

## In this issue..

- 3 **D'ye Hear There!**  
Prepare to enter the Fleet School
- 8 **Not Peace — Not War**  
Cyprus
- 10 **That's Entertainment**  
DPERA
- 12 **The Deadly Dolphins**  
Canada's 'O' Boats
- 16 **Disability — What Disability?**  
MCpl Gaétan Cadieux
- 17 **Among the Viking Peaks**  
CF Helos in Norway
- 20 **Pomp and Circumstance**  
Royal Visit
- 22 **Cornwall's Stoker College**  
METTP
- 24 **Voodoo Family Awaits Hornet**  
Bagotville changes
- 27 **A Tender Moment made Timeless**  
HMCS Restigouche
- 28 **Flaming bogies over the fiords**  
CF-5s in Norway
- 32 **Letters**
- 34 **Keeping Posted;** Featuring:  
Valcartier-Biathlon Mad, Oh My  
Aching Back, and more ...
- 38 **Snapshots**

### GOOD NEWS AND BAD NEWS

*Sentinel* readers never seem to run out of stories, anecdotes and photos, and for that we are grateful. You may have noticed that many recent issues of the magazine have been expanded from our standard 32 pages so that we can publish more of your submissions. You can help get your story or photo printed by taking one easy step — first. Call us. Call us before the event if you can, but call us for sure (or write, if you wish) *before* sending us anything. We'll help you with outline, length and deadlines. This is the best way to ensure your item gets published. In case you missed it in the masthead, our phone number is (613) 992-7950.

Speaking of the masthead, you'll notice another change. Maj Walter Chipchase has moved on to other information duties. *Sentinel's* new editor is Capt Richard Moore. Joining him is Lt Andrea Christie, the magazine's new staff writer.

For our subscribers, it's bad news again, I'm afraid. Because of increased production and postal costs, we must raise our subscription and single issue prices again. You will find the new prices at the bottom of this page.

We thank you for your continued support and submissions and we welcome your comments and suggestions. Remember — *Sentinel* is your magazine. Give it your best. . . CGM



Page 20 A Royal Visit



Page 17 CF Helos in Norway

#### Covers

Front — Lt(N) Robert Garigue on the bridge of HMCS *Okanagan*. (ISC 82-2013 by Capt Jean Marcotte)

Back — More than 400 Militia soldiers from seven southern Ontario units got a taste of Florida camouflage, vegetation and rain during a weekend exercise at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., last February. (IOC 82-026 by Sgt Vic Johnson)

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**W**ithout warning, the shark-like object erupted from the sea, white foam cascading from its smooth cigar-shaped body. Sailors swarmed from its belly as if unable to remain shut up in the innards of this Atlantic monster. They were some of the 65 officers and men of HMCS *Okanagan*, one of the navy's three submarines.

In the submarine's conning tower, Lt (N) Robert Garigue, and his lookout, Leading Seaman Marcel Simard, a radar plotter, cast searching eyes over the haze-shrouded ocean surrounding them. Certain they weren't in anyone's gun-sights, they relaxed a bit, breathing the salt air of the open sea for the first time in four days. Only a few metres below, the ever restless waves washed across the sub's deck.

### BECOMING A SUBMARINER

Canada's submariners can count on their fingers the number of days they tie up each year in their home port of Halifax. The *Okanagan*, for example, spent nearly 200 days away last year.

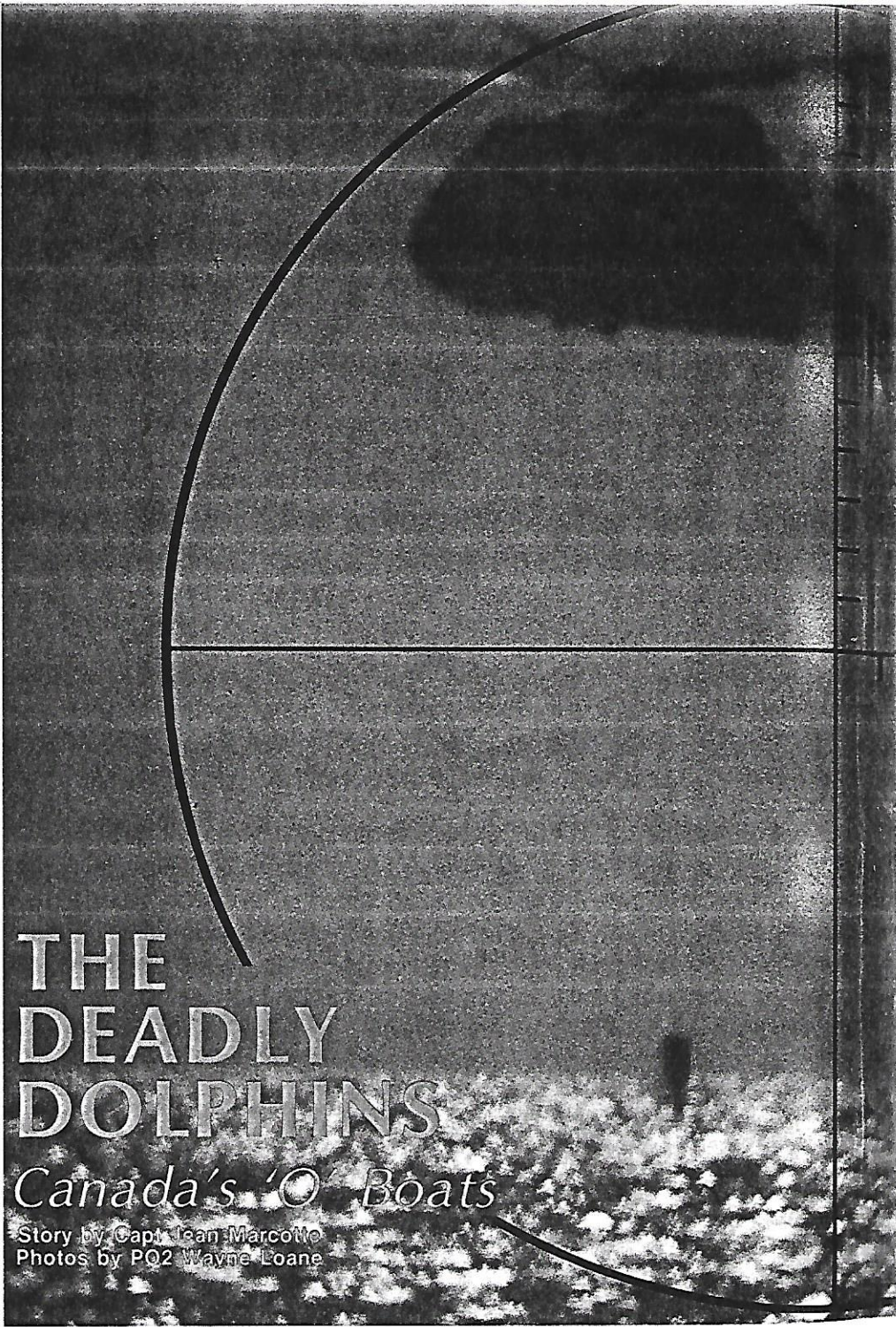
The life is hard on boat and sailor alike. And one doesn't become a submariner overnight. Only those who persevere through the long months of training get to wear the coveted twin dolphin badge on their uniforms.

It takes about six months to turn a surface sailor into a trained submariner and more than twelve months to train an officer. Prospective submarine commanders not only require considerable experience aboard submarines, but also must take a special Royal Navy course. Fewer than half its students pass the course, known appropriately as 'The Perisher.'

### STRENGTH OF CHARACTER

Before they even lay eyes on a submarine the volunteers must take a number of physical and psychological tests designed to check their suitability for submarine operations. Then, there are the many courses. But it is at sea, in the bowels of a submarine, that they undergo the real test. Petty Officer Paul Dubé, a weapons underwater tech, said, "There's only one place where we can really assess the potential of the young recruits, and that's at sea. After a few days, it's obvious to recruits and crew alike who will be staying and who won't."

To become a member of the crew, a sailor not only needs to know the submarine inside out, he must also possess strength of character. There is therefore



# THE DEADLY DOLPHINS

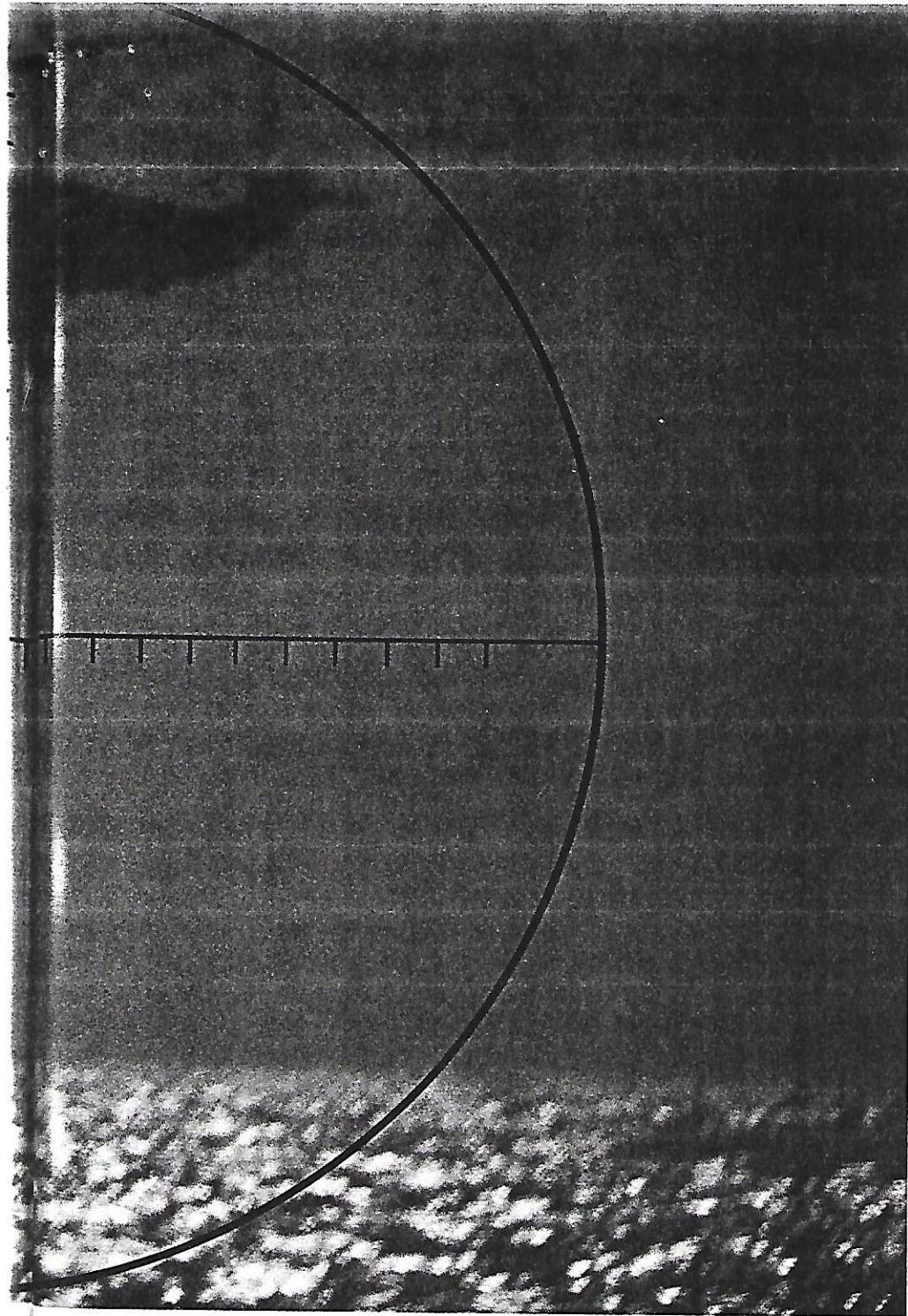
## Canada's 'O' Boats

Story by Capt. Jean Marcotte  
Photos by PO2 Wayne Loane

another test, less official and much more subtle, which is administered in small doses by the crew as a whole, that a prospective submariner must pass with flying colours. "It's essential to know what makes each crewmember tick," remarked LS Dan Reid, a weaponsman underwater. "Everyone goes through it. In a sub, if a man breaks down under strain it can be disastrous."

Under the constant supervision of an instructor, trainees learn the rudiments of their business. Examinations are held

monthly as they progress, but candidates are not required to write essays. Instead, tests are conducted orally using the machinery concerned. Moreover, every submariner must be familiar with the workings of every valve, pipe and dial in the submarine. "In an emergency situation, the life of the entire crew depends on what each crewmember knows," said Lt (N) Graham Day, *Okanagan's* executive officer. "The slightest error made through lack of knowledge could be fatal."



## LIFE ON BOARD

After an hour on watch on the bridge, young Simard, chilled to the bone, waited for his relief. Bundled up to his ears, Ordinary Seaman David Crowe, a sonarman, slowly climbed the ladder in the conning tower linking the interior of the submarine to the bridge. Without saying a word, he slipped into a one-man compartment located atop the bridge.

After briefing his shipmate and receiving permission from the officer of the

watch, Simard descended into the tower, carefully negotiating each corroded rung of its ladder. Bolting the hatch above him, he waited for a shipmate to open the lower hatch. With a momentary change of pressure and a slight hiss, the lower hatch opened, flooding the airlock with steam, light, and the ever-present odour of fuel oil. Simard rapidly descended the last rungs of the ladder. Like a protective womb, the compact interior of the submarine engulfed him, warm and comforting.

## THE HEART AND BRAIN

Hundreds of luminous dials on the bulkhead and hull bathed the control room in incandescent light. This is the heart and brain of the submarine. Everything on board is controlled from this compartment, no bigger than most living rooms. The room's red light and silence gave it a solemn, mysterious atmosphere. Only the calm voices of the captain and the officer of the watch passing orders broke the silence. Sailors instantly repeated the orders and actioned them.

Simard crossed the control room quickly without looking at anything. For him, all this was routine. For the moment, his thoughts focussed on the galley and a bowl of hot soup. "Any time of the day or night," said MCpl Carman Michel, a cook formerly with the Canadian Airborne Regiment, "we try to have some hot soup on the stove."

More like a large closet, the galley presents a real challenge in terms of storage. "But," said MCpl Michel, "you get used to it. The first few times, with less than a metre between the ovens and the hot plates, and with the severe pitching and rolling whenever we are surfaced, I thought it was a miracle every time I survived without being burned or scalded."

## NOW THAT'S CRAMPED

The submarine can store enough supplies for a three-month cruise but fresh supplies are usually taken on every 10 to 14 days. Space is so limited that every extra square centimetre devoted to food is obtained at the expense of something else. It takes considerable ingenuity on the part of the cook to choose and store the mixture of fresh, frozen, dehydrated and canned food. Most of the time, menus must be planned before the food is stored so that the first items needed will be the last placed in the storeroom.

In the cafeteria, LS Simard, now in shirtsleeves, wolfed down the bread he had generously covered with butter and jam. While a few buddies talked about the last evening spent in St John's Nfld., a petty officer sat in one corner, absorbed in a novel. In another corner, young recruits racked their brains in preparation for their next exam. Others, sipping soft drinks, watched an old TV program on videotape. The atmosphere was relaxed.

The desire to create a pleasant atmosphere in spite of the difficult conditions was evident throughout the boat. Submariners may give the impression of

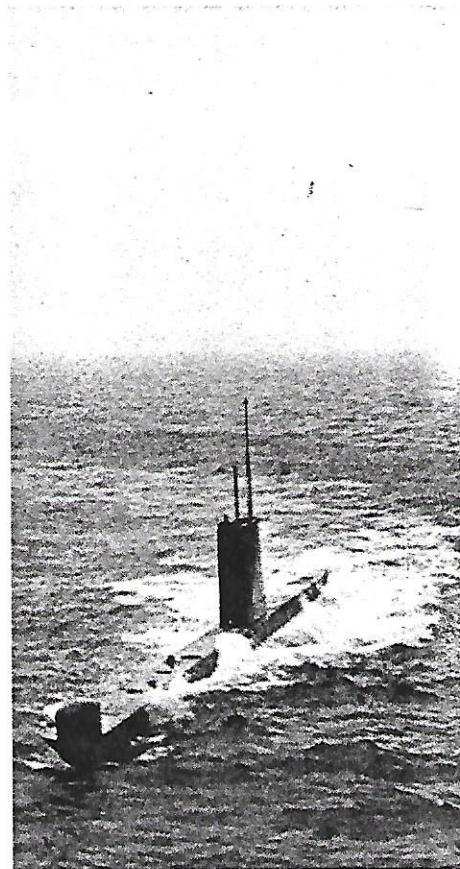
a casual, carefree lifestyle, but each of their activities is strictly regulated and subject to constant discipline.

Simard, warmed by his soup, was finally ready for some shuteye.

Slowly, bracing himself against the hull to compensate for the roll of the surfaced boat, the young submariner entered a passageway so narrow two could not pass abreast. Whenever he met someone, he pressed himself against the hull to let the other person pass. What began as a passageway became in turn, a dormitory, a store-room, a control room, a cafeteria, and a torpedo room.

one atop another. Some sailors sleep in tiered bunks that hook onto the bulkhead in the passageway. Only a curtain separates them from passersby. And everywhere there is the smell of fuel oil permeating clothing, bedding and bodies. Compared to this, life in a tent trailer is luxurious.

Suddenly the loudspeakers bark out orders. OS Crowe, Simard's replacement on the bridge, has spotted the stealthy approach of a sub-hunting *Sea King* helicopter. Within seconds, the submarine dips its nose and dives. As is the practice, Simard lay in bed, fully clothed. Content that he was not on



HMCS Okanagan (ISC 82-2157 by Capt Jean Marcotte)

icy deep. Underwater charts, pencils, kitchen utensils, and magazines, anything not tied down, was thrown towards the bow. Eyes riveted on a dial, the planesman called out the depth at regular intervals. At a depth of 30 m he leveled out as ordered. Sonarmen, concentrating on their screens, began a listening watch for traces of the helicopter.

The submarine and the searching *Sea King* now engaged in a kind of cat and mouse game — the sub playing the elusive mouse, the *Sea King* playing the stalking cat.

### CAT AND MOUSE

Bert and Ernie, the two diesel engines, were quickly shut down. Energy stored in the batteries propelled the silently running boat. If necessary they could continue that way at slow speeds for about 96 hours.

As they moved off, the 'ping' of the helicopter's sonar echoing off *Okanagan's* hull became louder and louder.

Scherber decided to use an old Second World War trick — he had the submarine dive again; this time through several layers of cold water. The difference in the density of the water layers

### A BIT OF PRIVACY

The wardroom or 'wardrobe', as it is jokingly referred to, accommodates eight officers. According to the time of day, it's used as a dormitory (when bunks are rigged), as a mess (when bunks are stowed), as a games room (when the table is cleared), as an office (when the games are put away), and as a movie theatre (when the screen is down). A tiny closet mounted on the bulkhead and eight small drawers on the floor are the only storage areas. "Space is limited," said Lt (N) David Ashling, a maritime engineering officer, "but we still have a bit of privacy."

At the stern of the submarine, among the torpedo tubes, pipes and all manner of machinery, the crews' bunks are piled

LS John Stone, a radar plotter, retires to his quarters after duty. Four men make their home in this 'mess'. (ISC 82-2151)

watch, he smiled, knowing that the submarine, once submerged, would once again be as steady as a surgeon's hand.

### THE DIVE

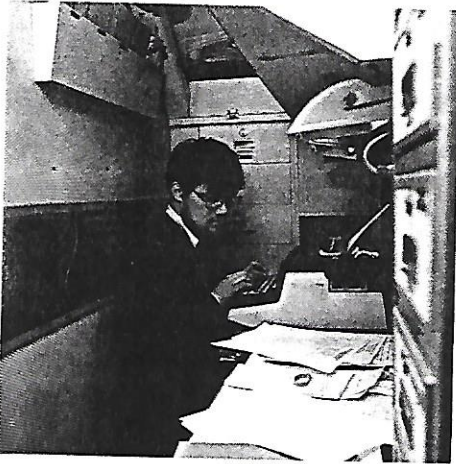
In the control room LCDr Frank Scherber, *Okanagan's* captain, stop watch in hand, resembled an orchestra conductor beating time. All knew the smooth drill by heart. Everyone remained alert to the captain's slightest movement. Scherber gave his orders in a calm, authoritative voice. Each command was carried out precisely.

The submarine angled down 15 degrees and slid towards the Atlantic's

makes sonar pulses deviate. Before the helicopter crew had time to make the required corrections, *Okanagan* had slipped away. Out of curiosity, Scherber brought the boat up to within 15 m of the surface and raised the periscope. The old trick was still effective. Scherber watched as the *Sea King* flew off, searching in the wrong direction.

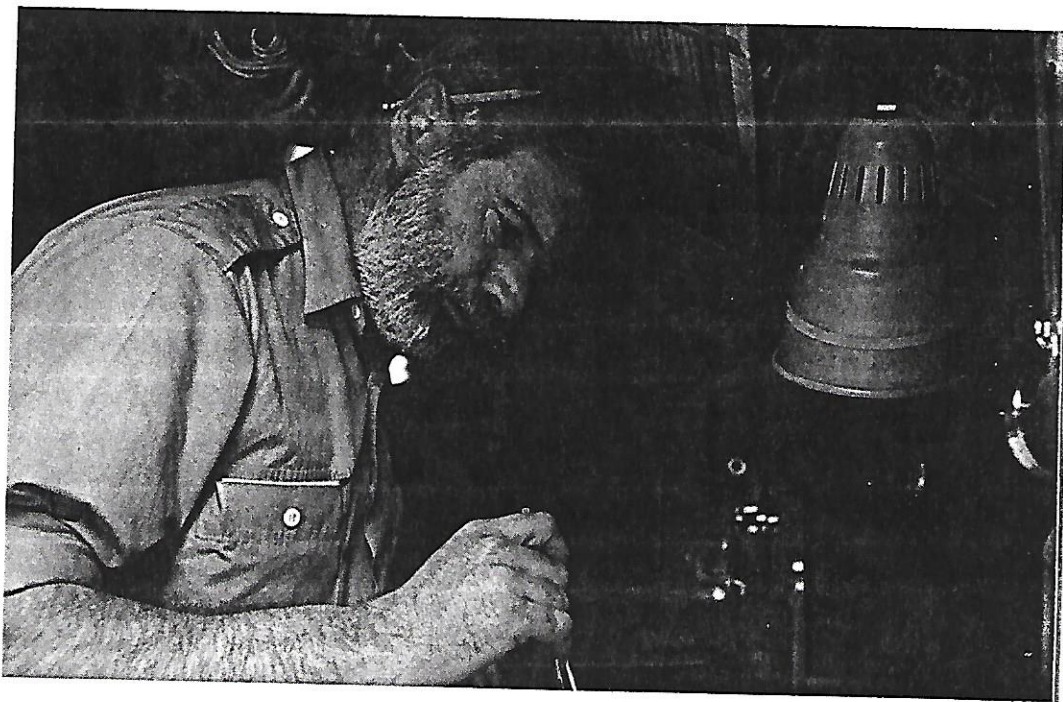
### STRONG, SILENT AND STEALTHY

Canada's three Oberon class submarines were built as hunter-killers.



Cpl Ken Larocque an admin clerk, types in *Okanagan's* 'spacious' office. (ISC 82-2152)

Peering through a periscope, CPO2 Jean-Paul Ayotte searches for anti-submarine helicopters. (ISC 82-2154)



Plotting *Okanagan's* course, PO1 Paul 'Fossil' Dubé. (ISC 82-2020)

When they dive, they become truly menacing predators. Submerged, they can lurk silently in any corner of any ocean, breathing stealthily through a snorkel, and awaiting their prey as long as fuel and food hold out.

"In peacetime, for operational reasons, we never go below 55 per cent of our fuel oil reserves," said LCdr Scherber. "We have enough rations for 90 days and we can distil seawater.

"In a real engagement," he continued, "contrary to popular opinion, we would be the first to detect the enemy. We have six torpedo tubes for'ard and two more aft to destroy him. The sub is an effective weapon and a real danger to the enemy."

But firing torpedoes is only one of the roles the submarine can play. Under the ocean's cover, for example, it can spy on the enemy. A camera attached to a periscope can gather information required for beach landings. A submarine can easily drop off and pick up agents right under the enemy's nose. Comfortably ensconced on a riverbed, a sub can observe, in minute detail, an enemy's inland traffic. Or it can just as easily lay mines, patrol the continental shelf, or help enforce a blockade. But above all, the hunter-killer sub remains the weapon most feared by enemy submariners.

### THEY LIKE THEIR JOB

Since all submariners are volunteers they nearly always form a group apart, even during maritime exercises. Over the years they have developed a unique personality. "We've always been different from the rest of the fleet," said PO1 Dubé. "We live under much more difficult conditions than anyone else. Maybe that's why we've developed such great respect for each other, regardless of age, rank or trade. We make up a real family, united not only by our job, but also by the kind of life we lead." 