

Fishermen's Fear Of Killer Subs

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BRITISH submarine commanders operating in the Irish Sea are under strict orders not to surface if their vessels collide with other boats or become entangled with fishing nets.

They are also forbidden to go to the rescue of seamen in danger following any collision.

Less Secrecy

This is the claim made by Bernard Moffat, assistant general secretary of the Celtic League. The organisation is campaigning for less secrecy on submarine activity in British and Irish waters.

Mr Moffat says he is quoting a high-ranking Ministry of Defence source.

The MoD deny the comment was made.

However, they refuse to reveal what orders are issued to submarine commanders, other than saying they are instructed to cause as little disruption to shipping as possible.

The Celtic League is particularly worried about the "Rat Run", a narrow strip of water between Ireland and mainland Britain.

In that area, a disturbing number of small boats have vanished over the last six years—with the loss of at least 32 lives.

There are allegations of fishing boats being dragged backwards at high speeds, some being swamped by huge waves in calm seas and others being holed and sunk in unexplained circumstances.

The MoD refuses to discuss the movement of submarines, but has admitted there have been incidents involving fishing craft and subs.

An understatement, claims Mr Moffat, who says the MoD have settled nine claims for damages out of court in the last 10 years.

"We're not only pointing the finger at the MoD," says Mr Moffat. "We're sure Soviet submarines, on surveillance missions off the Hebrides, are also involved. US, Dutch, West German, and French subs, too."

George Foulkes, Labour MP for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley, is pushing in Parliament for a full-scale inquiry into the danger from submarines.

Oldest Sub

HMS VALIANT, Britain's oldest nuclear submarine, was rededicated yesterday at Rosyth Naval Dockyard, Fife, where she is near the end of her third refit.

The nuclear-powered hunter-killer was launched at Barrow-in-Furness in 1963 and commissioned three years later.

The first nuclear-powered submarine of all-British design, she followed HMS Dreadnought—now an empty hulk moored at Rosyth—into service.

Guest of honour at the ceremony was Lady Thornycroft, who launched the submarine 25 years ago.



■ The Kirkcudbright trawler *Mhori L* went down in the Irish Sea in 1985 with the loss of five lives. There were allegations that a submarine was to blame.

Valiant went in for her latest refit—the cost has not been disclosed—in May 1986.

After trials she will rejoin the Third Submarine Squadron based at Faslane on the Clyde.

ON TUESDAY, the United States Air Force is expected to reveal the most sophisticated and bizarre-looking bomber in the world, writes our Defence Correspondent.

The top secret B-2 will be unveiled at the Northrop Corporation plant in Palmdale, California.

It's a revolutionary new design, shaped like a flying wing—flat, with no tail, almost like a boomerang.

The materials will be the latest in "Stealth" technology, designed to make the plane invisible to Soviet radar.

But the most secret aspect is the way engine heat is trailed away along ducts in the wing to confuse enemy missiles using infra-red trackers.

The bomber's debut comes just a fortnight after the USAF unveiled its F117—stealth fighter which, as we revealed in *The Sunday Post* last week, may be based in future at Machrihanish in the Mull of Kintyre.

The B-2 will be based almost solely in the US.