack . . . the day is finished.

The Task Group sleeps.

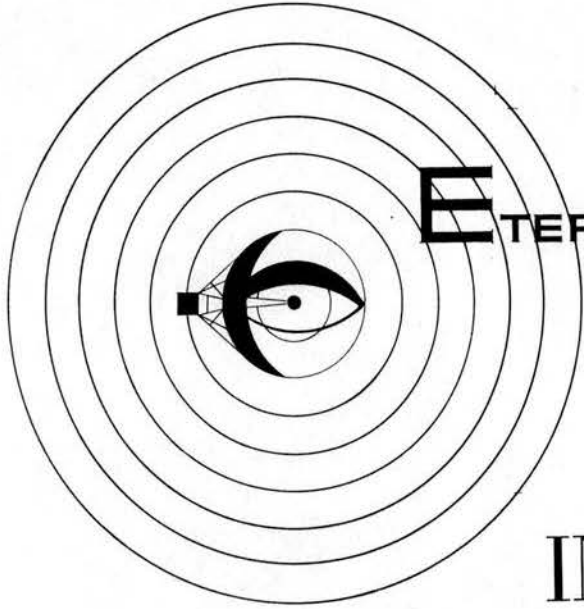


OPERATIONAL IMMEDIATE X CONFIDENTIAL

FROM COMASDEFORLANT TO CTG 81.8 X AIRLINES PILOT

REPORTS SIGHTING PERISCOPE ADJACENT YOUR AREA X

INVESTIGATE AND REPORT



ETERNAL VIGILANCE

INVESTIGATE

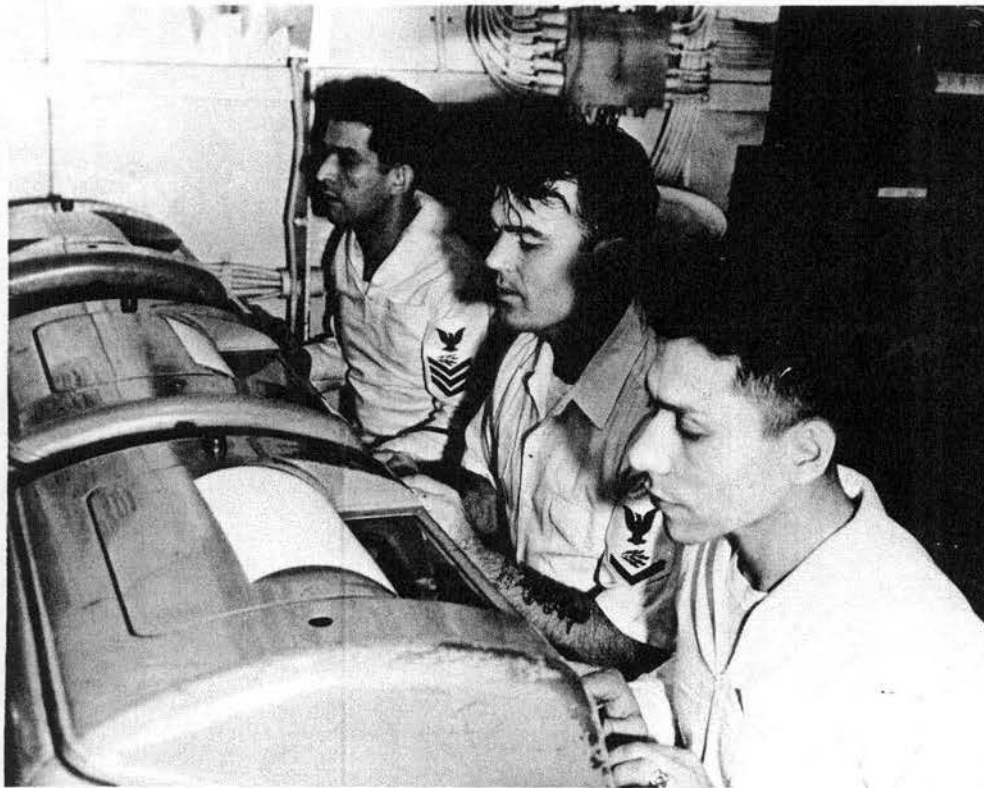
A message is received aboard the RANDOLPH from COMASDEFORLANT. Decrypted quickly, advance copies are sent to the Flag. In an instant, the months and weeks of drill and training begin to pay off. The Task Group has been alerted to a possible contact, and all units assume their roles in the Hunter-Killer ritual. Search/Attack units are designated; plans are drawn to find the contact and classify it. Pilots are quickly briefed; the aircraft, always ready to take off on a moment's notice, are tuned up. The destroyers speed to the datum; the submarines assume their positions along the perimeter of the contact area. Men and machines, well drilled and carefully maintained, ready to do their jobs.

*The vast coordination of men and machines begins
...the net draws tighter...*

Each minute means something to the Task Group. From the moment that a suspected contact is made, until the time of classification, messages stream to and from COMASDEFORLANT. The Task Group executes its evolutions . . . Flag strives to coordinate the efforts of the dispersed units, and keep in touch with all of them through the critical minutes and hours ahead . . . can the contact be verified?

*Advanced word is received, and the Flag office locates
each member of the Admiral's team.*

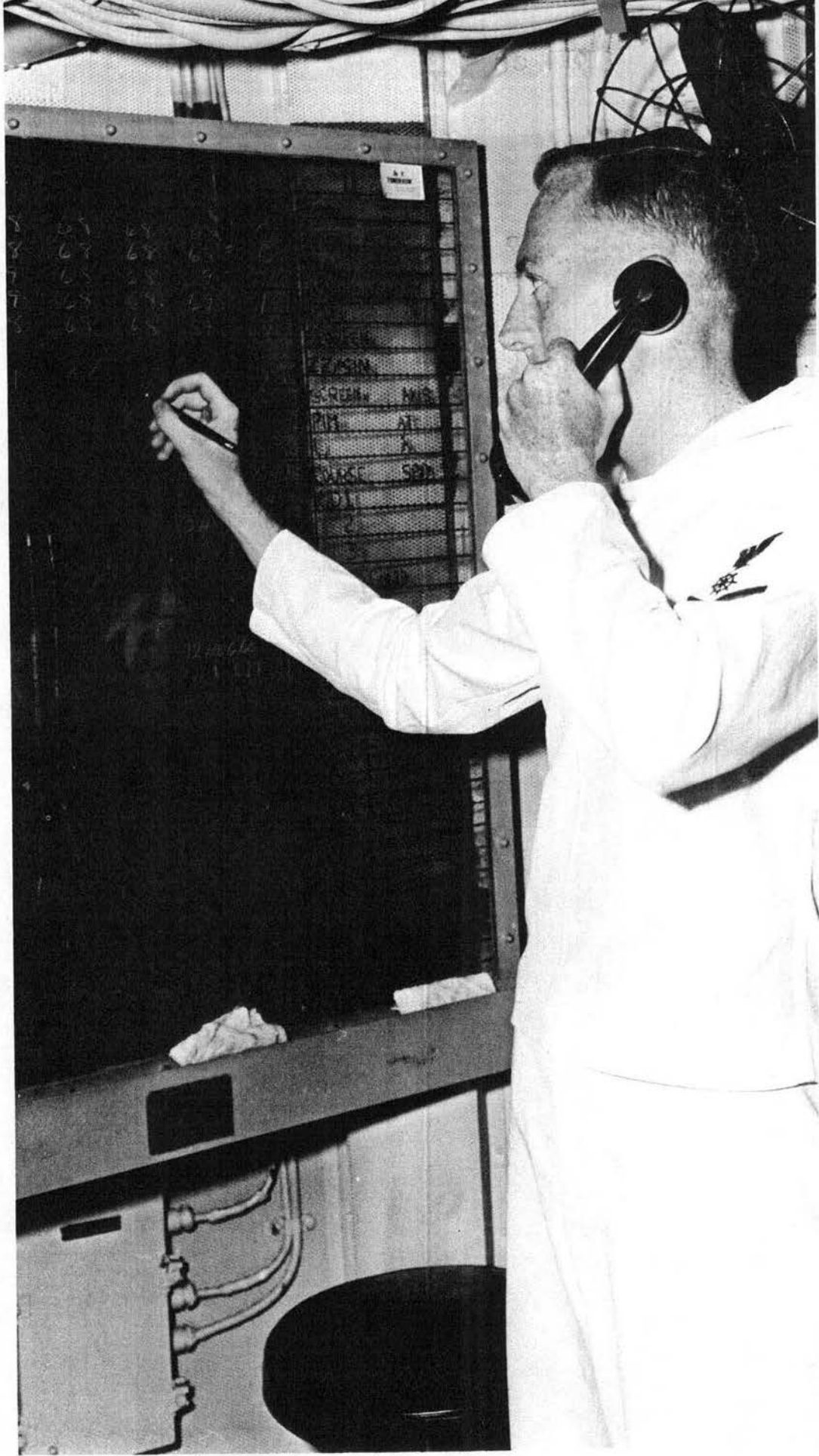




Alert radiomen from Flag man the teletype shack in RANDOLPH, each aware that reliability, security and speed are the marks of good communications.



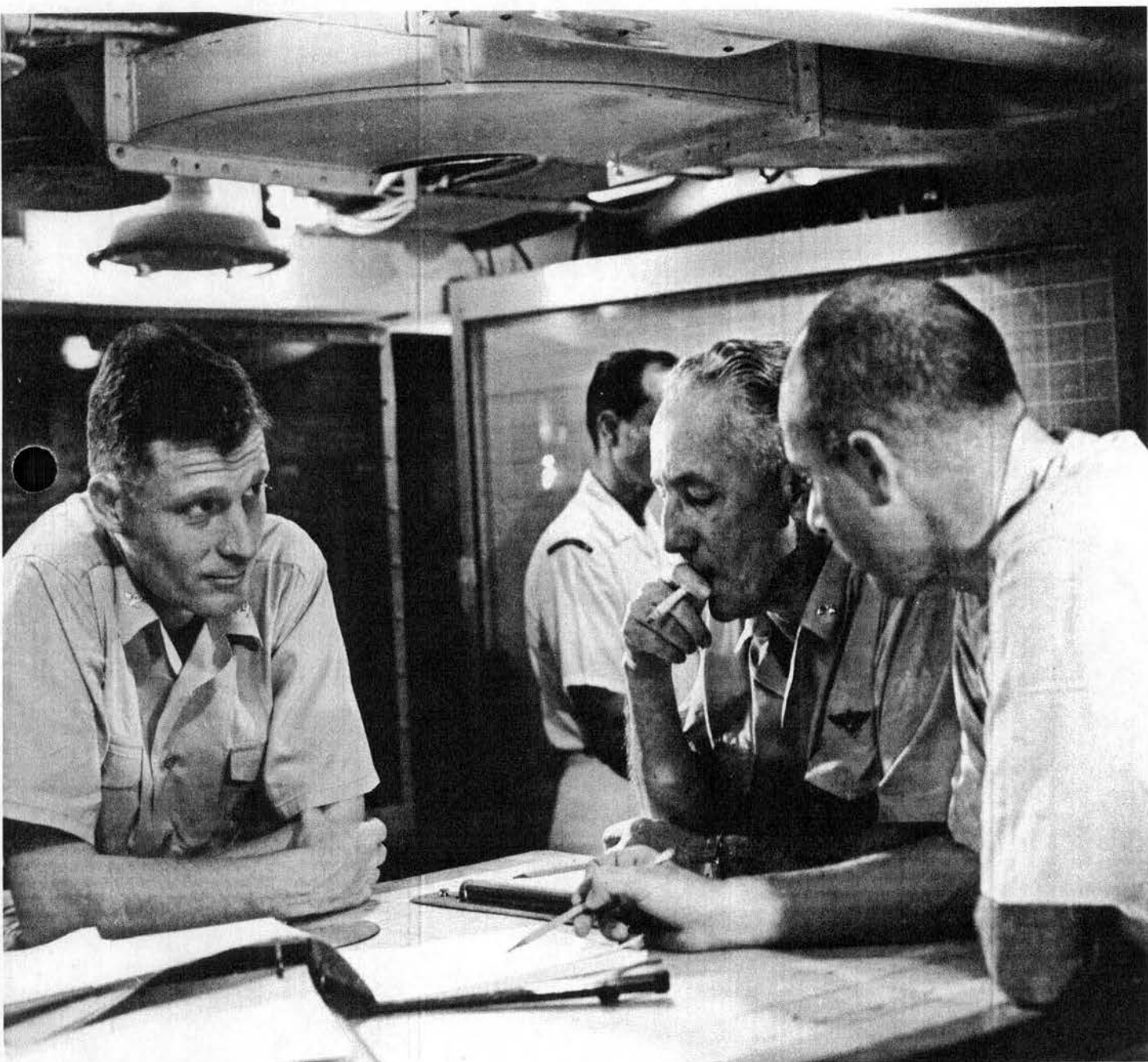
Each moment brings the sound of an intruder closer to the Task Group.



The Quartermaster board brings information to the Staff.

Decisions are made...reconsidered...confirmed

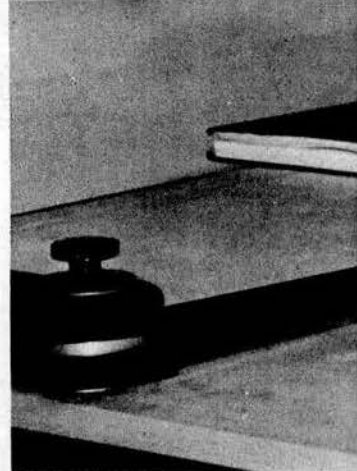
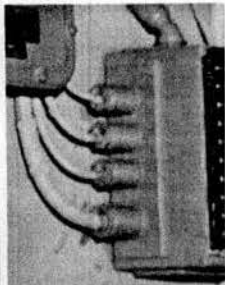
The leaders of the Task Group attempt to develop the most effective solution to the problem at hand . . . finding the intruder.

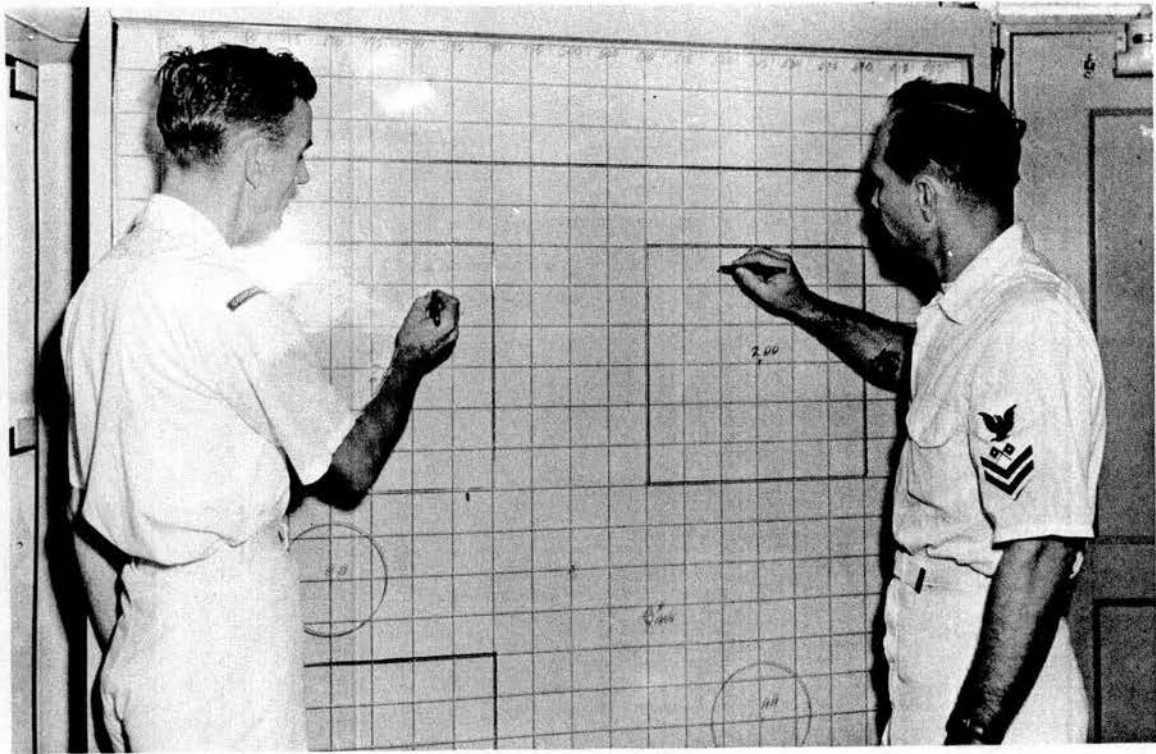


Information is correlated...



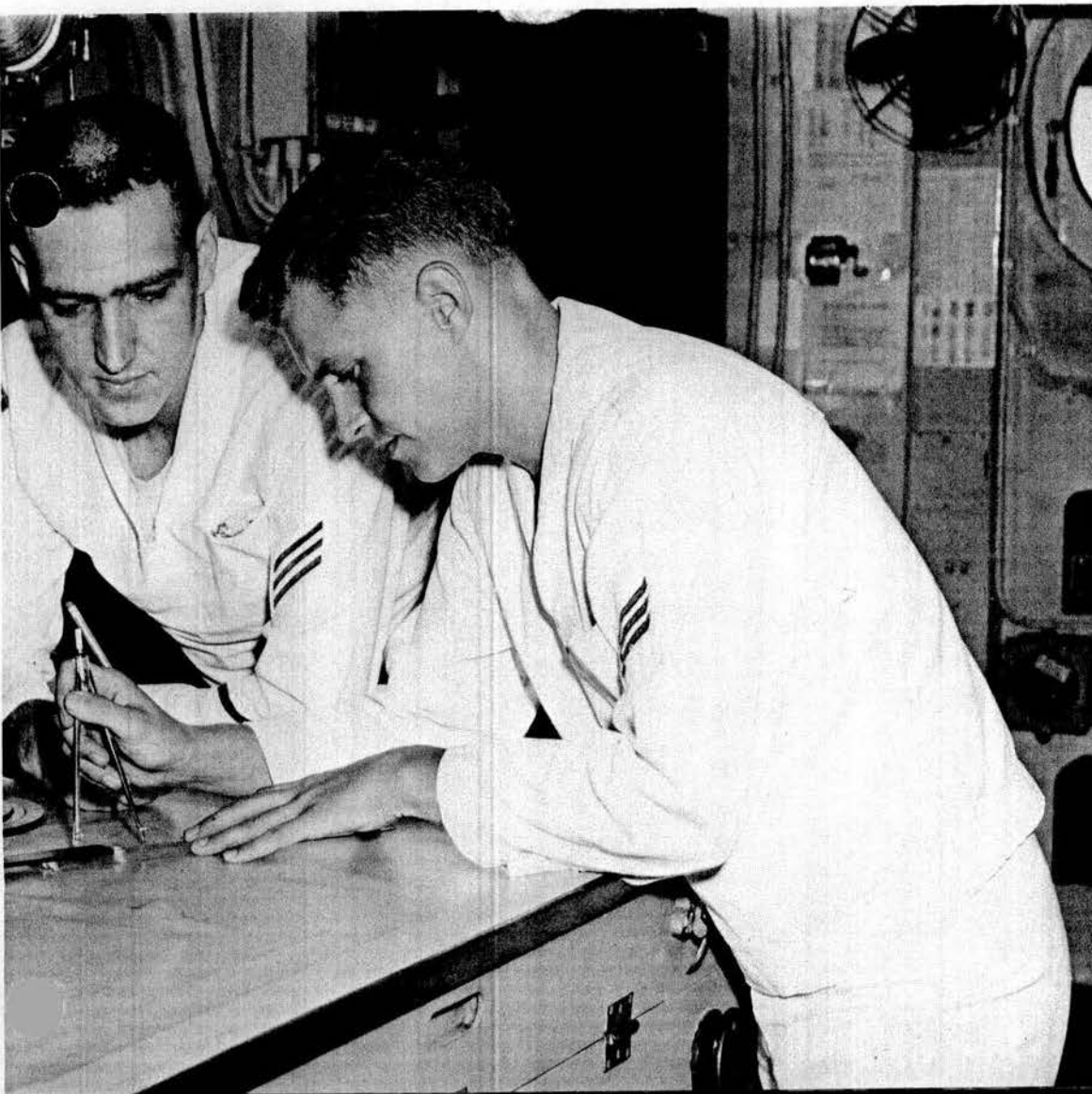
Instructions are passed . . .





... as search patterns are marked on the status boards ...

... and close contact is kept with the course and speed of all units.



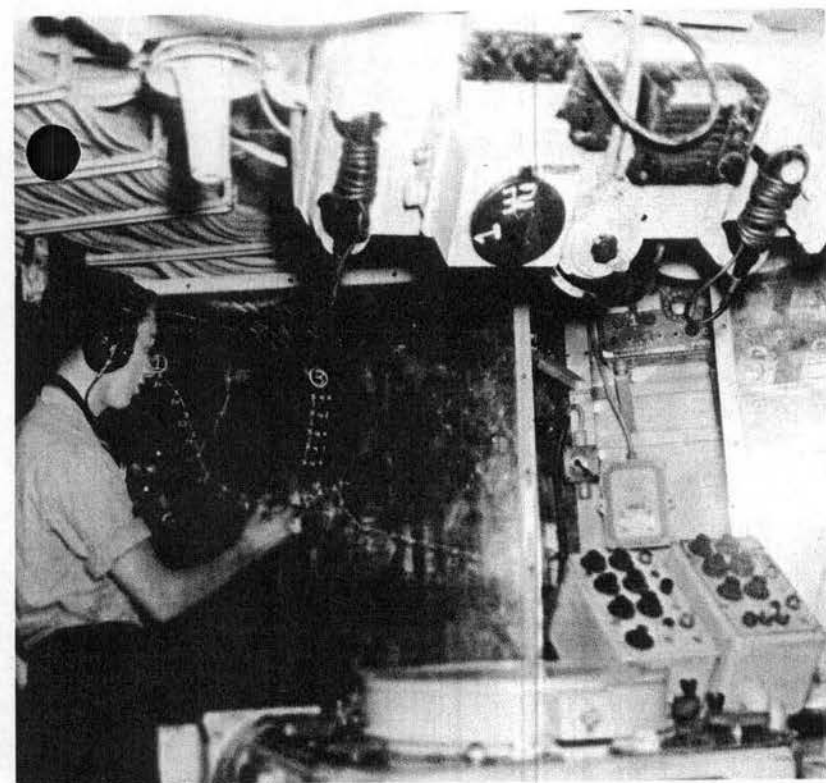
The path is charted

Calculations are made





... contact is made with the SAU



... his findings are plotted ...



... and word is passed back to the Commander.

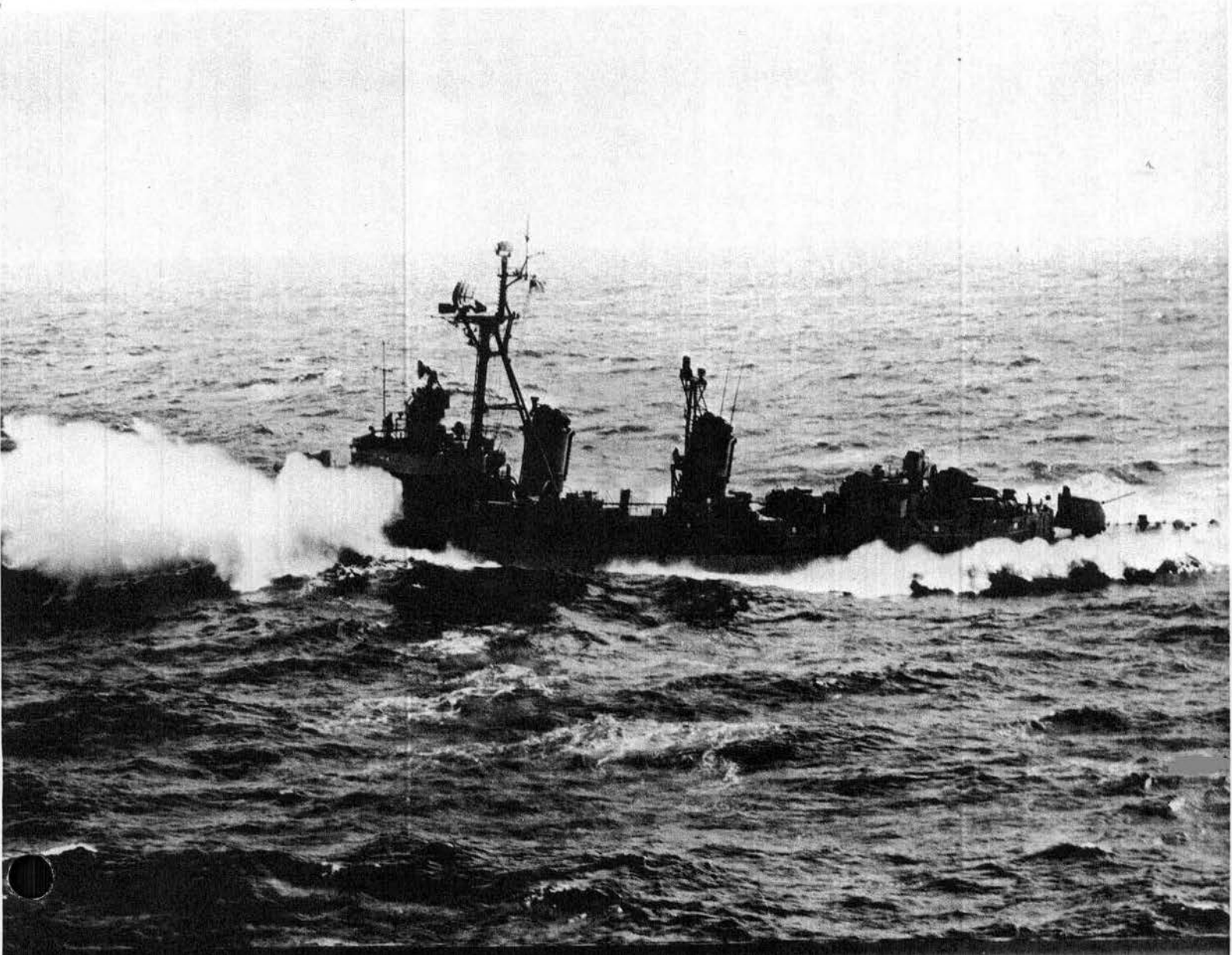
Contact verified!





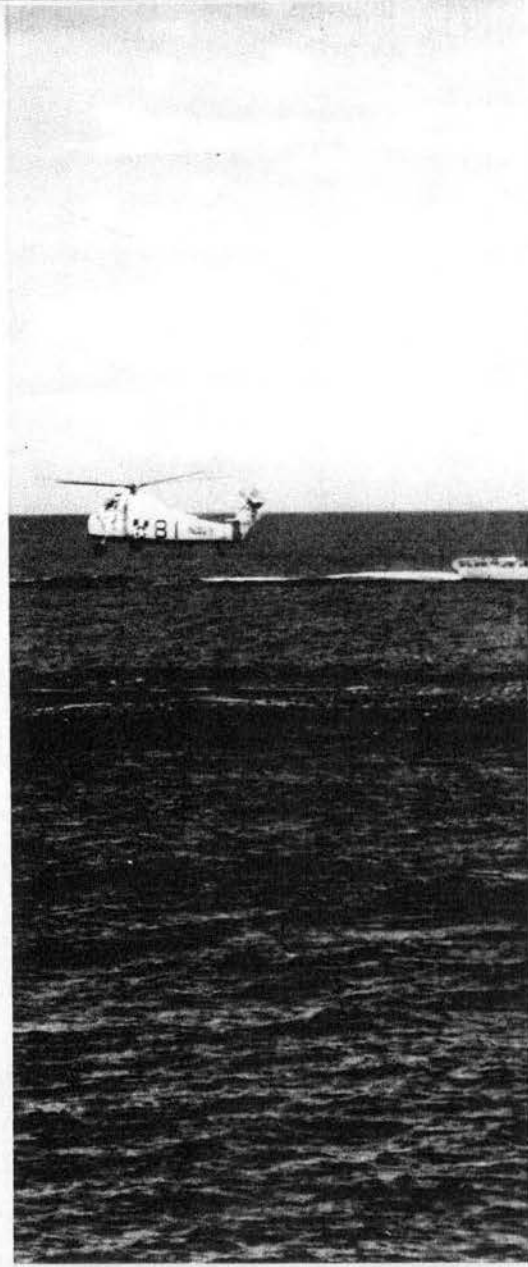
The contact is marked on the screen of a repeater

... and the Task Group steams into action ... ready for whatever may lie ahead.





Instructions crackle from the bridge on the RANDOLPH, and the destroyers spring into action.



Sonar and MAD gear probe down into the ocean.

Task units match their skills to find the intruder

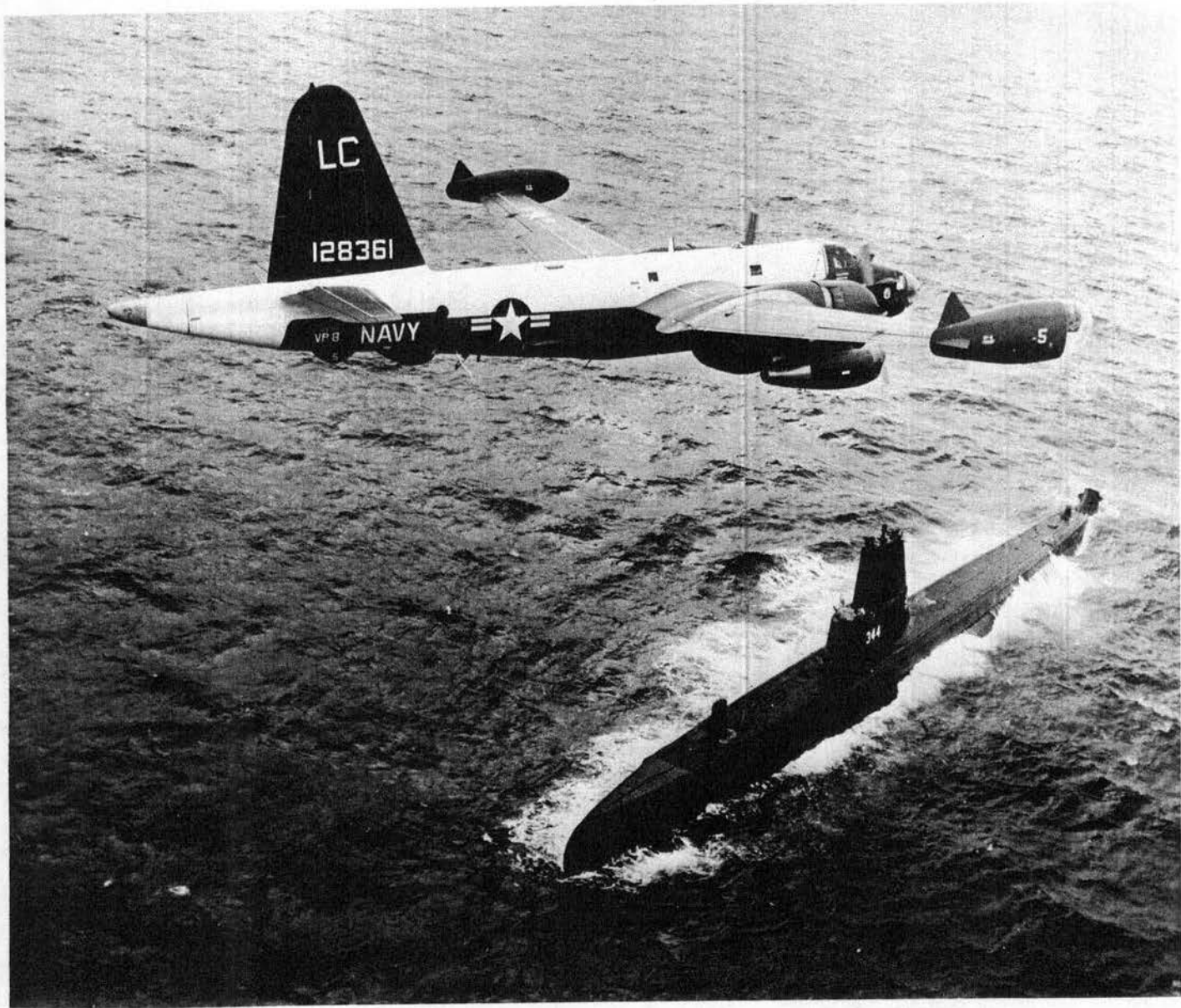


The helicopters are on the scene quickly and listen intently for the sounds they know only too well...

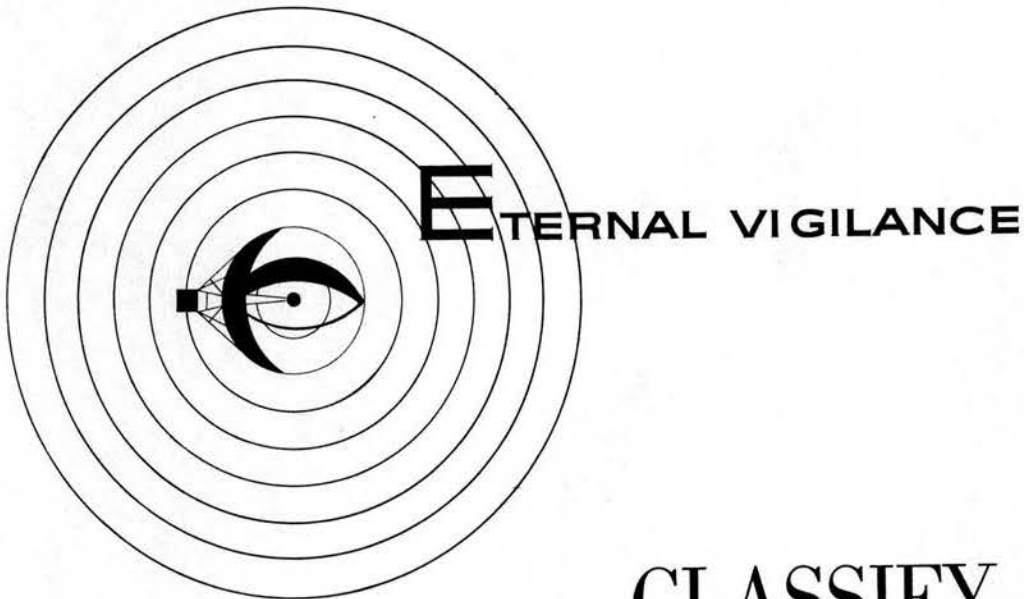




*Something's there . . . it might only be a school of fish,
or it might be a submarine.*



All units of the Task Group are called into service. A P2V searches from the beach, while one of the SSK's prepares to take his station.

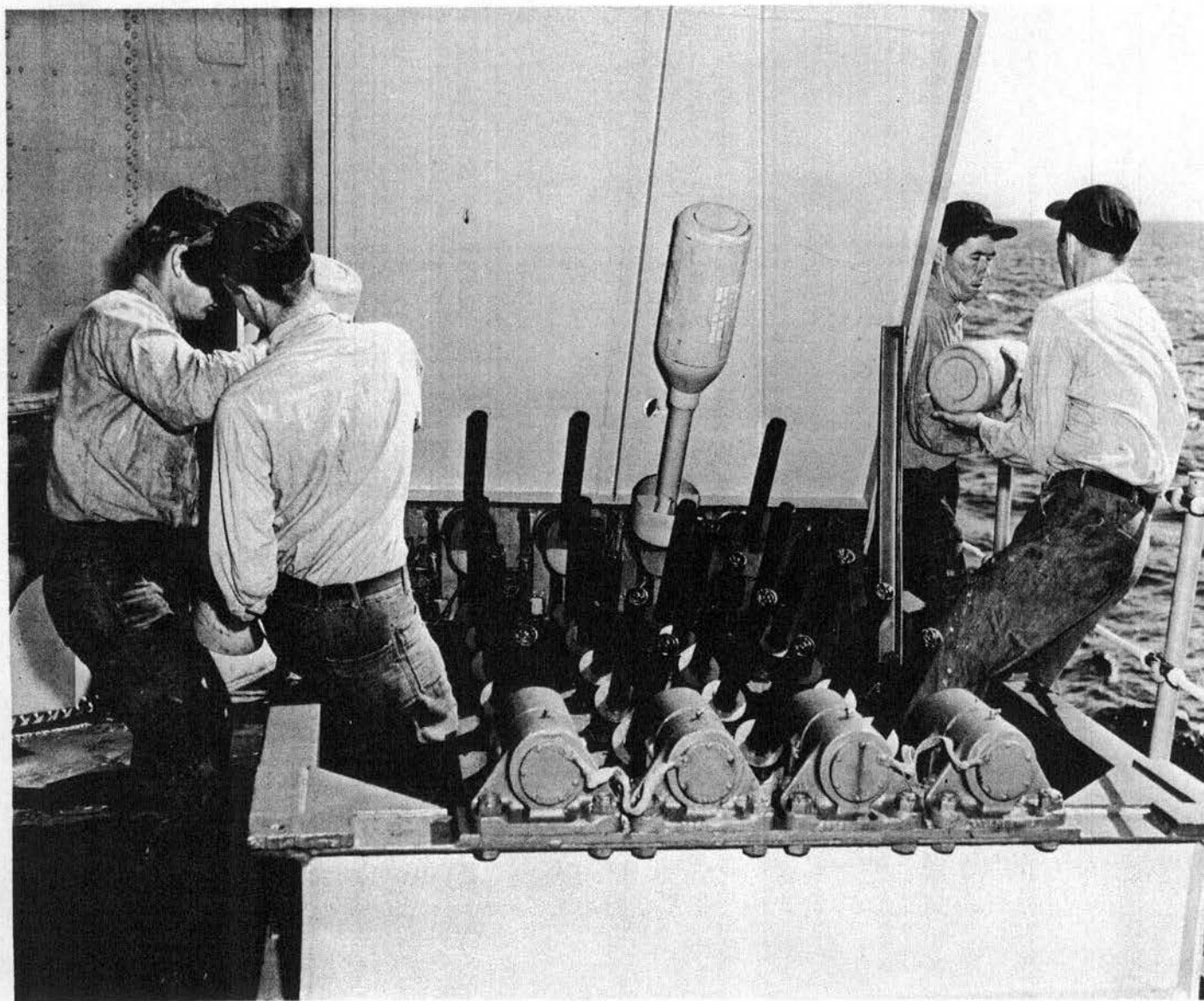


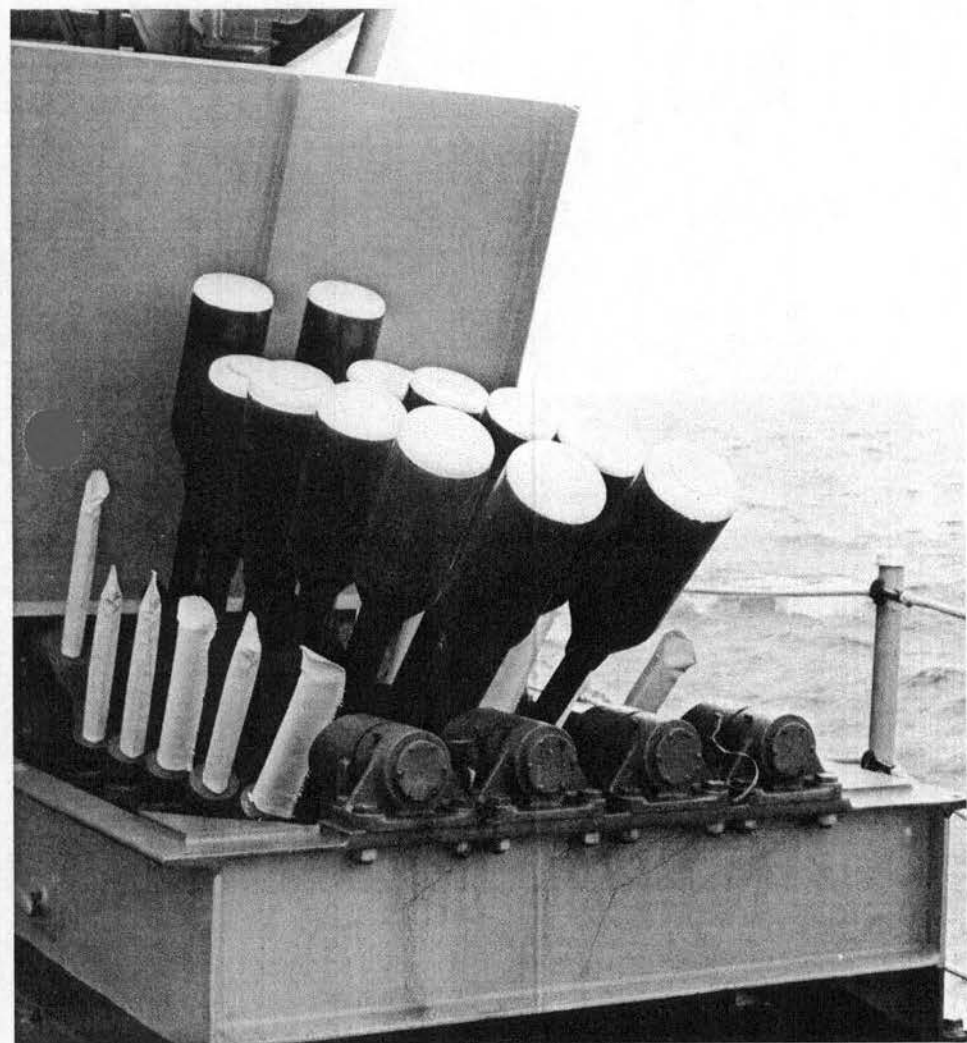
CLASSIFY

“Not U.S. or known friendly.” This is the report from the Task Group to COMASDEFORLANT. In peace, the Hunter-Killer forces must track their target, watching, waiting . . . but in war, they must be prepared to destroy the enemy. The German Navy in 1939 had only fifty-seven submarines . . . today, we face the possibility of dealing with a navy possessing over four hundred. The Task Group must be prepared to defend thousands of square miles of ocean, and must be ready to find and destroy any intruder in that area. Constant drill, continuing practice with the weapons of hot war . . . this is our way of keeping the cold war at bay, while the diplomats and the arbiters use the words of peace to effect a lasting unity among the nations of the world. That is why we are here, that is why we investigate . . . that is why we classify . . . and why, if necessary, we may have to destroy.

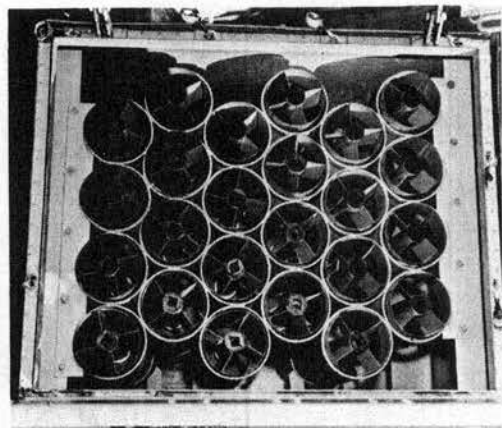
Skilled hands adjust armaments of all types.

Hedgehogs are prepared for firing . . .

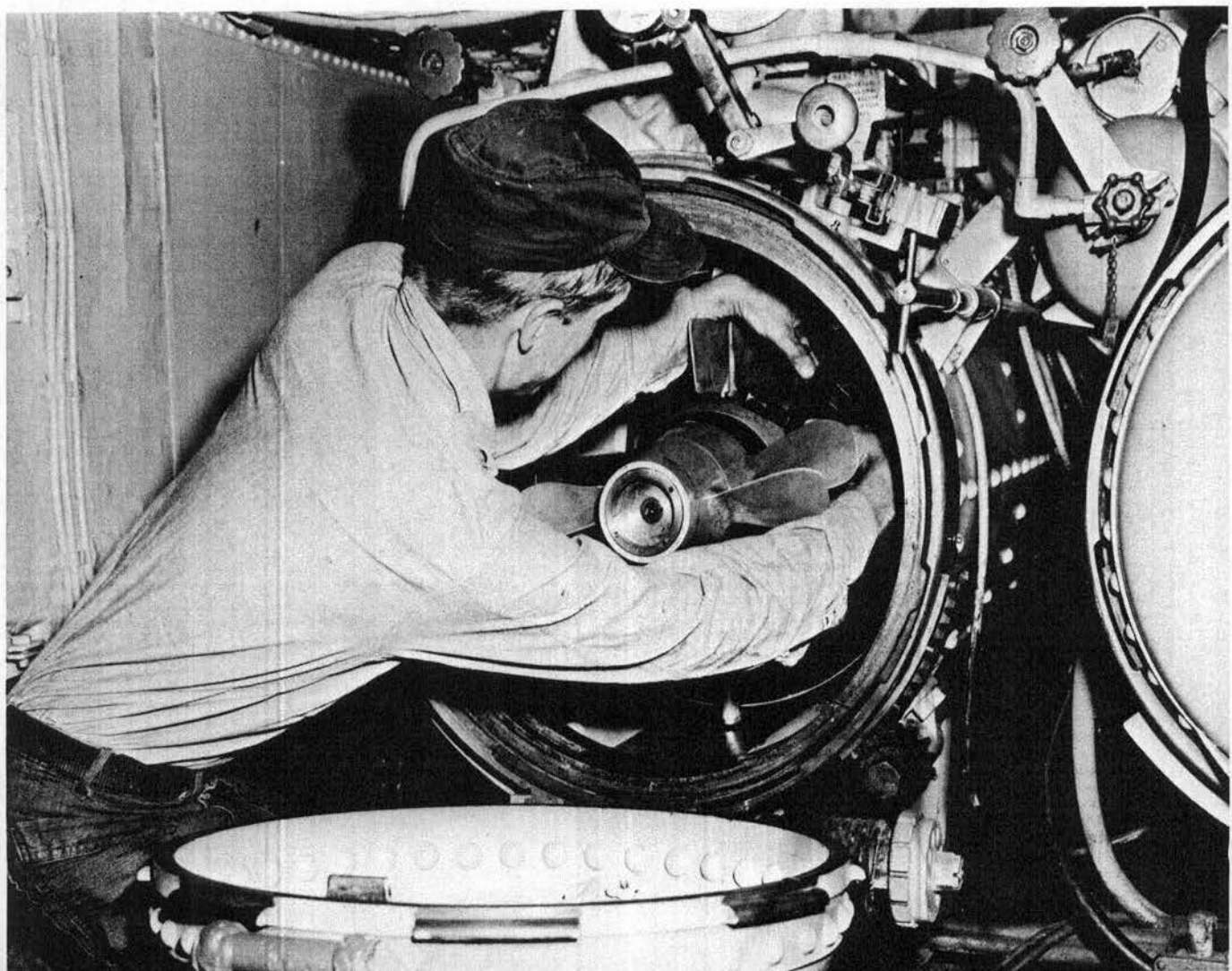


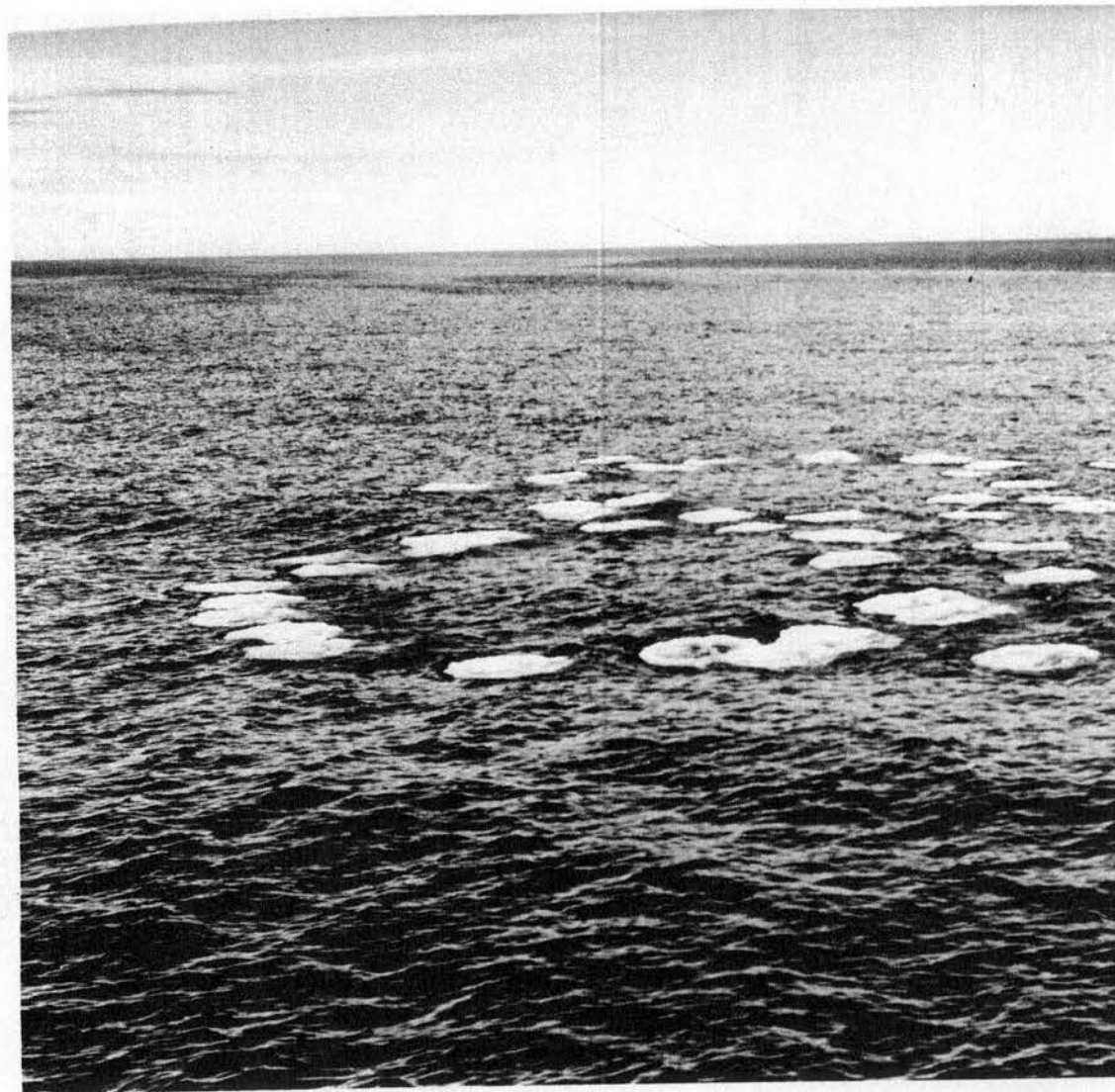
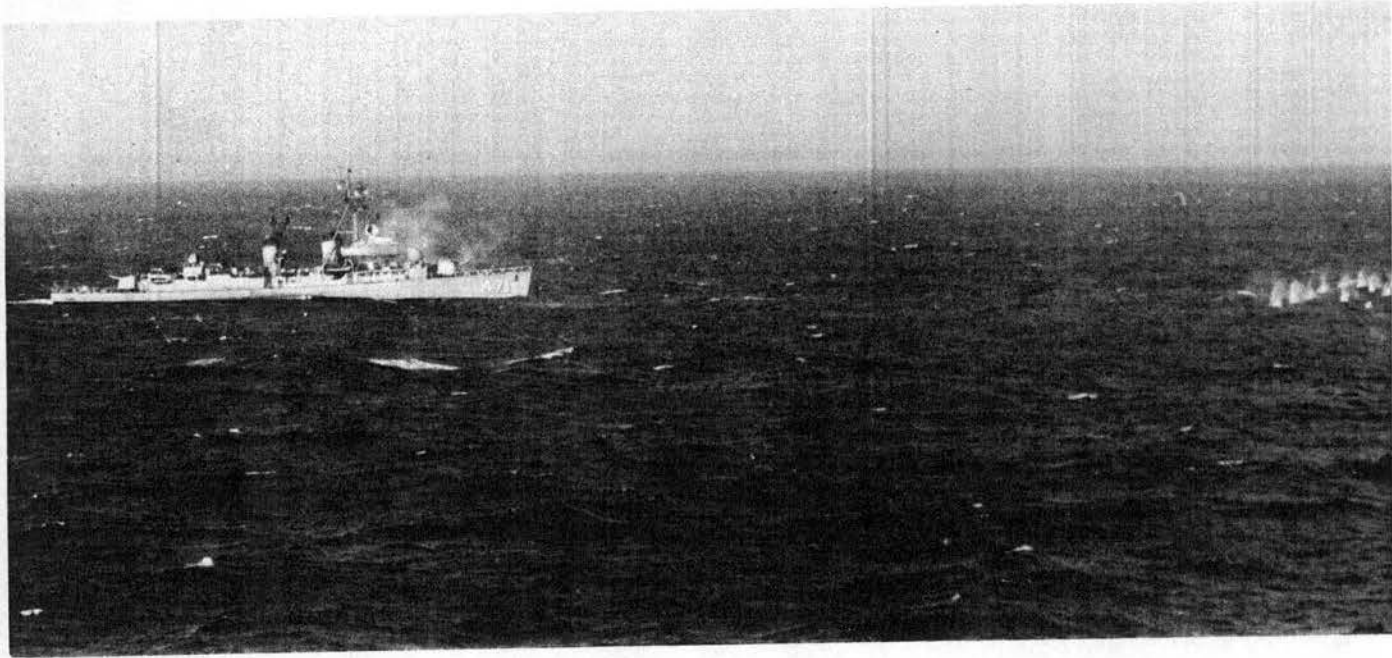


... and are set carefully in their racks, in case they are needed.

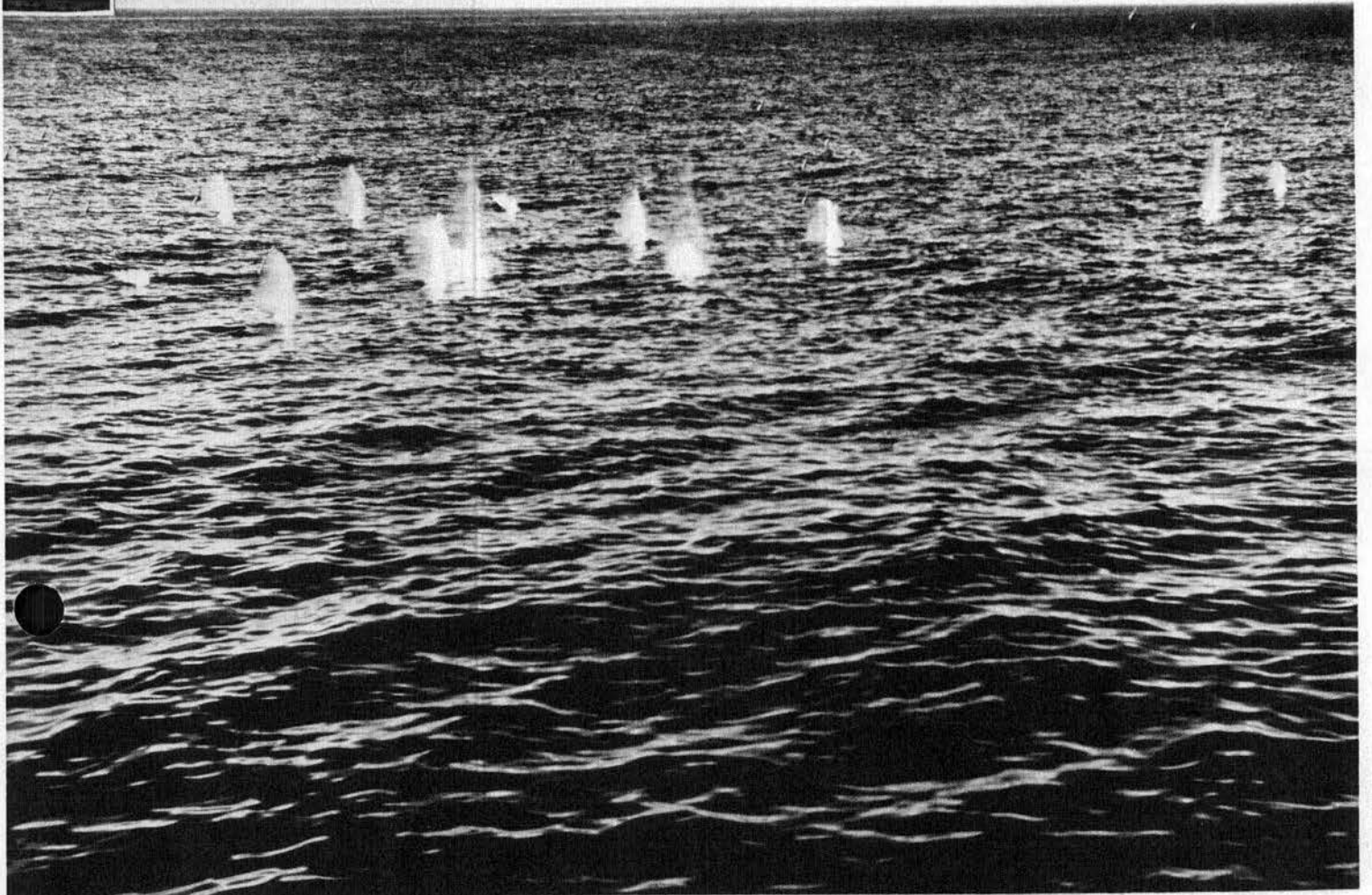


A small alteration insures a torpedo's accuracy.

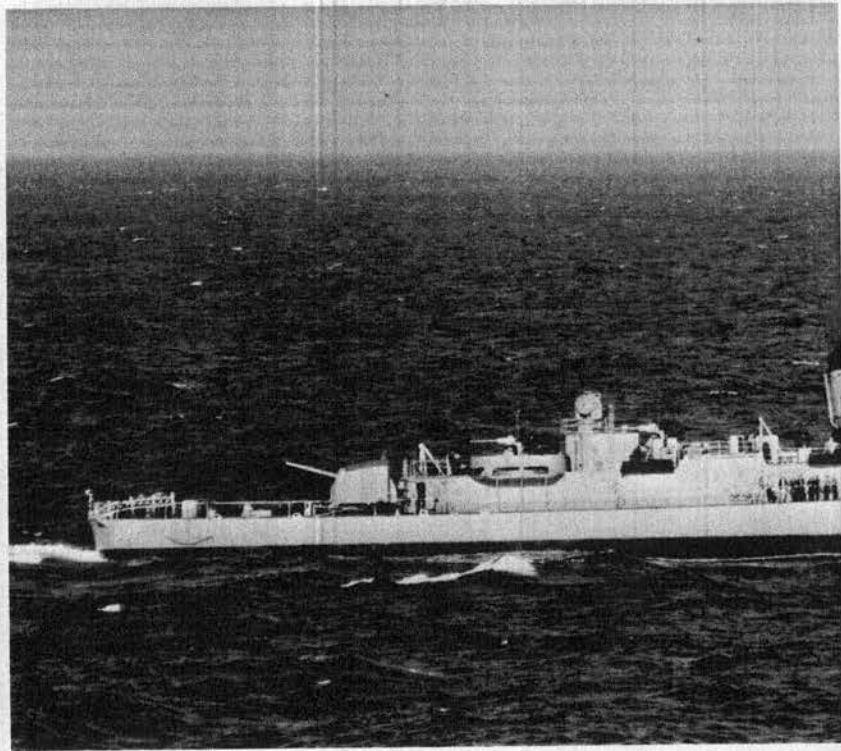




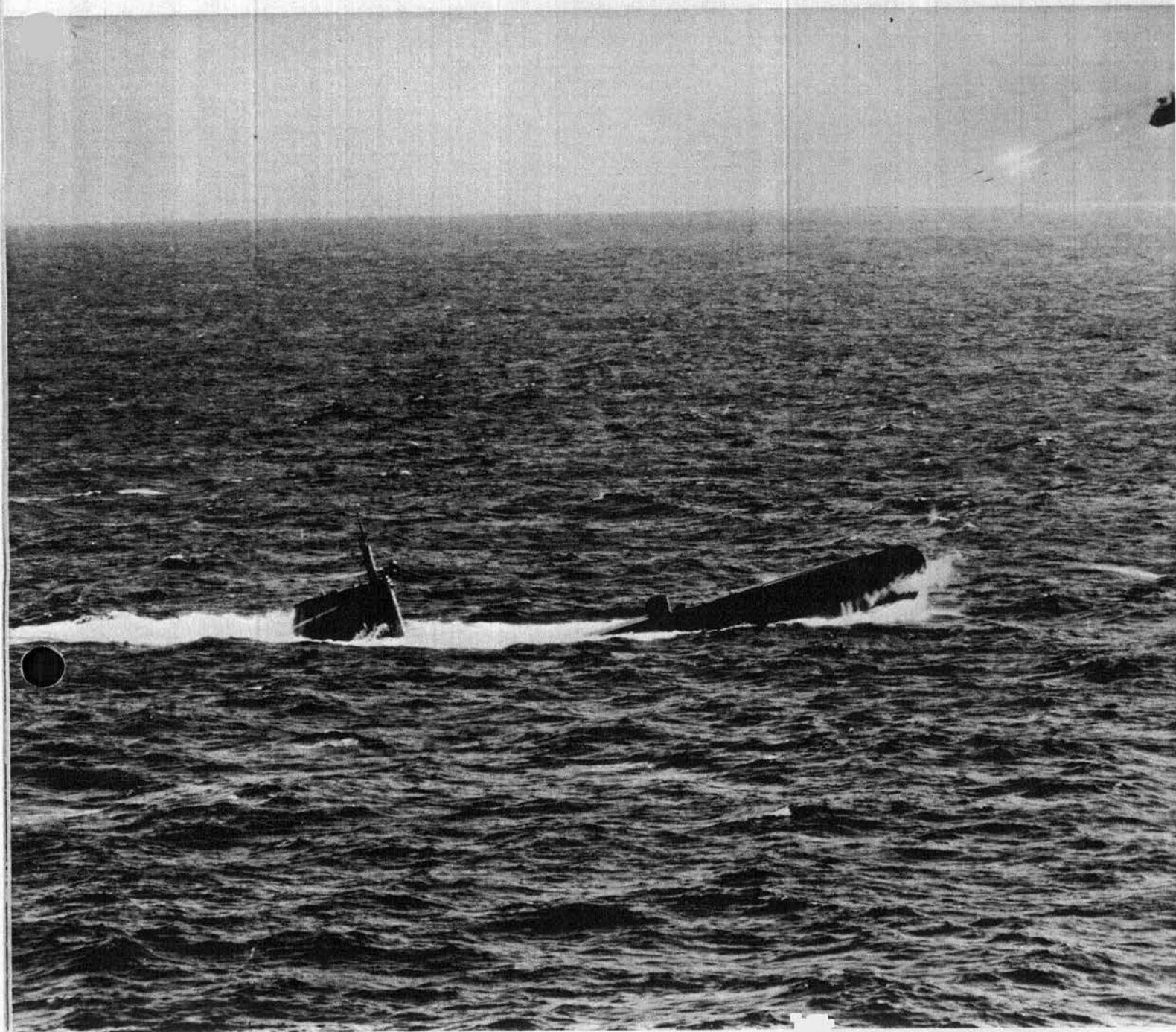
A constant pressure to maintain peace...



...a powerful weapon in time of war.

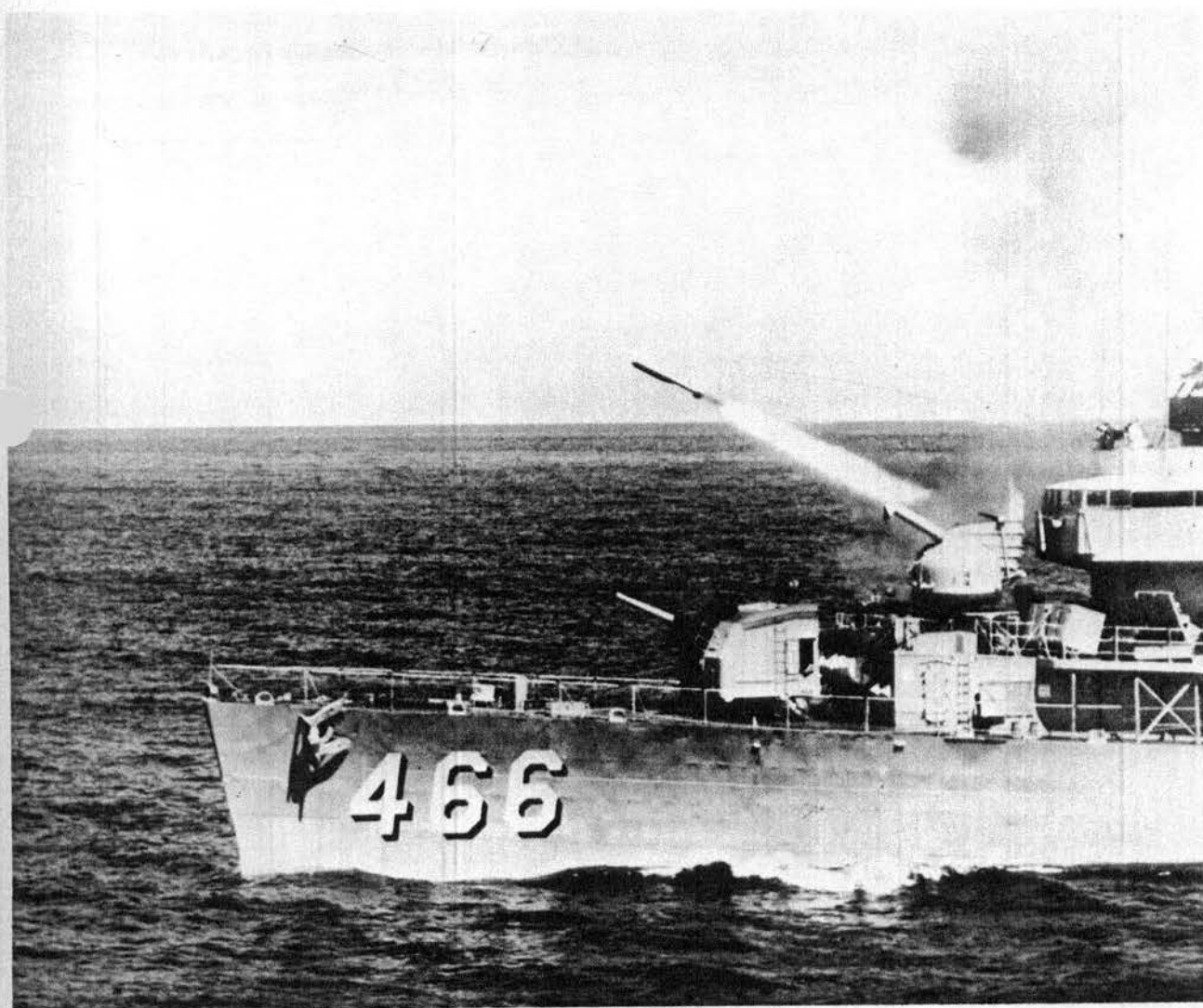


An S2F shifts suddenly from its passive tracking role to that of an attacker . . .

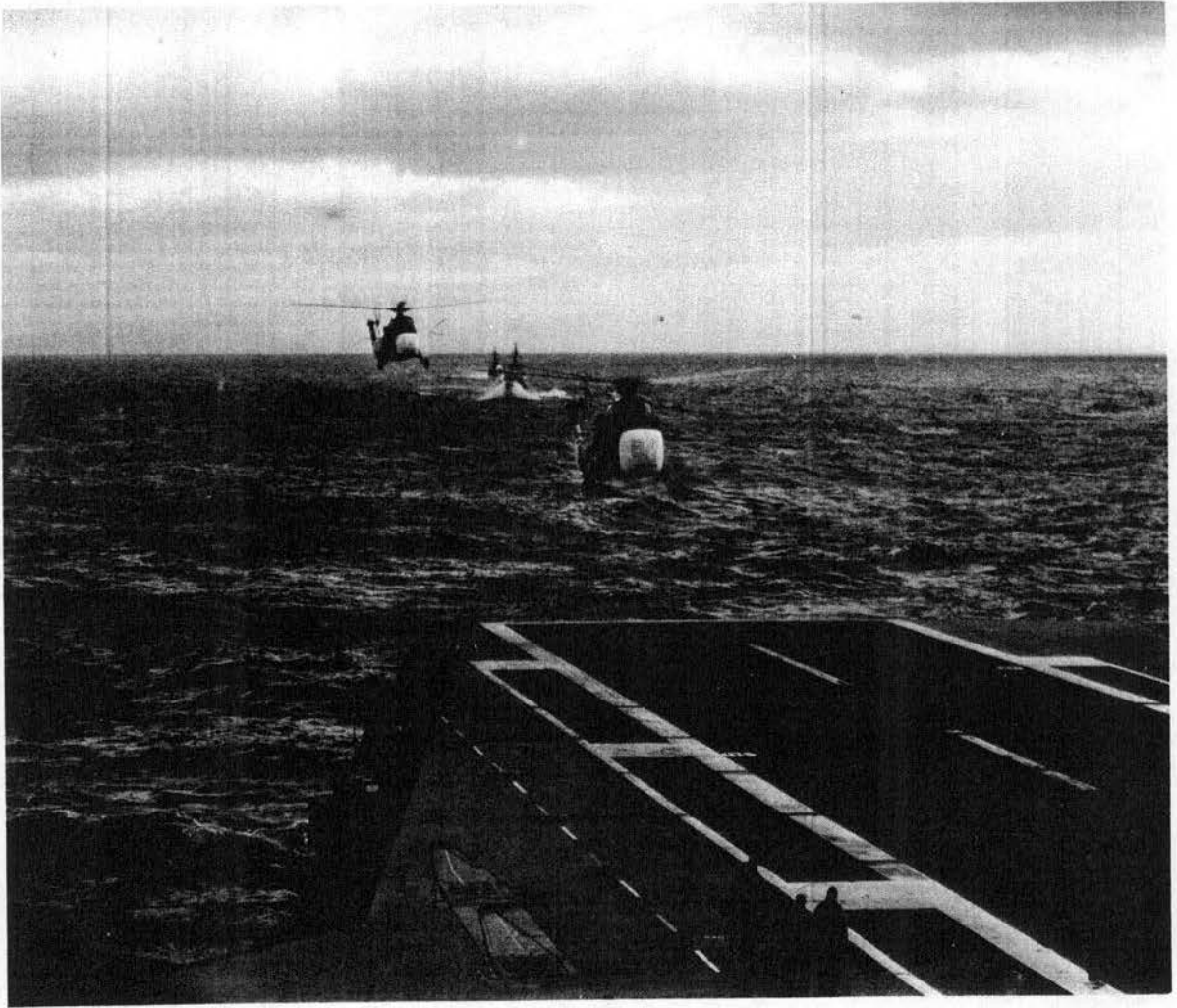




*Weapon Alfa...
a lethal greeting
to an undersea intruder*



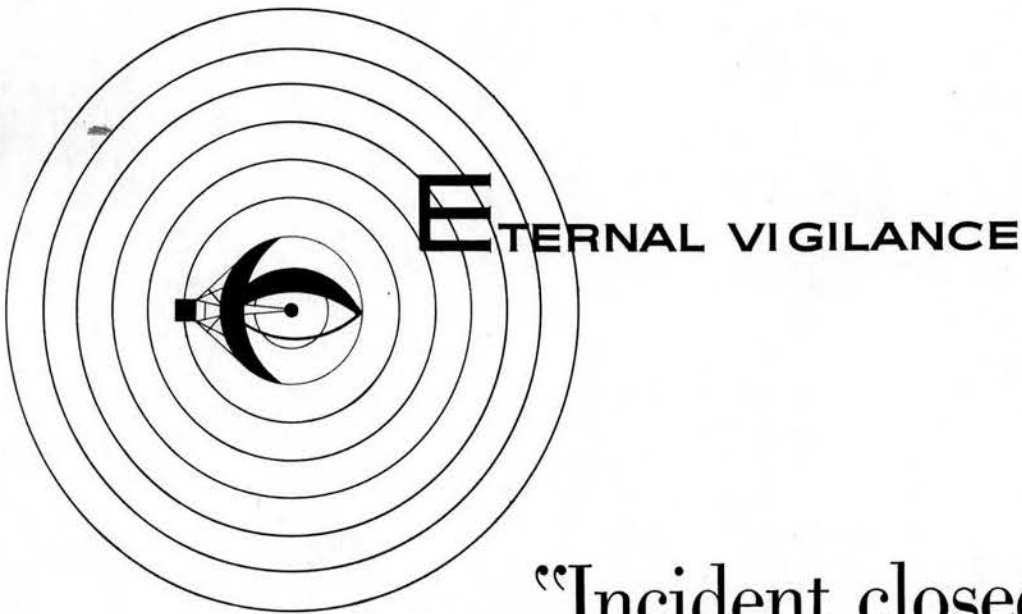
Rocket power to end the career of an enemy submarine.



The forces return...

...but the job continues and the watch goes on.





“Incident closed”

The forces of Task Group ALFA return to their ships, to their well-earned rests, and to the routine surveillance of the ocean. One incident, one day, recorded in the logs of our various units, and we wait for the next, never knowing when it will come. One incident of many, this intruder in the ocean. One incident among thousands, closed, by the alert and knowing actions of the Alfa Team which located, investigated and classified one small noise, a minute contribution to the strange sea of sounds and shadows that is the Atlantic. For even with all the scientific aids provided by the trained minds of men, even with the personal dedication and sacrifice of each individual, the cooperation of each unit, we are still faced with the problems presented by the ocean itself. Our machines, our men, are capable and well-trained...yet all of us together are only as capable as our understanding of the endless miles of ocean which we must guard.

*To this understanding,
and to a greater capability to protect our country,
we pledge ourselves...the ALFA Team.*

We in Task Group ALFA are working on what I consider the most important military problem that faces our country today, that of Anti-submarine Warfare. The Russians have over 450 modern submarines that are capable of operating against us in one way or another. No matter what form the next war might take, be it all-out nuclear holocaust, conventional war or limited war, these submarines are a potent threat that, if not properly countered, might well be decisive in our defeat. Hitler almost beat us in World War II with an initial fleet of 57 submarines. What would have been the outcome if he had had 450?

We of Task Group ALFA are proud of our part in the important task that engages us. Together we have built a crack team and have evolved new and effective anti-submarine tactics. But, despite our efforts, we are not able to do all that needs to be done. Before we can succeed there must be a better understanding by all Americans of the problem that faces us. We must enlist the help of our best scientists and engineers and get the dollar support that this task requires. We of Task Group ALFA can help by discussing this with our civilian friends and relatives.

To the men who manned the ships and aircraft which formed the ALFA team, the year that was 1960 will soon be a memory. Many of the men who lived the story of ALFA will soon move on to other ships and other jobs. The record that the men of ALFA have written will always be reviewed with pride.

John E. Clark

