

option, with the advantages of co-location with a refitting base, Devonport also suffered from its distance from the sound-ranging facilities in Loch Fyne, which could not be provided locally.

- Location near **Falmouth** was also seriously considered, with provisional plans involving an operating base at Carclase Point, an RNAD 600 yards south of Penarrow Point, near the small town of St Mylor, and a floating dock moored close to Messack Point. This option was estimated to have a good reactor safety rating, with the base located 1,100 yards from St Just and 1,500 yards from St Mawes. The weapon safety rating was judged to be 'fair' with only 'scattered housing and the small villages of Trelew and Trefussis' within the radius of major damage from the RNAD. This option was judged less favourably than Faslane/Coulport because of the problems involved in land purchase from the Duchy of Cornwall and the National Trust. The study's authors argued that 'a strong case would be required to justify spoiling a national beauty spot or vigorous sailing centre'. This was also one of the most expensive sites to develop.

Invergordon and **Loch Alsh** were thought to be generally acceptable, but they suffered from their remoteness and lack of amenities for off-duty sailors. Their exits would also be vulnerable to enemy anti-submarine attack.

The final choice was therefore between **Rosyth** on the Forth, and **Faslane** at Gareloch. Both locations had acceptable safety ratings, while construction costs at Rosyth (with the RNAD at nearby Crombie) were estimated to be lower.³⁷ Rosyth's proximity to Edinburgh and Dunfermline and to the Forth rail and road crossings does not appear to have been considered a disadvantage. According to the memoirs of Vice Admiral Sir Hugh Mackenzie, Polaris Chief Executive from 1963 to 1968, the Treasury and Ministries of Defence and Transport all favoured Rosyth.³⁸ **Faslane** was eventually chosen because of the strength of the Admiralty's arguments on operational grounds. **Gareloch** had the advantage of being sheltered, while also being close to exercise areas with deep water, as well as to the existing sound range at nearby Loch Fyne. Polaris submarines would have a choice of exits covered by well-used

37. Rosyth is ten miles from Edinburgh, well above the minimum safety distance used in the study.

38. Vice Admiral Sir Hugh Mackenzie, *The Sword of Damocles*, The Royal Navy Submarine Museum, 1995, p. 218.

shipping lanes and also used (could be used for support). into deep water from the C side of Arran or down to St and deception of hostile s was 500 miles from both Loch Fyne sound range, an was only a 'fair chance' o surveillance.

Ability to conceal submar was a vital consideration du 15 Soviet submarines passed often seeking to spot US o the Clyde. A Soviet intellig been frequently stationed (outside the 12-mile limit, and alert Soviet submarine timing, and deploying att deployed patrol ships and l The Navy is adamant that the Soviet Union while on

During discussion of th concern was expressed (fro that the proximity of the permit the Soviet Union to These objections were ove the US Navy tender could period of tension'.⁴⁰ The st requirement would be rega

Having decided on co- (conventional) Submarine S agreed to locate the RNAD at Glen Douglas was reject road and the potential pr existing NATO facility. M agreed to sell the necessary

39. Adela Gooch, 'The strange 14 December 1987.

40. Report of Working Party, p







