

"The Russians," says McCain, "keep an average of 30 surface ships and four to six submarines in the Mediterranean. And they constantly shadow our ships of the Sixth Fleet. Since the Russians have very poor sea manners, there have been several near collisions. I believe they provoke these close calls on purpose. I don't know their motive—it may just be that harassment is part of Communist conduct, on the sea or anywhere else."

McCain does, however, draw some satisfaction from the Russians' great concentration on a submarine fleet because he thinks it's bad for them — over-specialization. He says:

"I was brought up to believe in balance of total sea power and I believe history proves this through the German naval defeats in both World Wars. But even though the Navy has been my life, I'm not blind about its place in our total strength. Wars are brought to conclusion only by the man with the gun on his shoulder who occupies a piece of ground and says, 'This is mine.' And the role of the Navy and the Air Force is simply to help create the most favorable conditions for that man with the gun."

His submarine career

The little admiral with the big job was born about as inland as possible, in Council Bluffs, Iowa, where his mother happened to be visiting. He grew up in Washington, D.C., and after the Naval Academy years, began to tend toward submarines. In World War II he took part in the 1942 invasion of North Africa, later sank a Japanese destroyer and many merchantmen. McCain has gone through the nerve-wracking experience of being depth bombed and when you ask him how it was, he understates with a grin: "It gives you a new outlook on life."

Forging along through a typical Navy career that alternated sea and shore duty, McCain has picked up 15 ribbons and several distinctions. In 1964 he commanded more than 50,000 men in joint American-Spanish maneuvers in southern Spain. The next year he was senior officer when U.S. troops moved into the Dominican Republic. McCain also became known as a self-made sailor. For example, in 1965 he was put in one of the Navy's dead-end jobs—commander of the Eastern Sea Frontier in New York and military adviser to the U.S. mission at the United Nations. McCain concentrated so heavily on his U.N. work that he became President Johnson's first choice for the European post and its important diplomacy aspects.

As the McCains prepare to move to Hawaii—it's about the 20th move of their life — Mrs. McCain will do as always, plan to live with the heavy furniture in the new home but take enough of her own things to feel familiar.

Meanwhile, though, Hawaii is calling and the McCains know they are facing some of the busiest times of their life. In addition, they'll be thousands of miles closer to their captive son — but helpless to do any more than pray for him.