Cold War 2: Russian Submarine Fleet To Add Five Nuclear Subs In 2015, U.S. Navy Only Adds Two

The size of the Russian submarine force will begin going up by five starting in 2015, with the pace of construction resembling the Cold War days more than the lethargic shipbuilding rate that has prevailed ever since the Berlin Wall fell. But although the number of U.S. nuclear submarines will only increase by two this year, experts are already questioning the effectiveness of the Russia's submarine fleet.

In a related report by the Inquisitr, there have been allegations of a purported Russian submarine spying near Sweden and Scotland, but all efforts to find the elusive submarine have thus so far failed. One of Russia’s submarines being tested out, the top secret AC-12 Losharik, may have been outed in a recent photo.

The Russian Navy is currently working on building Borey-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines, Yasen-class nuclear attack submarines, and Kilo- and Lada-class diesel electric attack submarines. As a comparison, the United States submarine fleet construction rate only increased to two subs per year recently. A new class of ballistic U.S. submarines will begin construction in 2021, and it’s expected the construction rate will pick up to three subs per year.

The increase in the pace of construction has experts making comparisons to a new Cold War. But some of these Russian subs are being built to be sold to other countries like China. There’s also the issue of modernization, since many systems have been retired or are reaching the limits of their effectiveness in the modern age.

Although the increase in the Russian construction rate sounds impressive, experts question whether Vladimir Putin will be able to keep up this pace with the fall of oil prices. So while these five Russian submarines may be laid out in 2015, it’s possible there may be delays that
will stretch into years before they are finished. Some of the recently finished subs even used significant hull components from previous decommissioned Russian submarine designs.

Regardless, Russia's submarine fleet is known for being tough and innovative, and an increase in numbers alone could pose a problem for the U.S. Navy. "The Russians have put their money where their mouth is with regard to submarine construction and development," said Bryan Clark, a former U.S. Navy submariner and strategist, now an analyst with the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments. "They see that as a way to generate an asymmetric advantage over U.S. forces.

If they can develop a really high-end submarine force like they did in the Cold War, it would create a problem for U.S. naval planners and strategists thinking through how to deal with a potential Russian threat — one that could emerge without a lot of warning."According to Defense News, Clark still questions the combat effectiveness of these Russian submarine designs, claiming that Russia's best submarines are the equivalent of the oldest U.S. submarines still in service with the U.S. Navy. But it's believed they could still pose a concern since even a small number of subs can pose a threat when it comes to intelligence-gathering and a surprise nuclear first strike.

Source: inquisitor