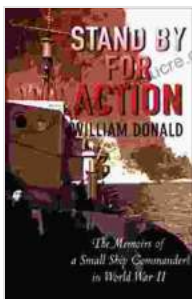


# Stand By for Action: A Legendary Nuclear Submarine in the Pacific's Depths

In the twilight of the 20th century, during the tense and perilous Cold War era, the United States Navy commissioned a formidable nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine destined to become a legend in the annals of undersea warfare: USS Stand By for Action.



## Stand By for Action: The Memoirs of a Small Ship Commander in World War II by William Donald

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 2220 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
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Lending	: Enabled



This formidable vessel, born from the crucible of technological innovation and strategic necessity, embarked on countless covert missions beneath the unforgiving ocean's surface, carrying the weight of global nuclear deterrence on its broad shoulders. With each submerged voyage, Stand By for Action stood as a silent and unwavering sentinel, safeguarding peace through its potent arsenal of nuclear warheads.

## Genesis of a Nuclear Colossal

The genesis of Stand By for Action can be traced back to the early 1960s, a period marked by heightened international tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union. As the Cold War intensified, both superpowers engaged in a relentless arms race, each seeking strategic advantage over the other.

Recognizing the need for a retaliatory force capable of surviving a nuclear attack, the US Navy embarked on a top-secret project to develop a new class of ballistic missile submarines. These submarines, known as the Benjamin Franklin-class, would be equipped with the latest nuclear-powered propulsion systems and armed with Polaris ballistic missiles, capable of delivering a devastating nuclear payload from thousands of miles away.

Stand By for Action, designated as SSBN-657, was one of the first boats to be built as part of the Benjamin Franklin-class. Her keel was laid in 1962 at the Electric Boat shipyard in Groton, Connecticut, and she was launched two years later. Following extensive testing and sea trials, Stand By for Action was commissioned into the US Navy in 1965, ready to assume her vital role in the nation's nuclear deterrent triad.

### **Beneath the Surface: Missions of Strategic Significance**

Throughout her illustrious career, Stand By for Action embarked on numerous covert patrols, venturing deep into the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean. These missions, shrouded in secrecy, were meticulously planned and executed, each one a testament to the skill and dedication of the submarine's crew.

Patrolling submerged for weeks at a time, Stand By for Action remained constantly vigilant, maintaining a constant state of readiness to launch her nuclear missiles at a moment's notice. This unwavering vigilance played a pivotal role in deterring potential adversaries and preserving the delicate balance of power during the Cold War.

In addition to her strategic deterrence mission, Stand By for Action also participated in various scientific research expeditions and intelligence-gathering operations. Her advanced sonar systems and deep-diving capabilities made her an invaluable asset for conducting underwater reconnaissance and collecting crucial data about the ocean's depths.

### **Nuclear Might: Polaris Missiles and Strategic Deterrence**

The centerpiece of Stand By for Action's formidable arsenal was her complement of Polaris ballistic missiles. These nuclear-tipped missiles, capable of reaching targets thousands of miles away with pinpoint accuracy, were the backbone of the US Navy's nuclear deterrent strategy.

Stand By for Action was equipped with 16 Polaris missiles, each one housed in a separate launch tube. The missiles were constantly maintained and inspected by the submarine's highly trained crew, ensuring that they were always ready for immediate launch. The presence of these nuclear weapons aboard Stand By for Action served as a powerful deterrent against any potential aggressors.

### **The Human Element: Crew and Submarine Life**

While the technological prowess of Stand By for Action was undoubtedly impressive, it was the human element that truly made her a remarkable

vessel. The submarine's crew, a diverse group of highly skilled professionals, played a critical role in her successful operation.

Life aboard a nuclear submarine is demanding, requiring long hours of work, constant vigilance, and the ability to function effectively in confined and often stressful conditions. The crew of Stand By for Action demonstrated unwavering dedication and professionalism, their esprit de corps forged in the crucible of their shared mission.

To maintain their physical and mental well-being during extended patrols, the crew had access to various amenities aboard the submarine, including a small library, a recreation room, and a galley where they could enjoy meals prepared by the ship's cooks. Despite the cramped quarters and the absence of natural light, the crew maintained a positive and supportive atmosphere, fostering a sense of camaraderie and shared purpose.

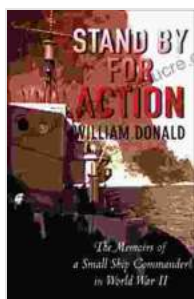
### **Legacy of a Legend**

After more than two decades of faithful service, Stand By for Action was decommissioned from the US Navy in 1994. Her Polaris missiles were removed, and she was subsequently converted into a training vessel for the Navy's nuclear power school. Today, Stand By for Action rests at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in Bremerton, Washington, serving as a museum ship where visitors can learn about her fascinating history and the important role she played in preserving global stability.

USS Stand By for Action stands as a testament to the ingenuity, technological prowess, and unwavering dedication of the men and women who served aboard her. Her legacy as a silent sentinel of nuclear deterrence will forever be etched in the annals of naval history.

The story of USS Stand By for Action is a compelling narrative of technological innovation, strategic necessity, and the human spirit. This legendary nuclear submarine, born from the crucible of the Cold War, played a pivotal role in maintaining global peace and stability. Her legacy serves as a reminder of the vital role that nuclear deterrence has played in preventing nuclear conflict and preserving the balance of power.

As we look back on the remarkable journey of Stand By for Action, we are reminded of the importance of vigilance, technological innovation, and the indomitable spirit of those who serve in the defense of their nation.



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