

A SHOW OF FORCE

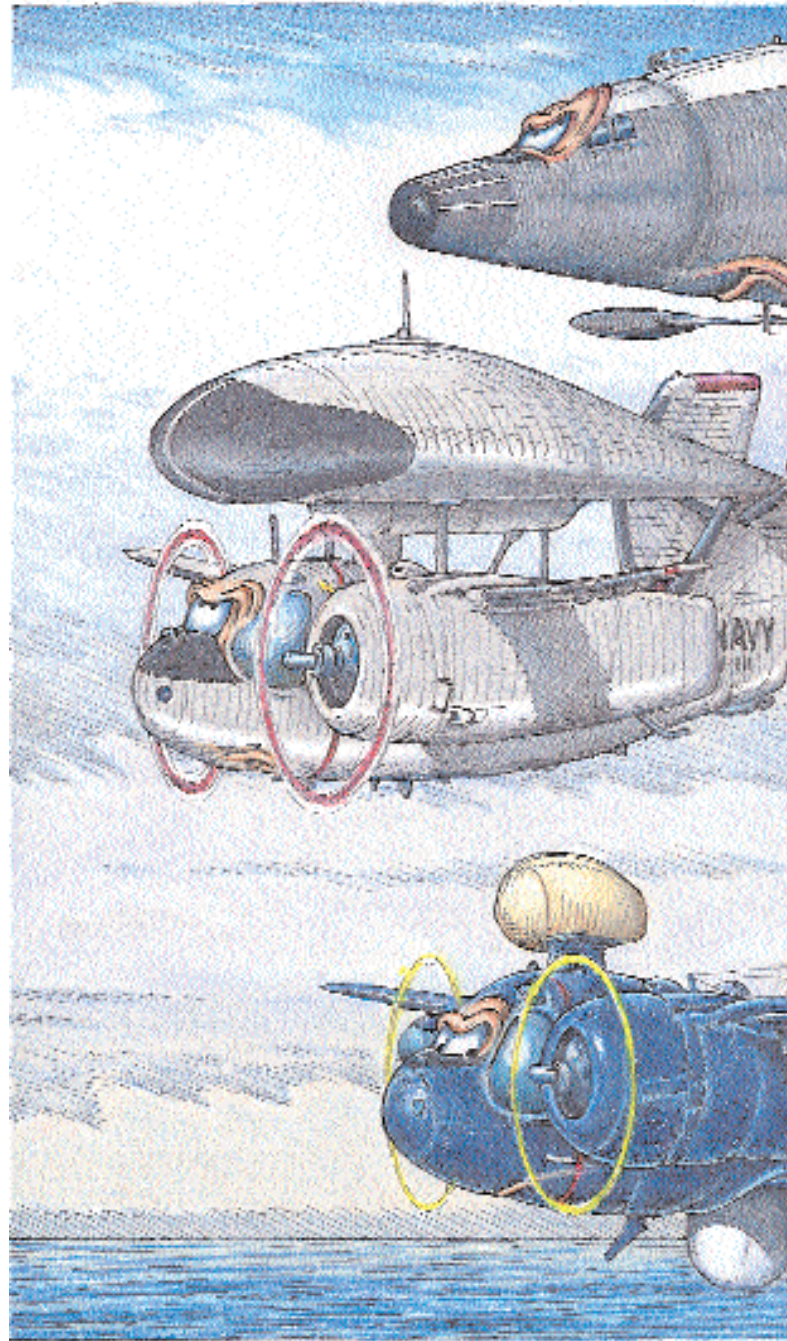
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Although some of Naval Aviation's roles have counterparts in other military services, there is one area where no one does what Naval Aviation can: patrolling the seas, the skies and the depths beneath the waves. This used to be called antisubmarine warfare (ASW). Now, it is called Force Warfare to reflect expansion of the traditional ASW role to include all types of patrol, surveillance and combat within the Navy's domain.

The responsibility for ensuring that operational squadrons fly aircraft and equipment that are fit for their assigned missions rests with the Naval Force Aircraft Test Squadron, or "Force," at NAS Patuxent River, Md. Established in 1975, Force recently celebrated its 25th anniversary of service to the fleet and the nation (see p. 10). In addition to aircraft intended for sea control and ASW missions, Force is also responsible for the test and evaluation of the Navy's training aircraft, including the venerable T-34C *Turbo-Mentor* and the new T-6A *Texan II*. As a result, the squadron has operated a surprising variety of aircraft types over the years, as depicted in the cover illustration.

"Loaded for Bear (Under the Sea and In the Air)"

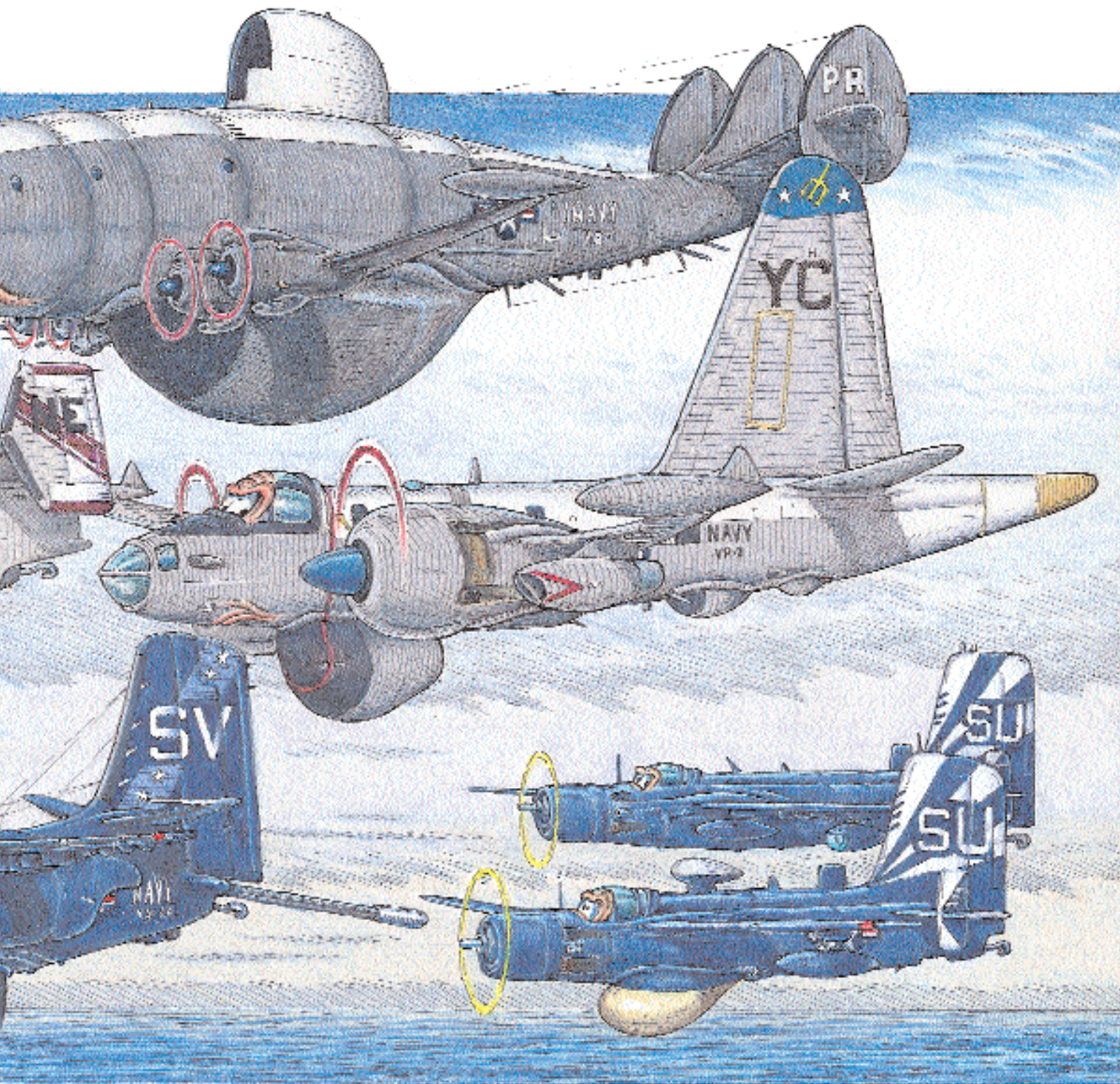
The end of WW II and the beginning of the Cold War brought the development of a new type of aircraft—one that was purposely designed to execute sea search and control missions efficiently and effectively. With the rise of the Soviet Union came the threat of a potent submarine force and a long-range air arm wielded by a



"LOADED FOR BEAR (UNDER THE SEA, IN THE AIR)"

very capable adversary. Grumman's carrier-based aircraft and Lockheed's land-based aircraft were the stars of this new era.

The principal players in this Cold War vigil are shown here. Counterclockwise from lower right, they are: Grumman's AF-2 *Guardian* team of aircraft



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(1949–1954)—the AF-2W “Guppy” hunter and AF-2S “Scrapper” killer; Lockheed’s long-lived (1945–1978) P2V *Neptune* series, represented by the P2V-7 (P-2H); Lockheed’s *Constellation*-derived PO-2W (WV-2) *Warning Star* (1954–1976); Grumman’s S-2 air surveillance derivative, the WF-2 (E-1B) *Tracer*; better

known as “Willy Fudd” or “Stoof with a Roof” (1957–1973); and Grumman’s S2F-1 (S-2A) *Tracker* or “Stoof,” the first carrier-based aircraft to incorporate both hunter and killer capabilities (1952–1977). With the exception of the *Guardian*, these aircraft also served in the Vietnam war or in foreign military services. ✈