

## NO SCORPION COVER-UP

Ed Offley's book, "Scorpion Down," has serious credibility problems in areas that relate to acoustic data. ["USSR sank Scorpion," Letters, Aug. 13]. Acoustic analysis is our forte, so we, the undersigned, have focused our rebuttal on Offley's allegations based on sound data.

Central to Offley's conspiracy theory are his allegations that naval intelligence agents confiscated or destroyed all acoustic evidence of a hostile encounter between the Scorpion and a Soviet sub, and manipulated it to prevent the Scorpion Court of Inquiry from learning what actually had happened. He bases his hostile encounter on a Sound Surveillance System, or SOSUS, recording that somehow surfaced 14 years later at a Navy school that trains students in basic acoustic analysis. According to the claims of a student, this tape contained strong, multisource acoustic signatures of Scorpion and a Soviet Echo II submarine, and of a torpedo fired by the Echo II, sinking the Scorpion.

We, who have a collective total of 400 years of experience with SOSUS and sound analysis, contend there was no conspiracy to confiscate, suppress, or destroy any data that could have been related to the loss of the Scorpion. In accordance with standing procedures, all data were sent to the SOSUS Evaluation Center in Norfolk, Va., where they were exhaustively analyzed. Analysis results were disseminated within Navy channels and beyond.

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Most of the 15 signatories to this letter participated in that collection and analysis. No data were sent to the Office of Naval Intelligence, nor did "men in black" from the Office of Naval Intelligence visit SOSUS stations and make "all the usual threats," as Offley writes. Other than weak implosion signals, there was no SOSUS acoustic detection of Scorpion, an Echo II, or a torpedo, nor were any such detections made by Canary Island sensors, which were at much closer range to the sinking. We conclude the tape was a composite of three separate events recorded, as commonly done, for training purposes.

Ed Offley interviewed none of the 15 of us, nor, to our knowledge, any other ONI or SOSUS Evaluation Center personnel. Bottom line: Offley's claims of conspiracy and taped acoustic evidence are total fabrications.

The condition of the Scorpion wreckage on the seabed in 11,100 feet of water indicates its pressure hull collapsed at great depth. This could not have happened if the hull had been penetrated by an explosion from a torpedo or other explosive event because the entire submarine would then have been flooded (pressure-equalized) before the hull sank to collapse depth. Conclusion: The Scorpion most likely sank to crush depth with pressure hull still intact because of an onboard problem the crew could not correct.

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