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L-516

OCEAN POLICY BRANCH (OP-616)

(C) POSSIBLE NEW FORM OF INCSEA VIOLATION EXPOSED IN PACIFIC

1. Crew members of USS VANCOUVER recently provided some relief from the boredom of routine at sea operations by "baring their buns" in the direction of a passing Soviet ship. The initial report indicating a whopping 300 bun salute was subsequently revised downward to a routine display of six. Although it is not clear the Soviets will protest this incident as a violation of ART III of the INCSEA Agreement which prohibits the pointing of weapons in the direction of ships of the other country, the US INCSEA delegation will be prepared to rebutt any arguments that this was a hostile act.

There is some concern that the Soviets will escalate the issue resulting in a toe-to-toe confrontation (figuratively speaking). However, in this case they may elect to turn the other cheek. Should this happen, the Soviets will enjoy a considerable advantage in throw weight, especially for those ships manned by the legendary Russian women of heroic proportions.

Whatever the final result is, the indication is pretty clear in this instance that the US Navy was caught with its pants down.

61 / *[Signature]*
"bunboat diplomacy"?

This is worthy of the
classification "bun
before read"

[Signature]

DECLASSIFIED

CLASSIFIED BY CNO (OP-61)
DECLASSIFY ON 30 APR 1989

Enclosure (5) to CNO ltr
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