



# Military Despatches

Vol 63 September 2022

## Honneur et Fidélité

French Foreign Legion

## Air America

Flying anything, anywhere, any time

## The Red Napoleon

The story of Võ Nguyên Giáp

## Uzi

Israel's iconic submachine gun

*For the military enthusiast*



**Click on any video below to view**



**Paratrooper Wings Quiz**

Most military paratroopers are awarded their jump wings after they have qualified.

In this quiz we show you 15 different wings and you tell us where they are from.



**Military Firearms Quiz**

This quiz is all about military firearms. We show you 15 firearms, you tell us what they are.

**Army Speak 101**

The SADF had their own language. A mixture of English, Afrikaans, slang and techno-speak that few outside the military could hope to understand.

Most armies around the world also had their own slang terms. In this video we look at some of them.



**Army Speak 101**  
Military slang from the SADF and around the world

**New videos each week**

We will be uploading new videos to our YouTube channel each week.

So remember to bookmark the channel and keep an eye out for new content.



**Elite Military Units Quiz**

Most military forces have an elite unit or regiment or a special forces component.

In this quiz we show you 15 and you tell us who they are and where they are from.



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**Please remember to subscribe to our channel.**

**Feel free to leave a comment, and share this video.**



## Editor's Sitrep

So here we are in the ninth month of 2022. It's officially spring. I just hope that the weather remembers this fact.

I find it hard to believe that this is the 63rd issue of the magazine. It has now been going for five years and two months. In that time we have produced more than 200,000 pages of copy.

The smallest issue of the magazine was 52 pages. That was in August 2017 - the very first edition of Military Despatches.

The largest issue has been 114 pages back in September 2021. On nine occasions that magazine has been more than 100 pages.

While it takes a fair amount of time to put the magazine together every month, it is something that I have always enjoyed.

I know that the magazine is widely circulated and currently it is read by more than half a million people worldwide.

Yet there is something that really concerns me, and that is the total lack of response from the readers.

More than a year ago I started a Military Despatches YouTube channel. I asked readers to please subscribe to the channel,

watch the videos, share the videos, and leave a comment. To date our videos have been watched a mere 1,079 times. We only have 13 subscribers, and only one of these subscribers is actually a reader of our magazine.

About two years ago I ran a competition in the magazine. All readers have to do was answer a simple question. The prize was a box set of the classic sitcom 'Dad's Army'. It included all nine series of the show (74 episodes) and the 1971 movie 'Dad's Army'.

So how many people entered the competition? A remarkable zero.

Things like this have happened often in the past five years. So I am seriously considering the future of the magazine. Currently I am considering to make the December 2022 issue of the magazine the last one unless something happens before then. Yet I somehow don't think it will.

Until next month, stay safe and stay healthy.

*Matt*

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### Front Cover

A member of the French Foreign Legion on patrol in Afghanistan.

About 800 members of the Legion served in Afghanistan during the War on Terror.



# 10 British WWII commanders

*It is usually during a war that military leaders and commanders make or break their reputation. This was especially true during World War II. This month we look at ten British commanders that enhanced their reputation during this global conflict. It should come as no surprise to see who was thought to be the top British commander in World War II.*

In past issues of Military Despatches we've looked at the ten greatest military commanders in history, German World War II leaders, and American World War II leaders. This month we look at ten individuals that we regarded as the best British commanders of World War II.

These are, in order, the top British commanders as rated by various historians.



## 10. Harold Alexander

Field Marshal Harold Rupert Leofric George Alexander, 1st Earl Alexander of Tunis, KG, GCB, OM, GCMG, CSI, DSO, MC, CD, PC (Can), was a senior British Army officer who served with distinction in both the First and the Second World War and, afterwards, as Govern-

nor General of Canada and the first Lord Lieutenant of Greater London in 1965.

Alexander was born in London to aristocratic parents, and was educated at Harrow before moving on to the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, for training as an army officer of the Irish Guards.

He rose to prominence through his service in the First World War, receiving numerous honours and decorations, and continued his military career through various British campaigns across Europe and Asia.

In the Second World War, Alexander oversaw the final stages of the Allied evacuation from Dunkirk and subsequently held high-ranking field commands in Burma, North Africa and Italy, including serving as the Commander-in-Chief Middle East and commanding the 18th Army Group in Tunisia.

He then commanded the 15th Army Group for the capture of Sicily and again in Italy before receiving his field marshal's baton and being made Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean.

In 1946 he was appointed as Governor General of Canada by King George VI, on the recommendation of Prime Minister of Canada William Lyon

Mackenzie King, to replace the Earl of Athlone as viceroy, and he occupied the post until he was succeeded by Vincent Massey in 1952. Alexander proved to be enthusiastic about the Canadian wilderness and popular with Canadians. He was the last Governor General before Adrienne Clarkson who was not born in Canada as well as the last Governor General to be a peer.

Alexander was sworn into the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and thereafter, in order to serve as the British Minister of Defence in the Cabinet of Winston Churchill, into the Imperial Privy Council. Alexander retired in 1954 and died in 1969.



## 9. John Vereker

Field Marshal John Standish

Surtees Prendergast Vereker, 6th Viscount Gort, VC, GCB, CBE, DSO & Two Bars, MVO, MC was a senior British Army officer.

As a young officer during the First World War he was decorated with the Victoria Cross for his actions during the Battle of the Canal du Nord.

During the 1930s he served as Chief of the Imperial General Staff (the professional head of the British Army). He is best known for commanding the British Expeditionary Force that was sent to France in the first year of the Second World War, only to be evacuated from Dunkirk the following year.

Gort later served as Governor of Gibraltar and Malta, and High Commissioner for Palestine and Transjordan. He died on 31 March 1946.



## 8. Sir Claude Auchinleck

Field Marshal Sir Claude John Eyre Auchinleck, GCB, GCIE, CSI, DSO, OBE, was a British Army commander during the Second World War.

He was a career soldier who spent much of his military career in India, where he rose to become Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army by early 1941.

In July 1941 he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Middle East Theatre, but after initial successes, the war in North Africa turned against the British, and he was relieved of the post in 1942 during the crucial Alamein campaign.

In June 1943, he was once again appointed Commander-in-Chief, India, where his support through the organisation of supply, maintenance and training for William Slim's Fourteenth Army played an important role in its success.

He served as Commander-in-Chief, India, until the Partition in 1947, when he assumed the role of Supreme Commander of all British forces in India and Pakistan until late 1948.

He died on 23 March 1981 at the age of 96.



## 7. Alan Brooke

Field Marshal Alan Francis Brooke, 1st Viscount Alanbrooke, KG, GCB, OM, GCVO, DSO & Bar, was a senior officer of the British Army.

Brooke "only just" qualified for the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, coming sixty-fifth out of seventy-two in the entrance exam, but passed out at seventeenth. Had he done any better he would have qualified for a commission in the Royal Engineers and probably would not have ended up on the General Staff after the Great War, showing that initial lack of success could be invaluable later on.

He was Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS), the professional head of the British Army, during the Second World War, and was promoted to field marshal on 1 January 1944.

As chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, Brooke was the foremost military advisor to Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and had the role of co-ordinator of the British military efforts in the Allies' victory in 1945.

After retiring from the British Army, he served as Lord High Constable of England during the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.

His war diaries attracted attention for their criticism of Churchill and for Brooke's forthright views on other leading figures of the war.

He died on 17 June 1963.



**6. Sir Arthur Harris**

Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Arthur Travers Harris, 1st Baronet, GCB, OBE, AFC, commonly known as “Bomber” Harris by the press and often within the RAF as “Butch” Harris, was Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (AOC-in-C) RAF Bomber Command during the height of the Anglo-American strategic bombing campaign against Nazi Germany in the Second World War.

Born in Gloucestershire, Harris emigrated to Rhodesia in 1910, aged 17. He joined the 1st Rhodesia Regiment at the outbreak of the First World War and saw action in South Africa and South West Africa.

In 1915, Harris returned to England to fight in the European theatre of the war. He joined the Royal Flying Corps, with which he remained until the formation of the Royal Air Force in 1918.

Harris remained in the Air Force through the 1920s and 1930s, serving in India, Mesopotamia, Persia, Egypt, Palestine, and elsewhere.

At the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, Harris took command of No. 5 Group RAF in England, and in February 1942 was appointed head of Bomber Command. He retained that position for the rest of the war.

In the same year, the British Cabinet agreed to the “area bombing” of German cities. Harris was given the task of implementing Churchill’s policy and supported the development of tactics and technology to perform the task more effectively.

Harris assisted British Chief of the Air Staff Marshal of the Royal Air Force Charles Portal in carrying out the United Kingdom’s most devastating attacks against the German infrastructure and population, including the Bombing of Dresden. After the war Harris moved to South Africa, where he managed the South African Marine Corporation. He was created a baronet in 1953.

His continued preference for area bombing over precision targeting remains controversial, partly because many senior Allied air commanders thought it less effective and partly for the large number of civilian casualties and destruction the strategy caused in Continental Europe.

He died on 5 April 1984 at the age of 91.

He died on 5 April 1984 at the age of 91.



**5. Charles Portal**

Marshal of the Royal Air Force Charles Frederick Algonon Portal, 1st Viscount Portal of Hungerford, KG, GCB, OM, DSO & Bar, MC, DL was a senior Royal Air Force officer.

He served as a bomber pilot in the First World War, and rose to become first a flight commander and then a squadron commander, flying light bombers on the Western Front.

In the early stages of the Second World War he was commander-in-chief of Bomber Command.

He was an advocate of strategic area bombing against German industrial areas, and viewed it as a war winning strategy. In October 1940 he was made Chief of the Air Staff, and remained in this post for the rest of the war.

During his time as Chief he continuously supported the strategic bombing offensive against Germany, and advocated the formation of the Pathfinder Force, critical to im-

proving the destructive force of Bomber Command.

He fended off attempts by the Royal Navy to take command over RAF Coastal Command, and resisted attempts by the British Army to establish their own Army Air Arm.

Portal retired from the RAF following the end of the war. He served as Controller of Production (Atomic Energy) at the Ministry of Supply for six years. Portal was then made chairman of British Aluminium.

He was unsuccessful in fending off a hostile takeover of British Aluminium by Sir Ivan Stedeford’s Tube Investments, in what was known as the “Aluminium War”.

Afterward he served as chairman of the British Aircraft Corporation. He died on 22 April 1971.



**4. William Slim**

Field Marshal William Joseph Slim, 1st Viscount Slim, KG, GCB, GCMG, GCVO, GBE, DSO, MC, KStJ, usually known

as Bill Slim or ‘Uncle Bill’, was a British military commander and the 13th Governor-General of Australia.

Slim saw active service in both the First and Second World Wars and was wounded in action three times.

During the Second World War he led the Fourteenth Army, the so-called “forgotten army” in the Burma campaign.

After the war he became the first British officer who had served in the Indian Army to be appointed Chief of the Imperial General Staff. From 1953 to 1959 he was Governor-General of Australia.

In the early 1930s, Slim also wrote novels, short stories, and other publications under the pen name Anthony Mills.

He died on 14 December 1970.



**3. Hugh Dowding**

Air Chief Marshal Hugh Caswall Tremenheere Dowding, 1st Baron Dowding, GCB, GCVO, CMG was an officer in the Roy-

al Air Force. He was Air Officer Commanding RAF Fighter Command during the Battle of Britain and is generally credited with playing a crucial role in Britain’s defence, and hence, the defeat of Adolf Hitler’s plan to invade Britain.

Born in Moffat, Scotland, Dowding was an officer in the British Army in the 1900s and early 1910s.

He joined the Royal Flying Corps at the start of the First World War and went on to serve as a fighter pilot and then as commanding officer of No. 16 Squadron.

During the inter-war years he became Air Officer Commanding Fighting Area, Air Defence of Great Britain and then joined the Air Council as Air Member for Supply and Research.

In July 1936, Dowding was appointed chief of the newly created RAF Fighter Command.

During the Battle of Britain in the Second World War, Dowding’s Fighter Command successfully defended the UK against the attacks of the Luftwaffe, thanks to his prudent management of RAF resources and detailed preparation of Britain’s air defences (the Dowding system).

He subsequently came into conflict with proponents of the Big Wing tactic, most notably Trafford Leigh-Mallory and Douglas Bader, which along with the inadequacies of RAF’s night-time defence during the Blitz led to his eventual downfall.

In November 1940, Dowding was replaced in command against his wishes by Sholto Douglas, another Big Wing advocate.

Dowding retired from the Royal Air Force in July 1942 and was made a peer in June 1943. Upon retirement, Dowding subsequently became an influential member of the British spiritualist, theosophical, and animal rights movements. He died on 15 February 1970, aged 87.



## 2. Louis Mountbatten

Louis Francis Albert Victor Nicholas Mountbatten, 1st Earl Mountbatten of Burma was a British naval officer, colonial administrator and relative of the British royal family. Mountbatten, who was of German descent, was born in England to the prominent Battenberg family and was a maternal uncle of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and a second cousin of King George VI.

He joined the Royal Navy

during the First World War and was appointed Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia Command, in the Second World War.

He was later made viceroy of British India, and then first governor-general of the Dominion of India, being the last British person to hold either of these positions.

Mountbatten attended the Royal Naval College, Osborne, before entering the Royal Navy in 1916. He saw action during the closing phase of the First World War, and after the war briefly attended Christ's College, Cambridge.

During the interwar period, Mountbatten continued to pursue his naval career, specialising in naval communications.

Following the outbreak of the Second World War, Mountbatten commanded the destroyer HMS Kelly and the 5th Destroyer Flotilla. He saw considerable action in Norway, in the English Channel, and in the Mediterranean. In August 1941, he received command of the aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious.

He was appointed chief of Combined Operations and a member of the Chiefs of Staff Committee in early 1942, and organised the raids on St Nazaire and Dieppe. In August 1943, Mountbatten became Supreme Allied Commander South East Asia Command and oversaw the recapture of Burma and Singapore from the Japanese by the end of 1945.

For his service during the war, Mountbatten was created vis-

count in 1946 and earl the following year.

In March 1947, Mountbatten was appointed Viceroy of India and oversaw the Partition of British India into India and Pakistan.

He then served as the first Governor-General of India until June 1948. In 1952, Mountbatten was appointed commander-in-chief of the British Mediterranean Fleet and NATO Commander Allied Forces Mediterranean.

From 1955 to 1959, he was First Sea Lord, a position that had been held by his father, Prince Louis of Battenberg, some forty years earlier.

Thereafter he served as chief of the Defence Staff until 1965, making him the longest-serving professional head of the British Armed Forces to date. During this period Mountbatten also served as chairman of the NATO Military Committee for a year.

Mountbatten was a strong influence in the upbringing of his grand-nephew, Charles, Prince of Wales, and later as a mentor – “Honorary Grandfather” and “Honorary Grandson”, they fondly called each other.

He from time to time strongly upbraided the Prince for showing tendencies towards the idle pleasure-seeking dilettantism of his predecessor as Prince of Wales, King Edward VIII, whom Mountbatten had known well in their youth.

Yet he also encouraged the Prince to enjoy the bachelor life while he could, and then

to marry a young and inexperienced girl so as to ensure a stable married life.

On 27 August 1979, Mountbatten was assassinated by a bomb planted aboard his fishing boat in Mullaghmore, County Sligo, Ireland, by members of the Provisional Irish Republican Army. He received a ceremonial funeral at Westminster Abbey and was buried in Romsey Abbey in Hampshire.



## 1. Bernard Montgomery

Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery, 1st Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, KG, GCB, DSO, PC, DL, nicknamed “Monty” and “The Spartan General”, was a senior British Army officer who served in the First World War, the Irish War of Independence and the Second World War.

Montgomery first saw action in the First World War as a junior officer of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. At Méteren, near the Belgian border at Bailleul, he was shot through the right lung by a sniper, dur-

ing the First Battle of Ypres.

On returning to the Western Front as a general staff officer, he took part in the Battle of Arras in April–May 1917.

He also took part in the Battle of Passchendaele in late 1917 before finishing the war as chief of staff of the 47th (2nd London) Division.

In the inter-war years he commanded the 17th (Service) Battalion, Royal Fusiliers and, later, the 1st Battalion, Royal Warwickshire Regiment before becoming commander of the 9th Infantry Brigade and then General officer commanding (GOC), 8th Infantry Division.

During the Western Desert campaign of the Second World War, Montgomery commanded the British Eighth Army from August 1942, through the Second Battle of El Alamein and on to the final Allied victory in Tunisia in May 1943.

He subsequently commanded the British Eighth Army during the Allied invasion of Sicily and the Allied invasion of Italy and was in command of all Allied ground forces during the Battle of Normandy (Operation Overlord), from D-Day on 6 June 1944 until 1 September 1944.

He then continued in command of the 21st Army Group for the rest of the North West Europe campaign, including the failed attempt to cross the Rhine during Operation Market Garden.

When German armoured forces broke through the American lines in Belgium during the Battle of the Bulge, Montgom-

ery received command of the northern shoulder of the Bulge. This included temporary command of the US First Army and the US Ninth Army, which held up the German advance to the north of the Bulge while the US Third Army under Lieutenant General George Patton relieved Bastogne from the south.

Montgomery's 21st Army Group, including the US Ninth Army and the First Allied Airborne Army, crossed the Rhine in Operation Plunder in March 1945, two weeks after the US First Army had crossed the Rhine in the Battle of Remagen. y the end of the war, troops under Montgomery's command had taken part in the encirclement of the Ruhr Pocket, liberated the Netherlands, and captured much of north-west Germany. n 4 May 1945, Montgomery accepted the surrender of the German forces in north-western Europe at Lüneburg Heath, south of Hamburg, after the surrender of Berlin to the USSR on 2 May.

After the war he became Commander-in-Chief of the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR) in Germany and then Chief of the Imperial General Staff (1946–1948). rom 1948 to 1951, he served as Chairman of the Commanders-in-Chief Committee of the Western Union. He then served as NATO's Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe until his retirement in 1958.

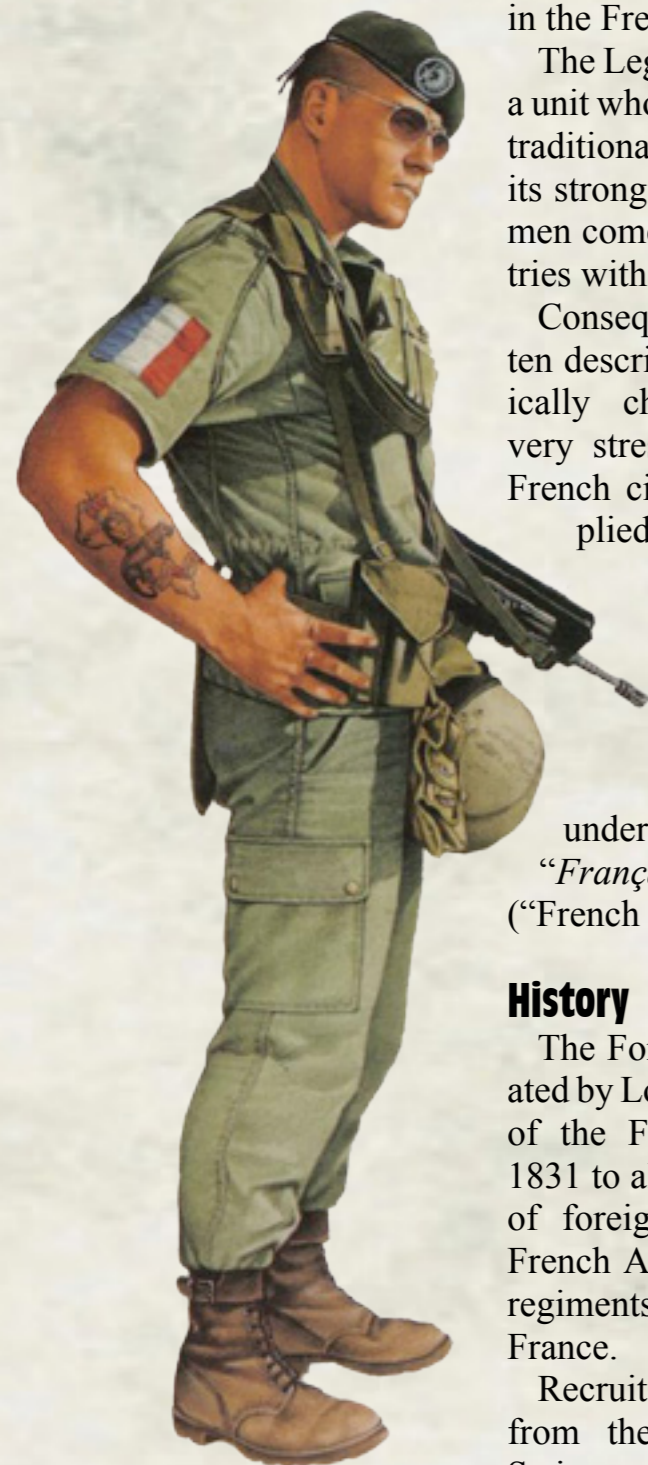
He died on 24 March 1976 at the age of 88.

# Special Force Training - Foreign Legion

In our ninth article on Special Forces selection and training, we look at 2 REP, the parachute regiment of the French Foreign Legion - *Légion étrangère*.

The Foreign Legion (*Légion étrangère*) is a corps of the French Army with a specific command and comprising several specialities: infantry, cavalry, engineers, and airborne troops.

It was created in 1831 to allow the incorporation of foreign nationals into the French Army.



It formed part of the *Armée d'Afrique*, the French Army's units associated with France's colonial project in Africa, until the end of the Algerian war in 1962.

Legionnaires are highly trained soldiers and the Legion is unique in that it is open to foreign recruits willing to serve in the French Armed Forces.

The Legion is today known as a unit whose training focuses on traditional military skills and on its strong esprit de corps, as its men come from different countries with different cultures.

Consequently, training is often described as not only physically challenging, but also very stressful psychologically. French citizenship may be applied for after three years' service.

Any soldier who is wounded during a battle for France can immediately apply to be a French citizen under a provision known as "*Français par le sang versé*" ("French by spilled blood").

## History

The Foreign Legion was created by Louis Philippe, the King of the French, on 10 March 1831 to allow the incorporation of foreign nationals into the French Army from the foreign regiments of the Kingdom of France.

Recruits included soldiers from the recently disbanded Swiss and German foreign reg-

iments of the Bourbon monarchy. The Royal Ordinance for the establishment of the new regiment specified that the foreigners recruited could only serve outside France.

The Foreign Legion was primarily used, as part of the *Armée d'Afrique*, to protect and expand the French colonial empire during the 19th century, but it also fought in almost all French wars including the Franco-Prussian War, World War I and World War II.

The Foreign Legion has remained an important part of the French Army and sea transport protected by the French Navy, surviving three Republics, the Second French Empire, two World Wars, the rise and fall of mass conscript armies, the dismantling of the French colonial empire, and the loss of the Foreign Legion's base, Algeria.

## 2nd Foreign Paratrooper Regiment

Considered as the Special Forces component of the Foreign Legion, the 2nd Foreign Parachute Regiment (*2e Régiment étranger de parachutistes*, *2e REP*) was established in 1955.

They replaced the 2nd Foreign Parachute Battalion (*2ème B.E.P*) that had been established in 1948.

The 1st Foreign Parachute Regiment (*1er Régiment Etranger de Parachutistes*, *1er REP*) was also established in 1948.

The regiment fought in the

First Indochina War, the Suez Crisis and Algerian War, but was dissolved along with the 10th Parachute Division and 25th Parachute Division following the generals' putsch against part of the French government in 1961.

2 REP) is the only airborne regiment of the Foreign Legion in the French Army.

It is one of the four infantry regiments of the 11th Parachute Brigade and part of the spearhead of the French rapid reaction force.

Since the regiment's arrival from Algeria in 1967, it has been stationed at Camp Raffalli near the town of Calvi on the island of Corsica, south of mainland France.

## Recruitment

Before applying to join the Parachute Regiment, potential candidates must first join the Foreign Legion and undergo basic training.

Anyone can apply to join the Foreign Legion, no matter what country they are from, nor their race or religion, their education, or ability to speak French.

They need to be between the ages of 17.5 and 39.5 years old, have a valid ID or passport, be literate in their own language, have a valid copy of their birth certificate, and be physically fit.

If they are wanted by Interpol for any serious crime, they will not be accepted.

To apply to join the Foreign Legion all they need do is report at one of the pre-selection centres in Paris or Aubagne. There are three pre-selection centres in Paris and five in Aubagne. The pre-selection centres are

open 365 days a year.

They spend between one to three days at the pre-selection centre before being transferred to the Foreign Legion Recruitment Centre in Paris.

There they will spend between one and four days at the recruitment centre where they will confirm the candidates motivation for joining, give them an initial medical check-up, and finalise their enlistment papers.

After that they will go on to the selection phase, which can last between seven and 30 days in Aubagne.

They undergo psychological and personality tests, logic tests (no education requirements), medical exam, physical condition tests, motivation and security interviews. After this selection will be either confirmed or denied.

New recruits are required a contract to serve for an initial period of five years in the Legion.

Once they are enlisted in the Legion, they are provided with a new identity, including a new name. That applies to all candidates, without distinction. After one year of service, they can ask to get your real identity back. This process is referred to as RSM (rectification, or recognizing in English).

## Basic training

Basic training for the Foreign Legion is conducted in the 4th Foreign Regiment. This is an operational combat regiment which provides a training course of 15–17 weeks, before recruits are assigned to their operational units:

- Initial training of 4–6 weeks



at The Farm (*La Ferme*) – introduction to military life-style; outdoor and field activities.

- March (*Marche Képi Blanc*) – a 50-kilometer two-day march (25 km per day) in full kit, followed by the Kepi Blanc ceremony on the 3rd day.
- Technical and practical training (alternating with barracks and field training) – three weeks.
- Mountain training (Chalet at Formiguière in the French Pyrenees) – one week.
- Technical and practical training (alternating barracks and field training) – three weeks.
- Examinations and obtaining of the elementary technical certificate (CTE) – one week.
- March (*Raid Marche*) – a 120-kilometer final march, which must be completed in three days.
- Light vehicle drivers education (drivers license) – one week.
- Return to Aubagne before reporting to the assigned operational regiment – one week.

Education in the French language (reading, writing and pronunciation) is taught on a

daily basis throughout all of basic training.

## Promo Parachutiste

*Promo Parachutiste* is the selection course which Legionnaires intending to join 2ème REP undergo at Camp Raffalli in Calvi, Haute-Corse.

Selection for 2e REP takes four weeks. The first two weeks are physical tests across terrain.

Parachute training takes place at Camp Raffalli and runs for two weeks with a total of six jumps.

2e REP is the only regiment of the 11th Parachute Brigade which trains its paratroopers.

The Legionnaires spend their parachute training in Calvi TAP within the walls of the regiment. All other regiments are trained at the *École des troupes aéroportées* (ETAP) in Pau.

Every new legionnaire has a password, assigned to a TAP instructor. This training is called the “promotion” or “the promo”.

It lasts for two to four weeks depending on aircraft availability for the jumping session.

When “the promotion” lasts two weeks, the first is devoted to instruction on the ground and the second to instruction on jumping.

If the training is extended for a week training is also included on combat formation.

After spending basic training with the 4th Foreign Regiment at Castelnaudary, recruits are assigned to regiments.

Those who have the ability are grouped by an NCO from Calvi, who is responsible for their recovery. They are then taken on a ferry to Corsica and

met by a bus at the island port.

Troops arrive at the barracks on Saturday morning. During the weekend they are still under the command of their monitor and they visit Camp Raffalli Legionnaires and paratroopers museum.

During the first week of “promoting” the future legionnaire paratroopers still have to pass a series of physical tests, known as TAP.

### TAP 1

- 15 pull ups minimum from a dead hang.
- 30 press ups
- 40 sit ups on an incline bench
- 30 squats
- 6m rope climb (arms and legs)

The emphasis in the legion is not in the gym, but in endurance. Long hard runs in the morning called ‘footing’ are the staple of the Legion training.

Once placed in their companies, newly fledged parachutists get a reality check of how fit they are as they are marched in full kit across the rugged terrain of the Corsican mountains.

### TAP2

- 1500 metre - run in combat uniform with backpack of 11 kg in less than 9 minutes.
- 8000 metre - run in combat uniform with backpack of 11 kg in less than 60 minutes.

### TAP3

- 10 metre - underwater swim, holding breath, in combat uniform and helmet, immediately followed by;
- 90 metre - surface swim in combat uniform and helmet



## Parachute Wings

First week - ground training: parachute equipment, exit procedures, landing procedures, emergency procedures.

Second week - flight phase: the first jump, second jump with opening of reserve parachute in flight, third through sixth jumps with increasing weapons and equipment. After completing the sixth jump, the soldier is issued his basic parachutist badge. The 2eme REP make the greatest number of jumps per year in the French Army. A legionnaire makes an average of 15 jumps per year.

## Motto

In contrast to all other French Army units, the motto embroidered on the Foreign Legion’s regimental flags is not *Honneur et Patrie* (Honour and Fatherland) but *Honneur et Fidélité* (Honour and Fidelity).

Moreover 2 REP also has the words *More Majorum* (in the manner, ways and traditions of our veterans foreign regiments) added.

## Marching songs

*Le Boudin* is the marching song of the Foreign Legion. 2 REP also has their own marching song, *La Légion marche*.



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**“War does not determine who is right - only who is left”**



# When the Cold War turned hot

*There were a number of times that the Cold War almost turned hot. May 1960 was one such occasion.*

Immediately after the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II, Germany had become a country divided in two.

West Germany was controlled by the United States of America, Britain and France. East Germany fell under the Soviet Union.

Although Berlin, the capital of Germany, was in East Germany, it too had been divided in half - East Berlin and West Berlin.

From the start, Russia wanted control of the entire city of Berlin but America was determined that this was not going to happen.

The East and the West had different ideological and economic visions for postwar Europe. The resulting tension and hostility became known as The Cold War.

One of the first major international crises of the Cold War became known as The Berlin Blockade.

The Soviet Union blocked the Western Allies' rail, road and canal access to the sectors of Berlin under Western control.

In response, the Western Allies organised the Berlin airlift which lasted from 26 June 1948 to 30 September 1949.

Aircrews from the United States Air Force, the British Royal Air Force, the French Air Force, the Royal Canadian Air Force, the Royal Australian Air Force, the Royal New Zealand Air Force, and the South African Air Force flew over 200,000

flights in one year, providing to the West Berliners up to 8,893 tons of necessities each day, such as fuel and food.

Although unhappy that their plan was not working, the Soviets did not attempt to disrupt the airlift for fear that this may lead to open conflict. On 12 May 1949, the USSR lifted the blockade of West Berlin.

## Intelligence needed

A Four Power Summit was scheduled to be held in Paris on 16 May 1960. One of the priorities on the agenda would be Berlin.

American President Dwight D. Eisenhower was under mounting pressure from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to see what the Russian military was up to. There were fears that Russia was developing intercontinental ballistic missiles. The CIA wanted to fly ultra-high altitude photographic reconnaissance missions over Russia.

Eisenhower was reluctant because he didn't want anything to jeopardise the Four Power Paris Summit. What if one of the planes was brought down by the Russians?

The CIA assured Eisenhower that this would not happen. They said that the Russians had no method of bringing down the plane, the Lockheed U-2.

The Lockheed U-2 was a high altitude recon aircraft that was built in 1957 to gather a range of information while cruising at



**CAPTURED:** CIA pilot Francis Gary Powers.

undetected high altitudes. It has a surface ceiling of 21,000 metres and could be equipped with a variety of sensory and communications systems for spying purposes.

Nicknamed the 'Dragon Lady', the U-2 was safe from the MiG-17, the Soviet Union's best interceptor, which could barely reach 13,700 metres. The Americans also believed that Soviet radar, which used American equipment provided during the war, could not track aircraft above 19,800 metres.

Eisenhower finally relented to the pressure and gave the go ahead for two missions to be flown. There were, however, conditions attached.

He wanted the missions to be flown by British pilots from the Royal Air Force. This would give the Americans plausible deniability if the missions were compromised. The British government, still reeling from the aftermath of the Suez Crisis and



**DRAGON LADY:** Nicknamed the 'Dragon Lady' the single-jet engine ultra-high altitude reconnaissance Lockheed U-2 was operated by the United States Air Force. A U-2 flown by the Central Intelligence Agency was shot down over Russia.

in no position to snub American requests, agreed to the proposal.

The first two missions flown by the British pilots were a success. They confirmed that the Russians were indeed building intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Eisenhower was now under pressure to determine the number of Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles more accurately. He gave permission for two more missions to be flown before the Four Power Paris Summit. This time, however, the missions would be flown by American pilots.

## Things go wrong

On 9 April 1960, a U-2C from the special CIA unit '10-10' took off from the US base at Peshawar, Pakistan. It was piloted by CIA pilot Francis Gary Powers.

He crossed the southern national boundary of the Soviet Union in the area of Pamir Mountains and flew over four Soviet top secret military objects: the Semipalatinsk Test

Site, the Dolon Air Base where Tu-95 strategic bombers were stationed, the surface-to-air missile (SAM) test site of the Soviet Air Defence Forces near Saryshagan, and the Tyuratam missile range (Baikonur Cosmodrome).

What the Americans did not realise was that Soviet radar technology had increased greatly and Powers' U-2 was detected by Soviet Air Defence Forces when it had flown 250 kilometres over the Soviet border. Interception attempts by a Mig-19 and Su-9 were unsuccessful.

The U-2 left Soviet air space and landed at an Iranian airstrip at Zahedan. The mission had been a success and the CIA was delighted with the results. The next flight from Peshawar airport was planned for late April.

On 28 April 1960 a U-2C, codenamed Article 358, was ferried from Incirlik Air Base in Turkey to the US base at Peshawar by pilot Glen Dunaway.

Fuel for the aircraft had been ferried to Peshawar the previ-

ous day, as well as the ground crew, mission pilot Francis Gary Powers, and the back up pilot, Bob Ericson.

On the morning of 29 April the crew was informed that the mission had been delayed for one day. As a result, Bob Ericson flew Article 358 back to Incirlik and pilot John Shinn flew another U-2C, Article 360, back to Peshawar. On 30 April the mission was delayed by yet another day due to bad weather over the Soviet Union.

The weather improved and on 1 May, 15 days before the opening of the Four Power Paris Summit, Captain Francis Gary Powers took off from Peshawar.

Under the code name 'Grand Slam', the mission would photograph targets including the ICBM sites at the Baikonur Cosmodrome and Plesetsk Cosmodrome, then land at Bodø in Norway.

Chelyabinsk-65, an important industrial center of plutonium processing, was another of the targets that Powers was to photograph. At the time, the USSR had six ICBM launch pads, two at Baikonur and four at Chelyabinsk-65.

The Americans had no idea that the U-2 flight was expected and all units of the Soviet Air Defence Forces in the Central Asia, Kazakhstan, Siberia, Ural, and later in the USSR European Region and Extreme North, were placed on red alert.

The U-2C was soon picked up by Soviet radar and Lieutenant General of the Air Force Yevgeniy Savitskiy ordered the air-unit commanders "to attack the violator by all alert flights located in the area of foreign

plane's course, and to ram if necessary".

Soviet attempts to intercept the plane using fighter aircraft failed yet again because of the U-2s extreme operating altitude.

The U-2s course was out of range of several of the nearest SAM sites. One of the SAM sites even failed to engage the target. 1 May is a holiday in the Soviet Union, and they were not on duty that day.

Finally, near Kosulion in the Ural Region, Powers' luck ran out. Three SA-2 Guideline (S-75 Dvina) surface-to-air missiles were fired by a battery commanded by Mikhail Voronov. One of the missiles exploded in the air behind the U-2. The resulting explosion was near enough to violently shake the aircraft, tearing off its long wings.

The plane began to nosedive and at a lower altitude Powers' bailed out. He had neglected to disconnect his oxygen hose first and struggled with it until it broke, enabling him to separate from the aircraft.

He parachuted safely to the ground but was soon captured. He had been issued with a modified silver dollar which contained a lethal, shellfish-derived saxitoxin-tipped needle, but he did not use it.

For more than 30 minutes the SAM command center was unaware that the U-2 had been destroyed. This resulted in 13 more missiles being fired by neighbouring batteries.

One of the missiles struck a Soviet MiG-19 fighter. The pilot, Sergei Safronov, was killed. The MiG's IFF transponders were not yet switched to the

new May codes because of the 1 May holiday.

### US cover up

It didn't take the CIA long to realise that something had gone horribly wrong with the mission.

Four days after Powers' had disappeared, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) issued a very detailed press release.

They claimed that a weather research aircraft had gone missing north of Turkey. They speculated that while the aircraft was on autopilot the pilot had lost consciousness due to an oxygen failure. They even went as far as to claim that the pilot had reported over the emergency frequency that he was experiencing oxygen difficulties.

To bolster the claim that the U-2 was a weather research aircraft, a U-2 was quickly painted in NASA colours and shown to the media.

On the same day the US Senate made its first comments on the U-2 incident and it began a domestic political storm for Eisenhower.

He was caught between the proverbial rock and a hard place - he could admit responsibility for the U-2 flight, and likely ruin any chances for détente at the Paris Summit, or he could continue to deny knowledge and indicate that he did not control his own administration.

Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev was delighted by the American's cover story. He planned a political trap for Eisenhower.

Khrushchev released information to the world that an

American spy plane had been shot down over Soviet territory. He made no mention of the fact that the pilot was alive and had been captured.

With the information that Khrushchev released, the Americans believed that they would be able to continue with their cover story that the crashed plane was a weather research aircraft and not a military spy plane. The cover-up said that the pilot of the U-2 weather plane had radioed in that he was experiencing oxygen difficulties while flying over Turkey.

From there they claimed that the plane could have continued on its path because of autopilot, and that this could be the plane that crashed in the Soviet Union.

The final attempt to make the cover story seem as real as possible was the grounding of all U-2 planes for mandatory inspection of oxygen systems in order to make sure that no other "weather missions" would have the same result as the one that was lost and possibly crashed in the Soviet Union.

On 7 May, Khrushchev sprang his trap. "I must tell you a secret," he announced. "When I made my first report I deliberately did not say that the pilot was alive and well ... and now just look how many silly things the Americans have said."

It soon became obvious that not only was Francis Gary Powers alive and well, but that he had revealed the full details of his mission to the Soviets.

Also, because of the release of some photographs of the plane, there was evidence that most of the covert U-2 technol-



**WORLD LEADERS:** US President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev. The Soviet Premier used the U-2 spy plane incident to embarrass the US President.

ogies had survived the crash. Powers?

From this Khrushchev was able to openly embarrass the Eisenhower administration by exposing the attempted cover-up.

Yet despite Khrushchev's political trap, the Soviet leader was a shrewd politician. He allowed Eisenhower a way out to save face, possibly to salvage the peace summit to some degree.

Khrushchev said that he did not lay the blame for the U-2 incident on Eisenhower himself, but rather on the CIA and its head Allen Dulles.

Khrushchev said that anyone wish to understand the U-2s mission should "seek a reply from Allen Dulles, at whose instructions the American aircraft flew over the Soviet Union."

On 9 May, the Soviet premier told US ambassador Thompson that he "could not help but suspect that someone had launched this operation with the deliberate intent of spoiling the summit meeting."

### Francis Gary Powers

And what of the fate of the CIA pilot, Captain Francis Gary

On 19 August 1960, Powers was tried and convicted of espionage. This was considered a serious crime covered by Article 2 of the Soviet Union's law 'On Criminality Responsibility for State Crimes'.

He was sentenced to 10 years confinement. Three years of his sentence were to be served in a prison, while the remaining seven years would be in a labour camp.

He was held in Vladimir Central Prison, about 240 km east of Moscow, in building number 2 from 9 September 1960 until 8 February 1962.

On 10 February 1962, Powers was exchanged, along with American student Frederic Pryor, in a well-publicized spy swap at the Glienicke Bridge in Berlin. The exchange was for Soviet KGB Colonel Viyalyam Fisher, known as "Rudolf Abel", who had been caught by the FBI and tried and jailed for espionage. When released, Powers' total time in captivity was 1 year, 9 months and 10 days.

Powers initially received a

cold reception on his return home. He was criticized for having failed to activate his aircraft's self-destruct charge to destroy the camera, photographic film, and related classified parts of his aircraft before his capture. He was also criticized for not using an optional CIA-issued "suicide pill" to kill himself.

In 2010, CIA documents were released indicating that American officials did not believe Powers' account of the incident at the time, because it was contradicted by a classified National Security Agency (NSA) report which alleged that the U-2 had descended from 20 to 10 km before changing course and disappearing from radar. However, newly released declassified CIA documents confirm the accuracy of Powers' report. The NSA report remains classified.

Powers received the CIA's Intelligence Star in 1965 after his return from the Soviet Union. Powers was originally scheduled to receive it in 1963 along with other pilots involved in the CIA's U-2 program, but the award was postponed for political reasons.

Powers worked for Lockheed as a test pilot from 1962 to 1970, though the CIA paid his salary. In 1970, he published Operation Overflight. Lockheed fired him, because "the book's publication had ruffled some feathers at Langley." Powers became a helicopter traffic pilot reporter for KNBC News Channel 4.

On August 1, 1977, while conducting a traffic report over Los Angeles, his helicopter crashed, killing him and George Spears, his cameraman.

# Bless you my son

Religion and the military all too often have gone hand-in-hand. Countless wars have been fought in the name of religion. Yet sometimes it does have a lighter side.

Religion played a very important role in the old South African Defence Force and most functions would be opened and closed with prayer. Once a week a church parade would be held.

During basic training the SADF did try and cater for the religious needs of the conscripts. The mainstream churches were all represented and these included the Dutch Reformed, Methodist, Apostolic, Anglican, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, and Baptist. A Rabbi was also available for those of the Jewish faith.

## Conversion

Dale was 18 when he did his national service and recounts his memories of church parade.

"We used to have church parade every Wednesday morning from 9.00 to 9.45 am. It was compulsory and there was no way that you could avoid church parade. We used to form up on the parade ground and the company sergeant major would read out the list of available choices.

"NG (Dutch Reformed) in die *grootsaal* (in the big hall). Roman Catholics in the small hall. Baptist in Lecture Room 5.

"It was funny because they would always refer to the Catholics as "*die Roms'gevaar*" (the Roman danger). It was third behind "*die swaartgevaar*" (the black danger) and "*die rooi-gevaar*" (the red (Communist) danger).

"He would continue through his list until all of the churches

and venues had been read. Corporals would then march the various groups off to their destinations. Most of the priests, pastors, whatever you want to call them, where from civvie (civilian) churches in town.

"I was a Baptist but I only attended one Baptist service. The Baptist minister was about 70 years old and he was a bore. Every Wednesday morning I would go to the Catholic service. My dear old mom would have thrown a fit if she had known about it. But I really enjoyed the Catholic service because the priest was a riot.

"He was from Ireland and he still had a thick Irish accent, which made nearly everything he said sound funny.

When he arrived on a Wednesday morning at 9 o'clock he would always greet us with "Good bless all here."

He would spend almost the entire service telling the most outrageous jokes. And by his own admission he enjoyed the odd glass of whisky or two.

Half the guys who used to attend were not Catholics. They used to go to hear this dear old Father carry on. We really loved that old geezer. Not that we received that much spiritual guidance, but hell we learnt some good jokes."

## Not a believer

Not everyone was as thrilled about church parade, though. Lenny was also 18 and he served his national service in the infantry in 1976. He was not in the least amused with church

parade.

"Listen, I grew up in the church. My dad was a lay preacher in a Pentecostal church and from as far back as I can remember I was forced to go to church. And I'm not talking about just once a week.

"Tuesday night was Bible Study, Thursday night was prayer meeting, and Friday night was youth. On Saturday nights we had a coffee bar at the church and I had to attend that as well.

"Sundays we would be in church for practically the whole day. At 9.00 in the morning I had to go to Sunday school. Then at 10.45 it was time for the morning service. If you got out of there by 1 o'clock you were lucky. Then it was back at 6.30 for the Evening Service. I hated it, I really did.

"It's not that I have anything against the church or against religion. It's just that I feel that it's a personal thing and should be a matter of choice. I was forced to go to church and I think that is the reason why I was so anti.

"One of the first things I thought when I was called up for national service was, "cool, now at least I won't be forced to go to church." What was the first thing the army did? Told me I had to go to church.

"When we had our first church parade the sergeant major called out all the churches and I just stood where I was. This was it. This was the day I was going to make a stand.

"Eventually I was the only person who had not fallen into



**SPOT THE DIFFERENCE:** Chaplains wore a purple beret (left) while members of the Parachute Battalion wore a maroon beret (right). One confused troop couldn't tell the difference.

a group and marched off. The sergeant major came up to me and asked me what church I belonged to.

"I'm an atheist," I told him. The sergeant major consulted his list for some time before replying.

"No," he said, very serious about it. "We don't have that on the list. I don't think that the atheist padre can make it on a Wednesday. Why don't you fall in with the Anglicans? That's almost the same thing, isn't it?"

I'm sure that the Anglicans would have been thrilled to learn that they were now considered to be atheists.

"I didn't even bother trying to explain to the sergeant major what an atheist was. I simply fell in with the Anglicans and attended their service every Wednesday. It could have been worse. At least it only lasted 45 minutes and it was only once a week."

## Who me?

Barry was 18 when he did national service in 1980. He remembers a church parade that landed him in hot water.

"We didn't have individual church parades at my unit. We had our own full time *dominee*

(minister). His rank was equal to that of a colonel.

"Every Wednesday morning the entire unit would assemble in the hall and he would give the service. Because he was from the Dutch Reformed Church most of the service would be in Afrikaans. Every now and then he would throw in an English sentence for the benefit of those of use that were English speakers.

"I was on leader group course at the time and we had to sit right in front of the hall. Now I have a huge problem. If I have to sit and listen to anyone talking in a monotone voice I fall asleep. I just can't help it.

"This particular Wednesday morning he was giving a sermon about how the youth were the future of the country. At one stage he said, in Afrikaans of course, "You people are the future of this country. Yes you! The "yes you" part had been said in English. And he had pointed his finger at his audience for effect.

"My eyes were closed and I must confess that I had fallen asleep. The loud "yes you" in English must have penetrated my slumber. I was convinced that he had noticed me sleeping

and asked, "why are you sleeping? Yes you!"

"I immediately jumped to my feet, shook my head, and said, "No I'm not dominee."

This poor dominee was standing there with his mouth hanging open while I stood there looking like an idiot.

"I heard the voice of our Regimental Sergeant Major say, "Sit down. And then come and see me after the parade." I ended up getting seven extra duties.

## Well done sergeant major

John (19) tells an amusing story from his basics about a church parade he attended one Sunday morning.

"There were quite a few of us that belonged to Pentecostal churches. In the army these were known as 'Free Churches'.

"Because we didn't have any pastors that could come and conduct a service at the camp we would all be transported to one of the churches in town on a Sunday morning.

"It was quite a big deal because it was the only time we got out of the camp. And of course there were always young girls at church.

"This one Sunday morning

our sergeant major decided that he would attend as well. Just to make sure we were all well behaved.

“When we arrived at the church some of us were given the task of handing out hymn books to the people as they arrived. The sergeant major was standing with us. One of the troops walked in and he still had his beret on his head. This was a huge no-no because you did not wear headgear when you were in church.

“Take your #&%\*!ing hat off,” bellowed the sergeant major at the top of his voice, slapping the beret off the poor troop’s head. “Can’t you see you in the #&%\*!ing house of the lord!”

“I couldn’t believe it. The sergeant major had just dropped two huge f-bombs in church. The poor church people were shocked.”

### She’s not right for you

Mark was 18 when he went into the military. He did not do national service, opting instead to join the permanent force.

“I did my basic training in Bloemfontein, but for obvious reasons I’m not going to mention the unit I was with.

“There were three people at our unit that scared the day-lights out of me. First was our basic training corporal. He was also permanent force. Then there was our company sergeant major. The final person that I was terrified of was our unit chaplain.

“Look, he was a nice enough person, but there was something about him that scared the hell out of me.

“Once we had finished basic training and because I was PF, I was given every weekend off.

I could also go out at night. I lived in Durban and would only go home about once every two months. It was just too far to drive down for only a weekend.

There wasn’t a great deal to do in Bloemfontein over weekends. Most of the time I would go and watch a movie and I also loved going to the Alabama Spur.

“One Saturday morning I met this really cute girl and we got chatting. She was in matric and obviously lived in Bloemfontein. We started dating and every Saturday we would go to a movie together and then go to the Spur for something to eat.

She said that she wanted to introduce me to her parents and I was keen. I went around to her house for Sunday lunch. It transpired that I knew her father. He was none other than our unit chaplain. I broke up with her shortly afterwards.”

### Mistaken identity

Rivalry between the units was always fierce. Luckily most units were in separate towns and there was little danger of major confrontations between units.

Yet in a place like Tempe, Bloemfontein, there were three basic training units situated on top of each other. 1 South African Infantry Battalion, 1 Special Services Battalion, and 1 Parachute Battalion were practically next to each other. All three units carried out basic training and rivalry between the units was intense.

Steve (19) recalls an incident that happened towards the end of one particular intake.

“I was a Drill and Musketry Instructor at 1 SAI, Bloemfontein. There was a lot of rivalry between 1 SAI, 1 SSB and One

Parachute Battalion.

“One of the highlights on the calendar was the Inter-unit sports day that was held at the local athletic stadium. I promised the troops in my platoon a weekend pass to anyone of them who could bring me a parabat beret after the sports day.

“At the end of the day about four or five of my troops, looking the worse for wear, presented me with a parabat beret. I was just about to dismiss them when another of my troops came running up to me with a huge grin on his face.

“I got one corporal,” he proudly told me. He handed me the beret and I went ice cold. The Parachute Battalion beret is maroon. This beret was dark purple.

“Where did you get this?” I asked him. He told me that he had gone to the toilet and found a parabat all alone.

“According to him, the parabat had smiled at him and greeted him in a friendly manner. My troop was having none of this and immediately decked the guy, knocking him onto his bum and taking his beret.

“With a sense of foreboding I turned the beret over. The badge on the front of the beret confirmed my worst fears. It was a cross surrounded by a laurel wreath.

“My stupid troop had beaten the crap out of an army padre and stolen his beret. I threw the beret down a drain, getting rid of the evidence.

“For about a month afterwards the military police were searching for the guy who had assaulted the padre. By the way, my troop received his weekend pass, on condition that he kept his mouth shut.”

# Springbok



The SA Legion is a national organisation, part of a world-wide family that addresses the needs of ex-service personnel and their dependents by way of housing, pensions, employment and general welfare. It is apolitical, non-sectarian, non-racial, non-sexist and non-partisan.

The Springbok is the official journal of the South African Legion. Read the December 2021 issue of Springbok by clicking on the cover to the left.

**Click on the photograph below to take a virtual tour of Warrior’s Gate and find out more about the MOTH Order.**

# Thank you for flying

## Air America

*Air transport company Air America flew to some strange destinations, often carrying even stranger cargo. They would often go where others airlines could not, or would not go.*

America has a lot of airlines. There is American Airlines, Delta Airlines, Frontier Airlines, JetBlue and United Airlines to name a few.

Yet there was one airline that not many people knew about, and it has a rich history.

Air America was not your run-of-the-mill airline. In fact it was a covert operation run by the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) from 1950 to 1976.

It operated as a civilian passenger and cargo airline, but was essentially used by the US government to covertly conduct military operations in ar-

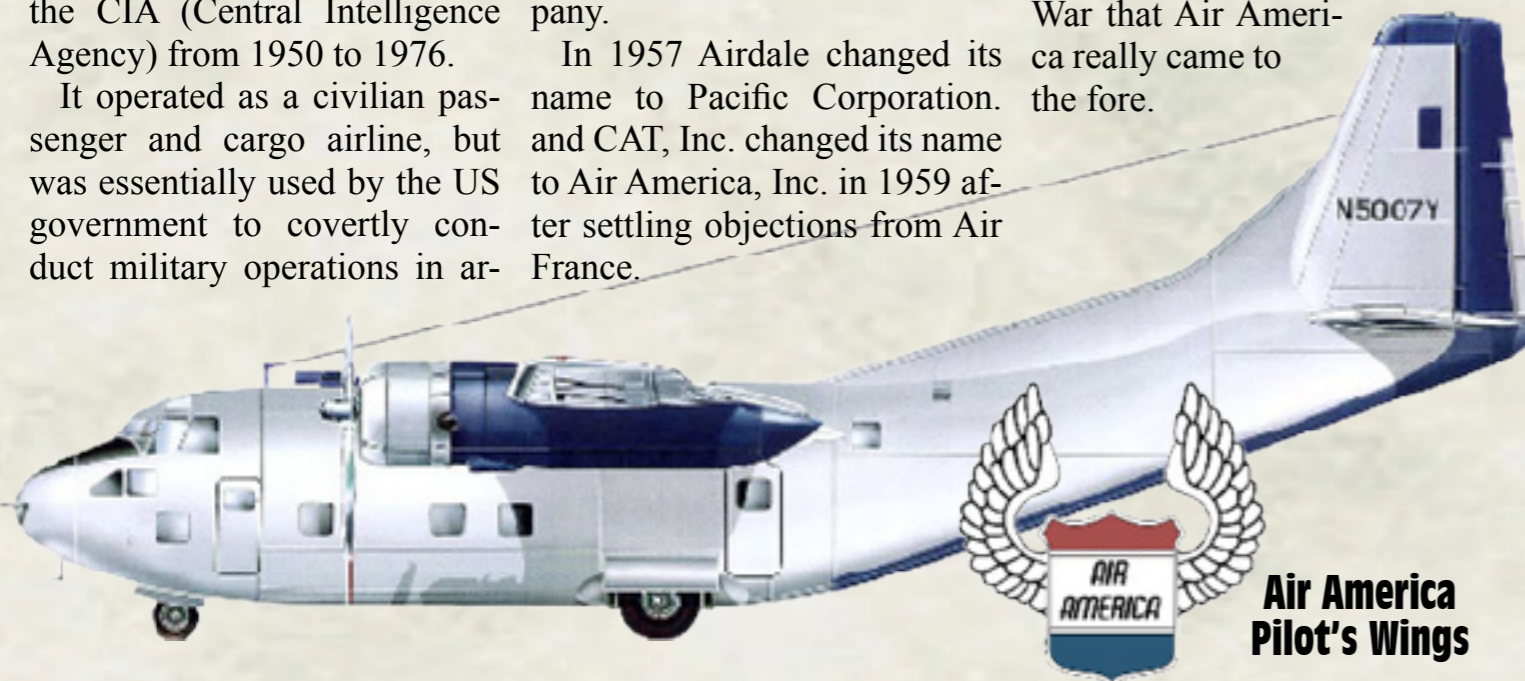
corporation named CAT, Inc. CAT purchased 40% of the assets of Civil Air Transport (CAT), an airline that had been started in China in 1946 by Gen Claire Lee Chennault (of Flying Tigers fame) and Whiting Willauer. Sixty percent of the company remained with Chinese investors. CAT Inc. also formed Asiatic Aeronautical Company Ltd, a Republic of China company.

In 1957 Airdale changed its name to Pacific Corporation. and CAT, Inc. changed its name to Air America, Inc. in 1959 after settling objections from Air France.

as the Republic of Vietnam, the Kingdom of Laos, and Cambodia. It operated from bases in those countries and also from bases in Thailand and as far afield as Taiwan and Japan. It also on occasion flew top-secret missions into Burma and the People's Republic of China.

### Vietnam

It was during the Vietnam War that Air America really came to the fore.



reas the US armed forces could not go due to treaty restraints contained in the 1954 and 1962 Geneva Accords.

### Formation

It was at the direction of the National Security Council that, in August 1950, the CIA formed Airdale, a corporation based in Delaware

Airdale formed a subsidiary

Air America's slogan was "Anything, Anywhere, Anytime, Professionally".

Air America aircraft, including the Curtiss C-46 Commando, Pilatus PC-6 Porter, de Havilland Canada DHC-4 Caribou, C-130, and Fairchild C-123 Provider, along with UH34D, Bell 204B, 205, and CH47C helicopters, flew many types of cargo to countries such

From 1962 to 1975, Air America inserted and extracted US personnel, provided logistical support to the Royal Lao Army, the Hmong Army, and Thai volunteer force.

Transporting refugees and flying photo reconnaissance missions were all in a day's work.

Their civilian-marked aircraft would fly search and rescue



**REFUELLING:** A Dornier DO-28 belonging to Air America is refueled with buckets at a mountain airstrip in Northern Laos, 1963.

missions for US pilots downed throughout Southeast Asia. Air America pilots were the only known private US corporate employees to operate non-Federal Aviation Administration-certified military aircraft in a combat role.

By the mid-70s, Air America was operating two dozen twin-engine transport aircraft, another two dozen STOL (short take off and landing) aircraft, and 30 helicopters in Burma, Cambodia, Thailand, and Laos.

There were more than 300 pilots, copilots, flight mechanics, and airfreight specialists based in Laos, Vietnam, and Thailand. During 1970, Air America delivered 21,000 metric tons of food in Laos. Helicopter flight time reached more than 4,000 hours a month in the same year.

While their slogan was "Anything, Anywhere, Anytime, Professionally", they could also have added "Anyone" to that list. They flew civilians, diplomats, spies, refugees, commandos, sabotage teams, doctors, war casualties, drug enforce-

ment officers, and even visiting VIPs like Richard Nixon all over Southeast Asia.

### Bizarre Passengers

Part of the CIA's support operations in Laos, for instance, involved logistical support for local tribes fighting the North Vietnamese forces and the Pathet Lao, their local opponents.

Thousands of tons of food had to be flown in, including live chickens, pigs, water buffalo, and cattle. On top of the food drops (known as "rice drops") came the logistical demands for the war itself, and Air America pilots flew thousands of flights transporting and air-dropping ammunition and weapons (referred to as "hard rice" to friendly forces.

When the North Vietnamese Army overran South Vietnam in 1975, Air America helicopters participated in Operation Frequent Wind evacuating both US civilians and South Vietnamese people associated with the Saigon regime.

The famous photograph depicting the final evacuation by Dutch photographer, Hubert van Es, was an Air America helicopter taking people from an apartment building in Saigon.

### Drug Smuggling

Air America were alleged to have profited from transporting opium and heroin on behalf of Hmong leader Vang Pao, or of "turning a blind eye" to the Laotian military doing it.

Because of the war against Pathet Lao rebels, the Hmong depended upon poppy cultivation for hard currency.

The Laotian Air Force had almost no light planes that could land on the dirt runways near the mountaintop poppy fields.

Having no way to transport their opium, the Hmong were faced with economic ruin. Air America was the only airline available in northern Laos.

According to several unproven sources, Air America began flying opium from mountain villages north and east of the Plain of Jars to Genera; Vang Pao's headquarters at Long Tieng.

### The End

After pulling out of South Vietnam in 1975, there was an attempt to keep a company presence in Thailand. After this fell through, Air America was dissolved on 30 June 1976.

The employees were released unceremoniously with no accolades and no benefits even for those who suffered long-term disabilities, nor death benefits for families of employees killed in action.

# Thank your lucky stars

*If you think your military service was tough, be thankful that you never had to serve in the North Korean military.*

**M**ost people that did national service, or any form of military service, will take great delight in telling you how tough their training was. Even if they did serve in the Woman's Auxiliary Balloon Corps.

Now the next time you

complain how hard your military service was or how tough life is in general, spare a thought for the 25 million people that live in the reclusive and isolated nation of North Korea. Life is not exactly a bed of roses for them.

And if things are rough for the ordinary citizen, imagine how hard it must be for those serving in the North Korean military.

Let's take a look at what it's like to be a soldier in the North Korean Army.

## Compulsory service

North Korea has compulsory military service for everyone. And this does mean everyone.

Every man must complete 10 years of compulsory military service, and every woman must complete seven years.

Those lucky enough to get into university and get a bachelor's degree only have to serve for five years after graduation. If you are a scientist and considered important to the country, you will only have to serve for three years. Unfortunately, very few citizens get the chance to attend university because of

a lack of schooling.

It should come as no surprise that North Korea has the largest army in the world in comparison to the number of people who live there. There are 47 active soldiers for every 1,000 people. That's a total of 1,190,000 active soldiers and 6,300,000 in reserve. Compare this to America, which has five active soldiers per 1,000 people, and Russia has 10.



## Teens included

The North Korean paramilitary force includes teenagers. Now you would think that being able to put more than seven million troops into the field would be enough to protect their country from enemies.

This is not enough as far as they are concerned. They also have a paramilitary force – The Worker-Peasant Red Guards (also known as The Workers and Peasant's Red Militia). This has somewhere between one and a half and six million reservists, but they don't like to reveal the real numbers. And let's not forget the teenage soldiers.

The Red Youth Guards organisation was created in 1970 and takes 15 to 17 year old teens on compulsory survival military training for 10 to 15 days in the summer. In this way they prepare for conscription at the age of 18. If there is a war, these teens will be shoved into the front line as well.

## Starved

The nutrition is so bad that many soldiers can barely walk. You would think that having to serve your country for 10 years without any choice in the matter would be bad enough. That's just the tip of the iceberg.

Imagine that you're going through tough military training and all you get to eat is raw corn kernels or, if you're really lucky, a few potatoes a day. So it's hardly a surprise that two out of every five North Koreans are undernourished (according to United Nations figures).

This may also explain the fact that on average most North Korean soldiers are a few centime-



**ON TARGET:** North Korea spends a fortune on weapons. It's a pity so little of the budget is spent on food and clothing.

tres shorter than soldiers in the South Korean Army. Once they become too weak to be efficient in their training, they are sent home to recover. At that point, many of them are too weak to walk unaided.

Unfortunately, not everyone manages to get to the point where they are sent home to recover. Many soldiers pass away from hunger and related health issues. Can you imagine the anguish of parents who know that their children may not come back from the army – even in times of peace?

Soldiers fighting for their lives often have to steal food by raiding farms and villages that barely have enough food to meet their own needs.

There have been reports that senior officers force their juniors to steal from farmers. Sometimes they are hired out to work in the fields twice a year. They also say that they have to use human excrement to fertilize the crops.

## Uniforms that injure

Imagine, as a soldier, being injured by your own uniform. Unless you belong to some third-world rag tag guerrilla group, chances are that if you're in the military you will wear a uniform.

Normally, it's a subject of pride and respect. In North Korea, it's also a source of pain and injuries.

According to former North Korean soldiers, the boots they are issued are thin and stuffed with cotton for reasons of economy. As you can imagine, this is no fun during the freezing cold winters.

They aren't sturdy enough to protect the soldiers from frostbite and start to fall apart quickly. They also rub, hurt and injure the soldiers.

## Even worse as a female

Things are even worse for female soldiers. These days most countries recognise that women



**NOT HAPPY CAMPERS:** Training is often brutal, and so what if a few recruits are lost. After all, troops are considered expendable.

deserve to be treated the same way as men and given the same rights. Yet it appears that the North Korean Army never got the memo.

During their seven years compulsory military service, many women fall victim to sexual violence or humiliation. The 'right' place for them is considered the kitchen.

Former soldiers told of how senior officers and commanders harass female recruits, touching them inappropriately. It is not uncommon for female recruits to be raped by senior NCOs and officers. If they dare complain then they are labelled as 'trouble makers' and can expect even harsher treatment.

There are currently around 180,000 women serving as it only become compulsory three years ago. This accounts for 40% of women aged between 18 and 25.

Because of the terrible conditions they live in, the hard training and malnutrition, a lot of them miss their periods for

years. However, they say that this is not a bad thing because they would otherwise have to wash and reuse cotton sanitary pads and suffer even more.

## Throwing sea mines

You may be called upon to throw sea mines into the Yellow Sea. According to reports Kim Jong-un forced his army to throw sea mines into the Yellow Sea, which would resurface in South Korea and kill locals and tourists.

The reports say that the primary target of those mines was American tourists and there were over 100 recorded incidents connected with those sea mines in 2017.

Foreign tourists obviously can't read the warning signs in Korean characters and they fall into danger zones quite easily. Even though not all of the soldiers agree with a command leading to so much cruelty, they have no choice not to do it, nor any right to complain. Refuse an order and it's tickets for you.

## Soldiers are brainwashed

One might hope that no human being would support violence against other humans, even if they came from a different country or political regime.

Well, even if some North Korean soldiers refuse to support violence, their army commanders are working hard to change that. They spend about 60% of their time learning the 'right' ideology.

In this case 'right' means that North Korea is superior to other countries, and all those other countries want to attack them. So they always have to be on guard, obey Kim Jong-un no matter what, and be ready to give their lives for him.

They're supposedly doing it for the next generation, so that they can enjoy the same happy life that they're living now. Brainwashing isn't so hard in an isolated country.

## Dodgy military hospitals

Brainwashed soldiers believe that it's an honour to die or get injured in the name of their glorious leader. So what happens to those soldiers that do get hurt? They are sent to a special military treatment centre. However, those centres have no free medications.

When interviewed, former soldiers described how they had to pay for their own treatment and, even when they did pay, all they got was alcohol rubbed on them. The only effect it had was to cause even more pain.

When treatment doesn't help, they are kicked out of the army. In case of death, there is no compensation for the family. All they get is a certificate stat-

ing how long the soldier served. I wonder if the families have to pay for the printing of the certificate as well?

### Personality change

Making it back home from the army alive and physically uninjured sounds like a dream when you consider everything they have to go through. Yet there's a different kind of danger to the soldiers.

Their personalities often shift so greatly that there's nothing that can be done to bring things back to normal. Soldiers have to be merciless and suppress their feelings and emotions.

Years of violence cannot go unnoticed, and they turn those men and women into cruel machines. It's no wonder that many civilians prefer to avoid any contact with the military.

### No escape

The bad news is that there is no way to escape. The most natural thing to do to avoid all the pain, suffering, and cruelty seems to be escaping the army. There have been multiple attempts to do so, but they usually don't end well.

Kim Jong-un takes a dim view on defection, especially when soldiers try to flee the country. Running away abroad seems like the only route to safety.

The Supreme Leader believes that it's bad for the country's reputation, so those trying to cross the Tumen River are mostly taken down – in a very terminal manner.

Military seniors who didn't stop their recruits from escaping or failed to inform about their plot get punished as well.

That's why very few people are bold enough to try and escape.

And if all this is not scary enough, here are two facts that you need to take into consideration.

### North Korean subs

North Korea has the same number of submarines as the United States Navy.

This may seem a bit out of balance when you consider the size of the US Navy and the Korean People's Navy.

The US has 72 submarines while North Korea has between 70 and 75, but there is no comparison.

North Korea has one nuclear submarine, four former Soviet Whiskey-class submarines built in the 1950s and 20 Chinese-built Romeo class submarines which were also built in the 1950s. The others are Romeo-class subs built in North Korea.

Even their single nuclear sub (Kim Jong-un's personal submarine) is a former Yugoslavian vessel built in the early 1970s.

According to reports, many of the Korean People's Navy vessels are not sea worthy. And this includes their submarine force.

The US Navy has 14 nuclear submarines. They also have 51 modern conventional attack submarines

### Big Budget

North Korea spends almost half of its budget on the military. The exact amount is not in open sources, but a lot of people are wondering just how much North Korea spends on its military. Official North Korean government reports say that it is only 15,8%, but most experts agree that it is far higher than this figure.

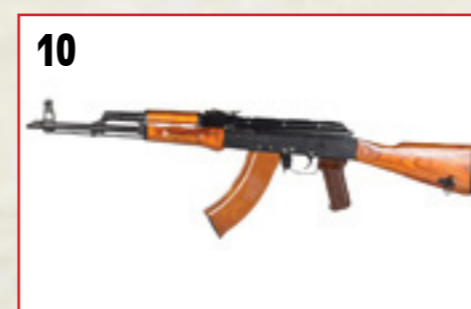
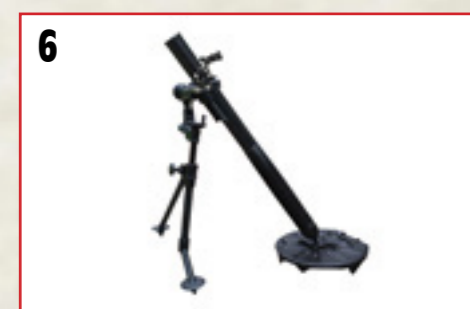
By all accounts, North Korea is no Utopia, and living there is not much fun for your average citizen.

Having to serve in the military sounds like even less fun. When compared to North Korea, our military training doesn't seem quite so bad now, does it?



# The Vietnam War

This month we're looking at weapons and equipment from the Vietnam War. These items were used either by the Americans, the North Vietnamese Army, or the Viet Cong. We show you an item, you tell us what it is. Answers on page 96.





# The Perks and perils of being a German general

During World War II 84 German generals were executed on the orders of Adolf Hitler.

One of the ambitions of anyone serving in the military is probably to rise to the rank of general or admiral.

Yet if you were a member of the German *Wehrmacht* (Defence Force) during World War II, the position did have its drawbacks.

While the rank did come with perks for members of the *Heer* (Army), *Luftwaffe* (Air Force), *Kriegsmarine* (Navy), or even the *Schutzstaffel* (SS), it also came with certain perils.

Get on the wrong side of the Führer, Adolf Hitler, and you'd find yourself executed quicker than you can say "ready, aim, fire!"

And it was far easier than you might imagine to get on the wrong side of Hitler or any of his acolytes.

The *Geheime Staatspolizei* (Secret State Police), more commonly known as the Gestapo, were always on the lookout for anyone that had anything bad to say about Hitler or the Nazi Party.

This was regarded as a 'crime against the state'. If there was even the slightest suspicion that someone had committed a crime against the state they would be hauled up in front of the *Volksgerichtshof* (People's Court).

Between 1943 and 1945, the

People's Courts under jurist Roland Freisler sentenced around 7,000 German citizens to death.

It was far worse if you were a member of the *Wehrmacht*. Discipline was often harsh and even a minor offence could see you being sentenced to death. And rank was no protection.

During World War II, no fewer than 84 senior German generals and admirals were executed on the personal orders of Hitler.

## Wilhelm Canaris

Take Wilhelm Canaris for instance. Not only was he an admiral, he was also chief of the *Abwehr*, the German military intelligence service, from 1935 to 1944.

Initially a supporter of Adolf Hitler, by 1939 Canaris had turned against the Nazis as he felt Germany would lose another major war. During World War II he was among the military officers involved in the clandestine opposition to Nazi Germany leadership. He was executed in Flossenbürg concentration camp for high treason. His execution took place on 9 April 1945, less than a month before Germany surrendered and 21 days before Hitler committed suicide.

## Erwin Rommel

One of Germany's great heroes

of World War II was Field Marshal Erwin Rommel. Nicknamed "The Desert Fox", he was respected by both friend and foe alike.

During World War I he was awarded the Iron Cross First Class and the *Pour le Mérite*. In World War II he was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves, Swords and Diamonds.

Rommel was popular with both the troops and the German public. So it came as a shock to Hitler to learn that Rommel had been involved in the 20 July Plot to assassinate Hitler.

By normal procedure Rommel would have been brought to Roland Freisler's People's Court, a kangaroo court that always decided in favour of the prosecution.

However, Hitler knew that having Rommel branded and executed as a traitor would severely damage morale on the home front. He thus decided to offer Rommel the chance to take his own life.

Two generals from Hitler's headquarters, Wilhelm Burgdorf and Ernst Maisel, visited Rommel at his home on 14 October 1944.

Burgdorf informed him of the charges and offered him three options: he could choose to defend himself personally to Hitler in Berlin, or if he refused to



**DESERT FOX:** Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was ordered by Hitler to commit suicide or face a public trial and execution.

do so (which would be taken as an admission of guilt), he could either face the People's Court - which would have been tantamount to a death sentence - or choose a quiet suicide. In the former case, his family would have suffered even before the all-but-certain conviction and execution, and his staff would have been arrested and executed as well.

In the latter case, the government would claim that he died a hero and bury him with full military honours, and his family would receive full pension payments. Burgdorf had brought a cyanide capsule.

On 14 October 1944, at the age of 52, Rommel committed suicide. He was given a full state funeral and it was announced that Rommel had succumbed to his injuries from an earlier strafing of his staff car in Normandy.

Yet not many were as fortunate as Rommel and given the option to commit suicide.

## Friedrich Fromm

*Generaloberst* (Colonel General) Friedrich Fromm was Commander in Chief of the *Ersatzheer* (Reserve Army), in charge of training and personnel replacement for combat divisions of the German Army, a position he occupied for most of the war.

While Fromm did not have any direct involvement in the conspiracy, he was aware that some of his subordinates - most notably Claus von Stauffenberg, his Chief of Staff - were planning an assassination attempt against Hitler, followed by a mutiny of the Army. He agreed to remain quiet if he became a top official of the new government after the mutiny.

On the morning of 22 July 1944, Fromm was arrested by Nazi officials and locked in jail to await trial. Fromm was discharged from the German Army on 14 September 1944.

The civilian Fromm was sentenced to death and considered

unworthy for military duty by the People's Court on 7 March 1945. Since the court failed to prove a direct association with the 20 July plotters, he had been charged and convicted for cowardice before the enemy, and sentenced to a military execution.

On 12 March 1945, Fromm was executed at the Brandenburg-Görden Prison by firing squad.

## Ludwig Beck

*Generaloberst* Ludwig Beck was Chief of the German General Staff during the early years of the Nazi regime in Germany before World War II. He never became a member of the Nazi Party.

In 1943, Beck planned two abortive attempts to kill Hitler by means of a bomb. In 1944, he was one of the driving forces of the 20 July plot with Carl Goerdeler and Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg.

The plot failed and Beck was taken into custody the following morning by General Friedrich Fromm.

Beck offered to commit suicide ("accept the consequences"). His last words were "I am thinking of earlier times." Beck then shot himself. In severe distress, Beck succeeded only in severely wounding himself, and a sergeant was brought in to administer the *coup de grâce* by shooting Beck in the back of the neck.

## Erwin von Witzleben

*Generalfeldmarschall* (Field Marshal) Erwin von Witzleben was the commander of *Armee*

OB West.

Von Witzleben was seen as a key man in the 20 July Plot and would have taken over supreme command of the whole *Wehrmacht* as the highest-ranking German officer.

Von Witzleben was arrested on 21 July and cast out of the *Wehrmacht* by the so-called *Ehrenhof der Wehrmacht* ("The Regular Army's Court of Honour"), a conclave of officers set up after the attempted assassination to remove officers from the *Wehrmacht* who had been involved in the plot, mainly so that they were no longer subject to German military law and could be arraigned to a show-trial before the People's Court"

On 7 August 1944, Witzleben was in the first group of accused conspirators to be brought before the People's Court.

Ravaged by the conditions of his Gestapo arrest, he surprisingly approached the bench giving the Nazi salute, for which he was rebuked by the presiding judge Roland Freisler.

Witzleben was sentenced to death on the same day. Witzleben's closing words in court, addressed to Freisler, were:

"You may hand us over to the executioner, but in three months' time, the disgusted and harried people will bring you to book and drag you alive through the dirt in the streets!"

Most of the People's Court trials, including scenes of Witzleben's show trial, was filmed for the German weekly newsreel *Die Deutsche Wochenschau* (The German Newsreel). However, Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels decided

against releasing the footage, firstly because Freisler's vituperative, insulting verbiage in the courtroom might draw sympathy for the accused, and secondly because the regime wanted to quell public discussion of the event. The material was classified as *Geheime Reichssache* (Secret German Affairs).

Witzleben was put to death that same day at Plötzensee Prison in Berlin. By Hitler's direct orders, he was hanged with a thin hemp rope (which people who were not from the prison staff called a piano wire) wound around a meat hook, and the execution was filmed.

### Erich Hoepner

*Generaloberst* Erich Hoepner was an early proponent of mechanisation and armoured warfare, he was a *Wehrmacht* army corps commander at the beginning of the war, leading his troops during the invasion of Poland and the Battle of France.

Hoepner commanded the 4th Panzer Group on the Eastern Front during Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941.

In January 1942, during the Battle of Moscow, Hoepner requested permission from the new commander of Army Group Centre, Günther von Kluge, to withdraw his over-extended forces.

Von Kluge said that he would discuss the matter with Hitler and ordered Hoepner to get ready. Assuming that Hitler's permission was on the way and not wanting to risk the matter any longer, Hoepner ordered his troops to withdraw on 8 Jan-

uary 1942.

Afraid of what Hitler might think, Kluge immediately reported Hoepner, causing Hitler's fury. Hoepner was dismissed from the *Wehrmacht* on the same day.

Hitler directed that Hoepner be deprived of his pension and denied the right to wear his uniform and medals, contravening the law and *Wehrmacht* regulations.

Hoepner filed a lawsuit against the Reich to reclaim his pension. Judges at the time could not be dismissed, even by Hitler, and Hoepner won his case.

Hoepner was implicated in the 20 July Plot and after the coup failed he was arrested and tortured by the Gestapo. He refused an opportunity to commit suicide and demanded a trial, though he would later come to regret it.

A summary trial was conducted by the People's Court and Hoepner was verbally attacked and sentenced to death.

Like other defendants, including Erwin von Witzleben, Hoepner was humiliated during the trial by being made to wear ill-fitting clothes, and not being allowed to have his false teeth.

Although judge Roland Freisler berated Hoepner, even he objected to him being made to dress in such a way.

Hoepner was hanged by a thin hemp rope mounted from meat hooks on 8 August, at Plötzensee Prison in Berlin.

Under the Nazi practice of *Sippenhaft* (collective punishment) Hoepner's wife, daughter, son (a major in the army), brother and sister were arrested.



**JUDICIAL JOKE:** The *Volksgerichtshof* (People's Court) under Roland Freisler (pictured in the centre) sentenced more than 7,000 German citizens to death. The trials were nothing more than a farce, with the verdict (always guilty) decided long before the trial even began. Freisler was killed on 3 February 1945 during an Allied bombing raid on Berlin.

The women were sent to Ravensbrück concentration camp. His sister was soon released but Frau Hoepner and her daughter were placed in the notorious *Strafblock* for four weeks' additional punishment.

Hoepner's son was first held at a specially created camp at Küstrin and then sent to Buchenwald concentration camp.

### Erich Fellgiebel

General Erich Fellgiebel was head of the cipher bureau of the *Reichswehrministerium*.

He was a signals specialist and was instrumental in introducing the Enigma machine. As head of Hitler's signal services, Fellgiebel knew every military secret, including Wernher von Braun's rocketry work at the Peenemünde Army Research Centre.

Part of the 20 July Plot, Fellgiebel was arrested immediate-

ly at Wolf's Lair and tortured for three weeks, but did not reveal any names of his co-conspirators.

He was charged before the People's Court. On 10 August 1944, he was found guilty by Roland Freisler and sentenced to death. He was executed on 4 September 1944 at Plötzensee Prison in Berlin.

### Friedrich von Rabenau

*General der Artillerie* Friedrich von Rabenau was a career-soldier, theologian, and opponent of National Socialism.

He was arrested in the aftermath of the 20 July Plot. On 15 April 1945, without having been charged or tried, General von Rabenau, one of the last inmates remaining in the Flossenbürg concentration camp, was shot on Himmler's specific orders.

The execution order was is-

sued by Gestapo Chief Heinrich Müller with additional orders to report his death as resulting from a low-flying allied air attack.

### Carl-Heinrich von Stülpnagel

*General der Infanterie* Carl-Heinrich von Stülpnagel served as military commander of German-occupied France and as commander of the 17th Army in the Soviet Union during Operation Barbarossa,

Stülpnagel was implicated in war crimes, including authorising reprisal operations against civilian population and closely cooperating with the *Einsatzgruppen* in their mass executions of Jews.

When Stülpnagel was recalled from Paris, he stopped at Verdun and tried to kill himself by shooting himself in the head with a pistol on the banks of the Meuse River. He only succeeded in blinding himself.

Stülpnagel and his adviser were both arrested by the Gestapo, and Stülpnagel was brought before the People's Court on 30 August 1944. He was found guilty of high treason and hanged the same day at Plötzensee Prison in Berlin.

These were just a few of the senior officers executed on the orders of Adolf Hitler.

Many of their executions were as a direct result of the 20 July Plot.

As a matter of interest, from the time Hitler took power in 1933 to his death on 30 April 1945, there were no fewer than 28 assassination attempts on Hitler's life.

# Unusual military units

*Military units, regiments, or armies that were unusual or downright strange.*

Throughout the history of warfare there have always been units that were elite and or even notorious.

Yet there have also been units, regiments or even armies that were different. Some were unusual, strange, or just plain weird.

In this article we take a look at some units that could only be described as unusual.

## 61st Cavalry Unit

It should come as no great surprise that horses have become largely outdated in modern warfare.

During World War I cavalry units found that the horse and lance was no match for a well placed machine gun.

These days most cavalry units have been converted to motorised and mechanised units and their steeds have been replaced with APCs (Armoured Personnel Carriers) of IFVs (Infantry Fighting Vehicles).

There really is no reason for horses to be used in the modern military. However, the 61st Cavalry Regiment would beg to differ.

This regiment is the largest mounted cavalry force still in existence.

They were created after the newly formed Indian government decided to combine all of their cavalry units into one huge regiment.

While primarily employed on

ceremonial occasions, the 61st Cavalry Regiment can be deployed for internal security or police roles if required.

The last publicized occasion on which the regiment saw active military service was when it undertook mounted patrol work during the Indo-Pakistani War of 1971.

On Republic Day each year the 61st Cavalry and the President's Body Guard parade in full dress uniform in New Delhi, in what is probably the largest assemblage of traditional cavalry still to be seen in the world.

The regiment has a strong polo playing tradition, producing some of India's best polo players. Members of the regiment have won the Arjuna award – India's highest award for outstanding sportsmen – four times for polo and five times for equestrian events.

## The Filthy Thirteen

You would think that a group of ruffian soldiers that refused to adhere to military discipline would never be sent into combat, much less survive World War II. In most cases, you would be right.

But the US Army's 1st Demolition Section of the Regimental Headquarters Company of the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division was no ordinary band of misfits.

There job was to carry out

demolitions behind enemy lines, a job that was extremely dangerous to say the least.

Their unorthodox behaviour made them the bane of their superior officer's existence. They had no respect for rank, nor rules and regulations.

They were given the nickname 'The Filthy Thirteen' when they stopped washing and shaving and used their water rations meant for ablutions to cook game poached from a nearby manor.

They also sported Indian-style Mohawk haircuts and covered themselves with war paint before going into battle. This was in respect of their leader, Jake McNiece, who was part Choctaw Indian.

While they were an unruly bunch, their skills were impressive.

During the Normandy Invasion of Europe in June 1944, the group was air dropped with the 3rd Battalion, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment by aircraft of the 440th Troop Carrier Group of the United States Army Air Forces. They were ordered to secure or destroy the bridges over the Douve River.

Half were either killed, wounded or captured on the jump, but the rest led by Jake McNiece accomplished their mission.

Most of the 3rd Battalion leadership had been killed on the initial jump so without any contact with the 3rd Battalion,

senior officers assumed the battalion had failed its mission and ordered the Air Force to bomb the bridges.

The Filthy Thirteen also participated in the capture of Carentan.

During Operation Market Garden, the Demolition Platoon was assigned to defend the three bridges over the Dommel River in Eindhoven, the Netherlands. German bombing of the city killed or wounded half the demolitions men in the platoon, and McNiece was then promoted to platoon sergeant of what was left.

McNiece considered that any activities not directly concerned with his mission were irrelevant, an attitude that got him in constant trouble with the military authorities.

Nevertheless, McNiece finished the war as an acting first sergeant and with four combat jumps, a very rare feat for an American paratrooper.

His combat jumps included Normandy, the Netherlands as part of Operation Market Garden, the pathfinder jump in to Bastogne, Belgium, during the Battle of the Bulge, and as an observer with the 17th Airborne Division during Operation Varsity.

Of the activities of the Filthy Thirteen, Jack Agnew, a member of the unit, once

said, "We weren't murderers or anything, we just didn't do everything we were supposed to do in some ways and did a whole lot more than they wanted us to do in other ways. We were always in trouble."

## The Ghost Army

While this may sound like the name of a cool video game, this unit had nothing to do with ghosts.

But there were given the name for a good reason. The Ghost Army was the nickname for the US Army's 23rd Headquarters Special Troops, an Allied deception units in World War II.

Made up of just 1,100 men, the unit was given a unique mission within the Allied Army: to impersonate other Allied Army units to deceive the enemy.

From a few months after D-Day, when they landed in France, until the end of the war, they put on a "traveling road show" utilizing inflatable tanks, sound trucks, fake radio transmissions, scripts and pretence.

They staged more than 20 battlefield deceptions, often operating very close to the front lines. Their story was kept secret for more than 40 years after the war, and

elements of it remain classified.

They used tactics that wouldn't have been out of place on a Hollywood movie set.

To complement existing techniques, the unit often employed theatrical effects to supplement the other deceptions. Collectively called "atmosphere" these included simulating actual units deployed elsewhere by the application of their divisional insignia, painting appropriate unit insignia on vehicles and having the individual companies deployed as if they were regimental headquarters units.

Trucks/Lorries would be driven in looping convoys with just two troops in the seats near the rear, to simulate a truck full of infantry under the canvas cover. "MPs" (military police) would be deployed at cross roads wearing appropriate divisional insignia and some officers would simulate divisional generals and staff officers visiting towns where enemy agents were likely to see them.

A few actual tanks and artillery pieces were occasionally assigned to the unit to make the "dummies" in the distance appear more realistic.

Of course it really helped that the soldiers of this unit were also actors, artists, sound engineers, illustrators, radio experts and even illusionists.

The Ghost Army is credited with saving anywhere between 15,000 and 30,000 lives due to



**NOT SUPERMEN:** Members of the Ghost Army lift an inflatable tank into position.

their strange, but effective tactics.

## Israel's Autistic Intelligence Unit

People on the autism spectrum often get looked down upon. They are either treated as though they are perpetual children or shunned because the majority of typical people do not understand why they act the way they do. It can be quite frustrating to deal with.

But Israel is offering teens and young adults with autism a job with an elite intelligence unit known simply as Unit 9900.

The programme is known as *Ro'im Rachok* (Looking Ahead).

This is because people on the autism spectrum tend to have high perceptual skills, including extraordinary attention to visual detail to compensate for their slow social development.

They analyse complex images from military satellites to pick out the tiniest detail that could help the Israeli Army. This skill has helped the Israeli Army save countless soldiers' lives as well as uncovered hidden weapons caches.

*Ro'im Rachok* was founded in 2013 by two Mossad veterans who realized that certain

individuals on the autism spectrum could be unusually skilled at spending long hours analyzing aerial reconnaissance photographs and picking out tiny details.

In addition to its military benefits, there are social benefits to the program. Military service is mandatory in Israel for almost all citizens, but teenagers on the autism spectrum are exempt.

This poses a barrier to advancement in their lives as military service is a significant step in Israeli society for young men, both symbolically as well as professionally.

Now, the military increasingly looks at individuals with High-functioning autism as potentially useful. Rather than forcing individuals to remain enlisted for the standard three years, *Ro'im Rachok* gives individuals the option to enlist in one-year increments once their three-month training is complete. When enlisted, the soldiers are accompanied by a therapist as well as a psychologist for their own benefit as well as to accommodate for some social barriers their commanders and colleagues may encounter.

The program also helps to prepare young adults with autism for their futures with train-

ing on how to deal with challenging situations related to their civilian life such as public transportation. The program also helps to prepare people for future careers in technological fields and careers. *Roim Rachok* aims to utilize skills people on the autism spectrum exhibit, as well as end stigma surrounding autism.

## Jessie Scouts

The strange exploits of this American Civil War unit have the makings of a great television sitcom.

The Jessie Scouts were a small group of about 60 Union soldiers who went undercover as Confederates to collect valuable information from enemy forces.

This put them under constant risk of enemy capture as well as friendly fire. But this unit had an oddly fun time with their dangerous spy work.

A Jessie Scout named Henry Hale thought it would be funny to steal a horse from an old cessationist at gun point. It didn't take long for the cessationist to catch up, take both his horse and Hale's, and force him to

walk back to town naked as punishment.

The Jessie Scout captain, Charles Carpenter, recalled the time he had to dress up and pretend to be a woman to deliver a letter to a Rebel officer.

## The Monuments Men

The Monuments Men were made up of 345 men and women from 14 different countries, all of whom were accomplished museum directors, curators, art historians, archivists, educators and artists who had a single – to save as much art as they could from being destroyed at the hands of the Nazi regime.

While other armies in World War II fought for their country, this unit fought to preserve several countries art, culture and history before the Nazis were able to destroy it all.

After all, history is written by the victors and this unit would not stand to have history written by such a heinous regime.

They braved the front lines just as much as any other soldier would, all while recovering important pieces of culture that would otherwise be lost.

After the war was over they returned these priceless artefacts and cultural objects back to their respective countries so that they may be able to share their histories for years to come.

## Paradogs of D-Day

A dog parachuting out of a plane may sound like the beginning of a joke.

Something like, "How does a blind person go skydiving? Jump with your guide dog on a long leash. When the leash goes slack, pull your ripcord."

But this is no joke. Back in World War II the British Army trained dogs to do just that.

These days military forces around the world make use of dogs for a wide variety of tasks. But back in the 1940s it was a relatively new concept.

The British Army even sent out notices requesting that people volunteer their dogs for this very special honour. So many people sent dogs in that the small military training school quickly became a shelter.

Dogs were taught how to identify the smell of explosives and gunpowder, how to track down enemies and how to behave when under fire.

The dogs actually seemed to enjoy their parachuting lessons, probably because they were given tons of treats afterwards.

Three dogs, Bing, Monty and Rane, were eventually chosen to parachute from planes on D-Day to assist with operations.

So the answer to the age-old question is, "Yes you can teach a dog new tricks."

## Russian Northern Fleet Motorised Rifle Brigade

Imagine a man riding on a sleigh pulled by reindeer. It's got to be Santa, right.

Now let's add machine guns to the sleigh and you'll quickly see that it's not Santa, it's the Russian Northern Fleet Motorised Rifle Brigade.

It was formed in early 2016 to protect what they believe to be an extension of Russian territory out in the Arctic Ocean, close to the North Pole.

Other countries have also

tried to stake their claim on this land but none seem to want to fight against the imposing brigade to get to it.

This isn't the first time that Russia has used reindeer in their army. Back in World War II the Soviets used reindeer to help move supplies, wounded men and a quick method of getting from battlefield to battlefield.

And of course the Russians learnt this little trick from the Finns during the Winter War.

## Sallywags

Europe wasn't the most fun place to live during World War II.

Countries were either under Nazi control or under siege by them. And it seemed as if the Germans would soon control the whole continent.

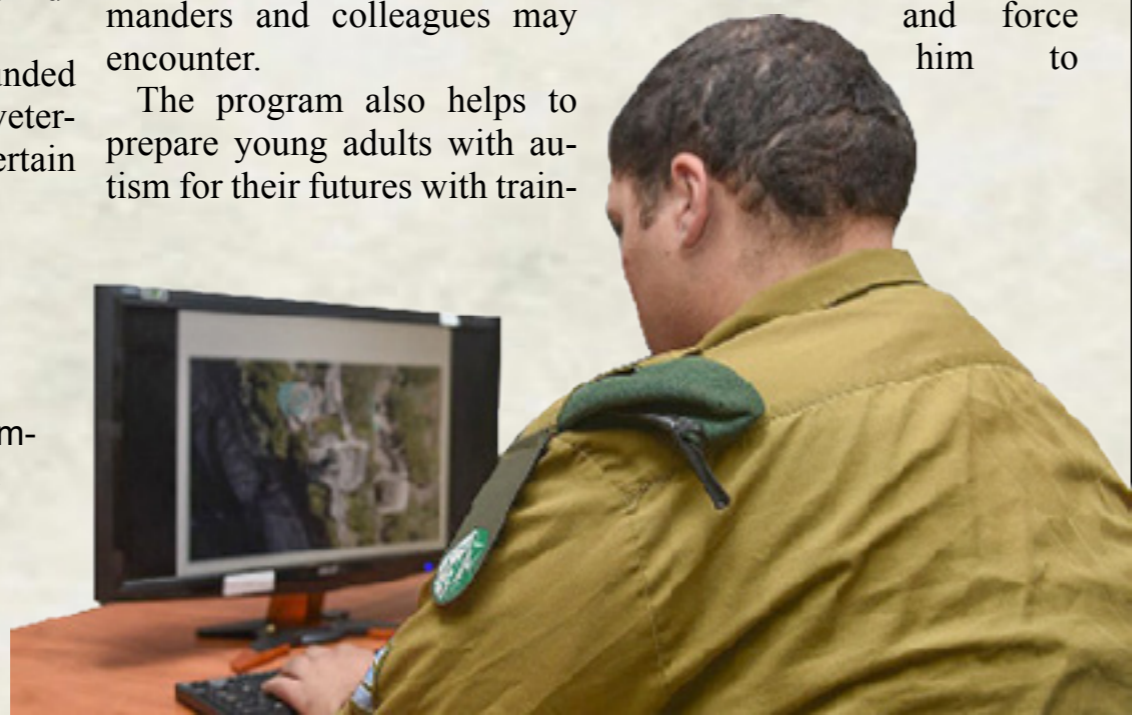
Enter the United Kingdom's Auxiliary Units, better known as the Sallywags.

These were specially training secret units ordered to 'sallywag' or carry out dangerous covert night missions and guerrilla warfare in order to combat against the invasion forces.

These missions were so dangerous that the life expectancy for this unit was a mere 12 days in the field.

This unit was made up of teams of people that you wouldn't think would be qualified to serve in such a skilled unit – dentists, farmers, gamekeepers, and even priests all served together in this almost slapped together army.

They were tasked to carry out assassinations, demolition work and sabotage of enemy plans.



**SPECIAL TALENT:** A member of Unit 9900 studies a satellite image.

# We don't talk about that

*The military often likes to boast and dazzle people with facts and figures, telling everyone just how great they are. Yet there are topics that they would rather avoid. Like for instance how much money they spend annually, their mistakes and other topics that are taboo.*

Most of our stories look at subjects such as military history, weapons, military technology, famous figures in military history, battles and so on.

Yet what about those topics that the military doesn't really like to talk about? From military *faux pas* to military spending, from deception to desertion.

## Big budgets

Many countries around the world spend billions upon billions on their armed forces. And you may have guessed, correctly, that the United States leads the way in military spending.

The US yearly spends about \$600 billion (R8,58 trillion) per year on its military.

China comes in at number two with \$129 billion.

In fact even if you added up the budgets of the next seven military forces in the world they still wouldn't surpass that of the United States.

## Insane training

Every nation prides itself on the level of training its soldiers and, especially, special forces have to go through.

In fact, many of you will probably remember your own military training and try to convince everyone that it was tougher than anywhere else.

Then there is Spetsnaz, the Russian Special Forces. Fair

enough, they do all sorts of stressful training. But it's one exercise that really stands out. Spetsnaz are known to actually shoot each other with hand guns – using live ammunition. Sure they wear body armour – but seriously.

## Gas guzzlers

Today we are more environmentally aware than ever before. We've become tree huggers par excellence. We use less packaging, we recycle, we cut down on electricity usage, and we conserve water as much as possible. Then we have the military.

All over the world, ships, planes and tanks burn an incredible amount of fuel. And who wins the prize for being the worst culprit? You guessed it – of course it's the United States.

Various estimates and official figures put the yearly petrol consumption of the US Military at upwards of three to four billion litres.

In World War II the US Military was using 3,7 litres of fuel per soldier per day, in the 21st century that level has gone as high as 83 litres.

## Female Special Forces

Over the past few decades the role of women in the military has expanded greatly. This includes roles in operational units and even special forces.

But can you guess which

military has the first all-female special forces unit? Surprisingly, it's Norway.

Known as Hunter Troop this all-female force was created to respond to new challenges on the battlefield.

Specifically, the force came about when all-male units reported difficulty in interacting with female civilians in Muslim countries. The big question is, are these ladies tough enough?

Well the women who make it in to Hunter Troop can do all the things their male counterparts can do.

The fact that only 4% of applicants make it through the selection and training suggests that these ladies can probably kick some serious butt.

## Desertion

If you're a soldier who runs away from your post or leaves your unit without permission, then you have just gone AWOL (absent without leave).

If, however, you're a soldier who runs away from your post or leaves your unit without permission, and have no intention of ever coming back, then you have just deserted.

Desertion happens in every military, but usually not on any great scale. Well, unless you're the Afghan Army that is.

Over the last few years this force has taken on more responsibility for fighting insurgents and groups such as the Taliban.

It has also experienced a huge surge in desertion. According to reports, 4,000 men are deserting every month.

Given that the starting salary of a soldier is just \$130 (R1,860) a month and the fact that they're fighting against people who don't bother taking prisoners, it kind of makes sense why so many leave and never come back

## Nukes, nukes and more nukes

Okay, we all know that there are many nuclear weapons all over the world and things could get really ugly, really quickly if they are ever used.

But do you realise just how many and how powerful these weapons actually are?

Latest figures put the number of warheads at around 15,000. Listen, if it makes you feel any better that's actually a lot less than there used to be.

On the other hand, almost every one of these weapons is at least several times more powerful than the bombs that levelled Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

## Sci-fi reality

As kids, most of us watched TV shows and movies where spaceships and people armed with lasers blasted away at each other.

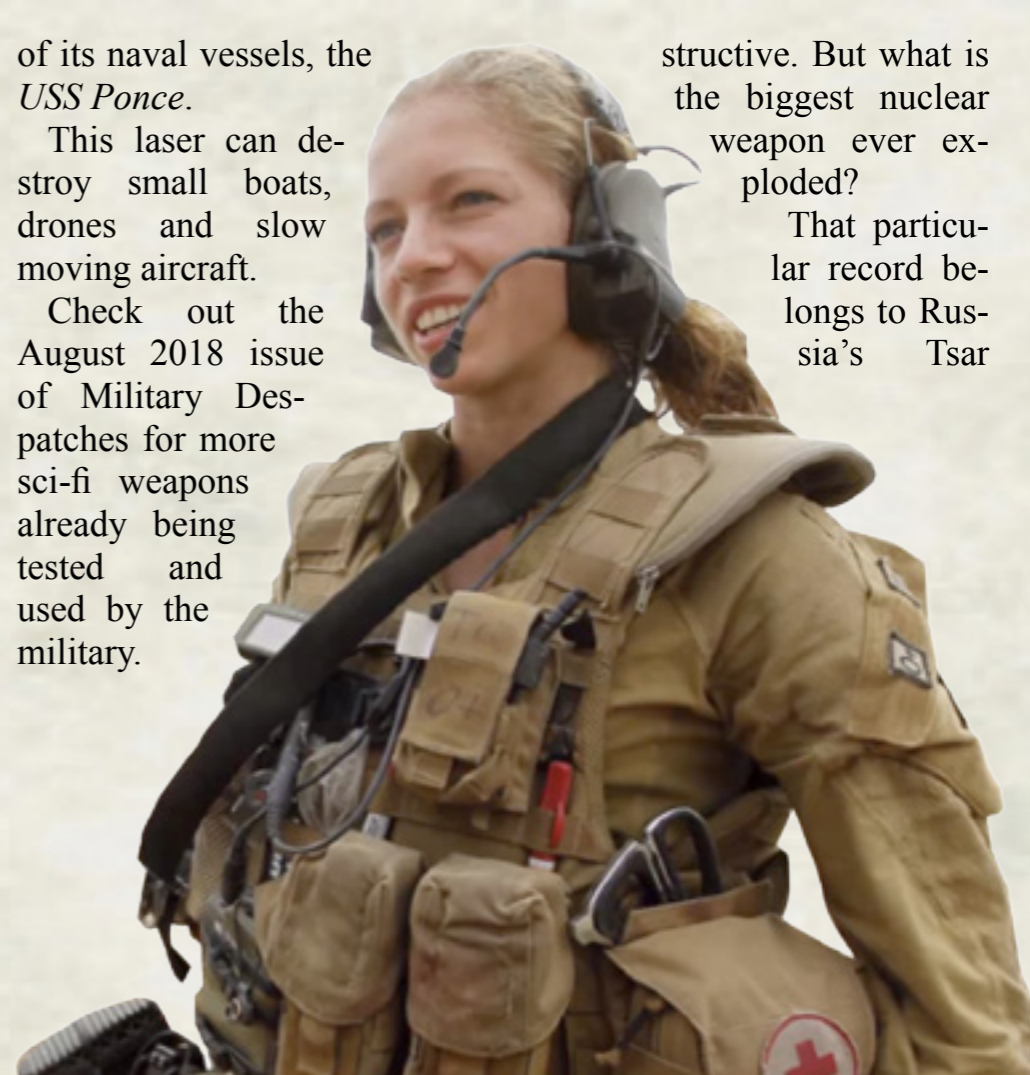
There were even rumours that the military had laser guns, but hey, these were just rumours weren't they? The problem is that the equipment needed to shoot a laser is big and clunky. Or at least, it used to be.

Today the US Military is actively testing lasers and even has one deployed aboard one

of its naval vessels, the *USS Ponce*.

This laser can destroy small boats, drones and slow moving aircraft.

Check out the August 2018 issue of *Military Dispatches* for more sci-fi weapons already being tested and used by the military.



Norway's Hunter Troop

## Under the sea

Would it surprise you to know that the largest submarine fleet in the world isn't American, Russian or even Chinese? This honour actually goes to North Korea.

While definitely not the most power or capable force in the world, it is estimated that North Korea operates over 70 diesel-electric submarines.

Most of them are pretty old and most likely very unsafe.

Nonetheless, some have been outfitted to fire ballistic missiles, which could one day give the isolated state a much greater nuclear deterrent.

## The Tsar Bomb

Your probably know that nuclear weapons are pretty de-

structive. But what is the biggest nuclear weapon ever exploded?

That particular record belongs to Russia's Tsar

Bomb. With a blast equivalent to 50 million tons of TNT, when this thing was tested in 1961 people sat up and took notice.

The bomb created a fireball eight kilometres in diameter. The blast wave shattered windows five miles away. It was so bright that people could see the flash 965 kilometres away – even through thick clouds.

## A fair chunk of change

Let's face it, like the rest of us, the military are concerned about soaring prices. Take the F-35 Stealth fighter for example.

This high-tech fighter will end up averaging out at \$85 million (R 1,216,082,250) per plane. That's a lot of money in anyone's books.

## WWII Rifles & submachine guns

This month we take a look at rifles and submachine guns from World War II.

This month we're looking at rifles and submachine guns from World War II. We show you 17 iconic rifles and submachine guns used in World War II.

The list features five American weapons, four German

weapons, three Russian weapons, two British weapons, and one each from Finland, Italy and Japan.

The list includes ten rifles, six submachine guns, and the Sturmgewehr 44 - the first fully automatic assault rifle.

### Sturmgewehr 44

**Type** - Assault Rifle  
**Place of origin** - Nazi Germany  
**Designer** - Hugo Schmeisser  
**Weight** - 4.6 kg  
**Length** - 94 cm  
**Cartridge** - 7.92×33 mm Kurz  
**Rate of fire** - 550–600 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 300 m (automatic) 600 m (semi-automatic)  
**Feed** - 30-round detachable box magazine



German fully-automatic assault rifle - the first of its kind.



Standard rifle of the US armed forces for two decades. Called "the greatest battle implement ever devised" by General George S. Patton.

### M1 Garand

**Type** - Semi-automatic rifle  
**Place of origin** - United States  
**Designer** - John C. Garand  
**Weight** - 4.31 kg  
**Length** - 1,100 mm  
**Cartridge** - .30-06 Springfield  
**Rate of fire** - 40–50 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 457 m  
**Feed** - 8-round en-bloc clip, internal magazine

### MP 40

**Type** - Submachine gun  
**Place of origin** - Nazi Germany  
**Designer** - Heinrich Vollmer  
**Weight** - 3.97 kg  
**Length** - 833 mm stock extended / 630 mm stock folded  
**Cartridge** - 9×19 mm Parabellum  
**Rate of fire** - 500–550 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 100 – 200 m  
**Feed** - 32-round detachable box magazine



The Maschinenpistole 40 was often erroneously called "Schmeisser" by the Allies, despite Hugo Schmeisser's non-involvement in the weapon's design and production.



Known as the 'Tommy Gun'. It was popular with gangsters during the prohibition era and nicknamed the 'Chicago Typewriter' or 'The Chopper'.

### M1928A1 Thompson

**Type** - Submachine gun  
**Place of origin** - United States  
**Designer** - John T. Thompson  
**Weight** - 4.9 kg  
**Length** - 850 mm  
**Cartridge** - .45 ACP  
**Rate of fire** - 600–725 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 150 m  
**Feed** - 20-round box, 30-round box, 50-round drum magazine

### M1 Carbine

**Type** - Submachine gun  
**Place of origin** - Nazi Germany  
**Designer** - Frederick Humeston  
**Weight** - 2.4 kg  
**Length** - 900 mm  
**Cartridge** - .30 Carbine  
**Rate of fire** - 750 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 270 m  
**Feed** - 15- or 30-round detachable box magazine



This was a standard firearm for the U.S. military during World War II, the Korean War and well into the Vietnam War.

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### Mauser Karabiner 98k

**Type** - Bolt-action rifle  
**Place of origin** - Nazi Germany  
**Designer** - Heereswaffenamt  
**Weight** - 3.7–4.1 kg  
**Length** - 1,110 mm  
**Cartridge** - 7.92 × 57 mm Mauser  
**Rate of fire** - 0–50 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 500 m  
**Feed** - 5-round stripper clip, internal magazine

Standard rifle of the German Army in World War 2. Nearly 15 million were made.

### Lee–Enfield Mk I

**Type** - Bolt-action rifle  
**Place of origin** - United Kingdom  
**Designer** - James Paris Lee  
**Weight** - 4.19 kg  
**Length** - 1,260 mm  
**Cartridge** - .303 Mk VII SAA Ball  
**Rate of fire** - 20–30 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 503 m  
**Feed** - 10-round magazine, loaded with 5-round charger clips



Often referred to as the “SMLE,” which is short for the common “Short Magazine Lee-Enfield” variant.



### PPSh-41

**Type** - Submachine Gun  
**Place of origin** - Russia  
**Designer** - Georgy Shpagin  
**Weight** - 3.63 kg  
**Length** - 843 mm  
**Cartridge** - 7.62×25 mm Tokarev  
**Rate of fire** - 900 to over 1000 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 125 - 150 m  
**Feed** - 35-round box magazine or 71-round drum magazine

Cheap, easy to make, and deadly. Its nickname was “pe-pe-sha”, which is Russian for “daddy”.

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### Gewehr 43

**Type** - Semi-automatic rifle  
**Place of origin** - Nazi Germany  
**Designer** - Walther  
**Weight** - 4.4 kg  
**Length** - 1,130 mm  
**Cartridge** - 7.92×57 mm Mauser  
**Rate of fire** - 30 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 500 m  
**Feed** - 10-round detachable box magazine, stripper clip fed

According to accounts and testimony from German veterans of World War II, many German soldiers disliked the Gewehr 43, and preferred the tried and true Karabiner 98k



### Sten Mk II

**Type** - Submachine Gun  
**Place of origin** - United Kingdom  
**Designer** - Major Reginald V. Shepherd, Harold J. Turpin  
**Weight** - 3.2 kg  
**Length** - 760 mm  
**Cartridge** - 9×19 mm Parabellum  
**Rate of fire** - 500-600 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 100 m  
**Feed** - 32-round detachable box magazine

Cheap and easy to produce, they were effective insurgency weapons for resistance groups.

### Mosin–Nagant

**Type** - Bolt-action rifle  
**Place of origin** - Russia  
**Designer** - Captain Sergei Mosin, Léon Nagant  
**Weight** - 4 kg  
**Length** - 1,232 mm  
**Cartridge** - .7.62×54 mm R  
**Rate of fire** - Variable  
**Effective firing range** - 500 m  
**Feed** - 5-round non-detachable magazine, loaded individually or with 5-round stripper clips



Even though it was a 50 year old design, millions of Soviet troops carried them.

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### Tokarev SVT-40

**Type** - Semi-automatic rifle  
**Place of origin** - Russia  
**Designer** - Sergei Simonov  
**Weight** - 3.85 kg  
**Length** - 1,226 mm  
**Cartridge** - 7.62×54 mm R  
**Rate of fire** - 400 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 500 m  
**Feed** - 10-round detachable box magazine

Captured SVT's were highly prized by both the Germans and the Finns.

### Carcano Modello 1891

**Type** - Bolt-action rifle  
**Place of origin** - Italy  
**Designer** - Salvatore Carcano  
**Weight** - 3.9 kg  
**Length** - 1,285 mm  
**Cartridge** - 6.5×52 mm Carcano  
**Rate of fire** - Variable  
**Effective firing range** - 1,000 m  
**Feed** - 6 round integral magazine, loaded with an en-bloc clip



A Carcano Model 91/38 was the rifle used to assassinate US President John F. Kennedy.



### M1903 Springfield

**Type** - Bolt-action rifle  
**Place of origin** - United States  
**Designer** - Springfield Armory  
**Weight** - 3.94 kg  
**Length** - 1,097 mm  
**Cartridge** - .30-03  
**Rate of fire** - 10–15 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 914 m  
**Feed** - 5-round stripper clip, 25-round (Air Service variant) internal box magazine

Used early in the war by the US, the Springfield was noted for its accuracy.

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### Type 99 rifle Arisaka

**Type** - Bolt-action rifle  
**Place of origin** - Japan  
**Designer** - Nariakira Arisaka  
**Weight** - 3.8 kg  
**Length** - 1,118 mm  
**Cartridge** - .7.7×58 mm Arisaka  
**Rate of fire** - Variable  
**Effective firing range** - 547 m  
**Feed** - 5-round internal box magazine, stripper clip loaded



The standard rifle issued to the Japanese Imperial Army.



### Suomi KP/-31

**Type** - Submachine Gun  
**Place of origin** - Finland  
**Designer** - Aimo Lahti  
**Weight** - 4.6 kg  
**Length** - 870 mm  
**Cartridge** - 9×19 mm Parabellum  
**Rate of fire** - 750–900 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 200 m  
**Feed** - 20-, 36- or 50-round box, 40- or 71-round drum. Also modified German MP 38 u. 40 32-round box magazine

Reliable and accurate, it was regarded as one of the best submachine guns of the war.

### M3

**Type** - Submachine Gun  
**Place of origin** - United States  
**Designer** - George Hyde  
**Weight** - 3.70 kg  
**Length** - 760 mm, stock extended  
**Cartridge** - .45 ACP  
**Rate of fire** - 450 rpm  
**Effective firing range** - 91 m  
**Feed** - 30-round detachable box magazine



Nicknamed the "Grease Gun", it was used by paratroopers and infantry for close combat.



# Võ Nguyên Giáp

*With no formal military training, this history teacher would go on to become one of the greatest military strategists of the 20th century.*

He was a history teacher, with no direct military training, but he was influenced by historical military leaders, personally citing T. E. Lawrence and Napoleon as his two greatest influences.

He would go on to transform a rag-tag band of rebels into a light-infantry army capable of taking on a larger, better equipped, modernised army.

He was an effective logistician and would go on to become a general and later a politician. He was considered one of the greatest military strategists of the 20th century and would earn the nickname 'Red Napoleon'.

His name was Võ Nguyên Giáp.

## Early life

Võ Nguyên Giáp was born on 25 August 1911 in Quảng Bình Province, French Indochina.

His father, Võ Quang Nghiêm, was a minor official and a dedicated Vietnamese nationalist. Giáp had two sisters and a brother.

When Giáp was eight years old his father was arrested by the French colonial authorities for subversive activities. He died in prison a few weeks later.

Soon after this one

of his sisters was also arrested. Although she was not held for long the harsh treatment in prison made her ill. She died a few weeks after being released.

Giáp was an intelligent young boy and had been taught at home before going to the village school.

He was soon transferred to the

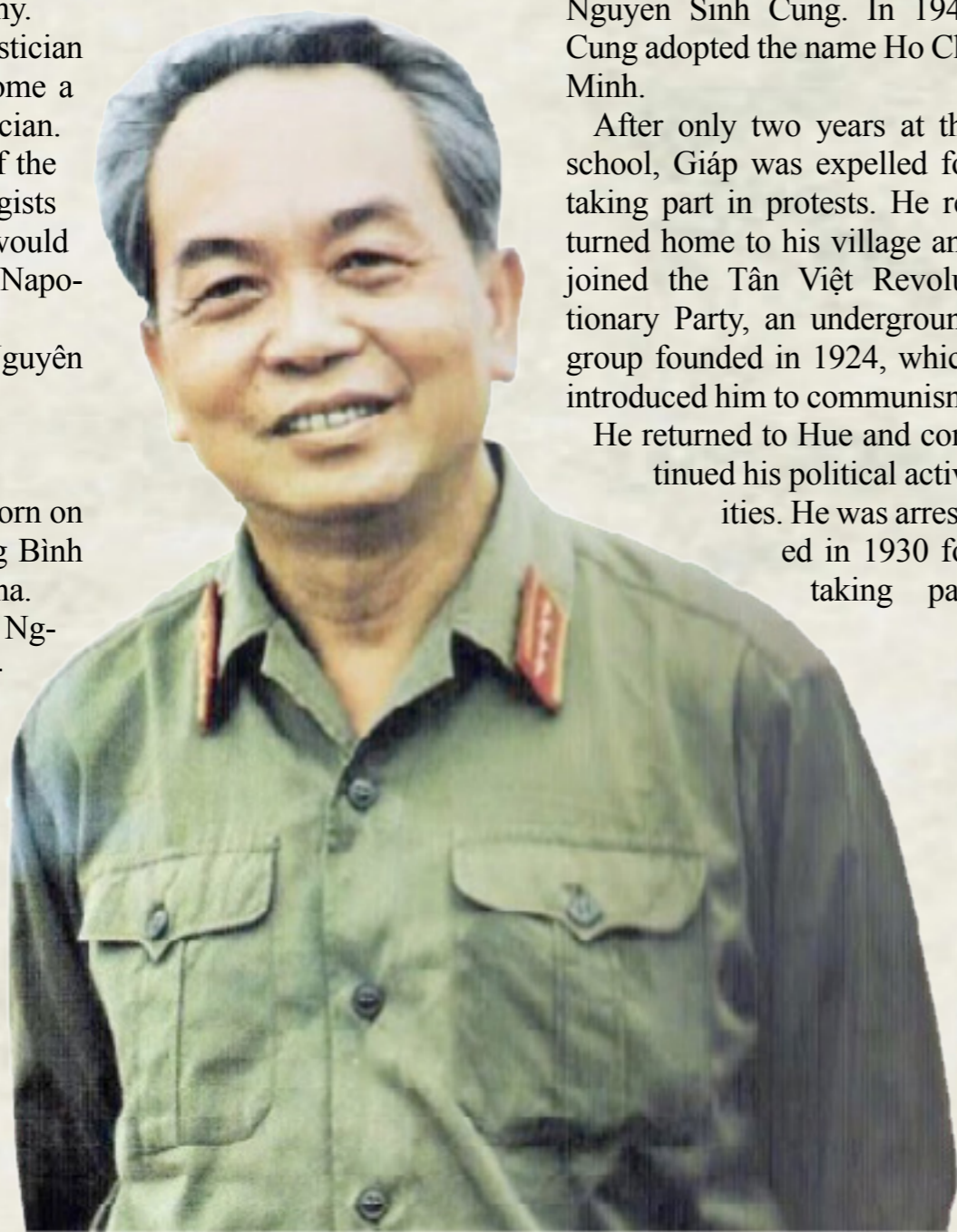
district school and, at the age of 13, he left home to attend the Quốc Học (National Academy) in Huế.

Also attending the academy was Ngô Đình Diệm, who would become the President of South Vietnam from 1955 to 1963.

Years earlier the same school had educated another boy, Nguyen Sinh Cung. In 1943 Cung adopted the name Ho Chi Minh.

After only two years at the school, Giáp was expelled for taking part in protests. He returned home to his village and joined the Tân Việt Revolutionary Party, an underground group founded in 1924, which introduced him to communism.

He returned to Hue and continued his political activities. He was arrested in 1930 for taking part



in student protests and served 13 months of a two-year sentence at Lao Bảo Prison.

He joined the Communist Party of Vietnam in 1931 and took part in several demonstrations against French rule in Indochina as well as assisting in founding the Democratic Front in 1933.

From 1933 to 1938, Giáp studied at the Vietnam National University of Hanoi where he earned a bachelor's degree in law with a major in political economy.

## Exile in China

While studying at university he met Nguyen Thi Minh Giang and in June 1938 they were married.

Due to his political activities he failed the examinations for the Certificate of Administrative Law and was unable to practice as a lawyer. Instead he took a job as a history teacher at the Thăng Long School in Hanoi.

Besides his teaching, he also worked as a journalist, writing articles for *Tieng Dan* (Voice of the People).

All the while, Giáp was a dedicated reader of military history and philosophy, revering Sun Tzu. He also made a particular study of Napoleon's generalship, and greatly admired T. E. Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, learning from it practical examples of how to apply minimum military force to maximum effect.

The French outlawed the Indochinese Communist Party after the signing of the Molotov–Ribbentrop Pact. The reasoning

was that if Hitler and Stalin had joined forces, then the communist must be bad.

The party decided that Giáp should leave Vietnam and go into exile in China. On 3 May 1940 he said farewell to his wife, left Hanoi and crossed the border into China. Giáp's wife was arrested, sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment.

In China, Giáp joined up with Hồ Chí Minh, then an adviser to the People's Liberation Army.

In September 1940, Vichy France agreed to the Japanese occupation of Vietnam, to 'protect' Indochina.

In May 1941 the Eighth Congress of the Indochinese Communist Party decided to form the Viet Minh and Giáp was made responsible for establishing an intelligence network and organising political bases in the far north of the country.

## World War II

In 1942 Giáp and about forty men moved back into Vietnam and established themselves in remote caves near the village of Vu Nhai. This and similar small groups in the mountains were the basis of the Viet Minh, the armed wing of the Vietnam Independence League.

For the next few years he and his comrades worked steadily to build up a small military force and to win local people over to the communist cause. By the end of 1943 several hundred men and women had joined the Viet Minh.

During the summer of 1943 Giáp learnt that his wife had

been beaten to death by guards in the central prison in Hanoi. Her sister was guillotined and Giáp's only daughter died in prison of unknown causes.

In September 1944 the first Revolutionary Party Military Conference was held and it was agreed that the time was now right to take the military struggle forward into a new phase. The formation of the Vietnam Liberation army was proclaimed, with Giáp as its commander.

Ho Chi Minh decided that for propaganda purposes, the Armed Propaganda Unit had to win a military victory within a month of being established, so on Christmas Day 1944 Giáp led successful attacks against French outposts at Khai Phat and Na Ngan. Two French lieutenants were killed and the Vietnamese soldiers in the outposts surrendered. The Viet Minh attackers suffered no casualties.

A few weeks later, Giáp was wounded in the leg when his group attacked another outpost at Dong Mu.

In one of the ironies of history, between May and August 1945 the United States, keen to support anti-Japanese forces in mainland Asia, actively supplied and trained Giáp and the Viet Minh.

Major Archimedes Patti, in charge of the so-called 'Deer Team' unit, taught the Viet Minh to use flamethrowers, grenade launchers and machine guns.

In a single month they succeeded in training around 200 hand-picked future leaders of the army they were to oppose a few

decades later. Growing stronger, Giáp's forces took more territory and captured more towns up until the announcement on 15 August by the Japanese Emperor of his country's unconditional surrender to the allies.

On 2 September 1945 Ho Chi Minh declared the independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. He formed a new government, with Giáp as Minister of the Interior.

He had no idea that the future of postwar Vietnam had already been decided by Truman, Churchill and Stalin at the Potsdam conference.

The country would be occupied temporarily to get the Japanese out. The northern half would be under the control of the Nationalist Chinese and the southern half under the British.

In October the British moved out and handed control back to the French. In May 1946 an agreement between the French and the Chinese was made. The Chinese moved out, and the French moved in.

Ho Chi Minh and Võ Nguyên Giáp pursued lengthy negotiations with the French, seeking to avoid an all-out war to cement their independence.

Ho Chi Minh departed for France on 31 May to negotiate with the French at Fontainebleau and Giáp was effectively in charge of the government in Hanoi.

In August 1946 Giáp married Ba Hanh and they went on to have two boys and two girls.

## First Indochina War

The tense standoff between the Vietnamese government and the French occupiers escalat-



**FUTURE LEADERS:** Võ Nguyên Giáp (left) and Hồ Chí Minh in Hà Nội, October 1945.

ed dramatically on 23 October when the French commander Argenlieu ordered the cruiser *Suffren* to bombard Haiphong in response to repeated skirmishes with Vietnamese forces as they tried to bring arms and contraband into the port.

Around six thousand people were killed, and fourteen thousand wounded in the bombardment.

Giáp, acting as de facto President in the absence of Ho Chi Minh, tried to maintain some kind of peace but by the time Ho returned in November, both sides were on a war footing.

Local fighting broke out repeatedly and on 27 November Ho's government, concluding

that it could not hold Hanoi against the French, retreated back up into the northern hills where it had been based two years previously.

On 19 December the Vietnamese government officially declared war on France and fighting erupted all over the country.

The first few years involved a most low-level, semi-conventional resistance fight against the occupying French forces.

When it became clear that France was becoming involved in a long drawn-out and so far not very successful war, the French government tried to negotiate an agreement with the Viet Minh. They offered to help set up a national government and promised



that they would eventually grant Vietnam its independence.

Ho Chi Minh and the other leaders of the Viet Minh did not trust the word of the French and continued the war.

While growing stronger in Vietnam, the Việt Minh also expanded the war and lured the French to spread their force to remote areas such as Laos. In December 1953, French military commander General Henri Navarre set up a defensive complex at Điện Biên Phủ in the Mường Thanh Valley, disrupting Việt Minh supply lines passing through Laos. He surmised that in an attempt to reestablish the route, Giáp would be forced to organise a mass attack on Điện Biên Phủ, thus fighting a conventional battle, in which Navarre could expect to have the advantage.

Giáp took up the French challenge. While the French dug in at their outpost, the Việt Minh were also preparing the battlefield. While diversionary attacks were launched in other areas, Giáp ordered his men to covertly position their artillery by hand. Defying standard military

practice, he had his twenty-four 105 mm howitzers placed on the forward slopes of the hills around Dien Bien Phu, in deep, mostly hand-dug emplacements protecting them from French aircraft and counter-battery fire.

With anti-aircraft guns supplied by the Soviet Union, Giáp was able to severely restrict the ability of the French to supply their garrison, forcing them to drop supplies inaccurately from high altitude.

Giáp ordered his men to dig a trench system that encircled the French. From the outer trench, other trenches and tunnels were gradually dug inward towards the centre. The Viet Minh were now able to move in close to the French troops defending Dien Bien Phu.

On 13 March 1954, Giáp launched his offensive. For 54 days, the Viet Minh seized position after position, pushing the French until they occupied only a small area of Dien Bien Phu.

The French surrendered on 7 May. Their casualties totaled over 2,200 men dead, 5,600 wounded and 11,721 taken prisoner. The following day the

French government announced that it intended to withdraw from Vietnam.

## The Interwar Years

With the French gone, Giáp moved back to Hanoi. He expanded and modernised the army, re-equipping it with Russian and Chinese weapons systems.

On 7 May 1955 he inaugurated the Vietnamese Maritime Force and on 1 May 1959, the Vietnamese People's Air Force.

During the late 1950s Giáp served as Minister of Defence, Commander in Chief of the People's Army of Vietnam, Deputy Prime Minister, and deputy chairman of the Defence Council.

The departure of the French and the de facto partition of Vietnam meant that the Hanoi government only controlled the north part of the country. In South Vietnam there were still several thousand guerillas, known as Viet Cong, fighting against the government in Saigon.

It was decided that the time for escalating the armed struggle in the South was right and in July that year Giáp ordered the opening up of the Ho Chi Minh trail to improve supply lines to Viet Cong units.

## The Vietnam War

Giáp remained commander in chief of the People's Army of Vietnam throughout the war against South Vietnam and its allies, the United States, Australia, Thailand, South Korea, and the Philippines.

He oversaw the expansion of the PAVN (People's Army of

Vietnam) from a small self-defence force into a large conventional army, equipped by its communist allies with considerable amounts of relatively sophisticated weaponry, although this did not usually match the weaponry of the Americans.

Giáp has often been assumed to have been the planner of the Tết Offensive of 1968, but this appears not to have been the case. The best evidence indicates that he disliked the plan, and when it became obvious that Lê Duẩn and Văn Tiến Dũng were going to conduct it anyway, he left Vietnam for medical treatment in Hungary, and did not return until after the offensive had begun.

Peace talks between representatives from the United States, South Vietnam, North Vietnam, and the NLF (National Liberation Front of South Vietnam - better known as the Viet Cong) began in Paris in January 1969.

In an effort to put pressure on both North and South Vietnam during the negotiations, President Nixon ordered a series of air raids on Hanoi and Haiphong, codenamed Operation Linebacker II.

The operation ended on 27 January 1973, after 12 days with heavy casualties and destruction. Both the U.S. and North Vietnam then agreed to sign the Paris Peace Accords that had been proposed in October. South Vietnam objected, but had little choice but to accept it. Clearly, the advantage had been given to Hanoi.

The last U.S. combat troops left in March 1973. Despite the treaty, there was no end in fighting. South Vietnamese attempts to regain communist controlled territory inspired their oppo-



**TOWARDS THE END:** This photograph of Võ Nguyên Giáp was taken in the mid-1990s.

nents to change strategy. Communist leaders met in Hanoi in March for a series of meetings to plan for a massive offensive against the South.

### Fall of Saigon

On 30 April 1975 Saigon fell. The standard view of this period is that after Ho Chi Minh's death in September 1969, Giáp lost a power struggle in 1972 shortly after the failed Easter Offensive where he was blamed by the Politburo for the offensive's failure.

Giáp was recalled to Hanoi where he was replaced as field commander of the PAVN and from then on watched subsequent events from the sidelines, with the glory of victory in 1975 going to the chief of the general staff, General Văn Tiến Dũng, and that Giáp's role in the 1975 victory is largely ignored by official Vietnamese accounts.

### Post War

Soon after the fall of Saigon, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was established. In the new government, Giáp maintained his position as Minister

of National Defense and he was made Deputy Prime Minister in July 1976. In December 1978 he oversaw the successful Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia which drove the Khmer Rouge from power and ended the Cambodian genocide. In retaliation, Cambodia's ally China responded by invading the Cao Bang province of Vietnam in January 1979 and once again Giáp was in overall responsibility for the response, which drove the Chinese out after a few months. He finally retired from his post at the Defense Ministry in 1981 and retired from the Politburo in 1982. He remained on the Central Committee and Deputy Prime Minister until he retired in 1991.

On 4 October 2013, the Communist Party of Vietnam and government official announced that Võ Nguyên Giáp had died.

He was given a state funeral on 12 and 13 October 2013 and his body lay in state at the national morgue in Hanoi until his burial at the Vững Chùa - Đảo Yến in his home province of Quảng Bình. He was 102 at the time of his death.



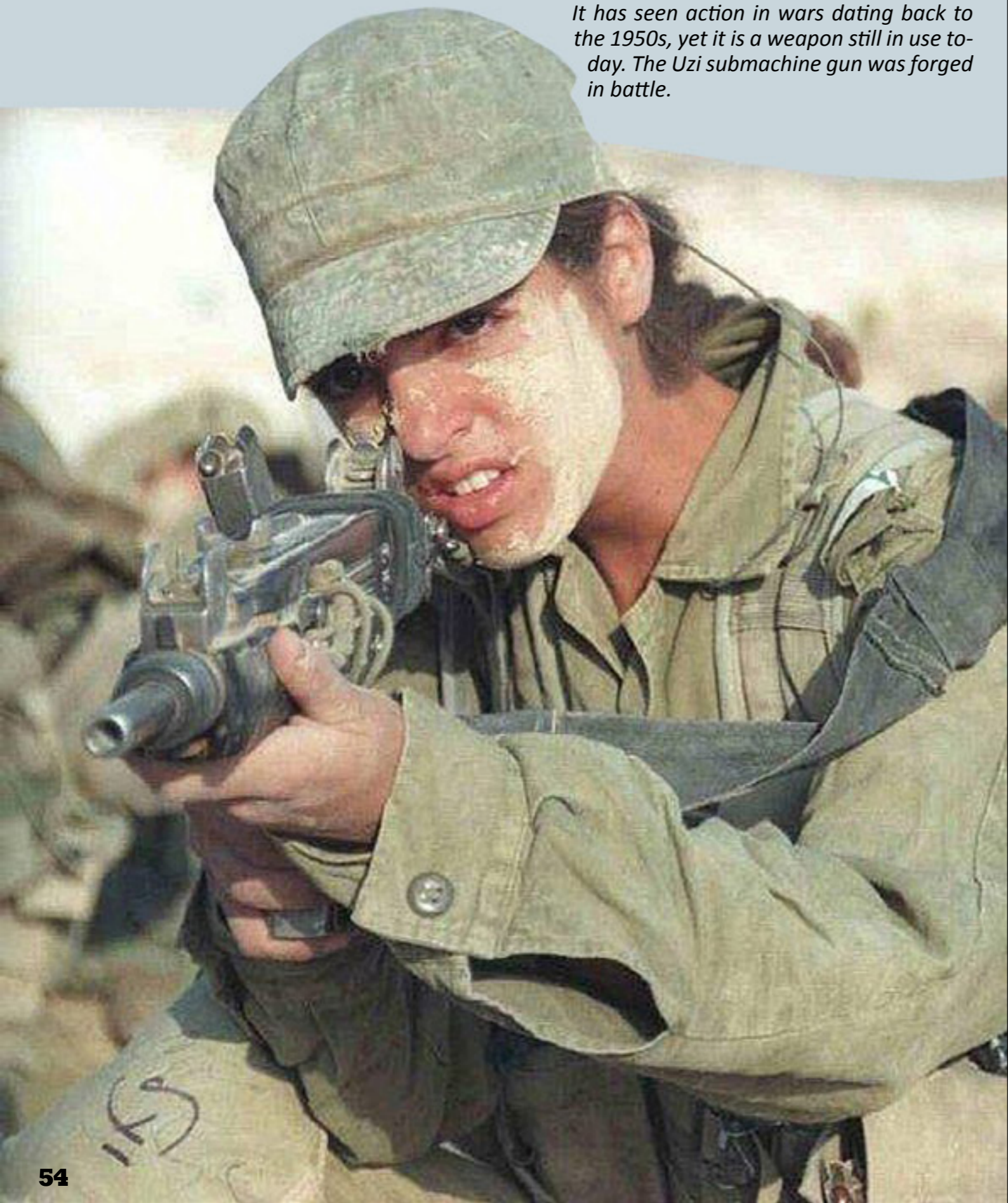
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# Uzi submachine gun

*It has seen action in wars dating back to the 1950s, yet it is a weapon still in use today. The Uzi submachine gun was forged in battle.*



It is a weapon that was designed in 1950 and first saw action in 1954. It has been used in no fewer than 27 major conflicts around the world. And it was used by 93 different countries. It was known simply as the Uzi.

The Uzi is a family of Israeli open-bolt, blowback-operated submachine guns and machine pistols first designed by Ma-

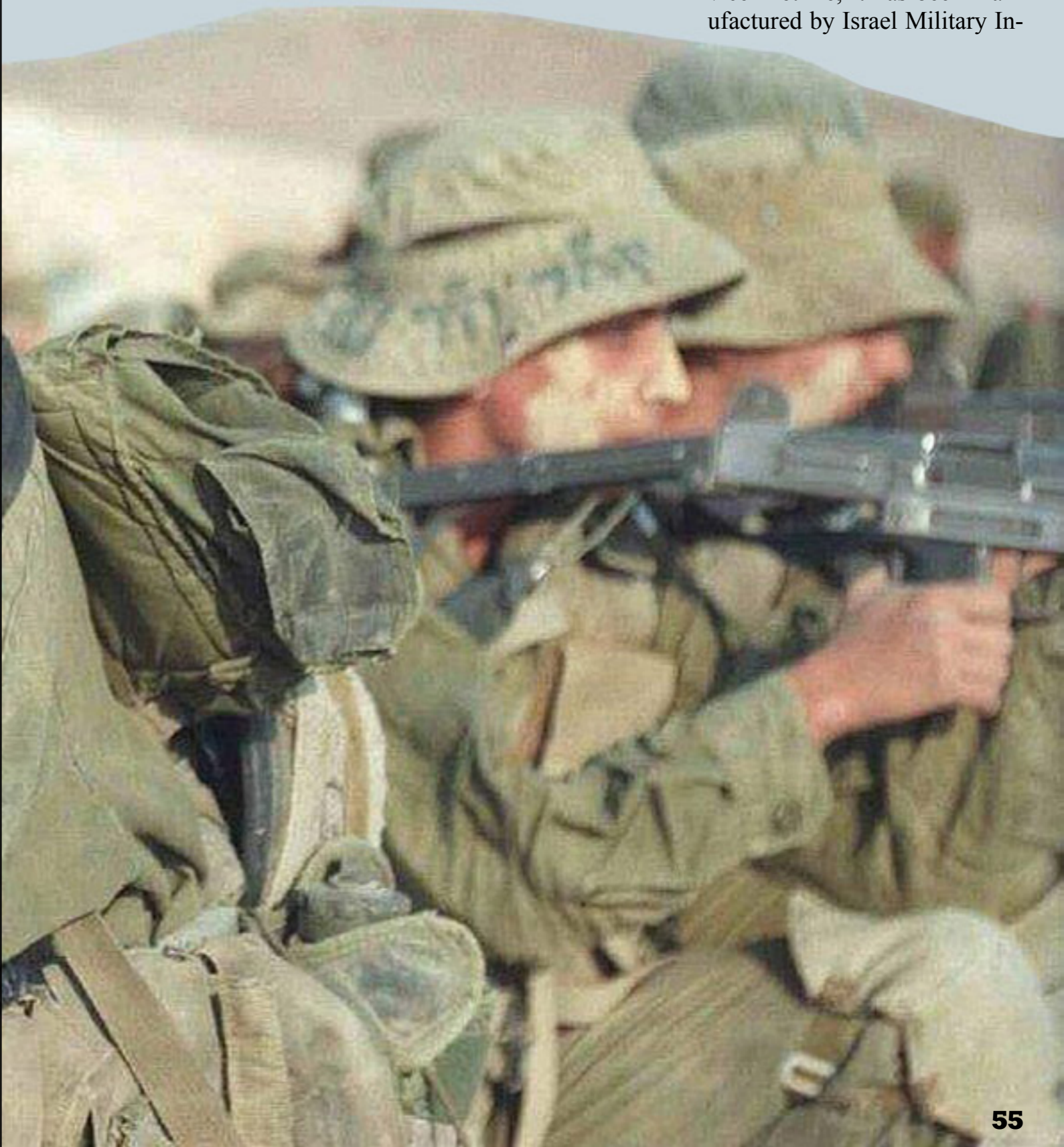
mor Uziel "Uzi" Gal in the late 1940s, shortly after the establishment of the State of Israel. It is one of the first weapons to incorporate a telescoping bolt design, which allows the magazine to be housed in the pistol grip for a shorter weapon.

The Uzi prototype was finished in 1950. It was first introduced to Israel Defence Forces

(IDF) special forces in 1954, and the weapon was placed into general issue two years later.

The IDF supplied Uzis to rear-echelon troops, officers, artillery troops and tank crews, as well as a frontline weapon by elite light infantry assault forces.

The Uzi has been exported to over 90 countries. Over its service lifetime, it has been manufactured by Israel Military In-



dustries, FN Herstal, and other manufacturers.

From the 1960s through to the 1980s, more Uzi submachine guns were sold to more military, law enforcement and security markets than any other submachine gun ever made.

## Drawbacks

The Uzi uses an open-bolt, blowback-operated design, quite similar to the Jaroslav Holeček-designed Czech ZK 476 (prototype only) and the production Sa 23, Sa 24, Sa 25, and Sa 26 series of submachine guns.

The open bolt design exposes the breech end of the barrel, and improves cooling during periods of continuous fire.

However, it means that since the bolt is held to the rear when cocked, the receiver is more susceptible to contamination from sand and dirt. It uses a telescoping bolt design, in which the bolt wraps around the breech end of the barrel.

This allows the barrel to be moved far back into the receiver and the magazine to be housed in the pistol grip, allowing for a heavier, slower-firing bolt in a shorter, better-balanced weapon.

The weapon is constructed primarily from stamped sheet metal, making it less expensive per unit to manufacture than an equivalent design machined from forgings.

With relatively few moving parts, the Uzi is easy to strip for maintenance or repair. The magazine is housed within the pistol grip, allowing for intuitive and easy reloading in dark or difficult conditions, under the

principle of “hand finds hand”.

The pistol grip is fitted with a grip safety, making it difficult to fire accidentally. However, the protruding vertical magazine makes the gun awkward to fire when prone. The Uzi features a bayonet lug.

## Operation

The non-reciprocating charging handle on the top of the receiver cover is used to retract the bolt.

Variants have a ratchet safety mechanism which will catch the bolt and lock its movement if it is retracted past the magazine, but not far enough to engage the sear.

When the handle is fully retracted to the rear, the bolt will cock (catch) on the sear mechanism and the handle and cover are released to spring fully forward under power of a small spring.

The cover will remain forward during firing since it does not reciprocate with the bolt.

The military and police versions will fire immediately upon chambering a cartridge as the Uzi is an open bolt weapon.

There are two external safety mechanisms on the Uzi. The first is the three-position selector lever located at the top of the grip and behind the trigger group.

The rear position is “S”, or “safe” (S = Sicher or Secure on the MP2), which locks the sear and prevents movement of the bolt.

The second external safety mechanism is the grip safety, which is located at the rear of the grip. It is meant to help pre-

vent accidental discharge if the weapon is dropped or the user loses a firm grip on the weapon during firing.

The trigger mechanism is a conventional firearm trigger, but functions only to control the release mechanism for either the bolt (submachine gun) or firing pin holding mechanism (semi-auto) since the Uzi does not incorporate an internal cocking or hammer mechanism.

While the open-bolt system is mechanically simpler than a closed-bolt design (e.g. Heckler & Koch MP5), it creates a noticeable delay between when the trigger is pulled and when the gun fires.

The magazine release button or lever is located on the lower portion of the pistol grip and is intended to be manipulated by the non-firing hand.

The paddle-like button lies flush with the pistol grip in order to help prevent accidental release of the magazine during rigorous or careless handling.

When the gun is de-cocked the ejector port closes, preventing entry of dust and dirt. Though the Uzi’s stamped-metal receiver is equipped with pressed reinforcement slots to accept accumulated dirt and sand, the weapon can still jam with heavy accumulations of sand in desert combat conditions when not cleaned regularly. The magazine must be removed prior to de-cocking the weapon.

## Stocks

There are different stocks available for the Uzi proper. There is a wooden stock with a metal buttplate that comes in three similar variations that was



Uzi

- Type: Submachine gun
- Place of origin: Israel
- In service: 1954–present
- Designer: Uziel Gal
- Designed: 1950
- Manufacturer: Israel Weapon Industries
- Weight: 3.5 kg
- Length: 445 mm stockless, 470 mm folding stock collapsed, 640 mm folding stock extended
- Barrel length: 260 mm
- Cartridge: 9×19mm Parabellum
- Action: Blowback, open bolt
- Rate of fire: 600 rounds/min
- Effective firing range: 200 metres
- Feed system: 25-round box magazine
- Sights: Iron sights

used by the IDF.

The first version had a flat butt and straight comb and had hollows for a cleaning rod and gun oil bottle. The second had an angled butt and a straight comb and no hollows.

The third had an angled butt and curved comb and no hollows; a polymer version is currently available from IMI.

The wooden stocks originally had a quick-release base but the ones sold in the United States have a permanent base to be

compliant with US gun laws.

Choate made an after-market polymer stock with a rubber buttplate that had a flat butt, a straight comb, and a permanent base.

In 1956, IMI developed a downward-folding twin-strut metal stock with two swiveling sections that tucks under the rear of the receiver.

The Mini Uzi has a forward-folding single-strut metal stock that is actually an inch longer than the Uzi’s. Its buttplate can be used as a foregrip when stowed. The Micro Uzi has a similar model.

## Magazines

The original box magazines for the 9mm Uzi had a 25-round capacity. Experimental 40- and 50-round extended magazines were tried but were found to be unreliable.

A 32-round extended magazine was then tried and was later accepted as standard. The Mini Uzi and Micro Uzi use a shorter 20-round magazine. Available extended magazines include 40-, and 50-round magazines.

Other high-capacity after-market magazines exist such as the Vector Arms 70-round and Beta Company (Beta C-Mag) 100-round drums.

The .45 ACP Uzi used a 16- or 22-round magazine, while the .45 ACP Micro Uzi and Mini Uzi used a 12-round magazine. A conversion kit by Vector Arms allowed the .45-caliber Uzi to use the same 30-round magazines as the M3 “Grease Gun”.

## Calibre conversions

The Uzi was available with calibre conversion kits in .22 LR or .41 AE. The operator just has to change the barrel, bolt and magazine.

The .22 LR had 20-round magazines; the original IMI kit used a barrel insert while the after-market Action Arms kit used a full replacement barrel.

The .41 AE also had a 20-round magazine; since it has the same bolt face as the 9×19mm Parabellum, only the barrel and magazine needed to be changed.

IMI also manufactured a .45ACP conversion kit both in full auto/open bolt with a 10.2” barrel for the 9mm SMG and a semi only/closed bolt with a 16” barrel for the carbine version. Magazine capacity is limited, with two sizes of 16 and 10 rounds each.

## Operational use

The Uzi submachine gun was designed by Captain (later Major) Uziel Gal of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) following the 1948 Arab–Israeli War.

The weapon was submitted to the Israeli Army for evaluation and won out over more conventional designs due to its simplicity and economy of manufacture. Gal did not want the weapon to be named after him, but his request was ignored.

The Uzi was officially adopted in 1951. First introduced to IDF special forces in 1954, the weapon was placed into general issue two years later. The first Uzis were equipped with a short, fixed wooden buttstock, and this is the version that initially saw combat during the

1956 Suez Campaign. Later models would be equipped with a folding metal stock.

The Uzi was used as a personal defence weapon by rear-echelon troops, officers, artillery troops and tankers, as well as a frontline weapon by elite light infantry assault forces.

The Uzi's compact size and firepower proved instrumental in clearing Syrian bunkers and Jordanian defensive positions during the 1967 Six-Day War.

Though the weapon was phased out of frontline IDF service in the 1980s, some Uzis and Uzi variants were still used by a few IDF units until December 2003, when the IDF announced that it was retiring the Uzi from all IDF forces. It was subsequently replaced by the fully automatic Micro Tavor.

In general, the Uzi was a reliable weapon in military service. However, even the Uzi fell victim to extreme conditions of sand and dust.

During the Sinai Campaign of the Yom Kippur War, IDF Army units reaching the Suez Canal reported that of all their small arms, only the 7.62 mm FN MAG machine gun was still in operation.

The Uzi proved especially useful for mechanized infantry needing a compact weapon, and for infantry units clearing bunkers and other confined spaces.

However, its limited range and accuracy in automatic fire (approximately 50 metres) could be disconcerting when encountering enemy forces armed with longer-range small arms, and heavier support weapons could not always substitute for a longer-ranged indi-



**PRESIDENTIAL PROTECTION:** Secret Service agents cover Press Secretary James Brady and police officer Thomas Delahanty during the assassination attempt of President Ronald Reagan by John Hinckley Jr. on 30 March 1981. Secret Service agent Robert Wanko unfolds the stock of an Uzi in case of further attack.

vidual weapon. These failings eventually caused the phasing out of the Uzi from IDF frontline assault units.

The Uzi has been used in various conflicts outside Israel and the Middle East during the 1960s and 1970s. Quantities of 9 mm Uzi submachine guns were used by Portuguese cavalry, police, and security forces during the Portuguese Colonial Wars in Africa.

### Non-military use

Paramilitary and law enforcement agencies from many countries have made use of the Uzi over the years.

From 1968 to 1973, the CIA bought 3,000 Uzis for use in Southeast Asia by Direct Action operatives and Special Forces troops.

From the 1960s to 1990s, The

US Secret Service's VIP details used a chopped-down model that could be concealed in a briefcase. This has since been replaced with either the Heckler & Koch MP5 and FN P90.

The Armed Support Units (ASU) (*Tacaiochta Faoi Arm*) are specialist armed response units of the *Garda Síochána*, the national police force of Ireland. Up until March 2014 they used the Uzi before it was replaced by the Heckler & Koch MP7.

The Uzi has been replaced in many military and paramilitary forces with more modern submachine guns such as the FN P90, PP-2000, and Heckler & Koch MP variants. Yet the Uzi is still in service with many other countries. It is a weapon that was Forged in Battle.

# Uzi

It was developed by an imprisoned Israeli captain. Cpt. Uziel Gal came up with the design for an international competition in the 1940s. Gal didn't want the weapon to be named after him, but no one listened to him.

Gal was actually imprisoned by the British for two years. But he didn't waste his time being in prison. In fact, he used that time to study up, learning everything he could about mechanical engineering. When he was released, he had the idea for the new gun in mind.

The first prototypes appeared in 1950. By 1954, the world wanted more Uzis. This helped the new Israeli government significantly since it made them money. The Uzi is easy to lead, compact, and heat and dust resistant. That makes it ideal for lots of places around the world. The IDF adopted the Uzi. That happened just three years after the nation of Israel was created.

The original Uzi was made with a wooden stock. This was replaced during the 1960s with a folding metal stock. The Uzi was originally manufactured by Israel Military Industries (IMI) Ltd. Then in 2005, the Israeli government privatized the small arms division. Now, the new company is known as the Israel Weapon Industries (IWI) Ltd. IMI made 3 variants. There's the standard, the Mini, and the Micro Uzi.

More than 2 million of them have been sold. That means that almost every law enforcement agency or military in the entire world has adopted and used the Uzi at some point.



*The plan was simple - seize a German-held port on the French Channel coast and hold it for the duration of at least two tides, and destroy enemy facilities and defences before withdrawing. The result, however, was a disaster.*

There are a number of reasons why the Dieppe Raid was planned and executed.

First of all the Royal Air Force (RAF) was pressing for a raid to temporarily seize a French port. Since the fall of 1940, when the German Luftwaffe switched to night bombing, the day fighters of the RAF were little to do. They deployed on a series of search-and-destroy missions, flying over France to engage the Luftwaffe in combat.

A major problem for the RAF was that the Luftwaffe fighters declined to engage in combat over the French coast and instead operated inland, forcing the Spitfires to fly deep into France to engage in combat and thereby using up their fuel, placing the British aircraft at a distinct disadvantage when they finally encountered the Luftwaffe.

The RAF believed that if there was a raid on a French port the Germans would assume that it was the beginning of an invasion and that the Luftwaffe would be committed in force to stop the invasion.

One important consideration for the planners was that the port be within range of the Royal Air Force's fighter aircraft.

A second factor was that the British government was under pressure from the Canadian government to ensure that Canadian troops saw some action. So it was important that Canadian troops be involved in the raid.

There was also intense pressure from the Soviet government to open up a second front in Western Europe. Joseph Stalin himself repeatedly demanded that the Allies create a second front in France to force the Germans to move at least 40 divisions away from the Eastern Front to remove some of the pressure on the Red

Army.

The French coastal town of Dieppe was chosen as the target for the raid. It is built along a long cliff that overlooks the English Channel. The River Scie is on the western end of the town and the River Arques flows through the town and into a medium-sized harbour.

In 1942, the Germans had demolished some seafront buildings to aid in coastal defence and had set up two large artillery batteries at Berneval-le-Grand and Varengeville-sur-Mer.

The original plan was code named Operation Rutter and was conceived in April 1942 and approved by the chiefs of staff in May 1942.

The 2nd Canadian Infantry Division, commanded by Major General John Hamilton Roberts, was selected for the main force. They would make a frontal assault from the sea while British parachute units would attack the artillery batteries on either side of them. The planned operation was cancelled.

### Operation Jubilee

Four months later it was decided that the operation would take place. Now renamed Operation Jubilee it would be launched on 19 August 1942.

The plan to land parachute units was cancelled and instead the British No. 3 Commando and No. 4 Commando would land by sea and attack the artillery batteries.

The raid was planned by Vice-Admiral Lord Mountbatten of Combined Operations Headquarters, involving an attacking force of about 5,000 Canadians, 1,000 British troops and 50 United States Army Rangers.

Armoured support was provided by the

14th Army Tank Regiment (The Calgary Regiment (Tank)) with 58 of the new Churchill tanks, to be delivered using the new landing craft tank (LCT). In addition, three of the Churchills were equipped with flame-thrower equipment and all had adaptations enabling them to operate in the shallow water near the beach.

The Royal Navy supplied 237 ships and landing craft. However, pre-landing naval gunfire support was limited, consisting of six Hunt-class destroyers with 100 mm guns. The Royal Air Force provided 74 squadrons of aircraft, of which 66 were fighter squadrons.

The plan called for a frontal assault, without any heavy preliminary air or naval bombardment. The planners of the raid feared that unjustifiable civilian losses would anger and further alienate the Vichy government; an unattractive option considering the intent of Operation Torch not three months later. Maj. Gen. Roberts, the military force commander, is also said to have argued that a bombardment would make the town streets impassable, and thus hinder the assault after it had broken out of the beaches.

The Dieppe landings were planned on six beaches: four in front of the town itself, and two to the eastern and western flanks respectively. From east to west, the beaches were code named Yellow, Blue, Red, White, Green and Orange. No. 3 Commando would land on Yellow beach, the Royal Regiment of Canada on Blue. The main landings would take place on Red and White beaches by the Royal Hamilton Light Infantry, the Essex Scottish Regiment, Les Fusiliers

Mont-Royal, A Commando Royal Marines and the armour. The South Saskatchewan Regiment and the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada would land on Green beach, and No. 4 Commando on Orange.

Intelligence on the area was sparse. The beach gradient and suitability for tanks had been assessed by scanning holiday snapshots. Air reconnaissance photographs had failed to detect German gun positions dug into the cliffs.

Not only was Dieppe well defended, with a garrison of 1,500 troops, but the city and port were protected by a concentration of heavy weapons on the main approach (particularly in the myriad cliff caves), and with a reserve at the rear.

The Germans were also on high alert, having been warned by French double agents that the British were showing interest in the area. They had also detected increased radio traffic and landing craft being concentrated in the southern British coastal ports.

### Yellow Beach

The initial landings began at 04h50 on 19 August, with attacks on the two artillery batteries on the flanks of the main landing area.

No. 3 Commando, under Lieutenant Colonel John Durnford-Slater, was to conduct two landings 13 km east of Dieppe to silence the *Goebbels* coastal battery near Berneval. The guns had to be out of action by the time the main force approached the main beach.

The craft carrying No. 3 Commando were surprised by a German coastal convoy. The convoy

had been detected by British radar stations at 21h30, but this was not conveyed to the raiding party.

German S-boats escorting a German tanker torpedoed some of the LCP (Landing Craft Personnel). The Germans were driven off but the group was dispersed, with some losses, and the German coastal defences were alerted.

Commandos from six craft landed at Yellow I but were pinned down. Unable to safely retreat or join the main force, they had to surrender.

Only 18 commandos managed to land on Yellow II beach. Unable to destroy the guns they harassed them with small arms fire until they had to eventually withdraw in the face of superior German forces.

### Orange Beach

Under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Lord Lovat No. 4 Commando, which included 50 US Army Rangers, carried out two landings 9.7 km west of Dieppe to neutralize the coastal battery *Hess* at Blancmesnil-Sainte-Marguerite near Varengeville.

They landed, climbed the steep slope, and attacked and neutralised the six 150 mm guns. They withdrew at 07h30 as planned. This was the only success of Operation Jubilee.

### Blue Beach

The landing by the Royal Regiment of Canada plus three platoons from the Black Watch of Canada was delayed by 20 minutes. The smoke screens that should have hidden their assault had already lifted and they had lost the elements of surprise and

darkness.

The Germans, alerted by the earlier naval engagement, had manned their defensive positions.

As soon as they reached the shore the Canadians were pinned against the seawall, unable to advance or retreat.

The Royal Regiment of Canada was annihilated. Of the 556 men in the regiment, 200 were killed and 264 captured.

### Green Beach

The South Saskatchewan Regiment's 1st Battalion landed on Green beach without being detected at the same time No. 4 Commando landed at Orange beach. There was, however, a problem.

Some of the landing craft had drifted off course and most of the battalion found themselves west of the River Scie rather than east of it. Because they had been landed in the wrong place, the battalion, whose objective was the hills east of the village, had to enter Pourville to cross the river by the only bridge.

By the time they reached the bridge the Germans had positioned machine guns and anti-tank guns there which stopped their advance.

The South Saskatchewan and the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada, who had landed beside them, were unable to reach their target and were forced to withdraw.

Both battalions suffered more losses as they withdrew; only 341 men were able to reach the landing craft and embark, and the rest were left to surrender.

### Red and White Beaches

The Essex Scottish and the

Royal Hamilton Light Infantry were to carry out the main frontal assault.

As the landing craft approached the beaches four destroyers were bombarding the coast. They were joined at 05h15 by five RAF Hurricane squadrons who bombed the coastal defences and set a smoke screen to protect the assault troops.

The infantry were meant to be supported by Churchill tanks of the 14th Army Tank Regiment landing at the same time, but the tanks arrived on the beach late. As a result, the two infantry battalions had to attack without armour support.

They were met with heavy machine gun fire from emplacements dug into the overlooking cliffs. Unable to clear the obstacles and scale the seawall, they suffered heavy losses.

When the tanks eventually arrived only 29 were landed. Two of those sank in deep water, and 12 more became bogged down in the soft shingle beach. Only 15 of the tanks made it up to and across the seawall. Due to a series of tank obstacles they were prevented entry into the town and were forced to return to the beach. None of the tanks managed to return to England. All the crews that landed were either killed or captured.

Unaware of the situation on the beaches because of a smoke screen laid by the supporting destroyers, Major General Roberts sent in the two reserve units: the Fusiliers Mont-Royal and the Royal Marines.

At 07:00 the Fusiliers under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Dollard Ménard in 26 landing craft sailed towards their beach.

The Germans hit them with heavy machine gun, mortar and grenade fire, and destroyed them.

Roberts then ordered the Royal Marines to land. They first had to transfer from their gunboats and motor boat transports onto landing craft. The Royal Marine landing craft were heavily engaged on their way in with many destroyed or disabled. Those Royal Marines that did reach the shore were either killed or captured.

As he became aware of the situation the Royal Marine commanding officer Lieutenant Colonel Phillipps, stood up on the stern of his landing craft and signalled for the rest of his men to turn back. He was killed a few moments later.

At 9:40, under heavy fire, the withdrawal from the main landing beaches began and was completed by 14:00.

Three Victoria Crosses were awarded for the operation: to Captain Patrick Porteous, No. 4 Commando; the Reverend John Weir Foote, padre to Royal Hamilton Light Infantry; and Lieutenant Colonel Charles Merritt of the South Saskatchewan Regiment.

### Battle in the Sky

Dieppe failed to register the knock-out blow against the Luftwaffe that the RAF was seeking.

The Allied air operation saw 48 fighter squadrons of Spitfires, eight squadrons of Hurricane fighter-bombers, four squadrons of reconnaissance Mustang Mk Is and seven squadrons of No. 2 Group light bombers being committed.

Opposing these forces were some 120 operational fighters of Jagdgeschwader 2 and 26 (JG 2 and JG 26), the Dornier Do 217s



**DISMAL FAILURE:** Landing craft burn in the background while Churchill tanks are bogged down on the beach.

of Kampfgeschwader 2 and various anti-shipping bomber elements of III./KG 53, II./Kampfgeschwader 40 (KG40) and I./KG 77.

The raid on Dieppe saw the baptism by fire of the new Spitfire Mark IX, the only British fighter equal to the FW 190.[37] Six squadrons (four British, two Canadian) flew the Mark IX at Dieppe. During the battle, Fighter Command flew 2,500 sorties over Dieppe, and achieved a narrow victory over the Luftwaffe.

The intense air fighting prevented the Luftwaffe from making major attacks on either the landing or the evacuation of the Allied forces, who consequently did not suffer very much from attacks from the air.

However, in achieving the goal of the "greatest air battle" that would cripple the Luftwaffe over France, Operation Jubilee was less successful. During the air battles over Dieppe, the Royal Air Force lost 91 aircraft shot down and 64 pilots (17 taken prisoner, the rest all killed) while the Royal Canadian Air Force lost 14 aircraft and nine pilots.

Additionally, the British lost six bombers over Dieppe. The Luftwaffe lost 48 aircraft, another 24 seriously damaged with 13 pilots killed and seven wounded.

### The Conclusion

Of the nearly 5,000-strong Canadian contingent, 3,367 were killed, wounded or taken prisoner, an exceptional casualty rate of 68%. The 1,000 British Commandos lost 247 men. The Royal Navy lost one destroyer (HMS Berkeley) and 33 landing craft, suffering 550 dead and wounded. The RAF lost 106 aircraft to the 48 lost by the Luftwaffe. The German Army had 591 casualties. Of the 50 US Army Rangers serving with different Commando units, six were killed, seven wounded, and four captured.

Although Dieppe was a dismal failure, the lessons learnt were invaluable. Dieppe essentially became the textbook of "what not to do" in future amphibious operations, and laid the framework for the Normandy landings two years later.

The Dieppe Raid highlighted:

- the need for preliminary artil-

lery support, including aerial bombardment;

- the need for a sustained element of surprise;
- the need for proper intelligence concerning enemy fortifications;
- the avoidance of a direct frontal attack on a defended port city; and,
- the need for proper re-embarkation craft.

The British developed a whole range of specialist armoured vehicles which allowed their engineers to perform many of their tasks protected by armour, most famously "Hobart's Funnies".

Because the treads of most of the Churchill tanks were caught up in the shingle beaches of Dieppe, the Allies started a new policy of learning what were the exact elements of every beach they intended to land upon, and devising appropriate vehicles for said beaches.

The operation also showed major deficiencies in RAF ground support techniques, and this led to the creation of a fully integrated Tactical Air Force to support major ground offensives.

It also forced the Allies to rethink the idea of seizing a major port for an invasion. Their revised view was that the amount of damage that would be done to a port by the necessary bombardment to take it, would almost certainly render it useless as a port afterwards. As a result, the decision was taken to construct prefabricated harbours, codenamed "Mulberry", and tow them to lightly defended beaches as part of a large-scale invasion.

The lessons learnt were applied two years later at Normandy.





Armed with his water-wings, a bucket and spade, **Private Matt O'Brien** hits the beaches at Normandy and finds it's not exactly a holiday.

When it comes to strategy gaming there are some war-games that are historically accurate and some that are fun to play. It is not often that you will find a game that does both.

With Steel Division Normandy 44, game developer Eugen Systems seems to have got this right.

First of all, it's a great looking game. The maps are detailed and accurate, as are the units used in the game. A lot of attention has been paid to detail.

The controls are fairly easy to get to grips with. Anyone that has played a real-time strategy game should almost immediately feel at home with its interface.

While it's easy to learn how to play the game, there is a significant learning curve in terms of how to play Steel Division well, but it's attractive and enjoyable enough to get started with that it's hard not to want to play more.

There are a number of tutorials that will teach you the basics of the game. I suggest that you play through these.

What I do suggest is that you go onto YouTube and check out some of the great videos on how to play the game.

You can also check out a number of websites that will provide

you with tips and tricks. One of these websites is the [Steel Division Wiki](#).

### Basics

Steel Division Normandy 44 can be played either as single player or multi-player.

Spend some time in single player mode before you think of tackling human players. In single player you can choose from campaign, mission or skirmish games.

There are three campaigns to choose from. Two for the Allies and one for the Germans. The Allies consist of British, Canadian, French, Polish and American units.

Each campaign consists of four separate missions, each of which must be completed to move on to the next one.

The first campaign is Mission Boston where you get to take on the role of the American 82 Airborne Division. The four missions are: Hedgerow Hell, Blood on the Rivers, Burning Bridges, and Iron Fist. This is a medium difficulty campaign.

In the second campaign, Atlantikwall, you play the role of the German 21st Panzer Division. The four missions are: Sie kommen! Pegasus Bridge (Atlantikwall), Panzer Vor! and The Lion's Den. This is a hard difficulty campaign.

The final campaign is Operation Epsom. Here you get to take on the roll of the British 15th Infantry Division. The four missions are: It's a long way, Battle for the Odon, The Scottish Corridor, and Over the hill and far away. This is a very hard difficulty campaign (impossible difficulty would be a better word).

I must have played this last campaign more than thirty times before I finally managed to succeed. It did feel good to eventually get it right.

There are eight historical scenarios that can be played against AI (Artificial Intelligence) or other players.

Skirmish mode is the best method of learning the game, and it will provide hours of gaming. You choose the map (there are 17 of them), choose whether you want to be the Allies or the Germans, select your division type, and off you go.

### Division types

Divisions are the basic level of organization in Steel Division. Each division can be one of four types, with their own units to choose from, advantages, and disadvantages. Each division also has its own limit of activation points and number of slots to fill in while creating your battlegroups.



Infantry divisions rely heavily on cheap and numerous infantry, infantry tanks & artillery. Less mobile than more mechanised ones, they can slowly grind an enemy to death.

Airborne divisions are very lightly equipped, relying mostly on elite infantry and the ability of its first-wave troops to operate behind enemy lines. Although they lack armoured punch, paratroopers are versatile units able to face almost every enemy opponent, and they may count on full air support. Airborne units (with wings by their name) do not receive penalties for being surrounded.

Mechanised divisions are 'reinforced' infantry divisions, with armoured transport, assault-guns and/or self-propelled artillery & anti-tank guns.

Armoured divisions usually rely on tanks, some heavy infantry in armoured transport and self-propelled howitzer & anti-tank guns. They are the most mobile divisions.

### Units

There are eight different unit types - Recon, tank, infantry, support, anti-tank, anti-air, artillery, and air. Each has advantages and disadvantages and select the right mix of units is vital.

### Game play

Steel Division includes three distinct phases for every battle:

Phase (A) involves light units looking for the enemy & securing key positions.

Phase (B) unlocks medium units to engage the enemy and try to push the frontline.

Phase (C) unlocks all the heaviest units for a full scale battle.

In each phase you get a limited amount of units to deploy, based on the battlegroup you've created. When starting out, using the auto-fill battlegroup option, it is a good way to get a feel for the division you selected.

Finally, maps feature a shift-

ing frontline that not only provides a helpful guideline for tracking enemy movements (in general, if it bulges out, someone is up to no good and you might want to take care of it). Certain types of units do not affect the frontline, so keep that in mind.



Publisher - Paradox Interactive

Genre - RTS

Score - 7.5/10

Price - R409 (on Steam)



## Movie Review

# Full Metal Jacket

Released: 1987

Running time: 116 minutes

Directed by: Stanley Kubrick

Released in 1987 and based on the book *The Short-Timers* by Gustav Hasford, *Full Metal Jacket* was directed and produced by Stanley Kubrick.

The first half of the storyline follows a platoon of U.S. Marines through their training, primarily focusing on two privates, Private J. T. "Joker" Davis (Matthew Modine) and Private Leonard "Gomer Pyle" Lawrence (Vincent D'Onofrio), who both struggle to get through boot camp for different reasons.

Joker doesn't know when to keep his mouth closed and his comments often get him into trouble.

Gomer Pyle, on the other hand, is over-weight and slow-minded. This makes him a target for their drill instructor, Gunnery Sergeant Hartman (R. Lee Erme).

Pyle is initially inept at basic training, but slowly improves after Hartman pairs him with Joker. However, when Hartman discovers a contraband doughnut in Pyle's foot locker, he adopts a collective punishment policy, punishing the rest of the platoon for Pyle's mistakes. One night, the recruits haze Pyle with a blanket party; Joker reluctantly participates.

Following this incident, Pyle reinvents himself as a model recruit and shows particular ex-

pertise in marksmanship. This impresses Hartman, but worries Joker, who notices Pyle talking to his rifle and believes that he may be suffering a mental breakdown.

The recruits graduate and receive their Military Occupational Specialty assignments. Joker is assigned to Military Journalism, while most of the others – including Joker's best friend 'Cowboy' (Arliiss Howard) and Pyle – are assigned to Infantry.

The second part of the movie is set in January 1968 and sees Joker, now a sergeant, as a war correspondent in South Vietnam for *Stars and Stripes*.

The Marine base is attacked at the start of the Tet Offensive, as the North Vietnamese Army unsuccessfully attempts to overrun the base.

The following day Joker, along with combat photographer Private First Class Rafterman, is sent to Phu Bai. They meet the Lusthog Squad, where Joker is reunited with Cowboy. Joker accompanies the squad during the Battle of Hué, where platoon commander "Touch-down" is killed by the enemy.

While patrolling Hué, Crazy Earl, the squad leader, is killed by a booby trap, leaving Cowboy in command. The squad comes under attack by a sniper, leading to the gripping climax of the film.

R. Lee Erme is brilliant in the role of Gunnery Sergeant Hartman. As a real-life former Marine Drill Instructor, he was hired as a technical advisor, but ended up getting the role of Hartman. Hartman's language would make a sailor blush.

Much of his dialogue in the film is ad-libbed, something that Kubrick rarely allowed in any of his movies.

R. Lee Emery won a Golden Globe for Best Supporting Actor. *Full Metal Jacket* was nominated for eleven awards worldwide between 1987 and 1989 including an Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay.

A film well worth watching.



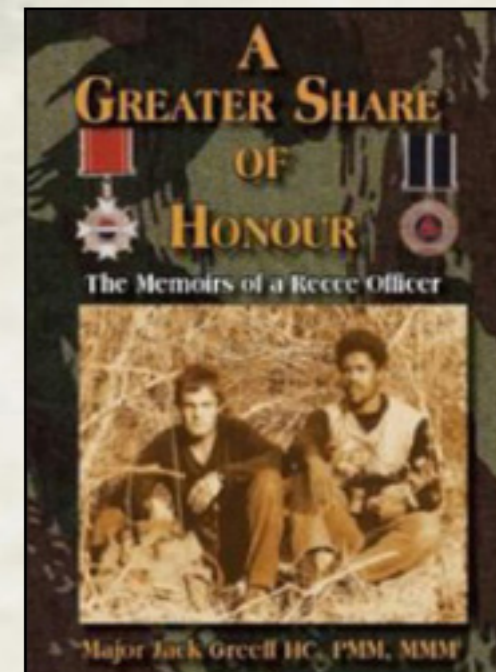
Click on the poster to watch a trailer of the film.

# A Greater Share of Honour

**A** Greater Share of Honour - The Memoirs of a Recon Officer by Major Jack Greeff is one of the better books about the elite Reconnaissance Regiment - the Recces.

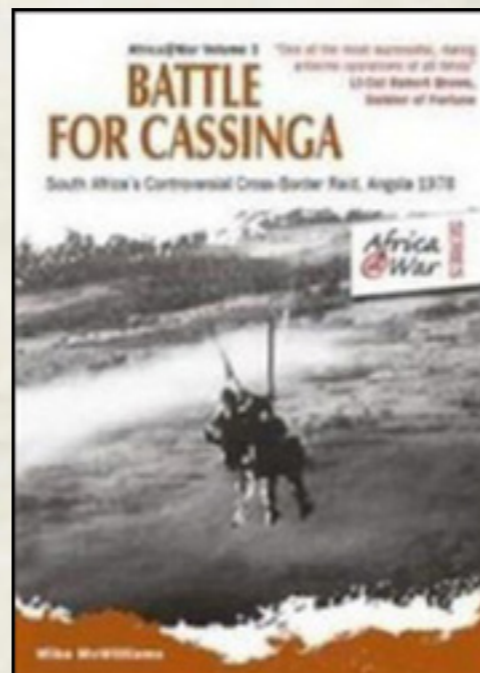
As a young Staff Sergeant in the Recces, Jack Greeff became one of the most decorated soldiers in the SADF. Leading two-man reconnaissance patrols deep into enemy held territories and operating under the noses of the enemy, they collected vital strategic information on enemy movements and installations. Using the information gathered, he led raiding parties to the targets to execute what were probably the biggest and most daring acts of sabotage in recent military history.

After five years service with 5 South African Infantry Battalion, both as an instructor and as a platoon sergeant in the operational area, he passed selection for the Recces and qualified as a combat operator. He served in the Recces for 11 years and was the recipient of the Golden Operator's Badge for 10 or more years as a combat operator in Special Forces. He became one of the most decorated soldiers in the SADF - all awarded for achievements and bravery during special operations. This included a well-deserved Honoris Crux. After rising to the rank of major he resigned to pursue a career as a game ranger. He has since successfully directed anti-poaching operations, firstly in South Africa's world-renowned

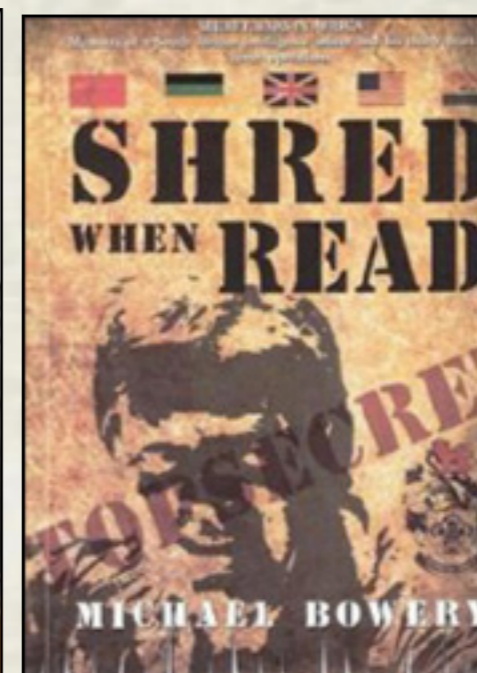


Kruger National Park and later elsewhere in Africa.

A Greater Share of Honour - Major Jack Greeff  
Softcover, 390 pages  
Cost: R375



Battle for Cassinga  
R220



Shred when Read  
R300



We fear naught but God  
R395

All books are available from [Bush War Books](#)

# This month in military history

Some of the significant military events that happened in September. Highlighted in blue are the names of those members of the South African Defence Force (SADF) that lost their lives during the month of September.

## 1 September

- **1862** - Following his brilliant victory at the Second Battle of Bull Run two days earlier, Confederate General Robert E. Lee strikes retreating Union forces at Chantilly, Virginia, and drives them away in the middle of an intense thunderstorm. Casualties and losses: US 1,300 - CSA 800.
- **1870** - The Battle of Sedan was fought between the French and the Prussian forces in Sedan, France resulting in German victory. The French Emperor, Napoleon III was captured in the battle resulting in the end of the Second French Empire.
- **1878** - British Major General John Frederick Charles Fuller was born on this day. He was an advocate of tank warfare and became one of the founders of modern armoured warfare. He was also a strong Nazi sympathiser.
- **1900** - During the Second Anglo-Boer War Two Australians of the Tasmanian Imperial Bushmen, Lieutenant Wylly and Private Bisdee, display exceptional bravery during an ambush by Boers in assisting a wounded officer and allowing five other wounded to escape. They were later awarded the Victoria Cross for extraordinary bravery.
- **1900** - Britain annexes the ZAR (Transvaal Republic).
- **1900** - During the Second Anglo-Boer War Commandant Piet Fourie, joined by Nieuwoudt and Kritzing, take Ladybrand, OFS, in a street by street fight, but fail to capture the British garrison, who retreats to a position at the foot of Platberg.
- **1939** - Germany invades Poland, starting World War II.
- **1950** - Korean War: 13 North Korean divisions open assault on UN lines.
- **1963** - The new Air Force Memorial on Bays Hill, south of Pretoria, is inaugurated by State President C.R. Swart and attended by about 8 000 people, including dignitaries of other countries. The monument is a memorial to almost 3,000 members of the SAAF who died in action through the years in war and peace.
- **1967** - Ilse Koch, Nazi war criminal (commonly known as "The Bitch of Buchenwald") hangs herself in prison at 60.
- **1969** - Colonel Muammar Gaddafi seizes power in Libya after a coup d'état, deposing King Idris and exiling him to Egypt.
- **1979** - Lieutenant Chris Jansen from 1 Satellite Radar Station at Mariepskop was killed in a private motor vehicle accident at Pilgrims Rest. He was 22.
- **1981** - A bloodless coup under General André Kolingba ousts President David Dacko of the Central African Republic.
- **1981** - Albert Speer, German architect and Nazi leader (Reich Minister for Armaments and War Production), dies of a stroke at 76
- **1982** - The United States Air Force Space Command is founded.
- **1983** - Warrant Officer Class II Johannes Petrus Lodewickus van Bosch from the South African Engineer Corps, attached to Sector 20 Headquarters was killed in a military vehicle accident between Rundu and Bagani when his military vehicle was involved in a head-on collision with another military vehicle. He was 39.
- **1983** - Seaman A.R. Roux from the South African Marines was critically wounded after being accidentally shot by another Leading Seaman while his platoon was on patrol in the Caprivi. He was casevaced by helicopter to Katima Mulilo but unfortunately succumbed to his

- wounds while still aboard the helicopter and was certified dead on arrival. He was 18.
  - **1983** - Korean Air Lines Flight 007 was shot down by a Russian fighter jet while on route from New York to Seoul, killing all 269 persons on board. The Boeing 747 reportedly strayed 160 kilometres off course over secret Soviet Russian military installations on the Kamchatka Peninsula and Sakhalin Island. It crashed in the Sea of Japan.
  - **1986** - Rifleman Simon Robert Hood from 32 Battalion was killed when he accidentally fell off the back of a moving Buffel Troop Carrier near Rundu. He was 24.
  - **1988** - Lance Corporal Petrus Jacobus Herbst from Walvis Bay Command was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident between Otjiwarongo & Okahandja. He was 20.
  - **1995** - Chief warlord Charles Taylor and other key militia leaders are installed in a new ruling council in Liberia.
  - **2003** - A new UN force with a wider mandate takes over from the French-led force in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.
- ## 2 September
- **31 B.C.** - Roman legions under Augustus Caesar defeated Mark Anthony's naval force at Actium.
  - **1862** - Civil War: President Abraham Lincoln reluctantly restores Union General George B. McClellan to full command after General John Pope's disaster at the Second Battle of Bull Run, Virginia, on August 29 and 30.
  - **1864** - During the American Civil War, Atlanta was captured by Sherman's Army. "Atlanta is ours, and fairly won," General William T. Sherman telegraphed President Lincoln.
  - **1870** - Napoleon III surrendered to the Prussians during the Battle of Sedan, resulting in the fall of the Second French Empire.
  - **1878** - Werner Eduard Fritz von Blomberg was born on this day. He was a German *Generalfeldmarschall*, Minister of War, and Commander-in-Chief of the German Armed Forces until January 1938.
  - **1898** - In the Anglo-Egyptian War Lord [Sir Herbert] Kitchener's force of 25,000 decisively defeats the Dervishes at the Battle of Omdurman, Sudan, taking Khartoum. 10,000 Sudanese fall in battle.
  - **1898** - The machine gun is used for the first time in battle.
  - **1939** - Nazi Germany captured the Free City of Danzig, Poland.. A concentration camp was set up at Stutthof, where several prominent Danzing Jews were deported.
  - **1944** - Future President George Herbert Walker Bush is serving as a torpedo bomber pilot in the Pacific theater of World War II when his squadron is attacked by Japanese anti-aircraft guns. Bush was forced to bail out of the plane over the ocean. After floating on a raft for four hours, a submarine crew fished a safe but exhausted Bush out of the water.
  - **1945** - Japan officially signs the act of unconditional surrender to the Allied nations on board the American battleship Missouri in Tokyo Bay.
  - **1958** - United States Air Force C-130A-II is shot down by fighters over Yerevan, Armenia when it strays into Soviet airspace while conducting a SIGINT mission. All the crew were lost.
  - **1962** - Soviet Russia agreed to send arms to Cuba, lead-



Albert Speer

ing to the October Missile Crisis after the shipments were discovered by the U.S.

- **1964** - Alvin York, American World War I soldier who led a famed attack on a German machine gun nest (Medal of Honour), dies at 76.
- **1977** - Rifleman Matthys Christiaan Henn from 4 SAI was critically injured in a military vehicle accident between Middelburg and Greefswald on 31 August 1977 and succumbed to his injuries in 1 Military Hospital on 02 September 1977. He was 18.
- **1978** - Rifleman Arau Chilimba from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment attached to D Squadron Rhodesian Special Air Service, was killed instantly in Mocambique when he accidentally walked into the helicopter tail rotor after being inserted into the designated drop zone inside enemy territory. He was 24.
- **1982** - Two members from 5 Maintenance Unit were grievously burned in an accidental petrol explosion at Ondangwa on 30 August 1982. Both members were evacuated to the 1 Military Hospital Burn Unit where they succumbed to their injuries on 02 September 1982. The casualties were: Private Gordon Gray Crossland (18). Private Hendrik Lambertus Groenewald (20).
- **1984** - Able Seaman Crispin John Canner from SAS Unity died from a gunshot

wound after being accidentally shot by a fellow sailor while carrying out guard duty at the Slangkop Radio Station. He was 24.

- **1989** - Lance Corporal Hendrik Jacobus Bekker from the Eastern Transvaal Command Provost Unit, South African Corps of Military Police, was accidentally killed after being struck by a moving train while on leave in Nelspruit. He was 18.
- **1999** - Major Kenneth Arthur Newman from 22 Squadron was killed when his Alouette III Helicopter, Serial No. 616 suffered engine failure and crashed in dense bush at Sea View, Port Elizabeth. He was 50.
- **2002** - The Sudanese government suspends peace talks with the country's main rebel group, the Sudanese People's Liberation Army, or SPLA, after rebels seize the strategic town of Torit.
- **1969** - The Nigerian Central Government forces began Operation OAU in order to seize the remaining Biafran cities. Though the Biafran forces were not very strong they managed to keep control over Umuahia and later recaptured Owerri and Aba cities.
- **1972** - U.S fighter-bombers attacked, Phuc Yen, one of the largest air bases in North Vietnam, and shot down a MiG aircraft. In all, 47 MiG aircraft were shot down since the North Vietnamese attack began.

### 3 September

- **1777** - The Flag of the United States is flown in battle for the first time. The British Army and their Hessian allies defeated an American militia at the Battle of Cooch's Bridge.
- **1783** - The American Revolution ends with the signing of the Treaty of Paris by the United States and the Kingdom of Great Britain. America is officially free from Britain.
- **1800** - Two rebels of the Graaff-Reinet Rebellion five years previously, Martinus Prinsloo and Adriaan van Jaarsveld, are sentenced to death and sixteen rebels receive life-long penalties. They had rebelled against the Company and had proclaimed the territory a free republic.
- **1916** - The Allies turn back the Germans in WW I's Battle of Verdun.
- **1939** - Great Britain and France declared war on Nazi Germany after its invasion of Poland two days earlier.
- **1939** - The United Kingdom and France begin a naval blockade of Germany that lasts until the end of the war. This also marks the beginning of the Battle of the Atlantic.
- **1941** - First use of Zyklon-B gas in Auschwitz (on Russian prisoners of war).
- **1942** - In possibly the first Jewish ghetto uprising, residents of the Łachwa Ghetto in occupied Poland,

informed of the upcoming "liquidation" of the ghetto, unsuccessfully fought against their Nazi captors.

- **1943** - Italy signed an armistice with the Allies during World War II in Europe as the British Eighth Army, commanded by General Bernard Montgomery, invaded the Italian mainland from Sicily.
- **1950** - A US Military Assistance Advisory Group arrived in Saigon to look into the French request for American military aid and assistance in the training of the South Vietnamese troops.
- **1974** - Joint routine exercises are held between the British Royal Navy and the South African Navy, under the Simonstown Agreement, and again from 14 October 1974.
- **1978** - Four Crew Members and 44 Passengers from Air Rhodesia Viscount "Hunyani" Flight RH825 were killed when the aircraft was shot down by ZIPRA insurgents using a Soviet SAM-7 Grail shoulder-launched Surface-to-Air Missile approximately five minutes after take-off from Kariba Airport. Almost immediately a distress signal was received to the effect that the aircraft engines had failed. The aircraft crashed near the northern border with Zambia in the Urungwe Tribal Trust Land, 40km South-East of Kariba Dam. Eighteen

people survived the initial crash but 10 survivors were executed by the ZIPRA Terrorists who returned to the accident scene to loot the aircraft contents. The remaining eight passengers managed to escape. The four crew members were posthumously awarded the Rhodesian Meritorious Conduct Medal (MCM) for brave and gallant conduct.

- **1980** - General Constand Viljoen is appointed as Chief of the South African Defence Force (SADF) and Lieutenant-General Jan Geldenhuys as Chief of the Army, with effect from 7 October 1980.
- **1981** - Rifleman Cornelius Jacobus Vermaak from Special Forces Headquarters died in the Edenvale Hospital from injuries sustained in a Military Vehicle Accident in Edenvale. He was 19.
- **1985** - Two members from 6 SAI were killed when their Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Grahamstown. The casualties were: Rifleman Orlando De Portugal Goncalves (19). Rifleman Shaun Patrick Atkins (21).
- **1986** - South Africa's government re-imposes order prohibiting journalists from reporting actions of security forces.
- **1987** - One member from 42 Squadron and one member from 4 Field Regiment

were Killed in Action when a 42 Squadron Atlas AM3-C Bosbok, Serial No 934 was shot down by a Soviet SA-8 Gecko Surface-to-Air Missile South of Lomba river in Southern Angola during Ops Modular. The casualties were: Lieutenant Richard William Glynn (21). Commandant Johann Christiaan Du Randt (32).

- **2001** - Sierra Leone's president Ahmed Tejan Kabbah shakes hands with his rebel counterpart General Issa Sesay, and declares the West African nation's war over.

### 4 September

- **1862** - Union General Lee invades North with 50,000 Confederate troops.
- **1886** - The last major U.S.-Indian war came to an end as Geronimo was captured. He died of natural causes in 1909 at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.
- **1900** - Danie Theron, an Afrikaner patriot believing in the just and divine right of the Boer to stand against British interference, died during the Second Anglo-Boer War in an inferno of



**Constand Viljoen**

- lyddite and shrapnel.
- **1916** - British forces take Dar-es-Salaam in Tanganyika.
  - **1918** - United States troops land at Archangel, in northern Russia and stay 10 months. The landing was part of an Allied intervention in the civil war raging in that country after revolution in 1917 led to the abdication of Czar Nicholas II in favour of a provisional government; the seizure of power by Vladimir Lenin and his radical socialist Bolshevik Party; and, finally, Russia's withdrawal from participation alongside the Allies in World War I.
  - **1939** - The House of Assembly defeats Prime Minister Hertzog's motion of neutrality and adopts Smuts' amendment in favour of joining the war. Hertzog resigns premiership the next day and he and his followers side with Dr Malan's National Party. Smuts becomes premier and retains the name United Party for his followers.
  - **1940** - The American destroyer Greer becomes the first U.S. vessel fired on in the war when a German submarine aims a few torpedoes at it, sparking heightened tensions between Germany and the United States. It was a case of mistaken identity. Roosevelt unofficially declared war on anyone who further attacked American vessels in the North Atlantic: "If German or Italian

- vessels of war enter these waters, they do so at their own peril."
- **1944** - Two days after the start of the Allied mission to liberate Belgium, the British forces liberated Antwerp from the Germans. In February 1945, Belgium was entirely freed from German occupation, after five months of joint operation by the USA, Canada, Britain and Poland.
  - **1945** - The Wake Island Japanese garrison's 2,200 Japanese soldiers finally lay down their arms and surrender to a detachment of U.S. Marines days after their government had already formally capitulated. Wake Island was one of the islands bombed as part of a wider bombing raid that coincided with the attack on Pearl Harbor and they had held since 23 December of 1941.
  - **1967** - The U.S. 1st Marine Division launches Operation SWIFT, a search and destroy operation in Quang Nam and Quang Tin Provinces in I Corps Tactical Zone (the region south of the Demilitarized Zone). A fierce four-day battle ensued in the Que Son Valley, 25 miles south of Da Nang. During the course of the battle, 114 men of the U.S. 5th Marine Regiment were killed while the North Vietnamese forces suffered 376 casualties.
  - **1969** - Radio Hanoi announces the death of Ho Chi Minh, proclaiming that the

- National Liberation Front will halt military operations in the South for three days, September 8-11, in mourning for Ho. He had been the spiritual leader of the communists in Vietnam since the earliest days of the struggle against the French and, later, the United States and its ally in Saigon.
- **1975** - Representatives of Egypt and Israel sign interim peace agreement in Geneva.
  - **1980** - Rifleman A.F. Chipa from 32 Battalion accidentally drowned near Buffalo. He was 27.
  - **1980** - Private Frederick Jacobus Janse van Vuuren from the Air Force School of Technical Training was killed in a Private Motor Vehicle Accident, at Nelspoort. He was 21.
  - **1981** - Four members from 1 Special Service Battalion were killed when their Eland armoured car overturned during a training exercise at Ottosdal. The casualties were: 2nd Lieutenant Derek Charl De Villiers (20). Trooper Mark Rodney Harty (20). Trooper Willem Frederick Raubenheimer (19). Trooper Johannes Martin Schoeman (18).
  - **1982** - Private Johannes Albertus O'Neill from 5 Maintenance Unit was grievously burned at Ondangwa on 30 August 1982 when he lit a cigarette while standing near petrol drums and the petrol fumes ignited causing an explosion. He succumbed

- to his injuries in 1 Military Hospital on 04 September 1982. He was 18.
- **1984** - Private Auguste Jansen from the Natal Command Workshop, Technical Service Corps was admitted to Addington Hospital on 01 September 1984 suffering from severe head injuries after being assaulted by persons unknown. He succumbed to his injuries on 04 September 1984. He was 19.
  - **1990** - Rifleman Anton Malan from Infantry School was accidentally killed when a 40mm multiple grenade launcher barrel exploded during a firing training exercise at Oudtshoorn. He was 22.
- 5 September**
- **1781** - In the Battle of the Chesapeake the British Navy is repelled by the French Navy, leading to the British surrender at Yorktown.
  - **1876** - German field marshal and World War II war criminal Wilhelm Ritter von Leeb was born on this day. Units under Leeb's command committed atrocities against the civilian population and closely cooperated with the SS Einsatzgruppen, the mobile killing squads primarily tasked with the murder of the Jewish population as part of the Holocaust. He was found guilty and sentenced to three years.
  - **1877** - Crazy Horse, the last great Sioux war chief, dies on this day at the age of 37.

- **1901** - During the Second Anglo-Boer War Lieutenant Hannam and members of the Bushveld Carbineers, fighting on British side, fire on wagons with women and children who offer no resistance, killing two children and wounding a girl.
- **1914** - The Battle of the Marne. Thirty miles north-east of Paris, the French 6th Army under General Michel-Joseph Maunoury begins attacking the right flank of German forces advancing on the French capital. By the next day, the counterattack was total. More than two million soldiers fought in the Battle of the Marne, and 100,000 of them were killed or wounded.
- **1939** - President Franklin Roosevelt declares US neutrality at start of WW II in Europe.
- **1965** - Air Mechanic Henry Cecil Oosthuizen from the Air Force Gymnasium was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in Krugersdorp. He was 19.
- **1969** - In Vietnam Lt. William Calley is charged with six specifications of premeditated murder in the death of 109 Vietnamese civilians at My Lai in March 1968.
- **1970** - Operation Jefferson Glen was launched on September 5th 1970 in the Hue Province to protect the critical installations. The United

- States 101st Airborne Division and the South Vietnamese 1st Infantry Division combined forces in what was to become the last major operation in which the U.S ground forces participated. It was also meant to strengthen the combat capability of the South Vietnamese army so they could enable them to fight the Viet Cong in the North. This parachute regiment left South Vietnam from March 1972.
- **1972** - Eleven members of the Israeli Olympic Team were killed during an attack on the Olympic Village in Munich by members of the Black September faction of the Palestinian Liberation Army. Israeli jets then bombed Palestinian positions in Lebanon and Syria in retaliation on September 8, 1972.
  - **1978** - Rifleman Michael Horn Du Plessis from 2 SAI was grievously burned and suffered smoke inhalation



**Ho Chi Minh**

while assisting to extinguish a veld fire in Windhoek. He succumbed to his injuries later in the day. He was 19.

- **1980** - Lance Corporal Ernesto Sophia from 32 Battalion was accidentally killed by friendly fire in Southern Angola during Operation Vastrap. He was 31.
- **1982** - Private Robert Peter van Spronsen from 5 Maintenance Unit was grievously burned at Ondangwa on 30 August 1982 when a cigarette was lit while standing near petrol drums and the petrol fumes ignited, causing an explosion. He succumbed to his injuries in 1 Military Hospital on 05 September 1982. He was 19.
- **1982** - Douglas Bader, the World War II RAF fighter pilot, dies on this day at the age of 72. Bader lost both his legs in an accident before the war, but he recovered, retook flight training, passed his check flights and then requested reactivation as a pilot.
- **1983** - Sergeant Ernestus Jacobus van Staden from 8 SAI was critically injured in a private motor vehicle accident near Bloemfontein. He succumbed to his injuries in the Universitas Hospital in Bloemfontein shortly after admission. He was 24.
- **1983** - The trial of Commodore Dieter Gerhardt on charges of spying for the Soviet Union began in the Cape Town High Court. Gerhardt was arrested in

1982, sentenced in 1983 to life imprisonment for passing military secrets.

- **1986** - Sapper Gary Edward Schentke from 1 Construction Regiment was accidentally killed when a road grader drove over him during construction work at the new 102 Battalion Base at Homba in the Kaokoveld. He was 19.
  - **1993** - Seven Nigerian UN peacekeepers are killed in an ambush by Somalis in Mogadishu.
- 6 September**
- **1228** - The Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick II landed in Acre, Palestine to mark the beginning of the Sixth Crusade. Frederick II was a successor to the Roman rulers of the antiquity and was crowned emperor by Pope Honorius II in 1220.
  - **1776** - during the American Revolutionary War, Ezra Lee, an American colonial soldier, commanding the 'Turtle' submarine attempted to time bomb to the hull of British Admiral Richard Howe's flagship 'Eagle' in New York Harbor. It was the first use of a submarine in warfare.
  - **1861** - Forces under Union General Ulysses S. Grant bloodlessly capture Paducah, Kentucky, which gives the Union control of the mouth of the Tennessee River.
  - **1900** - During the Second Anglo-Boer war the British,

under General French, occupy Carolina. On the same day forces under General Buller occupy Lydenburg.

- **1932** - The Battle of Boqueron started between the Bolivian and the Paraguayan armies. The battle was a major encounter in the Chaco War. The Bolivians had taken over the Boqueron outpost in 1932. The battle raged on for more than three weeks and finally resulted in the Bolivians surrendering.
- **1939** - South Africa declares war on Germany.
- **1944** - Soviet forces captured the city of Tartu manned by 69,000 German troops on their way to re-establishing their rule in Estonia.
- **1949** - Allied military authorities relinquish control of former Nazi Germany assets back to German control.
- **1965** - The US Marines and South Vietnamese forces launched Operation Piranha, as part of a major event during the course of the Vietnam War on the Batangan Peninsula. The operation included a raid on the Vietnam Army 1st regiment, by the Allied forces which resulted in several Vietnamese casualties.
- **1975** - Rifleman Leon Johannes de Wit Scheepers from 2 SAI was part of a group of patrols that were clearing all the islands down-river from Calueque Dam. During this process, he accidentally fell into the Cunene River and drowned

before he could be rescued. He was 18.

- **1976** - Soviet air force pilot Lt. Viktor Belenko lands a MiG-25 jet fighter at Hakodate in Japan and requests political asylum in the United States.
- **1977** - Corporal Thomas John Lewis Jones from 1 Kavango Battalion SWATF was killed when the Bedford truck in which he was travelling on the Rundu / Bagani Road, left the road and collided with a tree some 60 km west of Ondangwa. He was 21.
- **1977** - Commandant Johannes Petrus Human from Sector 70 Headquarters SWATF was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 49.
- **1978** - 2nd Lieutenant Andre Leon Opperman from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action in Southern Angola. He was 19.
- **1979** - During an external operation in Mocambique, code-named Ops Uric, a SAAF Puma helicopter carrying 3 SAAF Crew Members and 14 South African Nationals, all members serving in the Rhodesian Armed Forces, was shot down near Mapai in Mocambique. The SAAF casualties were: Captain Paul Denzil Velleman (25). Lieutenant Nigel David Osborne (22). Sergeant Dirk Wilhelmus Marthinus Retief (29).
- **1980** - Rifleman Alfred Gordon Smith from the Kimber-

ley Regiment was killed in a military vehicle accident at Sishen. He was 58.

- **1985** - Private Pierre Botha from 61 Base Workshops died in an accidental shooting incident at the Base. He was 20.
- **1986** - Lance Corporal Frederick Johannes Klaasen from Air Force Base Waterkloof was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in Paul Kruger Street, Pretoria. He was 20.
- **1987** - Lance Corporal Melvin Ashley Beneke from 1 Parachute Battalion Pathfinders was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces at the Lomba River in Southern Angola during Ops Modular. He was 19.
- **1988** - Sergeant N. Kibanguka from 32 Battalion was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 35.
- **1993** - Seven Nigerian United Nations peacekeepers are killed in an ambush by Somalis in Mogadishu.
- **1996** - Army troops drive Hutu rebels from their hillside positions outside Burundi's capital after three days of fighting.

**7 September**

- **1939** - The German Consulate in Cape Town packs up after South Africa's official declaration of war on Germany the previous day.

**Douglas Bader**



- **1940** - The German Luftwaffe began its Blitz bombing campaign against London during World War II.
- **1942** - Australian and American forces inflict a significant defeat upon the Japanese at the Battle of Milne Bay.
- **1977** - Rifleman J.M. Maquinda from 32 Battalion died from a gunshot wound, accidentally self-inflicted while on operations in Southern Angola. He was 30.
- **1978** - Major Lukas Gerhardus Grundling from 1 Parachute Battalion accidentally drowned at Wepener during a parachute jump with full kit. He was 29.
- **1986** - Private Shaun Anthony Sprowson from 16 Maintenance Unit was killed when his SAMAC Horse and Trailer overturned on the Rundu to Bagani Road. He was 20.
- **1987** - An intricate prisoner exchange takes place in Maputo, involving 133 Angolan soldiers, anti-apartheid activists, Klaas de Jonge, a

Dutch anthropologist, Pierre Andre Albertini, a French university lecturer and Major Wynand du Toit, a South African officer captured in Angola two years before that.

- **1988** - Constable [Hermanus Cornelius Johannes Du Plessis from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division \(Koevoet\) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 27.](#)
- **1992** - Rifleman [Johannes Lodewyk Bouwer Lourens from 4 SAI was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at White River. He was 18.](#)
- **1994** - The U.S. Army closed its headquarters in Berlin, ending the American military presence in the once-divided city after nearly half a century.

### 8 September

- **1886** - Siegfried Sassoon was born on this day. Decorated for bravery on the Western Front, he became one of the leading poets of the First World War.
- **1900** - General Buller, with 12,000 men and forty-eight guns, attack General Botha's position at Paardeplaats, near Lydenburg and Botha, with his force of 2,000 men, evacuates his position.
- **1914** - General Louis Botha announces the South African government's decision to carry the war into German

South West Africa.

- **1941** - The German Army began its blockade of Leningrad, lasting until January 1944, resulting in the deaths of almost one million Russian civilians.
- **1943** - The United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) carried out a bombing raid against the Italian town of Frascati. The raids targeted the German General Headquarters for the Mediterranean zone (O.B.S.) and the Italian headquarters near the town.
- **1943** - General Dwight Eisenhower publicly declared the surrender of Italy to Allies in the year 1943. The Italian government agreed to suspend all conflicts with the Allies.
- **1944** - London was attacked with a V2 ('Vergeltungswaffen', or 'retaliatory weapon') rocket for the first time on this day in 1944. The attack created a crater of 10 m, took three lives and injured 22 people.
- **1945** - United States troops arrive to partition the southern part of Korea in response to Soviet troops occupying the northern part of the peninsula a month earlier.
- **1951** - Jürgen Stroop, SS General during World War II and commander of Nazi forces during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, executed by hanging for crimes against humanity at age 56.
- **1967** - It is officially disclosed that South African

police are in Rhodesia actively helping in the fight against Nationalist guerrillas. This follows an attempt by several hundred guerrillas to invade South and South West Africa, from Zambia, at the urging of the Liberation Committee of the OAU in Kampala in July 1967.

- **1975** - USAF Tech Sergeant Leonard Matlovich, a decorated veteran of the Vietnam War, appears in his Air Force uniform on the cover of Time magazine with the headline "I Am a Homosexual". He is later given a general discharge.
- **1977** - Candidate Officer [Leon Loubser Jones from 4 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard flew into rising ground while he was carrying out a low level flight near Pretoria. He was 20.](#)

### 9 September

- **1943** - The invasion of Salerno began during World War II in Europe as Allied forces under General Mark Clark made amphibious landings along the western coast of Italy near Naples. Initial gains by the Allies met strong resistance from German forces.
- **1948** - Following the withdrawal of Soviet forces from North Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was proclaimed with Pyongyang as its capital.
- **1971** - [2nd Lieutenant Peter Schalk van der Merwe from](#)

[4 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 19.](#)

- **1976** - Rifleman [Christiaan Hendrik Pauley from the 1st Battalion Botha Regiment died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained in a shooting incident. He was 17.](#)
- **1976** - Longtime leader of Communist China, Chairman Mao Zedong, died. As a Chinese revolutionary soldier and statesman, he had proclaimed the People's Republic of China in 1949 in Beijing.
- **1984** - Major [Erasmus Johannes Louw from 8 SAI was killed instantly when a fellow Officer accidentally shot him in the back of the head with a 1 000ft rocket parachute flare during a training exercise at Riemvasmaak outside Upington. He was 29.](#)
- **1990** - Rifleman [Derio Arndse from the 2nd Battalion South African Cape Corps was critically injured in a military vehicle accident on 07 September 1990 and succumbed to his injuries in hospital on 09 September 1990. He was 26.](#)

### 10 September

- **1802** - Frans Bresler, landdroos of Graaff-Reinet, confers with Lieutenant-Governor Francis Dundas in Algoa Bay on the withdrawal of British troops from the eastern frontier of SA.
- **1813** - At the Battle of Lake

Erie U.S. Naval Captain Oliver Hazard Perry defeats a British flotilla.

- **1900** - Representatives of the ZAR and the Free State governments meet in Nelspruit and decide to allow President Kruger to go to Europe (initially for a period of six months), to prevent the possibility of his falling into British hands and to plead the Republican cause in Europe.
- **1901** - The youngest Boer commandant, 19 year old Commandant Piet van der Merwe and twenty-three burghers are killed in action at Driefontein, Cape Colony, when attacked by about 700 troops under Colonel Crabbe. Only three burghers escape.
- **1914** - The SA parliament decides with 91 votes against twelve to enter into WW1.
- **1919** - Following the defeat of Germany in World War I, the victorious Allies signed the Treaty of Saint-Germain ceding parts of pre-war German-Austria to Italy and Czechoslovakia. Austria was also forbidden to unite with Germany.
- **1943** - Hitler's troops occupied Rome and took over the protection of Vatican City.
- **1967** - Speaking at a special news conference the Rhodesian Prime Minister, Ian Smith, welcomes the partic-

ipation of the South African Police in Rhodesian anti-terrorist operations.

- **1974** - The South African Minister of Defence states that South Africa will provide bases and communication facilities to the maritime forces of Western nations interested in the defence of the Cape route.
- **1979** - Rifleman [Albertus Gottlieb from 101 Battalion SWATF was killed in a military vehicle accident in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.](#)
- **1985** - Major [Johan Petrus Uys from the Bothaville Commando was killed in a military vehicle accident at the intersection of the Bothaville and Wesselsbron Road. He was 51.](#)
- **1987** - Special Sergeant [Simeon Shikulo from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K \(Koevoet\) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 28.](#)



**Ian Smith**

- **2004** - Mercenary leader Simon Mann is sentenced to seven years in jail by a Zimbabwean court on weapons charges. This was for planning a coup d'état in Equatorial Guinea.

### 11 September

- **1813** - British troops arrive in Mount Vernon and prepare to march to and invade Washington D.C.
- **1814** - The climax of the Battle of Plattsburgh, a major United States victory in the war which ended Britain's final invasion of the northern states.
- **1840** - British bombard Beirut to force Mehmet Ali, pasha of Egypt, to submit.
- **1900** - Martial law is declared in the Transvaal.
- **1919** - U.S. Marines invade Honduras.
- **1941** - Franklin D. Roosevelt orders any Axis ship found in American waters be shot on sight.
- **1944** - The first Allied troops of the U.S. Army cross the western border of Germany.
- **1956** - Billy Bishop VC, CB, DSO & Bar, MC, DFC, ED, Canadian World War I flying ace, dies aged 62.
- **1965** - The 1st Cavalry Division of the United States Army arrives in Vietnam.
- **1974** - Warrant Officer Class II Olaf Volmer Jensen from 2 SAI Died of Wounds at the hospital at Walvis Bay after sustaining multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental hand grenade explosion. He

was 44.

- **1977** - Rifleman Rodriques Pedro from 32 Battalion was accidentally killed in an anti-personnel landmine explosion while assisting to lay a minefield during an operation in Southern Angola. He was 32.
- **1977** - Corporal Albertus Petrus van Zyl from the Tygerberg Commando was Killed in Action when his Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a landmine near Oshigambo. He was 31.
- **1983** - 2nd Lieutenant Deon De Villiers from 3 Medical Battalion Group was killed in a military vehicle accident in Bloemfontein. He was 26.
- **2001** - Thousands are killed after terrorists crashed hijacked airliners into the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington. The effect was felt world wide, also in SA, where i.e. flights to the USA were suspended, security measures at airports tightened, and the economy affected adversely.

### 12 September

- **1861** - The First Battle of Lexington was fought during the American Civil War between the Union Army and the pro-Confederate Missouri State Guard. The battle was fought from September 12 to September 20, 1861 and is also known as the Siege of Lexington. The

pro-Confederate Missouri State Guard emerged victorious in the battle.

- **1918** - American Expeditionary Forces under the command of General Pershing launched the U. S's major offensive in Europe as an independent army. The attack occurred at the Saint-Mihiel salient in France. This was a strategic location that was occupied by the Germans who blocked rail traffic between Paris and eastern sections of the front. The American offensive forced the German army decided to abandon the salient.
- **1931** - Andries J. Bester (81), Boer commandant during Second Anglo-Boer War, dies in Paul Roux, OFS.
- **1940** - Italian forces begin an offensive into Egypt from Libya.
- **1942** - RMS Laconia, a British troopship, was carrying civilians, Polish soldiers and Italian POWs to Britain via West African coast when a German U-boat U-156 torpedoed the ship. Operating partly under the dictates of the old prize rules, the U-boat commander immediately commenced rescue operations, broadcasting their humanitarian intent to all Allied forces in the area, and was joined by all U-boats in the vicinity. American bombers deliberately bombed U-156 and the rescue mission proved disastrous to both the survivors and the Germans. This event

forced the German navy to forbid such acts of kindness to get an upper edge in the war.

- **1943** - Former Italian Dictator Benito Mussolini was rescued by German paratroopers on orders from Adolf Hitler. Mussolini was being held prisoner by Italian authorities following the collapse of his Fascist regime.
- **1944** - U.S. Army troops enter Germany for the first time.
- **1960** - The Central African Republics, Ghana and Guinea threaten to withdraw their troops from a security force unless the United Nations gives up its control of Leopoldville radio and the Congo's airports.
- **1966** - Minister of Defence P.W. Botha announces in Cape Town that the posts of Secretary for Defence and Commandant-General of the Defence Force are to be combined under one head.
- **1968** - Warrant Officer Class I Pieter Francois Pienaar for the South African Corps of Signals was killed when his military vehicle overturned 11 miles from Colesburg on the Naauwpoort Road.. He was 37.
- **1969** - Rifleman Cornelius Gregorius Labuschagne from 4 SAI was accidentally killed after he suffocated as a result of gas at the Klerksdorp Provincial Hospital. He was 18.
- **1971** - Rifleman Trevor

Cowie from 6 SAI was killed in a private vehicle accident while returning to the unit after a weekend pass. The accident occurred at Howsens Poort, South of Grahamstown. He was 18.

- **1974** - Military officers depose Emperor Haile Selassie from the Ethiopian throne he had occupied for more than fifty years.
- **1978** - Candidate Officer Lancelot Emberger from Central Flying School, Dunnottar was killed when his AT-6 Harvard failed to recover from a spin and crashed near Delmas. He was 22.
- **1979** - Rifleman Johannes Conga HC from "C" Company, 31 Battalion (201 Battalion) was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Zambia. During this action, he deliberately drew enemy fire upon himself in order to save the life of his Officer, Lieutenant Coetzee. Rifleman Conga was posthumously awarded the Honoris Crux Decoration for his unselfish act of self-sacrifice. He was 25.
- **1980** - Corporal Jose Francisco from 32 Battalion was critically wounded by cannon fire from an Alouette Gunship during a contact with a numerically superior enemy force in Southern Angola. He was evacuated to Grootfontein Hospital

where he unfortunately succumbed to his wounds later in the day. He was 29.

- **1980** - Lieutenant Vincent Peter Lautenslager from 8 Squadron was Reported Missing on 12 September 1980 when his Atlas MB326K Impala Mk II flew into the ground near Xangongo while providing close air support to Army Ground Forces in Southern Angola. The subsequent Board of Enquiry found no evidence of hostile enemy action. He has no known grave. He was 23.
- **1980** - The Turkish army under the leadership of General Evren carried out a coup. Before the coup, the country was in a chaos and was without an elected president. The coup was generally welcomed by the public because it brought order to the nation.
- **1982** - Sergeant William Paul Courtney from 4 Reconnaissance Regiment died as a result of injuries sustained in a private motorcycle accident in Central Durban. He was 24.

**Benito Mussolini**





- **1982** - Corporal Christiaan Benjamin Ehlers from the Air Force Gymnasium was killed in a private motorcycle accident. He was 22.
- **1983** - Rifleman Michael Anthony Costello from 7 SAI was accidentally killed during a fire and movement exercise. He was 20.
- **1983** - Rifleman Johannes August van der Westhuizen from the South African Cape Corps was killed after being struck by a bullet from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle while at Bagani. He was 19.
- **1984** - Rifleman Pieter Taljaard from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned. He was 19.
- **1985** - Major Johannes Andries van der Vyver from 32 Battalion was decapitated by aircraft propeller and died instantly. He was 31.
- **1985** - Private Ricky Grant Whitaker from 5 Maintenance Unit died after being accidentally blasted in the face with a fire extinguisher at Ondangwa. He was 18.
- **1987** - Rifleman Fanie de Bruin from the South African Cape Corps was killed when his Buffel vehicle overturned during a contact and subsequent hot pursuit operation against SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 21.
- **1987** - Lance Corporal Stephen Lesley Roman from the South African Cape

Corps was killed in a motor vehicle accident in Mamelodi, North of Pretoria. He was 21.

- **1990** - Lieutenant Edward Diggle from 42 Squadron was killed when his Aer-macchi AM-3C Bosbok crashed at Potchefstroom. He was 20.

- **1990** - A treaty was signed by East and West Germany and the Allies of World War II allowing for the restoration of sovereignty to a re-unified Germany.

### 13 September

- **1759** - James Wolfe, British Army officer who defeated the French in Canada and captured Quebec, dies in battle at the age of 32.
- **1847** - During the American–Mexican War, U.S. forces under General Winfield Scott capture Mexico City effectively ending the war.
- **1851** - American Army physician Walter Reed (1851-1902) was born in Gloucester County, Virginia. Best known for his Yellow Fever research, he served as an army surgeon for more than 20 years. The U.S. Army's general hospital in Washington, D.C., is named in his honour.
- **1860** - Army General John J. Pershing (1860-1948) was born in Laclede, Missouri. He commanded the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) during World War I and oversaw the Meuse-Ar-

gonne operation that helped bring about the Armistice of November 11, 1918.

- **1862** - Union soldiers find a copy of Robert E. Lee's battle plans in a field outside Frederick, Maryland. It is the prelude to the Battle of Antietam.
- **1882** - During the Egyptian Rebellion, British forces under Wolseley rout the Egyptians at Tel-el-Kebir and proceed to occupy Egypt and the Sudan.
- **1889** - Lieutenant-Colonel R.G. Kekewich arrives in Kimberley to assess the military situation and to advise the new General Officer Commanding British Troops in South Africa, Lieutenant-General F.W.E.F. Forestier-Walker, on the defence of the town.
- **1900** - During the Second Anglo-Boer War Lord Roberts issues a proclamation calling on the Republican forces still in the field to surrender.
- **1914** - General Jan C.G. Kemp resigns as officer in the SA army because of the war policy of the Botha government and joins the Rebellion force.
- **1940** - Italy invades Egypt.
- **1946** - Amon Göth, Austrian SS commandant of the Płaszów concentration camp, is executed by hanging at the age of 37.
- **1951** - During the Korean War the 32 day Battle of Heart Break Ridge begins.
- **1964** - Egypt and Saudi Ara-

bia announce agreement of peaceful settlement of two-year-old Yemeni civil war.

- **1970** - Six members from 5 SAI and one member from 3 SAI were killed while being transported in a Gladiator Troop Carrier back to Ladysmith Army Camp. The casualties were: Rifleman Hilton Dudley Coker (19). Rifleman John Grinyer (20). Rifleman Peter Alfons Ernst Leonhardt (19). Rifleman Kevin Eric Mack (18). Rifleman Richard Neville Marriott (17). Rifleman Gregory George Olyott (18). Rifleman Mark Felice Valero (18).
- **1976** - Rifleman Christiaan Frederik Ehlers from 11 Commando Regiment was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents approximately 9km from Eenhana. He was 19.
- **1977** - Lance Corporal Paul Onre Dossena from the Natal Mounted Rifles was Killed in Action when his Bosvark vehicle detonated a boosted a Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese Mine while travelling to Nkongo. He was 19.
- **1985** - Chief Petty Officer Colin George Clement from Naval Base Simonstown collapsed after apparently suffering a heart attack while he was at the Catering School. He died later in 2 Military Hospital. He was 42.
- **1985** - Rifleman M.H.

Mutirua from 102 Battalion SWATF accidentally drowned during a river crossing while his patrol was carrying out a follow-up Operation against SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 22.

- **1987** - Six members of 32 Battalion were Killed in Action in a single incident during Ops Modular in Southern Angola. The Casualties were: Captain Alfred Desmond McCallum (28). 2nd Lieutenant José Raimundo Alves (20). Lance Corporal Matthys Michael De Klerk (20). Trooper Marthinus Johannes Kuyler (20). Lance Corporal Joao Rodrigues Mananza (33). Lance Corporal Waite Tchipango (31).
- **1988** - Gunner Andre Meiring from 4 Artillery Regiment was killed in a military vehicle accident at the Army Battle School at Lohatla. He was 19.
- **1990** - Private Warren Ralph Beech from 1 Military Town Management Fire Department was accidentally killed when he fell from a fire tower at Voortrekkerhoogte during fire practice drills when his harness safety shackle failed. He was 19.
- **1991** - Rifleman Amos van Wyk from the South African Cape Corps died in Grey's Hospital after being critically injured when the Samil 20

vehicle he was driving overturned near Richmond. He was 17.

### 14 September

- **1795** - British troops march from Simonstown and General J.H. Craig enters Cape Town. Sluysken formally surrenders on 16 September.
- **1812** - Napoleon and his troops first entered Moscow as the retreating Russians set the city on fire. Napoleon found it was impossible to stay through the winter in the ruined city. He then began a retreat from Moscow which became one of the great disasters of military history. Fewer than 20,000 of the original 500,000 men with him survived the Russian campaign.
- **1852** - Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington and British Prime Minister (1828-30) dies at 83.
- **1886** - Erich Hoepner, World War II German general and early proponent of mecha-



**John J. Pershing**

nisation and armoured warfare, was born on this day.

- **1901** - Andrey Andreyevich Vlasov, World War II Russian Red Army general, was born on this day.
- **1914** - The first ships with South African soldiers on board leave for the ports of German South West Africa to invade the territory.
- **1942** - A plan designed to fight Italian forces, Operation 'Agreement' is executed in Libya.
- **1980** - Rifleman Robert Edward Buchholtz from 4 SAI was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in East London while on a weekend pass. He was 20.
- **1985** - Sergeant Peter Henry Anthony from 8 SAI was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned near Etale Base. He was 25.
- **1985** - T/Leading Marine Simon Games Auld from 1 Marine Brigade was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in Port Elizabeth. He was 19.
- **1988** - Sapper Andre' Stephan Lategan from 5 Military Works Unit was accidentally killed on the Dwaalboom Road near Thabazimbi while loading a road grader. He went under the trailer to insert the retaining pin but the pin snapped causing both the trailer and grader to fall on him, killing him instantly. He was 21.
- **1992** - Seaman Goodman Mthunzi Maphumulo from Naval Station SAS Jalsena

accidentally drowned during a military training exercise at the Midmar Dam while he was undergoing Basic Military Training. He was 22.

- **1993** - Lance Corporal Pieter Joachim Smith died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained while at Broederstroom. He was 22.
- **2002** - The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a Christian fundamentalist rebel group trying to overthrow the Ugandan government since 1987, stages a series of attacks in which four people are killed and forty-one abducted.
- **2003** - President Kumba Yalla of Guinea-Bissau is toppled in a military coup.
- **2004** - The South African Air Force's newest addition, the Gripen fighter jet, takes its first flight around Cape Town, causing an ear-piercing sonic boom.

### 15 September

- **1776** - British forces under General William Howe captured New York during the American Revolution.
- **1882** - British forces occupy Cairo.
- **1901** - Fifteen members of the notorious special British unit called the Bushveld Carbineers send a petition to Colonel Hall of the Royal Artillery, requesting a full and impartial inquiry into the alleged atrocities perpetrated by members of their unit.
- **1914** - Boer leader General

Koos de la Rey, en route to Potchefstroom with general Beyers, is shot dead when his chauffeur-driven car fails to stop at a roadblock near Langlaagte, Johannesburg. (The roadblock had been erected to forestall William Foster of the Foster Gang, who shot dead a policeman during the day.)

- **1916** - Tanks were first used in combat, during the Allied offensive at the Battle of the Somme, in World War I.
- **1940** - The height of the Battle of Britain occurred as massive German air raids took place against London, Southampton, Bristol, Cardiff, Liverpool and Manchester. The British claimed 185 German planes were shot down.
- **1942** - U.S. Navy aircraft carrier USS Wasp is torpedoed at Guadalcanal.
- **1950** - UN forces land at Inchon in South Korea during the Korean War.
- **1962** - The Soviet ship Poltava heads toward Cuba, one of the events that sets into motion the Cuban Missile Crisis.
- **1967** - Egyptian commander in Six-Day War with Israel, Field Marshal Abdel Hakim Amer, commits suicide.
- **1978** - France returns the deposit paid by South Africa for two corvettes and two submarines.
- **1982** - Warrant Officer Class II Pieter Ryno Johannes Swart from the Maritime Operations Centre died after

suffering a fatal heart attack during a fitness walk. He was 52.

- **1984** - Rifleman Otto Bismarck Harms was accidentally killed at the Germiston railway station when he was struck by a moving train. He was 19.
- **1985** - Corporal Bruce Andrew Fidler HC (Posthumous) was an Ops Medic from 7 Medical Battalion Group operating with Special Forces that were providing operational support to Paratroopers and other SADF and UNITA Forces in Southern Angola during Operation Magneto. He was Reported Missing on 14 September 1985 when two vehicles were ambushed by approximately 40 enemy troops. Most of the UNITA soldiers were killed and the two Artillery Officers and Medical Orderly (Bruce) who were in the second vehicle were wounded. The two Officers successfully evaded but Bruce was captured. He was brutally tortured and interrogated by the enemy before being executed but he never once revealed the Order of Battle for an upcoming operation in support of UNITA, or the SADF Artillery positions or the location of the SAMS Surgical Team thereby enabling them to successfully evade capture and reach South African lines. His remains were repatriated back to South Africa in June 1992

and cremated on 15 September 1992. He was posthumously awarded the Honoris Crux for bravery and selfless devotion above and beyond the call of duty in the face of brutal torture. He was 21.

- **1988** - Lance Corporal Brian Collin Deyes from Air Force Headquarters was killed instantly when his private motor vehicle was involved in an accident in Potgieter Street and overturned. He was 20.
- **1997** - An Egyptian military court convicts seventy-two Islamic militants of subversion and sentences four of them to death.

### 16 September

- **1776** - The Battle of Harlem Heights is fought during the American Revolutionary War.
- **1891** - German admiral and politician Karl Dönitz was born on this day.
- **1910** - SS Colonel Erich Kempka, who served as Adolf Hitler's primary chauffeur from 1934 to April 1945, was born on this day.
- **1914** - The Siege of Przemyśl (present-day Poland) begins during World War I.
- **1940** - Italian troops conquer Sidi Barrani.
- **1943** - The German Tenth Army reports that it can no longer contain the Allied

bridgehead around Salerno.

- **1945** - The surrender of the Japanese troops in Hong Kong is accepted by Royal Navy Admiral Sir Cecil Harcourt.
- **1955** - The military coup to unseat President Juan Perón of Argentina is launched at midnight.
- **1955** - A Soviet Navy Zulu-class submarine becomes the first to launch a ballistic missile.
- **1970** - King Hussein of Jordan declares military rule following the hijacking of four civilian airliners by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). This results in the formation of the Black September Palestinian paramilitary unit.
- **1975** - The first prototype of the Mikoyan MiG-31 interceptor makes its maiden flight.
- **1978** - Rifleman Gregory James Engledoe from the South African Cape Corps was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He



Juan Peron

was 18.

- **1982** - Rifleman Gabriel Johannes Schwartz from Infantry School was killed in a military vehicle accident at Otjiwarongo. He was 21.
- **1982** - Beginning of a two day massacre in Palestinian refugee camps in West Beirut as Christian militiamen (the Phalangists) entered Sabra and Shatila and began shooting hundreds of Palestinians, including elderly men, women and children.
- **1983** - Three members from 102 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action during a contact with a large group of SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near the Cut-line. The casualties were: Rifleman K Kavari (19). Rifleman J Tinda. (18). Rifleman K Kavari (18).
- **1985** - Lance Corporal Glen Stuart Ruthven from 3 Medical Battalion Group was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Maitland. He was 28.
- **1985** - Gunner Alec Ridgard from 10 Artillery Brigade was critically injured in a private motorcycle accident on 14 June 1985 at Westonaria. He was admitted to the H.F. Verwoerd Hospital in Pretoria where he succumbed to his injuries on 16 September 1985. He was 19.
- **1987** - Rifleman Pieter Andreas Visagie from 61 Mechanised Battalion Group was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 23.
- **1988** - Rifleman Sean Cochrane Ellis from 61 Mechanised Battalion Group was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident between Ogongo and Okalongo. He was 21.
- **1991** - Two members from the SADF Dog Training Centre died from the effects of smoke inhalation at Bourkes Luck while assisting to extinguish a raging veld fire. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Adrian Marcel Juskiewicz (18). Lance Corporal Michael Swanepoel (19).
- **1999** - Lieutenant Sibusiso Madubela of the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) went on a murder rampage at 1 South African Infantry Battalion. He opened fire with an R4 Automatic Assault Rifle, killing seven serving SANDF members including one female civilian worker in the employ of the SANDF and wounding another twelve were wounded, one critically. His murder spree came to an abrupt end when he was intercepted and shot dead.
- **2007** - Mercenaries working for Blackwater Worldwide shoot and kill 17 Iraqis in Nisour Square, Baghdad.
- **2014** - The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant launches its Kobani offensive against Syrian-Kurdish forces.

### 17 September

- **1862** - The bloodiest day in U.S. military history oc-

curred as General Robert E. Lee and the Confederate armies were stopped at Antietam in Maryland by General George B. McClellan and numerically superior Union forces. By nightfall 26,000 men were dead, wounded, or missing.

- **1894** - Battle of the Yalu River, the largest naval engagement of the First Sino-Japanese War.
- **1901** - Commandant-General Louis Botha and General Cheere Emmett join forces to invade Natal.
- **1901** - A Boer column defeats a British force at the Battle of Blood River Poort.
- **1901** - Boers capture a squadron of the 17th Lancers at the Battle of Elands River.
- **1916** - Manfred von Richthofen ("The Red Baron"), a flying ace of the German *Luftstreitkräfte*, wins his first aerial combat near Cambrai, France.
- **1939** - Soviet Russians invaded Eastern Poland, meeting little resistance and taking over 200,000 Poles prisoner. This was done in accordance with the Nazi-Soviet Pact in which the Nazis and Soviets had predetermined how they would divide up Poland.
- **1939** - German submarine U-29 sinks the British aircraft carrier HMS Courageous.
- **1940** - Following Nazi Germany's defeat in the Battle of Britain, Hitler postpones Operation Sea Lion indefinitely.

nitely.

- **1941** - Soviet forces enter Tehran marking the end of the Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran.
- **1944** - Allied Airborne troops parachute into the Netherlands as the "Market" half of Operation Market Garden.
- **1944** - German forces are attacked by the Allies in the Battle of San Marino.
- **1962** - Warrant Officer Class 1 Johannes Jacobus Squier Heunis from 91 Ammunition Depot collapsed and died after suffering a fatal heart attack while in Pretoria. He was 45.
- **1963** - Adolph Gysbert (Sailor) Malan, SA fighter pilot during WWII and later national president of the Torch Commando, dies in Kimberley.
- **1965** - The Battle of Chawinda is fought between Pakistan and India.
- **1980** - Rifleman Adriaan Christoffel Ackerman from 7 SAI was accidentally shot dead by a fellow member while stationed at Nkongo Base. He was 20.
- **1981** - Rifleman Gerhardus Johan Myburgh from 1 SAI died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained while at Omuthiya. He was 19.
- **1981** - Trooper Diederick Arnoldus Steyn from 2 Special Service Battalion was critically injured in a military vehicle accident on 7 September 1981 and succumbed to his injuries on 1

Military Hospital on 17 September 1981. He was 19.

- **1982** - Corporal Luther Johannes Botha from the Northern Transvaal Provost Unit was killed in private motor cycle accident in Hillbrow, Johannesburg. He was 23.
- **1984** - Corporal C Paulo from 32 Battalion was accidentally smothered and suffocated during a training exercise. He was 28.
- **1987** - Sergeant Rudolf Morris from the South African Cape Corps died from a stab wound received during an altercation with a fellow soldier while at the Touwsriver Training Area. He was 29.
- **1991** - Rifleman Louis Johann Swart from the Dog Training Centre died from the effects of smoke inhalation while assisting to extinguish a veld fire at Bourkes Luck. He was 19.

### 18 September

- **1759** - During the Seven Years' War, the British capture Quebec City.
- **1898** - War is barely averted when a British expedition to establish a route through Africa reaches an obscure Sudanese fort and finds the French already there.
- **1900** - During the Second Anglo-Boer War Brigadier-General Stephenson occu-

pies Nelspruit without opposition and Lord Roberts transfers his headquarters there.

- **1914** - A body of Active Citizen Force (A.C.F.) troops of the Union of SA, nearly 1 800 strong, lands at Lüderitz Bay (Angra Pequena) in South West Africa and advance some distance into the desert.
- **1931** - The Mukden Incident gives Japan a pretext to invade and occupy Manchuria.
- **1939** - Lord Haw-Haw (William Joyce) begins transmitting pro-Nazi/anti-Allied propaganda.
- **1940** - The British liner SS City of Benares is sunk by German submarine U-48; those killed include 77 child refugees.
- **1943** - The Jews of Minsk are massacred at Sobibór.
- **1943** - Adolf Hitler orders the deportation of Danish Jews.



**Sailor Malan**

- **1944** - The British submarine HMS Tradewind torpedoes the Japanese ship Jun'yō Maru, 5,600 killed.
- **1945** - General Douglas MacArthur moves his command headquarters to Tokyo.
- **1947** - The U.S. Air Force was established as a separate military service.
- **1948** - Operation Polo is terminated after the Indian Army accepts the surrender of the army of Osman Ali Khan, Asaf Jah VII, Nizam of Hyderabad.
- **1961** - Dag Hammarskjöld, United Nations (UN) Secretary General, dies when his plane crashes under mysterious circumstances near Ndola in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia).
- **1964** - North Vietnamese Army begins infiltration of South Vietnam.
- **1969** - Rifleman Collin Arthur Williams from 4 SAI died from lung complications after participating in an unauthorised gas exercise held at the training grounds in Doornkop. He was 18.
- **1970** - Private Abraham Jacobus Goosen from 1 Air Depot was accidentally killed in a crane accident at Voortrekkerhoogte. He was 17.
- **1971** - Egypt and Israel exchange rocket fire across Suez Canal.
- **1973** - Rifleman Terence Arthur Langley from 3 SAI died from a gunshot wound, accidentally self-inflicted while he was stationed at
- **1979** - Corporal Andries Petrus Hanneman from Northern Transvaal Command was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Potgietersrus. He was 19.
- **1981** - Rifleman Petrus Jacobus van Staden from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed in a private motor cycle accident on the Bloemfontein to Winburg Road. He was 18.
- **1981** - Corporal Johannes Jacobus van Staden from the Transvaal Scottish died in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 23.
- **1986** - Airman Hendrik Frensch van Zyl from the Air Force Base Hoedspruit Fire Section was found murdered by persons unknown at Linbro Park, Johannesburg near the Alexandra Township with a knife wound to the neck. He was 20.
- **1988** - 2nd Lieutenant Petrus Gerhardus Lourens Koen from 61 Mechanised Battalion Group was critically injured on 16 September 1988 when his Ratel overturned while traveling between Ogongo and Okalongo in Northern Owamboland. He was evacuated to 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria where he succumbed to his injuries on 18 September 1988. He was 19.
- **1997** - Muslim extremists fire on a bus outside a museum in Cairo, killing ten people, mostly German tourists.
- **1998** - End of pro-democracy uprisings in Myanmar

Rundu. He was 18.

- after a bloody military coup by the State Law and Order Restoration Council. Thousands, mostly monks and civilians (primarily students), are killed by the Tatmadaw.
- **1991** - Yugoslavia begins a naval blockade of seven Adriatic port cities.
- **1997** - Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention is adopted.
- **2015** - Two security personnel, 17 worshippers in a mosque, and 13 militants are killed following a Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan attack on a Pakistan Air Force base on the outskirts of Peshawar.
- **2016** - Seventeen Indian Army security personnel killed in the Indian Administred Kashmir by anti-government militants.

### 19 September

- **1676** - Jamestown is burned to the ground by the forces of Nathaniel Bacon during Bacon's Rebellion.
- **1863** - The first day of the Battle of Chickamauga, in northwestern Georgia, the bloodiest two-day battle of the conflict, and the only significant Confederate victory in the war's Western Theater.
- **1870** - Having invaded the Papal States a week earlier, the Italian Army lays siege to Rome, entering the city the next day, after which the Pope described himself as a Prisoner in the Vatican.
- **1916** - During the East African Campaign of World War I, colonial armed forces of

- the Belgian Congo (Force Publique) under the command of General Charles Tombeur captured the town of Tabora after heavy fighting.
- **1918** - Two infantry battalions of Cape Corps capture Square Hill in Palestine.
- **1939** - The Battle of Kępa Oksywska concludes, with Polish losses reaching roughly 14% of all the forces engaged.
- **1944** - Armistice between Finland and Soviet Union is signed, marking the end of the Continuation War.
- **1957** - First American underground nuclear bomb test (part of Operation Plumbob).
- **1978** - Rifleman John James Hearn Cloete from the Rand Light Infantry was accidentally killed in a mortar bomb explosion at the Swartland Training Area near Rundu. He was 23.
- **1983** - Special Constable U. Ndiaombe from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 31.
- **1984** - Rifleman David Schalk van der Merwe from 1 SAI died from a gunshot wound sustained as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle while at the De Brug Training Area. He was 18.
- **1994** - U.S. troops invaded

- Haiti, with the stated goal of restoring democracy.
- **2003** - UN Security Council agrees to send 15,000 peace-keeping troops to Liberia.
- **2006** - The Thai military stages a coup in Bangkok. The Constitution is revoked and martial law is declared.

### 20 September

- **1834** - The troopship Charlotte is wrecked in Algoa Bay and ninety-seven people drown.
- **1857** - The Indian Rebellion of 1857 ends with the recapture of Delhi by troops loyal to the East India Company.
- **1915** - A new battalion consisting of Cape Coloured men, called the Cape Corps, is established with the view of being dispatched to East Africa in 1916.
- **1941** - The Holocaust in Lithuania: Four hundred three Jews (128 men, 176 women and 99 children) were murdered by *Einsatzkommando* 3 and the local police in Nemenčinė.
- **1942** - The Holocaust in Ukraine: In the course of two days a German *einsatzgruppen* murders at least 3,000 Jews in Letychiv.
- **1965** - Following the Battle of Burki, the Indian Army captures Dograi in course of the Indo-Pakistani War of 1965.
- **1967** - Israeli tank shelling sinks three Egyptian troop-

- carrying boats in the Suez Canal. Israel claims the ships violated the Egyptian-Israeli agreement banning small craft navigation in the waterway.
- **1979** - Emperor Bokassa I is overthrown in a bloodless coup in the Central African Republic.
- **1979** - Rifleman S. Shangweni from 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 24.
- **1981** - Two members from 4 SAI were Killed in Action in Southern Angola when their Buffel troop carrier with 11 troops on board, detonated a landmine. The casualties were: Rifleman Roderick James Leonard MacIntosh (18). Rifleman Edward Daniel van Rooyen (19).
- **1987** - Rifleman (Gunner) William George Beukman from 4 SAI was killed in action. He was 19.



**Douglas MacArthur**

- **1993** - Erich 'Bubi' Hartmann, World War II Luftwaffe fighter pilot, dies on this day at the age of 71. Hartmann was the leading fighter ace of World War II with 352 credited kills.
- **2011** - The United States military ends its "Don't ask, don't tell" policy, allowing gay men and women to serve openly for the first time.

### 21 September

- **1780** - During the American Revolutionary War, Benedict Arnold gives the British the plans to West Point.
- **1896** - British force under Horatio Kitchener takes Dongola in the Sudan.
- **1899** - During the Second Anglo-Boer War, Hong Kong offers military assistance to Great Britain.
- **1942** - The Holocaust in Ukraine: On the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, Nazis send over 1,000 Jews of Pidhayski to Belzec extermination camp.
- **1942** - The Holocaust in Poland: At the end of Yom Kippur, Germans order Jews to permanently evacuate Konstantynów and move to the ghetto in Biala Podlaska, established to assemble Jews from seven nearby towns, including Janów Podlaski, Rossosz and Terespol.
- **1942** - The Boeing B-29 Superfortress makes its maiden flight.
- **1953** - Lieutenant No Kum-sok, a North Korean pilot, defects to South Korea and

is associated with Operation Moolah.

- **1960** - United Nations deploys 4 000 troops to Katanga to prevent the massacre of Baluba tribesmen by provincial troops and police in Congo.
- **1964** - The North American XB-70 Valkyrie, the world's first Mach 3 bomber, makes its maiden flight from Palm-dale, California.
- **1966** - Able Seaman Phillipus Johannes Havenga from SAS Simonsberg was killed in a diving training accident in False Bay. He was 20.
- **1971** - Candidate Officer Hendrik Oswald Meyer Odendaal from Flying Training School Langebaanweg was killed when his Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I crashed in the Kouebokke Mountains near Citrusdal while carrying out a solo night Navigation exercise. He was 20.
- **1978** - Rifleman Johanne Cornelius Du Plessis from 11 Commando Regiment was critically wounded in a shooting incident at Etale Base. He later succumbed to his wounds in 1 Military Hospital. He was 21.
- **1978** - Sergeant Hendrik Gerhardus van der Merwe from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment attached to "D" Squadron Rhodesian Special Air Service was Killed in Action when he was hit in the throat by enemy rifle fire while participating in an attack on a ZANLA Base

in the Chimoio area of Mocimboa do Limpopo during Operation Snoop. He was 23.

- **1982** - Rifleman Dumba Catumbele from 201 Battalion SWATF was killed in an accidental explosion in an ammunition bunker at Omega. He was 23.
- **1988** - Rifleman Douw Cornet from 7 SAI attached to 202 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Mashari. He was 19.
- **1989** - Rifleman Rivers Ammon Sibuyi from the Kruger National Park Commando was killed after being attacked by a lion while on foot patrol in the Northern section of the Kruger National Park. He was 31.
- **1990** - Charles Taylor, leader of a Liberian rebel faction, announces a unilateral cease-fire set to take effect the next day.
- **2004** - Major Catherine Labuschagne (25) makes history when she becomes the first woman fighter pilot in the world to fly a Gripen fighter jet during the opening of the African Aerospace and Defence Air Show at the Waterkloof Air Force base.
- **2013** - Al-Shabaab Islamic militants attack the Westgate shopping mall in Nairobi, Kenya, killing at least 67 people.

### 22 September

- **1776** - During the American Revolution, Nathan Hale was executed without a trial

after he was caught spying on British troops on Long Island, his last words, "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

- **1828** - Shaka, Zulu chief and founder of the Zulu empire, is murdered by his two half-brothers Dingane and Mhlangana. Dingane assumes the throne.
- **1882** - Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, who served as Chief of the Armed Forces High Command (Oberkommando der Wehrmacht or OKW) in Nazi Germany during World War II, was born on this day.
- **1900** - As result of a military notice on this date, the first two refugee camps are established at Pretoria and Bloemfontein, initially with the aim to protect the families of burghers who had surrendered voluntarily. As the families of combatant burghers were also driven into these and other camps, they ceased to be 'refugee' camps and became 'concentration' camps.
- **1900** - The British, under Colonel Settle, enter Schweizer-Reneke, in western Transvaal.
- **1914** - German submarine SM U-9 torpedoes and sinks the British cruisers HMS Aboukir, Hogue and Cressy on the Broad Fourteens off the Dutch coast with the loss of over 1,400 men.
- **1939** - Joint victory parade of Wehrmacht and Red Army in Brest-Litovsk at

the end of the Invasion of Poland.

- **1965** - The Indo-Pakistani War of 1965 (also known as the Second Kashmir War) between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, ends after the UN calls for a ceasefire.
- **1979** - Rifleman William Ledgeton Saunders from 3 SAI was shot dead by another soldier while on guard duty in a bunker at Eenhana. He was 18.
- **1980** - Iraq invades Iran.
- **1985** - Rifleman Hymie Diamond from 5 SAI was killed in a private motor vehicle accident, at Vryheid. He was 19.
- **1989** - Two members from 85 Combat Flying School were killed when their Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I crashed near Sabie during a routine training flight. The casualties were: Lieutenant Werner Bredenkamp (20). Lieutenant Deon Joubert (20).
- **1991** - 2nd Lieutenant Nathaniel Roesch from the Dog Training Centre died from the effects of smoke inhalation while assisting to extinguish a veld fire at Bourkes Luck. He was 19.
- **1998** - Eight members of the SANDF, six from 1 Parachute Battalion and two from 7 Medical Battalion Group, were killed in action by Lesotho Army Forces during Ops Bolesas.

### 23 September

- **1869** - General Christiaan Frederik Beyers, Boer general, is born in Stellenbosch.
- **1890** - Field Marshal Friedrich von Paulus (1890-1957) was born on this day. Von Paulus led the German 6th Army at Stalingrad.
- **1942** - The Matanikau action on Guadalcanal begins when U.S. Marines attack Japanese units along the Matanikau River.
- **1950** - During the Battle of Hill 282 in Koera, the first US friendly-fire incident on British military personnel since World War II occurs.
- **1979** - The world press speculates that a bright flash detected by an American satellite between SA and the Antarctic was caused by a South African nuclear bomb explosion.
- **1983** - Lieutenant Frans Willem Conradie from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) was killed in a motor vehicle accident. He was 30.
- **1986** - A force of about



**Catherine Labuschagne**

fifty armed dissidents infiltrate the Togolese capital of Lome in an attempt to topple President Gnassingbe Eyadema's government. They are defeated by the military.

- **1990** - Lieutenant Sean James McGuinness from 42 Squadron was grievously burned when his Aermacchi AM-3C Bosbok crashed at Potchefstroom on 12 September 1990. He succumbed to his injuries in 1 Military Hospital on 23 September 1990. He was 23.

## 24 September

- **1645** - Battle of Rowton Heath, Parliamentarian victory over a Royalist army commanded in person by King Charles.
- **1780** - Benedict Arnold flees to British Army lines when the arrest of British Major John André exposes Arnold's plot to surrender West Point.
- **1877** - Battle of Shiroyama, decisive victory of the Imperial Japanese Army over the Satsuma Rebellion.
- **1884** - German weapons designer and engineer Hugo Schmeisser was born on this day. One of the most popular German weapons during World War II was the MP-40 submachine gun. It was often erroneously called "Schmeisser" by the Allies, although Hugo Schmeisser was not involved in the design or production of the weapon.

- **1960** - USS Enterprise, the world's first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, is launched.
- **1964** - South African ordnance workshops have produced the first Belgian F.N. rifle, which is now ready to go into production.
- **1978** - Hasso von Manteuffel, the German general who commanded the 5th Panzer Army during World War II, died on this day at the age of 81.
- **1979** - Civilian rule is established in Ghana after the first military coup under Jerry Rawlings on 4 June, 1979.
- **1982** - Rifleman Don Andries Spence from Bravo Company, 1 Parachute Battalion was killed after being struck by a bullet from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle after a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola. He was 20.
- **1987** - Armed forces seize control of Transkei, ousting Prime Minister George Matanzima.
- **1997** - Following the slaying of hundreds of civilians in a series of incidents believed linked to upcoming elections and the long though sporadically fought civil war, the military wing of Algeria's principle Islamic opposition group calls for a truce and orders its guerrillas to 'stop combat operations'.

## 25 September

- **1900** - The British under Generals R. Pole-Carew and I.S.M. Hamilton occupy the deserted Komatipoort on the ZAR eastern border with Portuguese East Africa (Mozambique). Burnt out railway cars form a train almost twelve kilometres long on the Selati line.
- **1901** - The attack on Fort Itala, occupied by the British, takes place with the British force retreating after fierce fighting and with heavy losses on both sides.
- **1901** - Captain R.D.C. Miers of the South African Constabulary is shot and killed under a flag of truce by Field-cornet Salmon van As, who is tried and executed nine months later.
- **1915** - World War I: The Second Battle of Champagne begins.
- **1944** - Surviving elements of the British 1st Airborne Division withdraw from Arnhem in the Netherlands, thus ending the Battle of Arnhem and Operation Market Garden.
- **1955** - The Royal Jordanian Air Force is founded.
- **1964** - The Mozambican War of Independence against Portugal begins.
- **1964** - Corporal Johannes David Kriel, an Air Photographer attached to 22 Flight (Later 22 Squadron) was Reported Missing when the helicopter he was flying in suffered engine failure and

crashed into Table Bay. He has no known grave and remains unaccounted for. He was 25.

- **1981** - Rifleman Frederick Hikab from the South African Cape Corps, attached to Sector 30 Headquarters SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in the Etosha Game Reserve. He was 22.
- **1985** - Rifleman Anton Botha from Infantry School was critically injured in a private motor vehicle accident between Mossel Bay and Oudtshoorn on 23 Sep 1985. He was transferred to the Tygerberg Hospital where he unfortunately succumbed to his injuries on 25 September 1985. He was 24.
- **1987** - Private Adriaan Jacobus Naude from 1 Maintenance Unit was accidentally electrocuted while offloading military supplies at the Modder River Station, South of Kimberley. He was 18.
- **1987** - Lance Corporal Herman Adolf Oosthuizen from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment attached to Fort Doppies was killed in a military vehicle accident while engaged in anti-insurgency operations in South Eastern Angola. He was 26.
- **1991** - Klaus Barbie, German SS captain, known as the "Butcher of Lyon", dies on this day.
- **1993** - Three US soldiers are killed in Somalia when their helicopter is shot down.

## 26 September

- **1895** - Jürgen Stroop, the SS commander that led the suppression of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in 1943, was born on this day.
- **1899** - The ZAR government formally requests military assistance from the Orange Free State in accordance with the 1897 Political Defence Agreement.
- **1901** - Fort Prospect, about fifteen kilometres east of Itala, is defended by about 80 men under Captain Rowley of the Dorsetshire Regiment when attacked by a burgher force under Cheere Emmett. A party of Zulu policemen under Sergeant Gumbi, outside the British lines at the time of the first attack, fights their way through to share in the defence, and the attack is repelled with their help.
- **1917** - World War I: The Battle of Polygon Wood begins.
- **1918** - The last major battle of World War I, the Battle of the Argonne, began as a combined force of French and Americans attacked the Germans along a 64 kilometre front.
- **1941** - During World War II, the Western Desert Force was upgraded with the addition of two complete corps: the XIII and XXX. General Sir Alan Cunningham was given overall command of

the newly created Eighth Army. Troops included South African, Australian, New Zealand, Indian, Free French, and Polish soldiers.

- **1941** - The Military Police Corps is created as a permanent branch of the United States Army.
- **1950** - Personnel of the SA Air Force's No 2 (Flying Cheetah) Squadron leave Durban to assist the United Nations in the Korean War.
- **1950** - United Nations troops recapture Seoul from North Korean forces.
- **1959** - Lieutenant General Sir Leslie James Morshead, who led the Australian and British troops at the Siege of Tobruk (1941) and at the Second Battle of El Alamein, dies on this day at the age of 70.
- **1978** - Private Jacob Daniel Otto van As from 1 Maintenance Unit was killed in a military vehicle accident at Grootfontein. He was 18.
- **1981** - Captain Noel John



**Klaus Barbie**

- Malcolm from 104 Volunteer Air Squadron was killed when his Piper PA-28 crashed while carrying out an officially authorised SAAF tasking. He was 60.
- **1982** - Private William Henry Ludick from the Army Catering Corps was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Kuruman. He was 20.
- **1983** - Soviet nuclear false alarm incident: Military officer Stanislav Petrov identifies a report of an incoming nuclear missile as a computer error and not an American first strike.
- **1985** - Special Warrant Officer Jacob Stephanus from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 39.
- **1987** - Rifleman Rudolf Johannes Badenhorst from Regiment de la Rey was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 20.
- **1988** - Gunner Ignatius Wilhelmus Ferreira from 4 Artillery Regiment was killed 9km from Kathu on the Kuruman road when he was hit by a civilian vehicle while assisting to dig out a field gun that was stuck in the sand. The vehicle failed to stop at the accident scene. He was 21.
- queror and his army set sail from the mouth of the River Somme, beginning the Norman conquest of England.
- **1777** - Lancaster, Pennsylvania becomes the capital of the United States, for one day after the Second Continental Congress evacuates Philadelphia to avoid invading British forces.
- **1862** - General Louis Botha, soldier, statesman and first prime minister of the Union of South Africa, is born near Greytown, Natal.
- **1899** - The ZAR calls up the South African Republican Burgher Force.
- **1900** - During the Second Anglo-Boer War the policy of concentration camps is officially sanctioned by Lord Roberts.
- **1940** - The Tripartite Pact is signed in Berlin by Germany, Japan and Italy.
- **1942** - Last day of the September Matanikau action on Guadalcanal as United States Marine Corps troops barely escape after being surrounded by Japanese forces near the Matanikau River.
- **1944** - The Kassel Mission results in the largest loss by a USAAF group on any mission in World War II.
- **1981** - Rifleman America Jose from 32 Battalion was shot dead by a fellow soldier during an argument at Buffalo. He was 26.
- **1982** - Private Renier Nicolaas Johannes Grobler from 3 Satellite Radar Station at Mafeking was killed in a private motor vehicle accident near Ottoshoop while doing a compulsory 30 day camp. He was 22.
- **1982** - Staff Sergeant Willem Petrus Burger from South African Army Headquarters died at 1 Military Hospital after suffering a fatal heart attack. He was 62.
- **1984** - Two members from 2 Special Service Battalion were accidentally killed when their SAMIL 20 overturned at Groot Marico after the front tyre burst, causing the driver to lose control of the vehicle. The casualties were: Trooper Jams Andries Solomon Theodorus Randall (20). Trooper Frans Hendrik Jansen van Vuuren (19).
- **1985** - Rifleman Coenraad Johannes Jacobus Bel from 4 SAI was killed in a private motor vehicle accident while on weekend pass. He was 22.
- **1987** - A British newspaper reports heavy fighting between Angolan government forces and Unita, in which SA is allegedly taking part.
- **1990** - Corporal Freek Johannes Palmer from the Cape Regiment Died of Wounds after being shot by an unknown gunman using a home-made weapon while he was on foot patrol in Kwamashu. He succumbed to his wounds in Addington Hospital later in the day. He was 26.
- **1992** - A Nigerian military-transport plane crashes shortly after taking off from Lagos September 27, killing all 163

## 27 September

- **1066** - William the Con-

- people on board.
- **1993** - The UN Security Council bans sales of arms and fuel to the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) because the rebel movement failed to stop fighting the government and renegotiates a 1991 peace settlement to end the country's civil war.
- **1993** - General James 'Jimmy' Doolittle, commander of the Doolittle Raid, a bold long-range retaliatory air raid on the Japanese main islands, on April 18, 1942, four months after the attack on Pearl Harbour, dies at the age of 96.
- **1996** - In Afghanistan, the Taliban capture the capital city Kabul after driving out President Burhanuddin Rabbani and executing former leader Mohammad Najibullah.
- 
- **1961** - A military coup in Damascus effectively ends the United Arab Republic, the union between Egypt and Syria.
- **1984** - Corporal Petrus Johannes Du Plessis from 1 Special Service Battalion died after being grievously burned in an accidental petrol stove explosion at Oshakati while the armoured vehicles were in a laager. He was 22.
- **1988** - Rifleman Rionell Prins from 53 Battalion was accidentally killed after being struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle during operations in Southern Angola. He was 20.
- **1991** - Strategic Air Command (SAC) stands down from alert all ICBMs scheduled for deactivation under START I, as well as its strategic bomber force.
- **1995** - Bob Denard and a group of mercenaries take the islands of the Comoros in a coup.
- **2012** - Somali and African Union forces launch a coordinated assault on the Somali port city of Kismayo to take back the city from al-Shabaab militants.
- during the second Basotho War.
- **1900** - The position of Commander-In-Chief at the War Office in London is offered to Lord Roberts.
- **1900** - Major His Highness Prince Christian Victor Albert Ludwig Ernst Anton, heir of Norway, grandson of Queen Victoria and ADC to Lord Roberts, dies of enteric fever in Pretoria.
- **1911** - Italy declares war on the Ottoman Empire.
- **1918** - Bulgaria signs the Armistice of Salonica. The Hindenburg Line is broken by an Allied attack. Germany's Supreme Army Command tells the Kaiser and the Chancellor to open negotiations for an armistice.
- **1935** - Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia, warns the League of Nations that he is going to mobilise his forces because of threats of invasion by Italy.
- **1936** - Spanish insurgents continue their march to the capital of Spain Madrid and large numbers of clergy have

## 28 September

- 1781 - American forces backed by a French fleet begin the siege of Yorktown, Virginia, during the American Revolutionary War.
- **1918** - The Fifth Battle of Ypres begins.
- **1939** - Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union agree on a division of Poland after their invasion during World War II.
- **1939** - Warsaw surrenders to Nazi Germany during World War II.
- **1944** - Soviet Army troops liberate Klooga concentration camp in Klooga, Esto-

## 29 September

- **1865** - The Battle of Naauwpoort, near Clarens in the eastern OFS, takes place

Jimmy Doolittle



now joined the rebels in protests against the leftist controlled government. Many of the priests were butchered by Government forces. This civil war is being fought by two extreme parties who are trying to gain control of the country.

- **1938** - Just two weeks after the Munich agreement was signed and the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain announced to the world "Peace In Our Time" Hitler is pushing the bounds of the agreement on the German occupation of Czechoslovakia and taking additional areas under Nazi control. Many suspect he had no intention of slowing his occupation of other countries and a second world war is inevitable.
- **1939** - The Active Citizen Force units of SA are authorised to accept volunteers for the duration of the war.
- **1941** - Holocaust in Kiev, Soviet Union: German *Einsatzgruppe C* begins the Babi Yar massacre, according to the *Einsatzgruppen* operational situation report.
- **1942** - East Africa. South African troops are landed at Tulearon (Toliara) on the south west coast of Madagascar, to support the East African force based at Tananarive (Antananarivo).
- **1977** - Four members from 4 SAI were killed in a friendly fire incident near Okalongo when a soldier who formed part of an ambush position,

opened fire. The casualties in this unfortunate incident were: Sergeant Jan Pieter Albertus Furstenburg (24). Corporal Leslie Muller (19). Rifleman Jan Joachim Jacobus de Vos (18). Rifleman Cornelius Johannes Lourens (19).

- **1979** - Ex-president Macias Nguema of Equatorial Guinea is executed following his overthrow on 3 August. No Equatoguinean soldier participates in the execution, because Macias Nguema was and is still believed to have magical powers. The job is done by hired Moroccan troops.
- **1981** - Two helicopter crewmen from 19 Squadron and four members of the SADF including a Medical Doctor were Killed in Action when their Aerospatiale SA330L Puma crashed at Oshakati. The casualties were: Lieutenant Desmond O'Connor (21). Sergeant Daniel Francis Lamprecht (27). Lieutenant (Dr) Cecil George Bartie (27). Candidate Officer James van Zyl (21). Private Hendrik Jacobus Badenhorst (19). Rifleman Richard Anthony Herbst (20).
- **1990** - Rifleman Barry Hart from 6 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident on Beit Bridge Road while traveling towards Vhembe Base. He was 23.
- **1990** - The YF-22, which would later become the F-22 Raptor, flies for the first time.

### 30 September

- **1832** - Lord Frederick Sleigh Roberts, British officer in command during Anglo-Boer War 2, is born in Cawnpore, UK.
- **1901** - The Battle of Moedwil takes place, with the Boer forces under General De la Rey and Kemp retreating after fierce fighting.
- **1901** - Cornelis Broeksma, an attorney from Holland, is executed as a traitor by firing squad at the Johannesburg Fort. Information about appalling conditions in concentration camps and the number of deaths that he had collected got into the hands of the British. His information made its way in code via Amsterdam to London.
- **1915** - Radoje Ljutovac becomes the first soldier in history to shoot down an enemy aircraft with ground-to-air fire.
- **1931** - The War Museum at the 'Vrouemonument' (Women's Memorial) in Bloemfontein is officially inaugurated by General Hertzog.
- **1966** - Nazi war criminals Albert Speer and Baldur von Schirach were released from Spandau prison after serving 20 years. The prison, originally built for 600 inmates, was left with only one prisoner, former Deputy Führer Rudolf Hess.
- **1949** - The Berlin Airlift, which delivers 2 million tons of food and fuel to West Berliners while circumvent-

ing a Soviet blockade, and in which the SAA took part, comes to an end.

- **1954** - The U.S. Navy submarine USS Nautilus is commissioned as the world's first nuclear reactor powered vessel.
- **1971** - It is officially announced that the British and South African naval units will engage in a month of joint manoeuvres in South African waters from 4 October to 3 November 1971.
- **1975** - The Hughes (later McDonnell Douglas, now Boeing) AH-64 Apache makes its first flight. Eight years later, the first production model rolled out of the

assembly line.

- **1980** - Iran continued bombing oil installations in Baghdad in retaliation for Iraq aircraft bombing it's oil refineries in the Persian Gulf. This is the 9th day of the war between these major oil producing nations with both claiming victory during each skirmish.
- **1983** - Rifleman Joshua Daniel Joubert Steyn from 4 SAI, attached to 61 Mechanised Battalion Group was accidentally killed in a shooting Incident at Omuthiya. He was 20.
- **1988** - Sapper Robert Renison from the Army Battle School died from a gunshot

wound, accidentally self-inflicted after he shot himself in the chest while playing with his firearm in the Duty Room at Lohathla. He was 18.

- **1988** - Rifleman Lefu Andries Chauzane from 54 Battalion was accidentally killed near the entrance to 5 Maintenance Unit in Owamboland. He was 18.
- **2004** - The AIM-54 Phoenix, the primary missile for the F-14 Tomcat, is retired from service. Almost two years later, the Tomcat is retired.



**F-14 Tomcat**





# The Vietnam War

1. Ka-Bar fighting knife.
2. M1911 pistol.
3. Tokarev TT-33.
4. RPG 7 rocket launcher.
5. M48 Patton.
6. M29 81mm mortar.
7. M60 machine gun.
8. F1 grenade.
9. T54/T55.
10. AKM assault rifle.
11. M26 grenade.
12. RPD light machine gun.
13. CAR-15 assault rifle.
14. SKS rifle.
15. M72 LAW.



## Useful links

Every month we feature a few useful links to military websites, newsletters and online magazines. Stuff that we think our readers will appreciate.

Here are two of our favourites. The first one is Nongqai, the unofficial police newsletter for veterans of the former South African Police Force and for those interested in Police History. The second is Jimmy's Own, the official newsletter of the South African Signals Association. Click on the magazine covers to go to the respective websites.



# Military Despatches Website



"Things don't have to change the world to be important."  
*Steve Jobs*

Our aim is to make the Military Despatches website easy to use. Even more important to us, we want to make the website informative and interesting. The latest edition of the magazine will be available, as will all the previous editions. More over, there will be links to videos, websites, and articles that our readers may find interesting. So check out the website, bookmark it, and pass the URL on to everyone that you think may be interested.



Have you checked out the bookshelf on the website? Here you can gain access to individual articles.

You will find articles on numerous different topics that have been published over the past four years as well as video clips and documentaries.

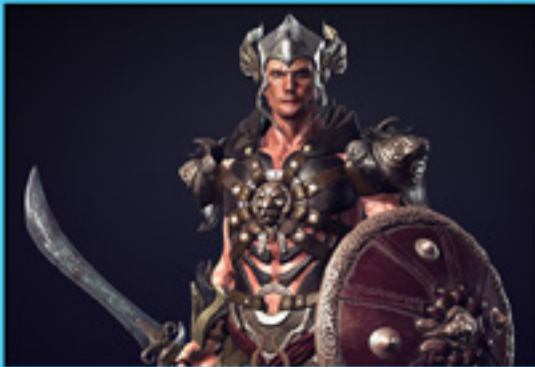
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