

Change of Command

USS RAY (SSN 653)



9 August 1986

Charleston, South Carolina

Command At Sea

THE PRESTIGE, PRIVILEGE AND BURDEN OF COMMAND

by Joseph Conrad

Only a seaman realizes to what great extent an entire ship reflects the personality and ability of one individual, her Commanding Officer. To a landsman this is not understandable, and sometimes it is even difficult for us to comprehend - but it is so.

A ship at sea is a distant world in herself and in consideration of the protracted and distant operations of the fleet units, the Navy must place great power, responsibility and trust in the hands of those leaders chosen for command.

In each ship, there is one man who, in the hour of emergency or peril at sea, can turn to no other man. There is one who alone is ultimately responsible for the safe navigation, engineering performance, accurate gunfiring and morale of his ship. He is the Commanding Officer. He is the ship.

This is the most difficult and demanding assignment in the Navy. There is not an instant during his tour as Commanding Officer that he can escape the grasp of command responsibility. His privileges, in view of his obligations, are most ludicrously small; nevertheless, command is the spur which has given the Navy its great leaders.

It is a duty which most richly deserves the highest time honored title of the seafaring world - "CAPTAIN".

Change of Command

COMMANDER STEPHEN A. JOHNSON
United States Navy

relieved by

COMMANDER PATRICK H. LAWLESS
United States Navy

as

Commanding Officer
USS RAY (SSN 653)

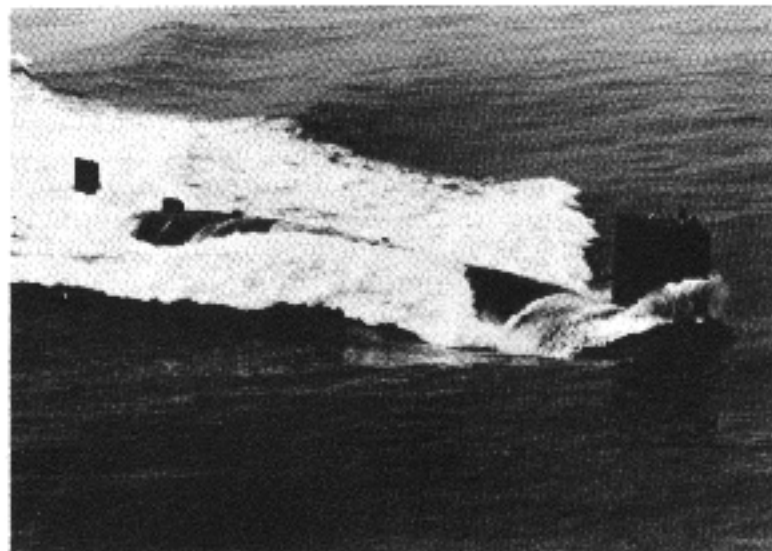
at

Naval Station,
Charleston, South Carolina



The Ceremony

The change of command ceremony is a time-honored tradition which formally restates to the officers and men of the command the continuity of the authority of command. It is a formal ritual conducted before the assembled company of the command. The change of command of a naval ship or organization is nearly unique in the world today. It is a transfer of total responsibility, authority, and accountability from one individual to another.



Schedule of Events

Arrival Honors

National Anthem

Invocation

Remarks by

Commander Submarine Squadron Four

Captain Mario R. Fiori

United States Navy

Remarks and Reading of Orders

Commander Stephen A. Johnson

United States Navy

Reading of Orders and Remarks

Commander Patrick H. Lawless

United States Navy

Benediction

Departure Honors



COMMANDER STEPHEN A. JOHNSON
United States Navy

COMMANDER
STEPHEN A. JOHNSON
UNITED STATES NAVY
COMMANDING OFFICER
USS RAY (SSN 653)

Commander Stephen A. Johnson was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee in 1946. He was raised in North Georgia and, from the age of eight, lived in Marietta, Georgia. He graduated from Marietta High School and entered the United States Naval Academy in 1964. He graduated and was commissioned in 1968, having earned a Bachelor of Science degree.

After graduation and following a year at the U. S. Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, Commander Johnson entered the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program, for which he attended courses of instruction in Bainbridge, Maryland and Windsor Locks, Connecticut.

Commander Johnson completed the Submarine Officers Indoctrination Course at Submarine School, New London, Connecticut and reported to the Pre-commissioning Unit of USS SANDLANCE (SSN 660) at Portsmouth, New Hampshire in September 1970. During twenty-six months aboard SANDLANCE, he served in various engineering department assignments and one year as Weapons Officer.

After completion of the Submarine Officers Advanced Course at Submarine School, New London, Connecticut, Commander Johnson reported to USS MARIANO G. VALLEJO (SSBN 658) (BLUE) for a two year tour during which he served as Damage Control Assistant and Main Propulsion Assistant. He left VALLEJO in June 1975 and reported aboard USS SIMON LAKE (AS 33) in Rota, Spain for a two year tour as Radiological Controls Officer.

Commander Johnson reported to USS GEORGE BANCROFT (SSBN 643) (GOLD) in September 1977 where he served two and a half years as Engineer Officer. In January 1980, he was assigned as Executive Officer of USS L. MENDEL RIVERS (SSN 686) where he served for thirty months. Upon completion of Prospective Commanding Officer training, Commander Johnson relieved as Commanding Officer, USS RAY (SSN 653) on 8 April 1983.

His 40 month command tour was highlighted by a sixteen month regular overhaul which consisted of the installation of the most advanced weapons systems package to date for a 637 class Submarine and a Submarine Ice Exercise culminating in the first simultaneous surfacing of three submarines at the North Pole. His next tour will be on the staff of Commander Submarine Group SIX.

Commander Johnson is entitled to wear the following personal awards: The Navy Commendation Medal with Gold Star in lieu of a second award and the Navy Achievement Medal.

Commander Johnson, his wife Nancy and their two sons, Michael and Jeffrey, reside in Charleston, South Carolina.



COMMANDER PATRICK H. LAWLESS
United States Navy

COMMANDER PATRICK H. LAWLESS

United States Navy

Commander Patrick H. Lawless, U. S. Navy, of Upper Darby, Pennsylvania, graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1970. After graduation, he completed nuclear power and submarine training.

His first assignment in 1972 was USS SCULPIN (SSN 590) in San Diego. After completing the Submarine Officer Advanced Course in December 1973, Commander Lawless was assigned to USS LEWIS AND CLARK (SSBN 644) (BLUE) in Charleston as Engineer Officer for six strategic deterrent patrols. He reported in 1978 to the staff of Commander, Submarine Squadron SIX in Norfolk, Virginia, for duty as Material Officer. Commander Lawless then was assigned to USS GLENARD P. LIPSCOMB (SSN 685) for duty as Executive Officer. From September 1983 to December 1985 he served on the staff of Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Submarines (OP-02) in Washington, D.C., as section head for submarine cruise missiles.

Commander Lawless has been awarded the Meritorious Service Medal with gold star in lieu of second award and the Navy Achievement Medal with gold star in lieu of second award. He is authorized to wear the Meritorious Unit Commendation, the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnamese Service Medal, the Navy Expeditionary Medal, the Navy Sea Service Ribbon and the Battle Efficiency "E".

Commander Lawless is married to the former Patricia Arends of Wayne, Michigan. They have two daughters, Kathleen and Christine.



CAPTAIN MARIO P. FIORI
United States Navy

CAPTAIN MARIO P. FIORI

United States Navy

Captain Mario P. Fiori was born in Frankfurt/M Germany, on December 14, 1941. He immigrated to the United States in 1948 and lived in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from Brooklyn Technical High School in 1959 and graduated from the United States Naval Academy in June 1963. His first duty assignment was to a diesel submarine, the USS TENCH (SS-417).

In September 1964, he qualified in submarines and then was transferred for duty under instruction at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. There, as a Naval Advanced Education (Burke) Program student, he earned a M. S. in Mechanical Engineering, a Nuclear Engineer degree, and, in 1968 a Ph.D. from the Nuclear Engineering Department.

In October 1968, he attended the Naval Nuclear Propulsion Course at the Navy Prototype, West Milton, New York. He reported to his first nuclear submarine, USS PARGO (SSN-650), a 637 class attack submarine, in May 1969. After 44 months and having served in numerous capacities, including Operations Officer, Weapons Officer and Navigator, he reported to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Washington, DC, and was assigned to the Operations Analysis Division (OP-96) as a Submarine Analyst. After nine months there, he was temporarily assigned to the Federal Energy Office as the DOD/FEO liaison officer during the Arab oil embargo crisis of 1973-74.

In August 1975, Captain Fiori reported as Executive Officer of USS GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER (SSBN-656) (BLUE). Upon completion of this assignment and on completion of the six month Prospective Commanding Officer Course in August 1979, he assumed command of USS SPADEFISH (SSN-668). His 39-month command tour was highlighted by three major deployments; a five-month Mediterranean deployment, a four-month independent operation and a three-month Submarine Ice Exercise. The highlight of the last deployment was the surfacing of the USS SPADEFISH at the North Pole. In June 1983, he reported to Washington, DC, as the Military Assistant to Dr. George Keyworth II, the President's Science Advisor. Captain Fiori assumed command of Submarine Squadron FOUR in June 1985.

In addition to the Defense Superior Service Medal, Captain Fiori holds a Legion of Merit with Gold Star in lieu of second award, Joint Service Commendation Medal, and Navy Commendation Medal with two gold stars. Under his command, USS SPADEFISH received two Navy Unit Commendations for the two independent operations she conducted.

Captain Fiori married the former Susan Wintfield Bayles of Arlington, Virginia, in 1968 and they have three daughters; Cristina (1973), Alison (1975), and Katherine (1978).



Ship's History

USS RAY (SSN 653) is the second submarine of the Fleet to be named for fish of the family Rajidae, especially abundant in the North Pacific and North Atlantic Oceans, some growing to a large size and attaining a weight of over 300 pounds. Most of them, however, are shorefishes which lie concealed in the sand or mud on the bottom and from that hidden point dart suddenly upon unsuspecting prey.

RAY is a Sturgeon class nuclear powered fast attack submarine designed for maximum speed and maneuverability submerged. She was constructed by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company of Newport News, Virginia, and was commissioned on 12 April 1967.

In the nineteen years since her commissioning, RAY has served as a member of both Submarine Squadron SIX in Norfolk, Virginia, and Submarine Squadron FOUR in Charleston, South Carolina. RAY has successfully completed numerous deployments to both the Mediterranean Sea and Atlantic Ocean. Many of these deployments have been missions of great importance to the safety and security of the United States. For her actions, RAY has been awarded five Navy Unit Commendations and four Meritorious Unit Commendations as well as earning several Battle "E" Efficiency Awards.

In February 1985 RAY completed a regular overhaul at Charleston Naval Shipyard receiving advanced cruise missile, underwater fire control and sonar systems. RAY is the first 637 class submarine to be certified to fire the Navy's TOMAHAWK cruise missile. She received a Secretary of the Navy Letter of Commendation for completion of the overhaul sixty-six days ahead of the Chief of Naval Operations originally scheduled completion date.

In June 1986 RAY participated in a Submarine Ice Exercise highlighted by the first simultaneous surfacing of three submarines at the North Pole on 6 May 1986.

Ship's Officers

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

LCDR C. R. Trahan, Jr, USN

WEAPONS OFFICER

LCDR H. "D." Tyler, III, USN

NAVIGATOR

LCDR R. J. Winkler, USN

ENGINEER OFFICER

LCDR G. M. Koucheravy, USN

SONAR OFFICER

LT T. R. Hayes, USN

ASSISTANT ENGINEER

LT D. C. Gneiser, USN

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

LT G. G. Benson, USN

MAIN PROPULSION ASSISTANT

LT M. T. Ammons, USN

REACTOR CONTROLS ASSISTANT

LTJG J. D. Gordon, USN

DAMAGE CONTROL ASSISTANT

LTJG J. D. Basil, Jr, USN

SUPPLY OFFICER

LTJG C. J. Coucoules, USN

RADIOLOGICAL CONTROLS OFFICER

LTJG C. P. Radford, USN

FIRE CONTROL DIVISION OFFICER

LTJG S. V. Stibler, USN

ELECTRICAL OFFICER

LTJG B. R. Hardas, USN

Leading Petty Officers

CHIEF OF THE BOAT

TMCM (SS) G. W. Moyer

TMCM (SS) F. D. Waddell

YNCS (SS) H. E. Edwards

EMCS (SS) D. J. Miller

QMCS (SS) L. A. Pete

MMCS (SS) A. A. Dalessandro

STSC (SS) J. L. Youngren

EMC (SS) R. S. Lindsey

MSC (SS) G. A. Talley

FTGC (SS) R. G. Brittian

ICC (SS) D. M. Donofrio

MMC (SS) T. A. Smith

RMC (SS) R. D. Dixon

MMC (SS) E. L. Brooks

MMC (SS) J. S. Voges, Jr

ETC (SS) D. J. Azevedo

ET1 (SS) C. G. Bougioukas

SK2 (SS) L. R. Boston

The Navy Hymn

Eternal Father, Strong To Save

Eternal Father, strong to save,
Whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
Who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep,
O hear us when we cry to thee
For those in peril on the sea!

Lord God, our power evermore,
Whose arm doth reach the ocean floor,
Dive with our men beneath the sea;
Traverse the depths protectively.
O hear us when we pray, and keep
Them safe from peril in the deep.

William Whiting
David B. Miller