



Military Despatches

Vol 79 January 2024

Operation Babylon

The Israeli airstrike on an Iraqi nuclear reactor

No love lost

Why the Japanese Army and Navy hated each other

Respected by all

Both friend and foe respected Adolf Galland



Celebs that served

Ten celebrities that served in the military

For the military enthusiast



Special Forces Ops - Operation Babylon

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Military Despatches

Paratrooper Wings Quiz

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 Despatches

Military Firearms Quiz

Military Firearms Quiz

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

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Army Speak 101

Military slang from the SADF and around the world

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.

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Elite Military Units Quiz

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.

Military Despatches

New videos each week

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.

Military Despatches

Who said that?

Famous military quotes quiz

Who said that?

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We give you 15 quotes, you tell us who made them.

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No love lost

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I wish I had one of those

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It's been referred to as a 'chef's hat' and even a 'clown's hat', yet the mitznefet is a helmet covering used by the Israel Defense Forces since 1994. Where did it come from, and why do they use it?

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General Knowledge

This month we have 25 questions to test your general knowledge.

Please remember to subscribe to our channel.

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



Editor's Sitrep

Well 2023 is a thing of the past. Kind of hard to believe we're into the 24th year of the new millennium.

I don't know what it's like in your part of the world, but here the wind has been howling for the past ten days. I must admit that I'm getting a bit tired of it.

2023 was an interesting year. The Russian-Ukraine war is still going on and doesn't look as if it's going to be resolved any time soon. Then of course there is the current situation in Palestine and it's one where everyone seems to have a strong opinion.

I did my Christmas shopping a week before Christmas. I don't know if it was my imagination, but the shops seemed less busy than they did before. Then again, everything just seems so damn expensive.

One of my traditions is that I have Christmas lunch as a supper on Christmas Eve. It means that on Christmas day no-one has to cook and we can have left overs for the next few days.

I normally invite a few people over. The spread is usually gammon, roast potatoes, pumpkin, green beans and gravy. I also

usually do a second meat such as brisket.

This year I had 12 people to supper. I also make some starters and then there's trifle for pudding. I make one with alcohol and one without.

This year I made spare ribs as the second meat dish. I must confess that it came to a tidy amount. Next year I'm planning on having fewer people to supper.

As I sit writing this editorial there are only five hours left of 2023. Is it my imagination or does time seem to go quicker the older you get. I know that it feels as if I just finish one edition of the magazine and it's time to send the next one out.

Maybe I need to make Military Despatches a quarterly magazine or something. It will give me a bit more time to do other things - like laze around, read, watch television, and so on.

Oh well, enough dreaming for now. I'll catch all of you next month.

Until next time, stay safe and stay healthy.

Matt

Hipe! media

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A Merkava Mk IV tank of the Israeli Defence Force. The Merkava is the backbone of the IDF Armoured Corps and has seen action since it entered service in 1979.

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Adolf Galland

A World War II German Luftwaffe general and flying ace, Adolf Galland flew 705 combat missions and was credited with 104 aerial victories. He was respected by both friend and foe alike.



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Ten times the US lost or accidentally dropped a nuclear device

Most of us have an awareness of the destruction and devastation a nuclear weapon can inflict. It would be natural to assume that security around nuclear weapons would be very tight. So how exactly did the United States manage to lose or accidentally drop at least 32 of them?

Let's be honest, at some stage all of us have lost or misplaced something. It could be your glasses, car keys, or even your wallet. But how exactly do you go about losing a nuclear weapon?

On 6 August 1945 the world saw just how devastating a nuclear weapon could be when the United States dropped an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima.

Three days later, on 9 August 1945, the US dropped another atomic bomb on the city of Nagasaki. The two bombings killed between 129,000 and 226,000 people. These remain the only use of nuclear weapons in armed conflict.

Modern nuclear weapons make the atomic bombs that were dropped in 1945 look like firecrackers.

No fewer than ten countries are known to have, or had, nuclear weapons. South Africa produced six nuclear weapons in the 1980s, but dismantled them in the early 1990s.

Knowing how destructive a nuclear device can be, it would be natural to assume that security around such devices would be extremely tight. Well that's not always the case.

The US Department of Defence has officially recognized

32 incidents where nuclear weapons have either been lost or dropped by accident. And these are just the ones that they are willing to admit to.

Other countries, such as Russia, China, India and Pakistan, have not been so forthcoming.

The United States even has a code word for incidents where a nuke is lost or dropped by accident. It's called "Broken Arrow".

Broken Arrow refers to an accidental event that involves nuclear weapons, warheads or components that does not create a risk of nuclear war. These include:

- Accidental or unexplained nuclear detonation
- Non-nuclear detonation or burning of a nuclear weapon
- Radioactive contamination
- Loss in transit of nuclear asset with or without its carrying vehicle
- Jettisoning of a nuclear weapon or nuclear component
- Public hazard, actual or implied

I remember watching a movie, titled *Broken Arrow*, where a US Air Force pilot, played by John Travolta, steals two nuclear bombs. Upon discovering that the US Military actually has a code word for the incident, a

young liaison officer remarks, "I don't know what's scarier, losing nuclear weapons, or that it happens so often there's actually a term for it."

Here then are ten "Broken Arrow" incidents where the United States has lost or accidentally dropped nukes.

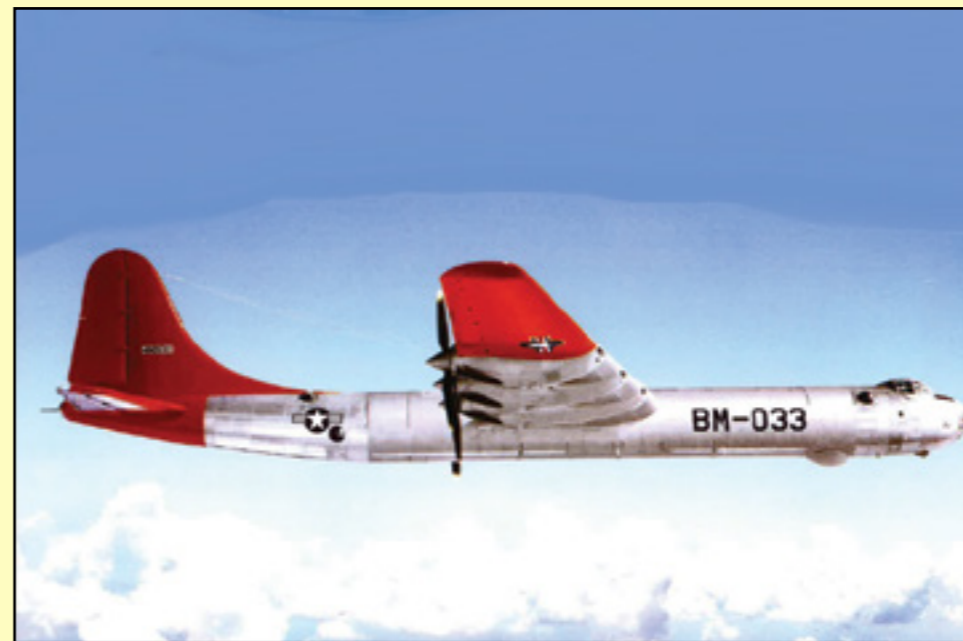
10. British Columbia crash

On 14 February 1950, a Convair B-36, Air Force Serial Number 44-92075 assigned to the 7th Bomb Wing at Carswell Air Force Base (AFB), crashed in northern British Columbia on Mount Kologet after jettisoning a Mark 4 nuclear bomb.

This was the first such nuclear weapon loss in history. The B-36 had been en route from Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks, Alaska to Carswell AFB in Fort Worth, Texas, more than 4,800 kilometres southeast, on a mission that included a simulated nuclear attack on San Francisco.

The plan for the 24-hour flight was to fly over the North Pacific, due west of the Alaska panhandle and British Columbia, then head inland over Washington state and Montana.

Here the B-36 would climb to 12,000 metres for a simulated bomb run to southern Cali-



BRITISH COLUMBIA CRASH: A Convair B-36 from the same Bomber Wing as the one that jettisoned a Mark 4 nuclear bomb.

fornia and then San Francisco, it would continue its non-stop flight to Fort Worth, Texas. The flight plan did not include any penetration of Canadian airspace.

The plane carried a Mark 4 atomic bomb, containing a substantial quantity of natural uranium and 2,300 kg of conventional explosives. According to the USAF, the bomb did not contain the plutonium core necessary for a nuclear detonation.

Seven hours into the flight, three of the six engines began shooting flames and were shut down, and the other three engines proved incapable of delivering full power.

The crew decided to abandon the aircraft because it could not stay aloft with three engines out of commission while carrying a heavy payload. The atomic bomb was jettisoned and detonated in mid-air, resulting in a large conventional explosion

over the Inside Passage.

The USAF later stated that the fake practice core on board the aircraft was inserted into the weapon before it was dropped.

The plane had been in constant radio contact with Strategic Air Command headquarters at Offutt AFB, Nebraska, and within minutes of the bailout the Royal Canadian Air Force launched Operation Brix to find the missing men. Poor weather hampered search efforts; nevertheless 12 of the 17 men were eventually found alive.

Canadian authorities were never told that the aircraft was carrying a nuclear weapon.

9. Goldsboro B-52 crash

The Goldsboro B-52 crash was an accident that occurred near Goldsboro, North Carolina, on 24 January 1961.

A B-52 Stratofortress, carrying two 3–4-megaton Mark 39 nuclear bombs, broke up

in mid-air while flying over the town of Goldsboro. In the process it dropped its nuclear payload onto the unsuspecting town of civilians.

The pilot in command, Walter Scott Tulloch, ordered the crew to eject at 2,700 metres. Five crewmen successfully ejected or bailed out of the aircraft and landed safely, another ejected but did not survive the landing, and two died in the crash.

The first bomb that descended by parachute was found intact and standing upright as a result of its parachute being caught in a tree. The second bomb plunged into a muddy field at around 310 m/s and disintegrated without detonation of its conventional explosives.

At the time everyone was assured that there was never any danger of the bombs detonating.

Information newly declassified in 2013 showed that one of the bombs came very close to detonating.

8. B-47 disappearance

On 10 March 1956 Boeing B-47 Stratojet took off from MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, in the United States for a non-stop flight to Ben Guerir Air Base, Morocco.

Because of the distance the Stratojet would have to refuel twice from airborne tankers.

After descending through solid cloud cover to begin the second refuelling, at 4,300 metres, suddenly lost radio contact with its tanker. They were never heard from again.

Despite an extensive search, no debris or bodies were ever found, and the crash site has never been located. It's last known location was "somewhere over the Mediterranean Sea".

The plane was carrying Mk 15 thermonuclear bombs which would have added up to a combined 3.4 megatons.

To this day the location of the aircraft, crew and the nukes remains unknown.



BIG BANG: A Mk 15 nuclear bomb. These could cause an explosion similar to those at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

7. Tybee Island mid-air collision

On 5 February 1958 a B-47 bomber was on a simulated combat mission from Homestead Air Force Base in Florida. It was carrying a single 3,400 kg Mk 15 nuclear bomb.

At about 02h00 the B-47 collided with an F-86 fighter jet that had just taken off from a nearby air base. The F-86 pilot ejected and his plane crashed.

The damaged B-47 remained airborne, plummeting 5,500 metres from 12,000 metres when Major Richardson regained flight control.

The crew requested permission to jettison the bomb, in order to reduce weight and prevent the bomb from exploding during an emergency landing. Permission was granted, and the bomb was jettisoned at 2,200 metres while the bomber was traveling at about 370 km/h.

The crew did not see an explosion when the bomb struck the sea off Tybee Island near Savannah, Georgia. They man-

aged to land the B-47 safely at the nearest base, Hunter Air Force Base.

Starting on 6 February 1958, the Air Force 2700th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Squadron and 100 Navy personnel equipped with hand-held sonar and galvanic drag and cable sweeps mounted a search.

On 16 April the military announced the search had been unsuccessful. Based on a hydrological survey, the bomb was thought by the Department of Energy to lie buried under two to five metres of silt at the bottom of Wassaw Sound.

In 2004, retired Air Force Lt. Colonel Derek Duke claimed to have narrowed the possible resting spot of the bomb down to a small area approximately the size of a football field.

He and his partner located the area by trawling in their boat with a Geiger counter in tow. Secondary radioactive

particles four times naturally occurring levels were detected and mapped, and the site of radiation origination triangulated. Subsequent investigations found the source of the radiation was natural, originating from monazite deposits.

To date this nuclear bomb is still missing.

6. Thule accident

In 1960, the USAF Strategic Air Command (SAC) began Operation Chrome Dome, a Cold War airborne alert program devised by General Thomas S. Power to fly nuclear-armed Boeing B-52 Stratofortress bombers to the borders of the Soviet Union.

The flights were scheduled to ensure that twelve bombers were aloft at all times. These bombers gave SAC offensive capability in the event of a Soviet first strike, and provided a significant Cold War nuclear

THULE INCIDENT: A B-52G Stratofortress, similar to the one that crashed at Thule Air Base.



deterrent.

Beginning in 1961, B-52 bombers also secretly flew as part of the "Hard Head" mission over Thule Air Base. The objective of "Hard Head" was to maintain constant visual surveillance of the base's strategically important Ballistic Missile Early Warning System (BMEWS), which provided early warning of Soviet missile launches.

If the communication link between North American Aerospace Defence Command and the base was severed, the aircraft crew could determine if the interruption resulted from an attack or a technical failure.

The monitoring mission started when the designated aircraft

reached a way-point at 75°0'N 67°30'W in Baffin Bay and entered a figure-eight holding pattern above the air base at an altitude of 11,000 metres.

On 21 January 1968 a United States Air Force (USAF) B-52 bomber was patrolling near Thule Air Base in the Danish territory of Greenland.

The aircraft was carrying four B28FI thermonuclear bombs on a Cold War "Chrome Dome" alert mission over Baffin Bay when a cabin fire forced the crew to abandon the aircraft before they could carry out an emergency landing at Thule Air Base.

Six crew members ejected safely, but one who did not have an ejection seat was killed

while trying to bail out. The bomber crashed onto sea ice in North Star Bay, Greenland, causing the conventional explosives aboard to detonate and the nuclear payload to rupture and disperse, which resulted in radioactive contamination.

The United States and Denmark launched an intensive clean-up and recovery operation, but the secondary stage of one of the nuclear weapons could not be accounted for after the operation was completed.

USAF Strategic Air Command "Chrome Dome" operations were discontinued immediately after the accident, which highlighted the safety and political risks of the missions.

Safety procedures were re-

viewed and more stable explosives were developed for use in nuclear weapons.

In 1995, a political scandal resulted in Denmark after a report revealed the government had given tacit permission for nuclear weapons to be located in Greenland, in contravention of Denmark's 1957 nuclear-free zone policy.

Workers involved in the clean-up program have been campaigning for compensation for radiation-related illnesses they experienced in the years after the accident.

5. The Mars Bluff incident

On 11 March 1958, a U.S. Air Force Boeing B-47E-LM Stratojet from Hunter Air Force Base operated by the 375th Bombardment Squadron of the 308th Bombardment Wing near Savannah, Georgia, took off at approximately 16h34 and was scheduled to fly to the United Kingdom and then to North Africa as part of Operation Snow Flurry.

The aircraft was carrying nuclear weapons on board in the event of war with the Soviet Union breaking out. Air Force Captain Bruce Kulka, who was the navigator and bombardier, was summoned to the bomb bay area after the captain of the aircraft, Captain Earl Koehler, had encountered a fault light in the cockpit indicating that the bomb harness locking pin did not engage.

As Kulka reached around the bomb to pull himself up, he



IT HAPPENED HERE: A sign in Mars Bluff, South Carolina, gives information about the incident which took place in 1958.

mistakenly grabbed the emergency release pin.

The Mk 6 nuclear bomb dropped to the bomb bay doors of the B-47 and the weight forced the doors open, sending the bomb 4,600 metres down to the ground below.

Two sisters, six year old Helen and nine year old Frances Gregg, along with their nine year old cousin Ella Davies, were playing 180 metres from a playhouse in the woods that had been built for them by their father Walter Gregg, who had served as a paratrooper during World War II. The playhouse was struck by the bomb.

Its conventional high explosives detonated, destroying the playhouse, and leaving a crater about 21 metres wide and 11 metres deep. Fortunately, the fissile nuclear core was stored elsewhere on the aircraft.

All three girls were injured by the explosion, as were Wal-

ter, his wife Effie and son Walter, Jr. Seven nearby buildings were damaged.

The United States Air Force (USAF) was sued by the family of the victims, who received US\$54,000, equivalent to \$468,934 in 2018. The incident made domestic and international headlines.

The crater is still present today, although overgrown by vegetation, and is marked by a historical marker; however, access to the site is limited because it is located on private property with no public access road.

4. Bent Spear at Minot

During the Cold War, the United States was stockpiling nuclear weapons, just in case they were caught in a conflict with the Soviet Union. After World War III never happened, the government was left with a surplus of weapons they had no



JUST CRUISING: A AGM-129A Advanced Cruise Missile.

idea of what to do with.

When nuclear bombs become out of date they're kept in a bunker called a 'Weapon's Graveyard'.

On 29 August 2007 a group of men at the Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota were gathering 12 supposedly dead AGM-129A missiles to deliver them to a weapon's graveyard on a B-52 bomber. From the outside, all of the weapons looked the same.

The men had no idea that half of the missiles were in fact nuclear warheads, because they had never been labelled properly. Collectively, those missiles had the power of ten Hiroshima bombs.

Those warheads flew for about 36 hours before anyone had any idea that they were nuclear. During this period, the warheads were not protected by the various mandatory security precautions for nuclear weapons. The incident caught the attention of the National Security

Council and they realised just how bad security checks were, even after all these years.

This incident was not a 'Broken Arrow' one, but rather one referred to as a 'Bent Spear' incident.

Bent Spear refers to incidents involving nuclear weapons, warheads, components or vehicles transporting nuclear material that are of significant interest but are not categorized as Broken Arrow. Bent Spear incidents include violations or breaches of handling and security regulations.

What makes this incident scary is that there are still so many nuclear weapons lying around that the government has no idea where many of them are.

3. Savage Mountain crash

On 13 January 1964 a B-52D bomber was returning to Georgia from Massachusetts after an earlier Chrome Dome airborne alert to Europe.

Near Meyersdale, Pennsylvania, on a path east of Salisbury, Pennsylvania the pilot had to make altitude changes to evade severe turbulence.

The vertical stabilizer broke off and the aircraft was left uncontrollable as a result. The pilot ordered the crew to bail out, and the aircraft crashed. The wreckage of the aircraft was found on the Stonewall Green farm.

The two nuclear bombs being ferried were found "relatively intact in the middle of the wreckage", and after Fort Meade's 28th Ordnance Detachment secured them, the bombs were removed two days later to the Cumberland Municipal Airport.

What was meant by "relatively intact" is anyone's guess, but it certainly doesn't sound very reassuring.

2. Philippine Sea incident

In November 1965 the aircraft carrier USS Ticonderoga departed from the US Naval Base Subic Bay in the Philippines.

On 5 December, 31 days later, they were carrying out exercises when a US Navy Douglas A-4E Skyhawk attack aircraft of Attack Squadron 56 (VA-56) was lost at sea. The aircraft was carrying a B43 nuclear bomb.

While being rolled from the number two hangar bay to the number two elevator the attack jet fell over the side.

The pilot, Lieutenant (junior grade) Douglas M. Webster; the

aircraft, Douglas A-4E BuNo 151022 of VA-56; and the B43 nuclear bomb were never recovered from the water which was said to be 4,900 metres in depth.

The accident was said to occur 109 kilometres from Kikai Island, Kagoshima Prefecture, Japan.

It was not until 1989, 24 years later, that the Pentagon revealed the loss of the one-megaton bomb.

The revelation inspired a diplomatic inquiry from Japan requesting details. Understandably, Japan are rather wary when it comes to nuclear weapons.



RECOVERED: The B28RI nuclear bomb, recovered from 870 metres of water, on the deck of the USS Petrel.

1. Palomares B-52 crash

On 17 January 1966 a B-52G bomber left from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, North Carolina, carrying four type B28RI hydrogen bombs on a Cold War airborne alert mission named Operation Chrome Dome.

The flight plan took the aircraft east across the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea towards the European borders of the Soviet Union before returning home. The lengthy flight required two mid-air refuellings over Spain.

At about 10h30, while flying at 9,450 metres, the bomber commenced its second aerial refuelling with a KC-135 out of Morón Air Base in southern Spain. The B-52 pilot, Major Larry G. Messinger, later recalled:

“We came in behind the tanker, and we were a little bit fast,

and we started to overrun him a little bit. There is a procedure they have in refueling where if the boom operator feels that you’re getting too close and it’s a dangerous situation, he will call, “Break away, break away, break away.” There was no call for a break away, so we didn’t see anything dangerous about the situation. But all of a sudden, all hell seemed to break loose.”

The planes collided, with the nozzle of the refueling boom striking the top of the B-52 fuselage, breaking a longeron and snapping off the left wing, which resulted in an explosion that was witnessed by a second B-52 about a two kilometres All four men on the KC-135 and three of the seven men on the bomber were killed.

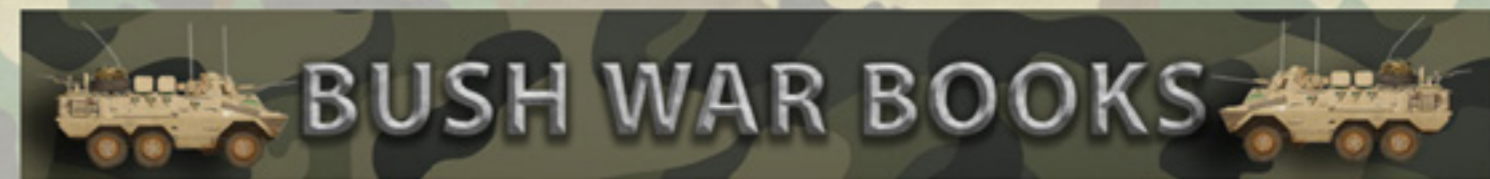
The aircraft and hydrogen bombs fell to earth near the

fishing village of Palomares, in the Almeria province of Andalucía, Spain.

Three of the weapons were located on land within 24 hours of the accident - the conventional explosives in two had exploded on impact, spreading radioactive contamination, while a third was found relatively intact in a riverbed.

The fourth weapon could not be found despite an intensive search of the area - the only part that was recovered was the parachute tail plate, leading searchers to postulate that the weapon’s parachute had deployed, and that the wind had carried it out to sea.

A total of 2.6 square kilometres was contaminated with radioactive material. This included residential areas, farmland (especially tomato farms) and woods.



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

Operation Babylon

When Iraqi President Saddam Hussein began construction of a nuclear facility at al-Tuwaitha, Israel considered it a threat to their national security. It was clear that Iraq wanted to acquire nuclear weapons. Operation Babylon was the Israeli response.

- **Date:** 7 June 1981
- **Location:** al-Tuwaitha, Iraq
- **Units involved:** Israeli Air Force

Saddam Hussein had spent nearly two decades as a street fighter and assassin for the militant Ba'ath Party in Iraq. When the party seized power in 1968, Hussein began his ascendancy to the presidency.

In the late 1970s, it became clear to the international community that Iraq was attempting to acquire nuclear weapons through the guise of buying nuclear reactors for power generators.

Hussein, who was now president, was well known for his expansionist ambitions. He also bore an unyielding animosity towards Israel, which he referred to as "the Zionist entity".

If Israel had a supposed nuclear capacity, then Hussein was determined that Iraq would have one as well.

Hussein stepped up his efforts and used diplomatic and financial contacts he had made in France earlier in the decade.

In 1975 he completed a deal with France to sell Iraq the equipment necessary to con-

struct a nuclear reactor at al-Tuwaitha, a research site located on banks of the Tigris River, a mere 20 kilometres from the centre of Baghdad.

The French also agreed to supply Iraq with 72 kilograms of enriched, weapons-grade uranium, which could easily be converted for use in an atomic bomb. Such a bomb, which experts calculated could be completed by the early 1980s, could easily kill at least 100,000 people if dropped on Tel Aviv, the capital of Israel.

The world reacted with alarm to news of the sale. The United States and Great Britain expressed measured diplomatic concern, and the United Nations' International Atomic Energy Agency increased monitoring efforts of Iraq's nuclear program. But it was little more than a slap on the wrist.

In the immediate wake of the 1973-74 oil embargo, the West was reluctant to alienate the Arab world. So it was left to Israel to take more direct action.

It was Israel's intelligence agency, the Mossad, that made the first move in 1979. They intercepted a shipment of nuclear cores from France to Iraq at La Seyne-sur-Mer.

The Mossad agents blew up the warehouse where the shipment was stored, severely damaging the cores.

Terrified of Hussein's reaction to the news, Iraqi officials accepted the damaged goods and kept their mouths shut.

Unfortunate incidents

Over the next 15 months a number of key nuclear scientists from Iraq and other Arab countries met a series of unfortunate accidents while visiting

western Europe.

These accidents included hit-and-run automobile accidents, sudden fatal flu-like illnesses, and virulent food poisoning. And a few of them had their throat slit. Mossad were hard at work slowing down the pace of Iraq's nuclear program. Undeterred, Hussein continued to press forward.

"How could a people who only know how to ride camels produce an atomic bomb?" he scoffed when asked about his plans.

Meanwhile, he threatened to suspend payments - and much-needed oil shipments - to France unless the French fulfilled their original contract calling for delivery of 72 pounds of 93% enriched uranium. Naturally the French agreed to honour their terms.

Iraq's nuclear efforts suffered their next blow nine days after the start of the Iran-Iraq war on 30 September 1980. And it was Iran and not Israel that did the deed.

Iran sent two Phantom F-4E jets to attack several Iraqi targets, among them the uncompleted nuclear reactors at al-Tuwaitha. The Phantoms fired two rockets. One did not explode, and the other hit the housing of one of the reactors, damaging the dome and cooling system, but causing no significant destruction. Hundreds of French and Italian technicians and engineers working at the facility were evacuated, however, and work at al-Tuwaitha ground to a standstill.

Israel was rightly worried over the Iraqi nuclear threat and over the course of the follow-

ing year Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin considered various options. These options included an attack on Iraq's nuclear reactors.

Such an attack, however, came with major concerns. These including the probable adverse reaction from the rest of the world, and concerns that even though Iraq was at war with Iran, they may still have attacked Israel. Another concern was the distance to the target. It was over 1770 kilometres to the target and back.

There was something else to consider - the reaction of Egypt. Egyptian President Anwar Sadat had brokered a peace treaty with Begin at Camp David in 1979. While an attack would not violate Israel's treaty with Egypt, which called for Israel to pull out of the Sinai in April 1982, Sadat's reaction was still unpredictable.

Operation Babylon

Begin had some hard decisions to make. He weighed the risks and came to the conclusion that a preemptive strike was worth any possible aftereffects. The thought of Iraq having nuclear capabilities was just too dangerous to contemplate.

The Israelis felt that a quick, surgical air strike was the best option, and there were two things in their favour.

First of all Iraq was weakened by its ongoing ground war with Iran. The second consideration was even more important.

The reactor was not yet operational, so an attack would not result in any kind of nuclear fallout over Baghdad. This would have been a humanitari-

an and public-relations disaster. By the end of March 1981, Mossad reported that foreign workers were returning to al-Tuwaitha, and that construction had resumed on the Osirak nuclear reactor. Begin and his advisors finalized plans for an air strike on the Iraqi facility in early May. It was codenamed Operation Babylon.

After a series of delays, Mossad reported that France had finally delivered all 72 kilograms of enriched uranium to Iraq. It was time for the Israelis to strike.

Just before sunset on Sunday 7 June 1981, Operation Babylon was launched. It had been carefully planned for a Sunday, on the assumption that the 100 to 150 foreign experts employed at the reactor would be absent on the Christian day of rest.

The raid was planned for late afternoon because it would give the Israeli Combat Search and Rescue Team, riding in CH-53 helicopters, all night to search for any downed pilots.

At 15h00 the CH-53s took up their position, hovering at only 30 metres just west of the Jordanian border. The CH-53 crews were not told what the mission was. Their instructions were that if a plane went down they had permission to violate any sovereign airspace to pick up the pilots.

At 16h00 eight of Israel's American-built F-16 fighters took off from Etzion airbase in the Sinai desert. They were carrying extra 1,400 litre fuel tanks to increase their range.

Due to the distance to the target, weight was a serious



consideration. The F-16s were stripped of two of their four air-to-air Sidewinder missiles. The jamming devices for protection against Iraqi MiGs and SAM-6 radars had also been removed.

Despite these attempts to reduce weight the F-16s took off at a weight that exceeded nearly twice the plane's design specifications.

Each F-16 was equipped with special racks that carried two 900 kilogram MK-84 'dumb' bombs. They were called 'dumb' bombs as opposed to 'smart' bombs because they had to be dropped directly on the target. They had no form of guidance system.

The F-16s were escorted by eight F-15 fighter interceptors. They would provide protection against Arab aircraft as well as jamming Iraqi radar over the target. Moreover they would act as communication relay stations to a Boeing 707 command post that would be orbiting over Israel.

The route to the target was anything but easy. They would have to fly over or circumvent seven separate Arab airfield.

There was a very real danger of interception from Jordanian F-5-Es and Iraqi Mirage-4000s, MIG-23, and MIG-25s. At al-Tuwaitha itself, the fighters would face anti-aircraft artillery batteries and SAM-6 missiles.

The route of the attack from take off in the Sinai was east across the Gulf of Acaba, then across the northern part of Saudi Arabia near the border of Jordan, where Israel believed it had discovered some radar blind spots. Additionally, the Israelis had intelligence that

the Saudis would only have one of their American-supplied Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) intelligence aircraft in the air at the time of the attack and that it would be overlooking the Persian Gulf.

Radio communication, only to be made at five checkpoints, would be single words in English, the international language of aviation, so that if overheard the communication might be mistaken for a commercial flight.

The eight pilots were divided up into two teams. Each of them had been chosen for their experience in F-16s. Team one included Lt. Col. Zeev Raz, the wing commander, Amos Yadlin, Doobi Yaffi, and Hagai Katz. Team two, led by Lt. Col. Amir Nachumi, included Iftach Spector, Relik Shafir, and Ilan Ramon.

The formation flew low, about 30 metres, and fast, about 360 knots, to avoid detection. Once they were across Saudi Arabia they turned towards Baghdad.

Once they reached their target the attack was over in a matter of minutes. The F-16s swept across the sky in pairs, quickly climbing to 1,500 metres in four seconds, before diving and unleashing their bombs at the target. It was something that had practiced for months in the Sinai.

The first bombs hit the side of the reactor, opening holes for the second set of bombs, which found and destroyed the reactor inside. In all, 14 out of 16 bombs hit the reactor with pinpoint precision.

A French worker who witnessed the Israeli attack called



NUCLEAR AMBITIONS: Iraqi President Saddam Hussein wanted to develop a nuclear program, giving Iraq the ability to build an atomic bomb.

the accuracy of the Israeli bombing "stupefying." Eight workers, including one French technician, were killed in the bombing.

Within two minutes the attack, which had been timed for sunset, was over and Iraq's nuclear ambitions came to an abrupt halt.

The larger Tammuz I (or Osirak) reactor was destroyed. The smaller Tammuz II reactor's sensitive equipment and foundation were ruined.

As it transpired, Iraqi anti-aircraft unit personnel were eating when the attack occurred, which was another reason for the timing of the bombing, and had turned off their radars. It was something that the Israelis had expected.

As a result, there was a fatal delay in their reaction time, and no SAM-6s were fired at the Israeli planes. A number of Iraqi soldiers on the ground, however, were killed by errant anti-aircraft fire. As predicted, the Saudi AWACS aircraft was fac-



SURGICAL STRIKE: Israeli F-16 jets on patrol. It was planes similar to these that carried out Operation Babylon.

ing the Persian Gulf and did not detect the Israeli aircraft.

The attack squadron landed safely back at Etzion at 19h00 without so much as a scratch, having faced no enemy aircraft on the return flight.

Sadly, in a cruel twist of fate, pilot Ilan Ramon, Israel's first astronaut, would die in the Columbia space shuttle accident in February 2003.

The world reacts

While the raid had been brilliantly executed, the rest of the world was not amused. The raid was universally condemned, including by the United States.

The Reagan administration, normally sympathetic to Israel, chose to condemn the attack through a speech by American UN ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick, who called the raid "shocking" and compared it to the recent Soviet incursion into Afghanistan.

France, who were naturally upset, declared the Israeli actions "unacceptable," and made a brief national hero out of an unfortunate French nuclear technician, Damien Chausse-

pied, who was killed while working in a lab next to the reactor at the time of the raid.

Great Britain denounced it as "a grave breach of international law." A New York Times editorial thundered: "Israel's sneak attack on a French-built nuclear reactor near Baghdad was an act of inexcusable and short-sighted aggression."

A United Nations Security Council resolution condemning Israel's raid passed unanimously. But despite loud denunciations inside the Arab world, Israel was never attacked in reprisal, and no UN sanctions were ever put in place against it (the result of a threatened American veto). As for the president, Ronald Reagan shrugged off the dramatic event with a characteristic shrug. "Boys will be boys," he said.

Saddam Hussein was besides himself and he played the victim to the hilt. He called on "all peace-loving nations of the world to help the Arabs in one way or another acquire atomic weapons" in order to offset Israel's obviously aggressive tendencies. At the same time,

he sought to deflect blame for the attack away from his army's own less-than-stellar defensive performance at al-Tuwaitha by accusing the French of being complicit with Israel in the attack.

The Israelis stood firm against the adverse public opinion. It was not the first time that they had been condemned for defending themselves, nor would it be the last.

"Israel has nothing to apologize for," Begin told a news conference a few days after the raid.

Noting that Sadaam Hussein had frequently butchered his closest colleagues, to say nothing of his opponents, Begin warned that Iraq would have had "no hesitation in dropping three or four or five of those bombs on Israel."

Three weeks later, Begin's hard-line Likud Party was given a thumping endorsement at the polls, and a few months later the United States quietly resumed the sale of F-16s to Israel.

When American forces invaded Iraq in 1991 and 2003, they did not have to confront the fear of an Iraqi nuclear response. The audacious Israeli raid on al-Tuwaitha had seen to that.



Hoplites and Phalanxes

Around 700 BCE, a new type of foot soldier emerged in Greece. The hoplite, equipped with a long spear, a sword, an elaborate bronze corselet and helmet, and a large wooden shield (aspis, or hoplon), would form the backbone of Greek armies for the next 500 years.

The earliest examples of hoplite equipment date back to about 710bce, and within half a century of this date, depictions on vases show hoplites fighting in their signature tactical formation - the phalanx.

Composed of rows of spear-wielding hoplites, the phalanx was normally eight men deep. With spears of around 240–70cm in length, only the first three ranks could reach the enemy line, but the phalanx's structure presented a fearsome barrier.

The age of the hoplite

In the 7th and 6th centuries bce, the main hoplite tactic involved colliding with the opposing phalanx, followed by concerted pushing and stabbing. There was little tactical sophistication, and the encounters continued until one side broke and fled.

Only the hoplite's left side was fully protected, thanks to the hoplon (shield) of the man next to him: as a result, the phalanx tended to drift to the right, as each man tried to edge behind the hoplon of his neighbour.

By the early 5th century, bronze corselets had been superseded by linen or scale leather armour, allowing the wearer more freedom of movement.

When Darius of Persia invaded Greece in 490bce, the lightly armed Greek phalanx charged the Persian archers at Marathon, neutralizing one of their opponents' key advantages, and aiding an unlikely Greek victory against significant odds.

Eleven years later, at Plataea, a renewed Persian invasion was defeated by the hoplites of Sparta, a militarized Greek city-state that trained its warriors from childhood.



ors from childhood.

Sparta's rival, Athens, also participated in the land campaign against the Persians, but its most valuable contribution was a fleet of triremes - fast ships powered by triple banks of oarsmen - that outmanoeuvred the Persians to victory at Salamis, in 480bce.

With the Persians defeated, Sparta and Athens clashed for almost the next 80 years, result-

ing in the Peloponnesian War (431–04bce), which, although bloody, showed only a few innovations in equipment and tactics.

The armies began to make more use of archers, and employed flexible light infantry, called peltasts, as skirmishers, armed with javelins and swords.

However, almost as soon as Sparta emerged victorious in 404bce, its power was challenged by the Thebans, led by Epaminondas.

The evolution of the phalanx

Thebans deepened their phalanxes to 12 ranks or more, made greater use of cavalry, and trained an elite force known as the Sacred Band.

This helped them win a stunning victory at Leuctra, in 371bce, which broke Spartan supremacy.

However, Theban dominance was short-lived and Greece fell into civil wars, ending with the rise of Macedon, first under Philip II and then Alexander the Great.

The Macedonians further deepened the phalanx to 16 ranks, and their soldiers carried the sarissa, a longer spear of up to six metres, which allowed the first five rows to strike at the enemy.

These armoured "phalan-



Corinthian Helmet

gites" kept enemy infantry pinned down, while heavy cavalry, slingers, and peltasts launched their attack.



Sarissa spear head



Kopis sword



Xiphis sword

Key Events 725–300bce

- c.725–700bce The earliest known war between Greek city-states (the Lelantine War between Chalcis and Eretria) is thought to have been fought in this period. Hoplite armour is also thought to originate in this era.
- c.650bce The earliest depiction of hoplites in art shows them without swords, but carrying two spears: one for thrusting and one for throwing.
- 492–90bce The first Greco-Persian War takes place. Darius I of Persia invades Greece, attracting some allies in the north, but is defeated by the Athenians and their Plataean allies at the Battle of Marathon (490bce), in which the Plataean hoplites surprise the Persians by charging into their ranks.
- 431–04bce Spartan and Athenian forces clash in the Peloponnesian War.
- 480bce Xerxes launches the second Persian invasion of Greece. The Persians are delayed by Spartan resistance at Thermopylae (480bce). They are then defeated at Salamis (480bce) by the Athenian navy, and at Plataea (479bce), where Spartan hoplites break through the Persian line, causing the Persian army to flee.
- 378bce The Thebans, under Epaminondas, destroy the Spartan army at the Battle of Leuctra, marking the beginning of the eclipse of traditional hoplite forces.
- 338bce At Chaeronea, Philip II of Macedon defeats the Thebans by feigning a withdrawal, stretching one wing of the Theban army in pursuit. Philip's son, Alexander, then charges the enemy's left wing with cavalry, routing it. The Theban Sacred Band is destroyed.
- 331bce The Battle of Gaugamela takes place. A Macedonian attack on the left wing of the Persian army, opens up a gap in their ranks, into which Alexander advances. This flexible approach is far in advance of traditional hoplite tactics.

IJA vs IJN - no love lost

When it came to the Imperial Japanese Army and the Imperial Japanese Navy it wasn't merely a question of inter-service rivalry. It went far deeper than that - they hated each other.

Inter-unit rivalry is common in nearly any military organisation around the world.

Your unit had the toughest basic training, they were the fittest unit, and no unit was better in action.

Inter-service rivalry can be even more intense. After all, it goes without saying that the Army was better than any other service. Unless of course you served in the Navy or Air Force. Then you would have a different idea.

Yet inter-service rivalry between the Japanese Army and Navy during World War II took

things to a complete new level.

The Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) of the Second World War had one enemy more cunning than all others, an opponent they had been fighting for more than a decade before the war even started – the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN). It was one of the worst cases of inter-service rivalry the modern world has ever seen.

The Imperial Japanese Army and the Imperial Japanese Navy, despised each other to the point that it heavily compromised their war effort. But how did things get that bad?

As always, the roots of the problem run deep through history. Japan rose meteorically from a reclusive feudal society to become the democratically-governed Asia-Pacific hegemon in the decades preceding the Second World War.

Their crushing victory over the Russians in the Russo-Japanese war had left the IJN as the major naval power in the Pacific.

The IJA has also tested their mettle during the Great War and fought against the Bolsheviks as part of an international coalition during the Russian Civil War.

Both services realised they had the power to massively increase Japan's international reach. The thing is, Japan was a new industrial society. A small island nation, they didn't have seemingly limitless space for

expansion like the Americans, nor dominions rich in resources like the British and French.

The Japanese economic pie wasn't very big, and the Army and Navy were continually fighting for a bigger slice. In pretty much any other circumstance everywhere else, if the Army and Navy can't sort out the military budget, the civilian government steps in and sorts it out for them.

But this couldn't happen in Japan because the civilian government had problems of their own. The economy was dominated by Zaibatsus – effectively

mini national economies.

These were family-run business conglomerates that operated their own central banks, factories, supply chains, and everything else. Japan had four major Zaibatsus that together dominated Japan's civilian and military production.

Two of these Zaibatsus were allied with the Army and two with the Navy, and they were viciously opposed. As they wielded massive economic power, the Army and Navy both managed to purchase seats at the political table.

Each service was represented by a minister in the Japanese cabinet, and these ministers had veto power over new legislation. Appointed by their respective services, these ministers couldn't be removed and only answered to the Emperor himself. This meant they had effective control over Japanese policy.

The only thing that could save this gigantic mess was the alignment of the IJA and IJN's strategic goals. This should have been easy, as both sides needed to secure access to natural resources and a captive market for Japanese goods. The problem was that both services were looking in different directions.

The Navy favoured the "southward drive" – a strategy that involved taking over the European colonies in Asia for their resources, especially Java. In this instance, they forecast their main enemy would be the United States.

The Army, on the other hand, was focused on exploiting turmoil in China and Russia to invade Manchuria and Siberia to the west. They weren't concerned

with the Americans, as their primary enemies were the Chinese and the Soviets.

Right as the Army and Navy were arguing over literally everything, the Great Depression hit and turned what was already a huge mess into a cock-up of legendary proportions. The conservative military ministers had forced the democratically-elected government into supporting only right-wing policy.

Economic hardship also popularised ultra-nationalism, and the country careened towards a crisis point. In 1930, the London Naval Treaty was ratified by Japan, limiting the number of battleships they could have.

The IJN was furious and, in November, a Navy-aligned ultra-nationalist shot the Prime Minister in retribution. The Army struck back with two attempted coups, both in 1931.

They planned to incite riots and then seize power once martial law was declared. Both plans were discovered by the secret police, but the ringleaders weren't punished. In light of these failures, the Army had to secure its position.

To do this, they fabricated a terror attack in Manchuria and invaded without permission from the Government. They ran the region as a military colony.

The navy was being outplayed, so on 15 May 1932, 11 young naval officers assassinated the Prime Minister again and attacked the residences of other important Army-leaning politicians. They weren't punished either.

After several minor events, a faction in the Army launched yet another coup in February 1936. This one had the backing

of three full regiments and yet again, they tried to shoot the prime minister, which probably qualifies as one of the most dangerous jobs in the world.

They didn't get him, but they did kill another two previous prime ministers, bringing the total of dead prime ministers to four.

When word reached the Navy, they went to battle stations and threatened to blow the Army to pieces from the harbour. As shells were being loaded, the Emperor personally stepped in to diffuse the situation. The Army's failed coups and invasion of Manchuria opened the door for the Navy to take over, and Japan was effectively run by admirals.

By 1936, civilian democracy had completely given way to the military. While the Army had been at war with the Chinese and Soviets since the early 30s, the war began for the Navy in December 1941 with the attack on Pearl Harbour.

The petty inter-service rivalry was still going strong, but they knew they had to work together to fight the real enemy, even if they still couldn't agree who that was. To keep things simple, the Army controlled everything that happened on land and the Navy everything at sea.

Both services also had their own air forces, paratroop regiments, and support staff. If an Army plane landed on a Navy base, they wouldn't be repaired or refuelled by the Navy ground crews. Likewise, if Army intelligence knew about an enemy naval attack, telling the Navy about it would be pretty low-priority.



The best example of this dysfunction in Japan was their abysmal record of intercepting bombers. The Army argued that US bombers flew over the ocean – making it a Navy problem. The Navy argued that they bombed ground targets – making it an Army problem.

While their superiors argued, fighter commanders refused to share intelligence and therefore found it impossible to field large numbers of planes against enemy bombers – which as the Germans found, was essential for defence. Only 74 US bombers were lost to fighters over Japan, while thousands were lost over Germany.

Seeing as they couldn't agree on strategies, both services just did what they wanted. The Navy pushed southwards, taking over European colonies in the Pacific, and the Army pushed westwards, fighting the Chinese and Soviets. Cooperation was rare and only seemed to happen when things were going exceptionally well.

Things weren't going well for the Japanese in 1943, during the Guadalcanal campaign, and cracks in Army-Navy cooperation began to show. 36,000 Army troops were fighting on the island and depended on resupply by sea.

This was done in the most inefficient way possible. So much Army equipment was piled on Navy destroyers that they ships couldn't properly defend themselves. If they were attacked, the sailors pushed the supplies off the decks into the sea so they could bring their guns to bear.

When they reached the Army bases, they pushed supplies,



DAY OF INFAMY: The surprise attack on Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941 brought America into World War II.

packed in steel drums, overboard without stopping, making the soldiers swim out to pick them up. Three-quarters of the critical rations and ammo would always be lost, but who cares? It was only Army stuff.

US ships were inflicting heavy losses on the IJN during these Guadalcanal supply runs. Consequently, the admirals withdrew to preserve their forces – without telling the Army – and effectively abandoned them.

Orders eventually came from the top demanding the Army be evacuated, but not before they lost over 25,000 soldiers to starvation. It wasn't just the Army who suffered due to this dysfunctional relationship; the Navy did too.

Cemented during the Battle of the Coral Sea, winning the Pacific naval war was all about air power. The Japanese had a lot of high-quality planes, but they were split between the Army and Navy air forces. As they were at the forefront, the Navy took the brunt of plane losses.

What happened when the Navy could no longer launch sufficient planes to defend

themselves? The Army said, "Don't make your problems ours." The best example of this backwards logic was the sinking of the battleship Yamato – one of the most powerful battleships ever built.

Having lost command of the air in early 1945, the Navy kept the ship in port. When the island of Okinawa was threatened by Allied invasion, the Army petitioned the Emperor to make the Navy do something. They called the ship "nothing but a hotel for admirals" and the Navy "inept".

To save face, or maybe just to prove a point, the Navy sent Yamato and a surface force on a suicide mission. The mighty ship was crippled and sunk by air attacks, which I suppose proved the Navy right.

With all this infighting going on behind the scenes, it's honestly incredible Imperial Japan managed to fight for as long as it did.

When they surrendered, the Army and Navy argued about who lost Japan the war, but they were probably happy in the end, seeing as neither service won.

Air Forces Army vs Navy

There was very little, if indeed anything that the Japanese Army and Navy could agree upon.

The logical solution would be to have a Japanese Imperial Air Force. This, however, never happened. Each service had their own dedicated air force

- The Japanese Imperial Army Air Service and the Japanese Imperial Navy Air Service.

The Army Air Service operated from land bases and were responsible for any operations that took place on land.

The Navy Air Service were mainly based on aircraft carri-

ers and were responsible for operations at sea.

They couldn't even agree on what fighter aircraft they would use, nor what armament they would carry. This meant that parts and ammunition between aircraft were not interchangeable.

Army



Nakajima Ki-44

- Produced: 1940–1944
- Number built: 1,225
- Manufacturer: Nakajima Aircraft Company
- Crew: One
- Length: 8.84 metres
- Wingspan: 9.45 metres
- Height: 3.25 metres
- Gross weight: 2,764 kg
- Powerplant: 1 × Nakajima Ha-109 14-cylinder air-cooled radial piston engine
- Maximum speed: 605 km/h
- Range: 1,200 km
- Service ceiling: 11,200 metres

Armament

- Guns: 2 × fixed, forward-firing, synchronised 12.7 mm Ho-103 machine guns. 2 × wing mounted 12.7 mm Ho-103 machine guns
- Hardpoints: Two with a capacity of 2 × 130 litre drop tanks

Navy



Mitsubishi A6M Zero

- Produced: 1939–1945
- Number built: 10,939
- Manufacturer: Mitsubishi Heavy Industries
- Crew: One
- Length: 9.06 metres
- Wingspan: 12 metres
- Height: 3.05 metres
- Gross weight: 2,796 kg
- Powerplant: 1 × Nakajima NK1C Sakae-12 14-cylinder air-cooled radial piston engine
- Maximum speed: 533 km/h
- Range: 1,870 km
- Service ceiling: 10,000 metres

Armament

- Guns: 2 × 7.7 mm Type 97 aircraft machine guns. 2 × 20 mm Type 99-1 Mk.3 cannon
- Bombs
- 2 × 60 kg bombs

I wish I had one of those...

Over the last 30 years, technology has changed the way we do things. This is especially true in the military. **Matt O'Brien** is still green with envy.

Many of our readers served in the military during the 1970s and 1980s. At the time we thought that our equipment was pretty good and some of our technol-

ogy was up there with the best. Today, however, we can look back at what we used then and what is available now and it leaves us with just one thought, "I wish I had one of those back

Getting your bearings

How many of you remember what fun it was trying to plot where exactly you were, by using a map and compass.

You would look for three distinct features, such as a building, mountain, lake, rock formation - something you could see on your map.

You would take a compass bearing on the feature, orientate your map so that it was facing north, then draw a line on your map along the compass bearing.

You did this three times and where the lines intersected, that was roughly your position on

then..."

And the scary thing is that all of the equipment and technology mentioned in this article are freely available - even to civilians.

the map. You could then even work out your grid reference.

Try doing that in a place such as Ovamboland where it was flat and the only features were trees. And let's face it, one tree looked very similar to the next one.

These days a GPS will tell you exactly where you are with no problems. It will even give you directions and satellite imagery if you require. It makes life a whole lot easier.



Communications

I can personally remember when my signaller could get radio comms with someone hundreds of kilometres away, but couldn't get comms with our base which was 20 kilometres away.

These days I wouldn't even bother using the radio. I would just call them on my cellular phone.

If you go one step further and use a satellite phone, you can reach anyone, anywhere.

A phone such as a Codex 4 will give you powerful encryption which means that nobody

will be able to listen in on your call.

During the Battle of Bangui in the Central African Republic (CAR) in March 2013, one of the South African soldiers was cut off.

He borrowed a cell phone from one of the locals and called the only number he remembered - his unit, 44 Parachute Regiment in Bloemfontein.

The call was passed through to the force commander at Bangui airport, and a French patrol went out to collect him.



The need for H2O

When you were out on patrol in the bush, there were two things you never wanted to run short of - ammunition and water.

The standard issue SADF water bottle held one litre of water. Not nearly enough if you were out on a four day patrol. So most guys would carry at least four water bottles.

I can remember on a few occasions when a patrol lasted far longer than we anticipated and we ran out of water. It is not the most pleasant experience.

If you are lucky enough to actually find water, it is often dirty and contaminated. You could boil it if you had time or use water purification tablets. Even so, it still tasted terrible.

These days all you need to do is carry something like a "LifeStraw". You put the one end into the water, then suck on the other end, just like a straw. The result - pure, clean water.

I've tested one of these and was really impressed. I stuck it into a pool of green, putrid water that stunk. I sucked on the straw and the water that came out was crystal clear and tasted like expensive bottled water.

You can also get water bottles that you fill with dirty unsafe water and this will filter it. This means you can drink clean, uncontaminated water directly from the bottle.

Talking about carrying extra water bottles, these days its far easier to use a water bladder such as the "Camelbak". It fits on your back and is usually carried under your backpack.

It can carry up to three litres of water and has a pipe that goes over your shoulder. If you want a drink all you need to do is suck on the mouthpiece of the pipe and there you go.

Binoculars

When you needed to take a closer look at something that was some distance away, a good pair of binoculars was what was called for.

They were often used by observation posts or even by someone doing close target reconnaissance. They were not bad at all and they served their purpose.

These days things have been taken to a whole new level. Try a pair of digital binoculars and you will soon see what I'm talking about.

They still work the same as non-digital binoculars. It's just

that they come with a wide range of optional extras.

As you scan with the binoculars a digital reading will show you the exact bearing your binoculars are looking at. You can also frame an object and it will give you the distance that the object is from you.

A click of a button means you can take a high-quality digital photograph or even digital video that is stored on a memory card.

Most of them have advanced night vision. So operating in the dark is not a problem in the least.





Portable drone

You're out on patrol when you're confronted by a thick clump of bush.

You would really love to know what was on the other side of the bush. Is there an enemy ambush just waiting for you to come blundering through the bush?

These days the solution is easy. Just send up your small, lightweight portable drone.

It's high quality camera will send back live images to your operating device, such as a cell phone and all will be revealed.

Night vision

Throughout history it has always been difficult to fight at night. After all, it's difficult to hit a target if you can't even see the thing.

During the Vietnam War the Americans began using what was known as a "Starlight" scope that could be used as a hand-held device or mounted on a rifle.

It amplified any ambient light, such as the moon or the stars, to present the viewer with a hazy green image.

While it did provide night vision, it would not work in the pitch dark.

Modern night vision goggles are mounted to a troops helmet. They can be lowered to provide the troop with a clear image, although everything is still green.

These night vision goggles means that a troop can literally see in the dark, making it far easier to identify and hit targets that in the past would not even be seen.



New British Military night vision goggles

Lap top computers

Okay, the final bit of technology on my list would probably be of no use out on patrol. But it does make a huge difference when you're back in base.

Do you remember sitting and writing letters back home. Maybe to your parents, a friend, but most of all to a wife or girlfriend.

And you couldn't just seal your letter and post it off if you were in the operational area. It would first have to be censored, normally by an officer.

I can remember censoring the letters of one of my troops. He would write these really steamy letters to his fiancé. The thing that always amused me was the fact that he was engaged to four

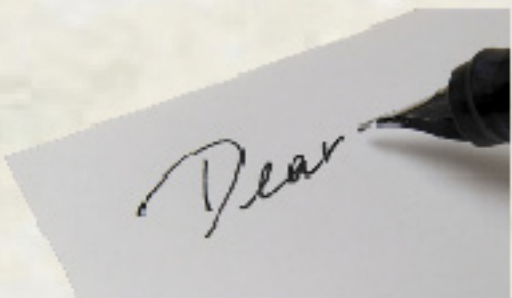
different girls - at the same time.

When I would ask him about it, he would just shrug his shoulders and say, "Hey lieutenant, you only live once."

These days few troops would ever dream of writing a letter to someone. It's far easier just to send an e-mail, or use your cell phone to send an SMS or WhatsApp.

Even better, you can make a Zoom call and chat with your parents, wife, or girlfriend face to face.

When you're off duty you can use your lap top to watch YouTube videos, movies, or even play games.



LifeStraw water filtration



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.

Click on the logo to the left to visit the SA Legion website.

The Mitznefet

It's been referred to as a 'chef's hat' and even a 'clown's hat', yet the mitznefet is a helmet covering used by the Israel Defense Forces since 1994. Where did it come from, and why do they use it?

I must confess that the first time I saw a *mitznefet* I was puzzled, and more than a little amused. After all, it did have a strange shape to it.

Now before I lose you totally, let me explain exactly what a *mitznefet* is. It's a helmet cover that has been used by the Israel Defence Force since 1994.

It is considerably larger than the actual helmet worn by infantry soldiers and is similar in appearance to a *keffiyeh* (traditional Middle-East headdress).

Helmet covers are not a new idea in the least. In fact a U.S. Army field manual produced during World War II had the following to say about helmets;

"Its curved, familiar shape can be identified by the enemy. One of your first steps in preparing for the job of staying alive to fight is to disrupt both the form of your helmet and the strong, straight-lined shadow it casts."

The manual goes on to suggest slipping a net or a rubber band over the headgear and then stuffing branches and leaves around the edges.

I'm sure that many of our readers will remember from their own military training sticking bits of grass and twigs into the lining of their bush hats.

Well the main purpose of the *mitznefet* is to do exactly that - break up what would otherwise be the distinctive outline of a helmeted human head. It also prevents light from reflecting off the wearer's helmet.

In the Hebrew language, the covering shares the same name as the priestly turban, which was worn by the High Priest of Israel in the Temple of Jerusalem during the Second Temple period. The name originates from a Semitic root meaning to wrap.

The covering is easily removable, and can be attached to the helmet while folded. It is made up of a reversible mesh fabric, with one side having woodland

camo paint and the other side with a brown desert paint.

The *mitznefet* has another great function - it makes an excellent sun shade. And in places such as the Negev Desert any protection from the scorching sun is a major boon. It's like a bush hat on steroids.

You simply move the bulk of the *mitznefet* to whichever side the sun is facing. Then there is one other advantage. Because the *mitznefet* is made of mil-spec mesh it also allows an air flow through it and heat out of it. This is why you'll often see IDF troops wearing them even if they aren't wearing a helmet underneath.

The *Mitznefet* has not been adopted by non-Israeli forces, but I think it's only a matter of time before other countries start to realise the benefits of the *mitznefet*. Especially as Agilite, the company that produces it, have a non export-restricted *Mitznefet* in mil-spec Multi-cam.

As I mentioned, the *mitznefet* is produced by Agilite, a premium Israeli manufacturer that produces tactical gear. Not only is their gear used by the IDF, it has been tested in the harshest environment - on the battlefield. You can check out the Agilite website by clicking [here](#).

If the *mitznefet* does resemble a clown's hat, all I can do is echo the words of the Judy Collins song, "Send in the clowns."



General Knowledge

This month we're testing your military general knowledge. We give you 25 questions and you give us the answers. Some of these are easy, some of them not so easy. See how many of these you know. The answers are on page 84.

1. Where was the first place ever bombed by the South African Air Force?
2. How many South Africans were awarded the Victoria Cross during World War II?
3. By what name was the German Panzerkampfwagen V better known as?
4. What was the nickname given to Britain's Home Guard during World War II?
5. What does the AK stand for in AK-47?
6. How many women have been awarded the Victoria Cross?
7. By what name are the Russian Special Forces commonly known as?
8. Who was South Africa's leading air ace during World War I?
9. What does the American nickname GI stand for?
10. Who was the first person to be awarded the Honoris Crux?
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12. Which former heavyweight boxing champion was a paratrooper during World War II?
13. Which Rhodesian unit was known as "The Saints"?
14. Who wrote 'The Charge of the Light Brigade' about an event in the Crimean War?
15. Which South African army unit was based at Nduku-duku in Zululand?
16. During the Vietnam War, who was known as Hanoi Jane?
17. Which big band leader disappeared over the English Channel on 15 December 1944?
18. How long did the 100 year war last?
19. Lord Haw-Haw broadcast Nazi propaganda to Britain from Germany during World War II. What was his real name?
20. Which Academy Award winning movie featured the memorable Colonel Bogey March?
21. Who was the only member of the South African Air Force to become Chief of the SADF?
22. During what war did Florence Nightingale help to found modern nursing?
23. Which World War II tank was nicknamed the 'Ronson'?
24. What was the nickname given to the Bell UH-1 Iroquois helicopter?
25. What was the NATO code-name for the Russian Mig-21 fighter jet?



Naval guns and kit

Naval cannon first appeared in the mid-14th century in the form of wrought-iron breech-loaders.

Cast-bronze muzzle-loaders were developed in the 16th century, and by the 18th century all European navies were widely using cast-iron muzzle-loaders, such as the British versions shown here.

To charge muzzle-loaders of

this type, a fabric powder cartridge was loaded down the muzzle and into the chamber, followed by a rope wad to hold it in place, the shot, and a second rope wad. The charge was pricked by inserting a wire pricker into the vent, then the gunpowder was poured in. Either a gunlock or a slow match held at the vent hole was used to fire the gun.



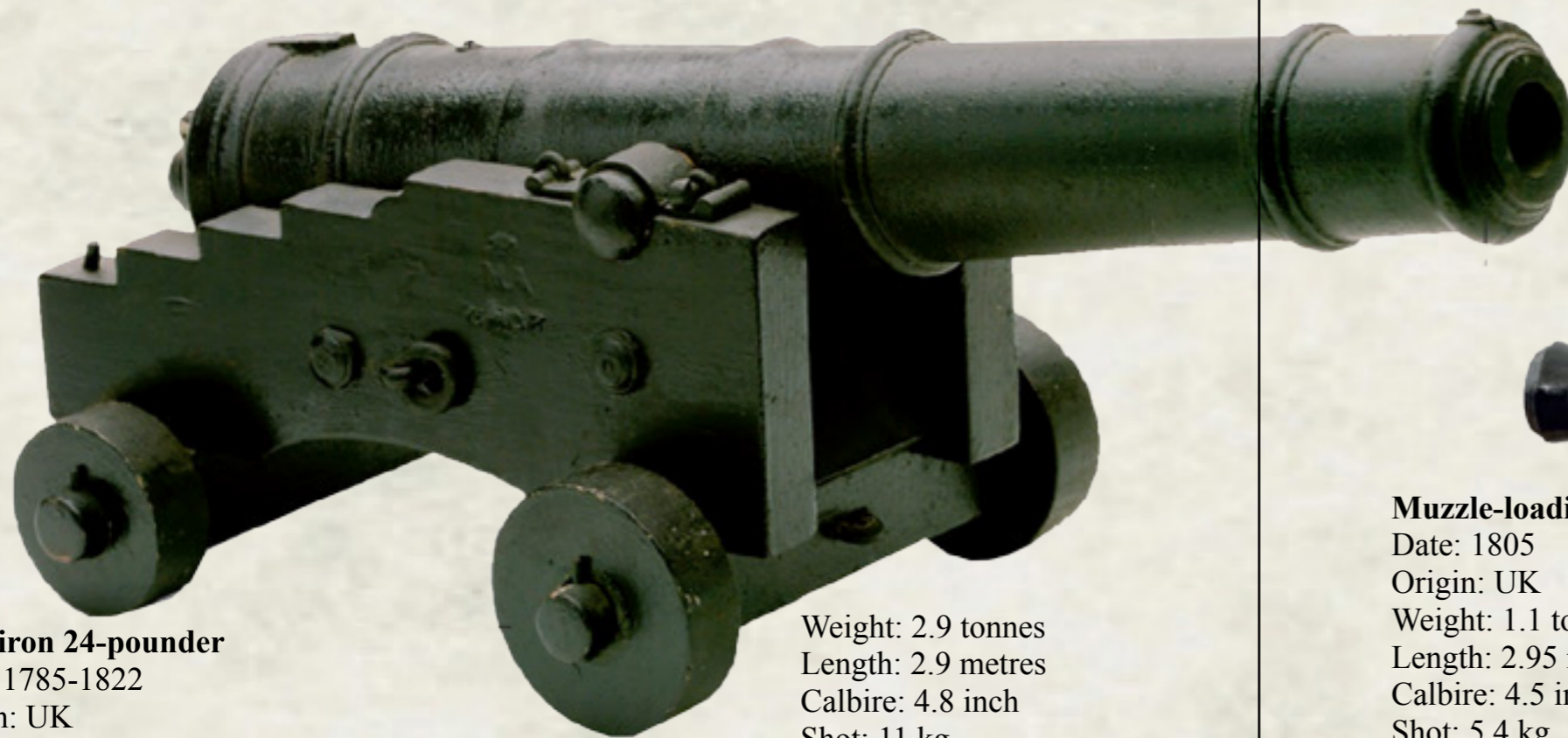
Match Tub and slow matches
Date: c.1800
Origin: UK
Material: Wood, hemp



Rope Wad
Date: c.1800
Origin: UK
Material: Rope



Cartridge Case
Date: c.1800
Origin: UK
Material: Wood



Cast-iron 24-pounder
Date: 1785-1822
Origin: UK
Material: Iron

Weight: 2.9 tonnes
Length: 2.9 metres
Calbire: 4.8 inch
Shot: 11 kg



Round shot
Date: c.1800
Origin: UK
Material: Iron



Grapeshot
Date: c.1800
Origin: UK
Material: Canvas, iron



Chain shot
Date: c.1800
Origin: UK
Material: Iron



Bar shot
Date: c.1800
Origin: UK
Material: Iron



Sponge
Date: c.1800
Origin: UK
Material: Ash, copper nails, sheepskin



Cast-iron 3-pounder
Date: Late 17th century
Origin: England
Length: 2 metres
Calbire: 3 inch
Shot: 1.36 kg



Muzzle-loading 12-pounder
Date: 1805
Origin: UK
Weight: 1.1 tonnes
Length: 2.95 metres
Calbire: 4.5 inch
Shot: 5.4 kg

10 Celebrities that you may not know were in the military



They may have gone on to become stars of the big screen or small screen, or music legends, but these 10 celebrities all spent time in uniform.

I think I would be correct in saying that the vast majority of Military Despatches' readers served in the military at some stage.

They may have been permanent force members, conscripts, or even citizen force or reserve members.

Now if you did serve in the military then you have something in common with the 10 people on this list - at some stage they also served in the military.

1. Mr. T

Lawrence Tureaud is better known as Mr. T. He is best remembered for his role as B.A. Baracus in the 1980s television series *The A-Team*. He also starred as the boxer Clubber Land in the 1982 film *Rocky III*.

His brother had fought in Vietnam and Tureaud enlisted in the United States Army and served in the Military Police Corps.

In November 1975 he was awarded a letter of recommendation by his drill sergeant. In a group of 6,000 troops Tureaud was elected "Top Trainee of the Cycle" and was promoted to squad leader.

In July 1976 while at a training camp at Fort McCoy in Wisconsin, his platoon sergeant

punished him by ordering him to chop down trees. But he never told him how many to chop down.

Tureaud began chopping trees at 06h30. At 10h00 a shocked major superseded the sergeant's orders. In the space of three and a half hours Tureaud had single-handedly chopped down over 70 trees.

2. Bea Arthur

Bea Arthur will be best remembered for her role as Dorothy Zbornak on the 1980s sitcom *The Golden Girls*.

During World War II she served in the United States Marine Corps Women's Reserve where she worked as a truck driver and a typist. She was given an honourable discharge in 1945 with the rank of staff sergeant.

She passed away from cancer on 25 April, 2005 at the age of 86.

3. Gene Hackman

Best remembered for his role as Detective Popeye Doyle in *The French Connection*, Hackman won two Academy Awards, three Golden Globe Awards, and two BAFTA Awards.

In starred in a number of "war" movies that included *A Bridge Too Far*, *Uncommon Valour*, *Crimson Tide* and *Be*

hind Enemy Lines.

At the age of 16 he lied about his age to enlist in the United States Marine Corps where he served four and a half years as a field radio operator.

4. Chuck Norris

Martial arts champion and actor Carlos Ray Norris is better known as Chuck Norris.

He has starred in numerous movies and the TV series *Walker, Texas Ranger*.

He joined the United States Air Force as an Air Policeman (AP) in 1958 and was sent to Osan Air Base, South Korea.

It was there that Norris acquired the nickname Chuck and began his training in Tang Soo Do, an interest that led to black belts in that art and the founding of this own style, Chun Kuk Do.

When he returned to the United States, he continued to serve as an AP at March Air Force Base in California. Norris was honourably discharged from the U.S. Air Force in August 1962.

5. Morgan Freeman

Academy Award winning actor Morgan Freeman needs little introduction.

His many movie credits include the role of President Nelson Mandela in the 2009 film *Invictus*.

As a youngster he turned down a partial scholarship from Jackson State University. Instead he chose to enlist in the United States Air Force where he wanted to train as a pilot. He ended up serving as an Automatic Radar Repairman, rising to the rank of Airman 1st Class.

6. Arnold Schwarzenegger

Arnold "I'll be back" Schwarzenegger has done it all - actor, producer, businessman, investor, author, philanthropist, activist, world body-building champion, and former Governor of California.

He won the Mr. Universe title at age 20 and went on to win the Mr. Olympia contest seven times, remaining a prominent presence in bodybuilding and writing many books and articles on the sport.

Born in Austria, Schwarzenegger had to fulfill the one year of military service required at the time. At the age of 18 he was conscripted into the Austrian Army.

During his army service he won the Junior Mr. Europe contest. Unfortunately he would often go AWOL so he could take part in competitions. He ended up spending a week in military detention.

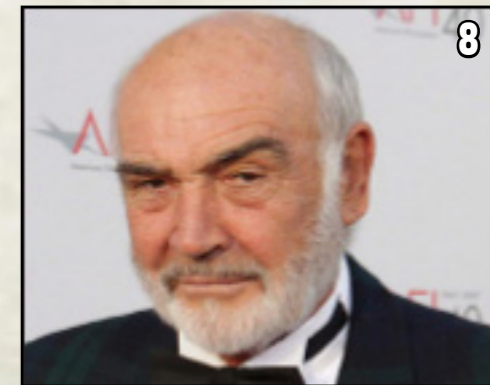
4. Clint Eastwood

Clint Eastwood rose to fame as the "Man with No Name" and as Detective Harry Callahan in the five *Dirty Harry* films.

He starred in war movies such as *Where Eagles Dare* and *Kelly's Heroes*. He also directed the acclaimed *Letters from Iwo Jima*.

He was drafted into the United States Army during the Korean War, but did not serve in Korea.

According to his former long-time companion Sondra Locke, he was a life guard at Ford Ord in northern California for his entire stint in the military.



3. Sean Connery

The original James Bond, Scottish actor Sean Connery has been polled as “The Greatest Living Scot”.

He joined the Royal Navy during which time he acquired two tattoos. One tattoo is a tribute to his parents and reads ‘Mum and Dad,’ and the other is self-explanatory, ‘Scotland Forever.’”

Connery was later discharged from the navy on medical grounds because of a duodenal ulcer, a condition that affected most of the males in previous generations of his family.

2. Jimi Hendrix

Regarded by many as one of the best guitarists ever, Jimi Hendrix was only 27 when he died.

Not only did Hendrix serve in the military, he was a paratrooper. At the age of 19, after twice being caught by police for riding in stolen cars, a judge gave him the choice of spending time in prison or enlisting in the military. He chose the later option and entered the US Army in 1961

After basic training he was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division and stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

By February 1962, his personal conduct had begun to draw criticism from his superiors. His platoon sergeant wrote in a report, “It is my opinion that Private Hendrix will never come up to the standards required of a soldier. I feel that the military service will benefit if he is discharged as soon as possible.”

On 29 June 1962 Hendrix



ART IMITATES LIFE: Sean Connery (left) and Gene Hackman starred in the film *A Bridge Too Far*. Connery as Major General Urquhart and Hackman as Polish Major General Sosabowski. Both served in the military.

was granted an honourable discharge on the basis of unsuitability.

1. Elvis Presley

Elvis Presley was already a star when he was drafted into the US Army in March 1958.

Presley announced that he was looking forward to his military stint, saying he did not want to be treated any differently from anyone else: “The Army can do anything it wants with me.”

After his basic training, Presley joined the 3rd Armored Division in Friedberg, Germany. Fellow soldiers have attested to Presley’s wish to be seen as an able, ordinary soldier, despite his fame, and to his generosity. He donated his Army pay to charity, purchased TV sets for the base, and bought an extra set of fatigues for everyone in his outfit.

Honourable Mentions

Of course these 10 celebrities were not the only ones to ever serve in the military. Many oth-

er also served. The list is far too long to mention, but here are a few.

- Private First Class Hugh Hefner.
- British singer Captain James Blunt.
- Corporal Mel Brookes.
- Dr. Ruth (Israeli Defence Force).
- Christopher Lee – Finnish Army, British Home Guard, Royal Air Force.
- Tom Selleck (Magnum PI).
- Leonard Nimoy (Dr Spock).
- James Earl Jones.
- Actors Jimmy Stewart, Lee Marvin, Charles Bronson, Clark Gable, Ernest Borgnine, Humphrey Bogart, Michael Caine, Henry Fonda, Charlton Heston, Steve McQueen, Kirk Douglas, Harvey Keitel, Mickey Rooney, Gene Wilder, Paul Newman, Sidney Poitier
- Singers Kris Kristofferson, Tony Bennett, Johnny Cash and Willie Nelson.
- Former heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis.



General Knowledge

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2. How many South Africans were awarded the Victoria Cross during World War II?
3. By what name was the German Panzerkampfwagen V better known as?
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5. What does the AK stand for in AK-47?
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8. Who was South Africa’s leading air ace during World War I?
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The Six Day War

In Part III of our Head-to-head series on the Six Day War, we look at the aircraft used by Israel, Egypt, Syria and Jordan.

When Israel decided to launch a pre-emptive strike they knew that for their attack to have any chance of success it was vital that they achieve air superiority.

Egypt was regarded as the main threat and the initial Israeli air strike would be against eight Egyptian airfields in Sinai, on the Suez Canal and around Cairo.

The timing of the attack was sheer genius. Military doctrine dictates that the best time for an attack is at first light. The Israeli air strike was planned for 08h45 Egyptian time.

The relative lateness of the hour was chosen for a number of reasons. First of all the Egyptians would be hit when they least expected it. By that time the early morning mist in the Nile Delta had lifted.

Most importantly, the Egyptian air patrols and radar surveillance had been stood down with the passing of the time for a classic dawn attack. More over the change-over of watches within the Egyptian air command was taking place.

In another move that went against the norm, the Israelis chose not to make Arab radar stations their first priority.

To achieve surprise in the strikes against the airfields around Cairo the Israelis flew deep into the Mediterranean before they turned to attack the air fields from the rear.

And it wasn't just a quick 'hit-and-run' strike either. The Israelis kept successive waves of attacking aircraft over the major targets until resistance was totally broken. For 80 minutes the Israelis kept up a continuous attack on airfields housing the cutting edge of Egyptian air power.

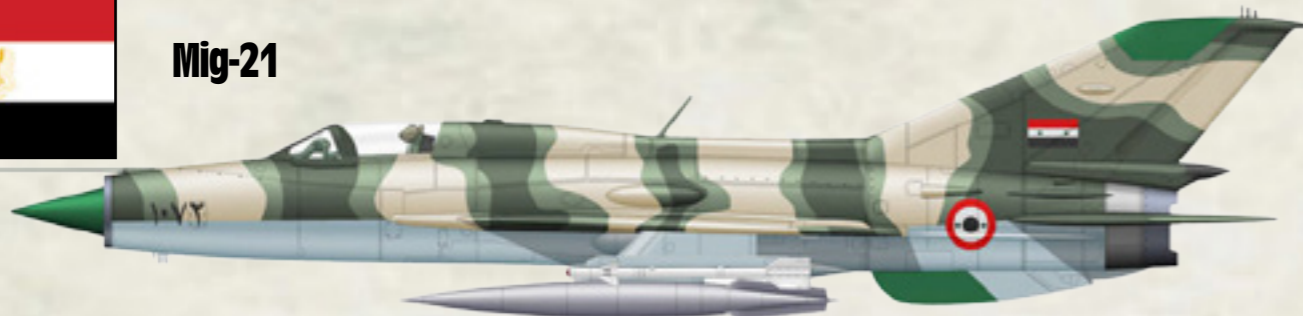
At the end of the first day's operation about 300 Arab aircraft had been destroyed with



Dassault Mirage III



Mig-21



the Israelis losing only ten of their own.

As can be expected the Israeli intelligence was spot on and the target identification by the pilots was outstanding. Dummy installations and aircraft were ignored while the real targets were destroyed.

That the Israelis were able to keep waves of attacking aircraft over the target was due to careful calculation of flight times and an allowance of ten minutes time-over-target for each attacking wave before the next wave arrived to take over.

Once the eight original airfields had been dealt with the Israelis extended their operations to cover a further nine Egyptian airfields.

They then moved on to cover the Jordanian, Iraqi and Syrian fronts. On the first day they annihilated the Jordanian Air Force and inflicted such heavy loses on the Syrian Air Force

that it took virtually no active part in the war. The fact of the matter is that the Jordanian and Syrian Air Forces had been destroyed within the space of 25 minutes.

Most of the damage from the Israeli aircraft was inflicted by cannon fire against aircraft caught on the ground.

Some Israeli pilots actually lowered their undercarriage to reduce speed and increase the accuracy of their fire.

Yet the Israelis did not rely on cannon only. A variety of bombs had been developed to make runways unusable.

Some were set on long time delay fuses to discourage ground crews from trying to repair the runways. Installations and runways in Sinai were relatively lightly attacked because the Israelis planned on using them for themselves.

In the end the war lasted only six days and became known as

the Six Day War. A total of 418 Arab aircraft were destroyed for the loss of 27 Israeli aircraft.

While the war lasted for six days it was, for all intents and purposes, over after three hours.

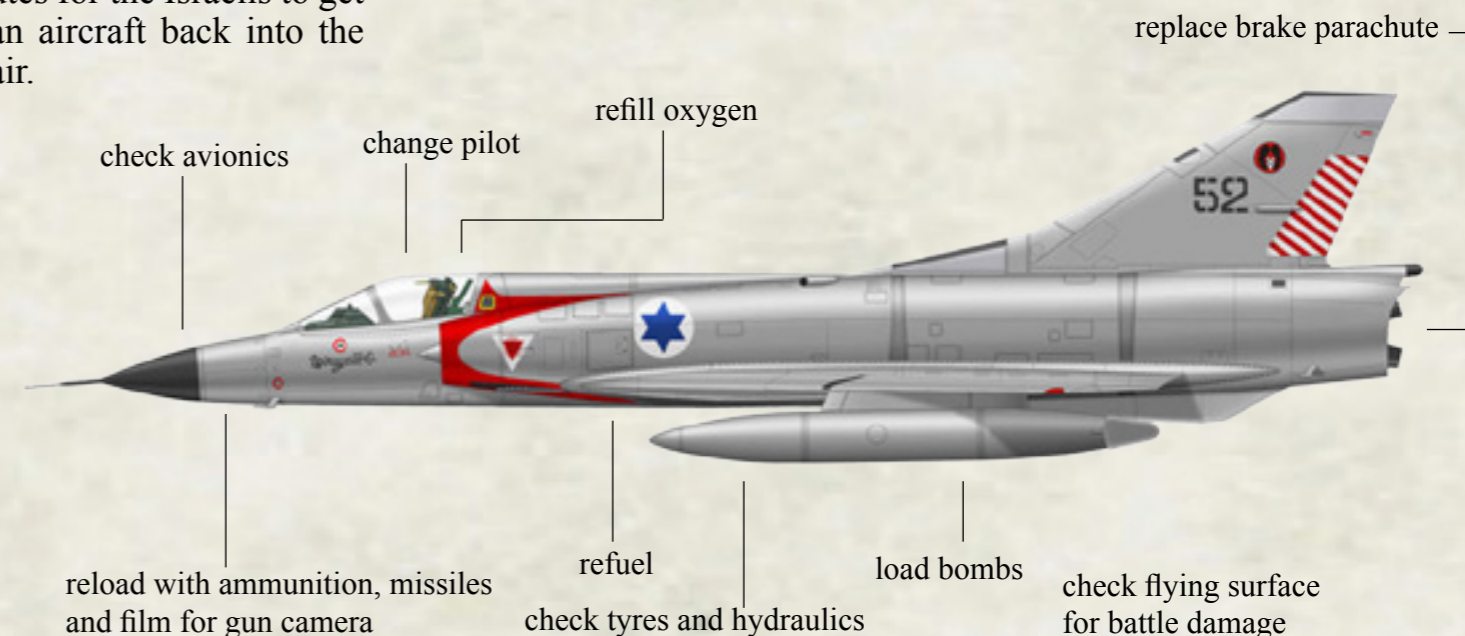
In that time the Israelis inflicted a huge defeat on the Arabs from which they could never hope to recover. Once the Israelis had secured air superiority the outcome of the war was never in doubt.

In the history of air warfare no operation stands comparison with the Israeli Air Force attack on 5 June 1967 with regard to the expertise in execution and significance for the outcome of a campaign.

It was a blow the Arab Forces could never hope to recover from and basically Israel's success meant their defeat.

Turn-around procedure

It took a mere seven minutes for the Israelis to get an aircraft back into the air.





Israel 350 Aircraft

Dassault Mirage III

The Dassault Mirage III is a family of single-seat, single-engine, fighter aircraft developed and manufactured by French aircraft company Dassault Aviation. It was the first Western European combat aircraft to exceed Mach 2 in horizontal flight.

The Israeli Air Force (IAF) purchased three variants of the Mirage III:

- Weight: 7,050 kg
- Length: 15.03 metres
- Wingspan: 8.22 metres
- Height: 4.5 metres
- Crew: 1

- Armament: 2× 30 mm DEFA 552 cannon, 2× Matra 9× 68 mm SNEB rockets, 2× AIM-9 Sidewinder Air to Air missiles
- Powerplant: 1 × SNECMA Atar 09C after-burning turbojet engine
- Max speed: 2,350 km/h
- Rate of climb: 83 m/s
- Combat range: 1,200 km
- Avionics: Thomson-CSF Cyrano II radar; Marconi continuous-wave Doppler navigation radar



Dassault Super Mystère

The Dassault Super Mystère is a French fighter-bomber and was the first Western European supersonic aircraft to enter mass production.

- Weight: 6,930 kg
- Length: 14.13 metres
- Wingspan: 10.51 metres
- Height: 4.6 metres
- Crew: 1
- Armament: 2× 30 mm DEFA 552 cannon, 2× Matra 9× 68 mm SNEB rockets, 2× Rafael Shafrir AAMs

- Powerplant: 1 × SNECMA Atar 101G-2 after-burning turbojet engine
- Max speed: 1,195 km/h
- Rate of climb: 89 m/s
- Combat range: 870 km
- Nord 2501IS military cargo plane.



Other aircraft used by the Israeli Air Force included:

- Sud Aviation Vautour
- Mystere IV
- Dassault Ouragan
- Fouga Magister trainer outfitted for attack missions



Egypt 450 Aircraft

Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-21

The Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-21 (NATO reporting name: Fishbed) is a supersonic jet fighter and interceptor aircraft, designed by the Mikoyan-Gurevich Design Bureau in the Soviet Union. Its nicknames include: Balalaika, because its plan-form resembles the stringed musical instrument of the same name.

- Weight: 8,725 kg
- Length: 14.7 metres
- Wingspan: 7.154 metres

- Height: 4.1 metres
- Crew: 1
- Armament: 1 × internal 23 mm Gryazev-Shipunov GSh-23L auto-cannon, 4 × S-24 57mm rockets, K-14

- AAMs
- Powerplant: 1 × Tumansky R-25-300 afterburning turbojet
- Max speed: 2,175 km/h
- Combat range: 660 km



Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-19

The Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-19 (NATO reporting name: Farmer) is a Soviet second generation, single-seat, twin jet-engined fighter aircraft, the world's first mass-produced supersonic aircraft.

- Weight: 5,172 kg
- Length: 12.54 metres
- Wingspan: 9 metres
- Height: 3.88 metres
- Crew: 1
- Armament: 3× 30 mm

- Nudelman-Rikhter NR-30 auto-cannon, 2 × 32-round ORO-57K rocket pods
- Powerplant: 2 × Tumansky RD-9B after-burning turbo-

- jet engines
- Max speed: 1,452 km/h
- Rate of climb: 177.8 m/s
- Combat range: 1,390 km



Other aircraft used by the Egyptian Air Force included:

- MiG-17
- Su-7B
- Tu-16
- Il-28
- Il-18
- Il-14
- An-12

Besides the 450 aircraft of the Egyptian Air Force, Syria had 120 aircraft while Jordan had 40.

They used pretty much the same aircraft as the Egyptians with the exception of Jordan which also used the British designed Hawker Hunter.

Adolf Galland

A World War II German Luftwaffe general and flying ace, Adolf Galland flew 705 combat missions and was credited with 104 aerial victories. He was respected by both friend and foe alike.

A commercial pilot, a fighter ace, holder of the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords, the youngest general in the German armed forces, and a legend - Adolf Galland was all of these and more.

Early life

Adolf Josef Ferdinand Galland was born on 19 March 1912 in Westerholt (now Herten), Westphalia.

He was the second of four sons of Adolf Galland (senior) and his French wife Anna, née Schipper.

Galland developed a lifelong interest in flying which began in 1927 when a group of aviation enthusiasts brought a glider club to Borkenberge.

It was here that the *Gelsenkirchen Luftsportverein* (Air Sports Club of Gelsenkirchen) created an interest in flying among young Germans. Galland travelled by foot or horse-drawn wagon 30 kilometres until his father bought him a motorcycle to help prepare the gliders for flight.

Galland became an outstanding glider pilot; he became an instructor at the age of 19.

His father promised to buy him his own glider if he also passed his matriculations examinations, which he succeeded in doing.

Under the Treaty of Versailles, Germany was denied an air force. They were however allowed gliders and it became the way for fledgling pilots to begin their flying career. The sport became so popular that the

Reichswehr set up ten schools, at least one in each of the seven military districts of Germany.

Pilot training

In February 1932, Galland graduated from Hindenburg Gymnasium (high school) in Buer and was among 20 personnel who were accepted to the aviation school of Germany's national airline, Luft Hansa.

During the final years of the Weimar Republic, jobs were scarce and life was hard for the Galland family economically. Adolf had some experience of flying gliders so he applied to the *Deutsche Verkehrsfliegerschule* or DVS (German Commercial Flying School) which was heavily subsidised by Luft Hansa.

He was one of 100 successful applicants out of 4,000. After ten days of evaluations, he was among just 18 selected for flight training. Ad-

If was then assessed on performance. Those that did not reach the standard were sent home.

His early career went badly. So badly he was convinced he would soon be

sent home, and he applied to join the German Army. In the meantime, he carried on with his flight training. Galland did not receive a reply from the Army and settled down to continue his training. By Christmas 1932, he had logged 150 hours flying and had obtained a B2 certificate.

Early in 1933, along with several other pilots, he was ordered to attend an interview at the *Zentrale der Verkehrsflieger Schule* (ZVS—Central Airline Pilot School).

Here the group were interviewed by military personnel in civilian clothing. After being informed of a secret military training program being built that involved piloting high performance aircraft, all the pilots accepted an invitation to join the organisation.

In May 1933, Galland was ordered to a meeting in Berlin as one of 12 civilian pilots among 70 airmen who came from clandestine programmes, meeting Hermann Göring for the first time. Galland was impressed by and believed Göring to be a competent leader.

In July 1933, Galland travelled to Italy to train with the *Regia Aeronautica* (Italian Air Force). Initially the Germans were treated as inferior by the Italians, but after Galland had flown some daring and impressive low-level manoeuvres, the German contingent won their hosts' respect.

As a part of his training, beginning in October 1933, Galland flew Lufthansa airliners. Flying the Junkers G24 from

Stuttgart to Barcelona in Spain, via Geneva and Marseilles. In December 1933, Galland was recalled to the ZVS headquarters and offered the chance to join the new Luftwaffe.

Galland found the choice hard as he wanted the adventure of a military flying career, but as an airline pilot, Galland had enjoyed the life style of flying and visiting exotic places and was reluctant to give it up. Nevertheless, he decided to officially join the Luftwaffe.

After basic training in the Army, he was discharged from his barracks in Dresden in October 1934. In February 1935 Galland was posted to *Jagdgeschwader 2* (Fighter Wing 2).

In October 1935, during aerobatic manoeuvre training, he crashed a Focke-Wulf Fw 44 biplane and was in a coma for three days, other injuries were a damaged eye, fractured skull and broken nose.

When Galland recovered, he was declared unfit for flying by the doctors. A friend, Major Rheital, kept the doctors report secret to allow Adolf to continue flying. The expansion of the Luftwaffe and his own *Geschwader* (wing) flooded the administration officers and Galland's medical report was overlooked. Within a year, Galland showed no signs of injury from his crash.

In October 1936 he crashed an Arado Ar 68 and was hospitalised again, aggravating his injured eye. It was at this point his previous medical report came to light again and Galland's un-

fit certificate was discovered. Major Rheital was rumoured to have undergone a court-martial, but the investigators dropped the charges. Galland, however, was grounded.

He admitted having fragments of glass in his eye, but convinced the doctors he was fit for flying duty. Galland was ordered to undergo eye tests to validate his claims. Before the testing could begin, one of his brothers managed to acquire the charts. Adolf memorised the charts passing the test and was permitted to fly again.

Condor Legion

During the Spanish Civil War, Galland was appointed *Staffelkapitän* of a Condor Legion unit, 3. *Staffel* of *Jagdgruppe 88* (J/88—88th Fighter Group), which was sent to support the Nationalist side under Franco at Ferrol from mid-1937. Galland flew ground attack missions in Heinkel He 51s.

In Spain, Galland first displayed his unique style: flying in swimming trunks with a cigar between his teeth in an aircraft decorated with a Mickey Mouse figure. When asked why he developed this style, he gave a simple answer:

"I like Mickey Mouse. I always have. And I like cigars, but I had to give them up after the war."

Galland flew his first of 300 combat missions in Spain. Following the Nationalist victory was awarded the 'Spanish Cross in Gold with Swords and Diamonds' for his contributions.



Before leaving he made ten flights in the Bf 109; deeply impressed with the performance of the aircraft, it persuaded him to change from a strike pilot to a fighter pilot.

Invasion of Poland

Just before the outbreak of war, Galland was promoted to *Hauptmann* (Captain).

During the invasion of Poland from 1 September 1939 onward, he flew with 4 Staffel, II./Lehrgeschwader 2. Equipped with the Henschel Hs 123, nicknamed the “biplane Stuka,” supporting the German Tenth Army.

Galland ceased combat operations on 19 September 1939, having flown 87 missions. After flying nearly 360 missions in two wars and averaging two missions per day,

on 13 September 1939, Galland was awarded the Iron Cross Second Class.

ond Class.

Western Europe

On 10 May 1940, the Wehrmacht invaded the Low Countries and France under the codename *Fall Gelb*. JG 27 supported German forces in the Battle for Belgium. On the third day of the offensive, 12 May 1940, Galland claimed his first aerial victories, over two Royal Air Force (RAF) Hawker Hurricanes. Galland claimed his third Hurricane later that same day over Tienen.

On 19 May, Galland shot down a French Potez aircraft. He continued flying and the next day, claimed another three more aircraft, making a total of seven. For this he was awarded the Iron Cross First Class from Erhard Milch on 22 May.

With the effective defeat of Belgium JG 27 was moved into forward airfields to support the invasion of

France. During the Battle of Dunkirk, after encountering the Supermarine Spitfire for the first time, Galland was impressed with these aircraft and their pilots.

As Galland noted, the nature and style of the air battles over the beaches should have provided a warning as to the inherent weaknesses of the Luftwaffe’s force structure.

By the end of the campaign Galland has 12 victories to his credit. On 6 June 1940, Galland took over the command of III./Jagdgeschwader 26 “Schlageter” (III./JG 26—3rd group of the 26th Fighter Wing) with the position of Gruppenkommandeur.

Battle of Britain

From June 1940 on, Galland flew as the Gruppenkommandeur of III./JG 26 (JG 26), fighting in the Battle of Britain with Messer-

schmitt Bf 109Es. On 19 July 1940, he was promoted to Major and JG 26 moved to the Pas de Calais, where they were to remain for the next 18 months with III./JG 26 based at Caffiers.

As the battles over the Channel continued, Galland shot down Spitfires on 25 and 28 July, bringing his total to 17. On 1 August 1940, Galland was awarded the Knight’s Cross of the Iron Cross. By 15 August, in two weeks’ fighting over Britain, Galland had increased his own tally to 21.

Galland was summoned to Karinhall, Herman Göring’s country residence, on 18 August 1940, and missed the intense air battle that day, known as The Hardest Day. During the meeting, Göring insisted that, in combat, Bf 109 fighters escort Bf 110s, which could not survive against single-engine fighters.

As high-scoring aces, both Galland and Werner Mölders shared their concerns that close escort of Bf 110s and bombers robbed fighter pilots of their freedom to roam and engage the enemy on their own terms. They also pointed to the fact that German bombers flew at medium altitudes and low speed, the best height area and speed for the manoeuvrability of the Spitfire. Galland resented his pilots having to carry out a task unsuited to their equipment but Göring would not move from his position.

During the battle, the fighter pilots were criticised by Göring

for the growing bomber losses. In a front line General Officer briefing on Luftwaffe tactics, Göring asked what his fighter pilots needed to win the battle. Werner Mölders replied that he would like the Bf 109 to be fitted with more powerful engines.

Galland replied: “I should like an outfit of Spitfires for my squadron.” which left Göring speechless with rage. Galland still preferred the Bf 109 for offensive sweeps, but he regarded the Spitfire as a better defensive fighter, owing to its manoeuvrability.

During the Battle of Britain, the question of killing enemy pilots while in their parachutes was raised. In another conversation with Göring, Galland recalled:

Göring wanted to know if we had ever thought about this. “Jawohl, Herr Reichsmarschall!”

He looked me straight in the eyes and said, “What would you think of an order to shoot down pilots who were bailing out? “I should regard it as murder, Herr Reichsmarschall”, I told him, “I should do everything in my power to disobey such an order”. “That is just the reply I had expected from you, Galland”.

On 23 September, Galland became the third member of the Wehrmacht to receive the Knight’s Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves for achieving his 39th and 40th aerial victories. On 25 September, he was summoned to Berlin to receive

the award from Adolf Hitler.

On 9 August 1941, RAF ace Douglas Bader bailed out over St Omer, France. Bader was well known to the Luftwaffe and at the time of his capture had been credited with 22 aerial victories.

Galland and JG 26 entertained Bader over the next few days. Owing to the significant stature of the prisoner, Galland permitted Bader, under escort, to sit in the cockpit of a Bf 109. Apparently, despite losing one of his tin legs in the aircraft, Bader, in a semi-serious way, asked if they wouldn’t mind if he took it on a test flight around the airfield. Galland replied that he feared Douglas would attempt to escape and they would have to give chase and shoot at each other again, and declined the request.

High Command

In November 1941, he was chosen by Göring to command Germany’s fighter force as *General der Jagdflieger*, succeeding Werner Mölders who had just been killed in an air crash en route to attend the funeral of Ernst Udet. Galland was not enthusiastic about his promotion, seeing himself as a combat leader and not wanting to be “tied to a desk job”. He was the youngest General in the armed forces.

Galland was outspoken, something that was not often tolerated by Göring. Yet, by earning and cultivating the support of other powerful personalities in the Luftwaffe, like Er-



hard Milch and Günther Korten, and personalities in the industrial sector such as Albert Speer and even Adolf Hitler, Galland was able to survive in his position for three years.

Galland's position as General der Jagdflieger brought him into gradual conflict with Göring as the war continued. Galland was often with odds with Göring and Hitler on how to prosecute the air war.

Göring's influence was in decline by late 1944 and he had fallen out of favour with Hitler. Göring became increasingly hostile to Galland, blaming him and the fighter pilots for the situation.

On 17 January, a group of senior pilots took part in a "Fighter Pilots Revolt". Galland's high standing with his fighter pilot peers led to a group of the most decorated Luftwaffe combat leaders loyal to Galland (including Johannes Steinhoff and Günther Lützow) confronting Göring with a list of demands for the survival of their service.

Göring initially suspected Galland had instigated the unrest. Heinrich Himmler had wanted to put Galland on trial for treason himself; the SS and Gestapo had already begun investigations into who he associated with. The *Oberkommando der Luftwaffe* (OKL) appointed the more politically acceptable Gordon Gollob, a National Socialist supporter, to succeed him as *General der Jagdflieger* on 23 January.

Although professional contemporaries, Gollob and Gal-

land had a mutual dislike, and after Galland had removed the Austrian from his personal staff in September 1944, Gollob started to gather evidence to use against Galland, detailing false accusations of his gambling, womanising, and alleged private use of Luftwaffe transport aircraft.

The official reason for his being relieved of command was his ill health. Göring suspected Galland of organising the rebellion, and wanted all the ring-leaders to face Court-martial.

For his own safety, Galland went to a retreat in the Harz Mountains, where he was effectively under house arrest. Hitler, who liked Galland, had not heard of the events.

However, when he learned of them he ordered that "all this nonsense" [the treatment of Galland], was to stop immediately.

Hitler had been informed by Albert Speer, who in turn had been informed of events by one of Galland's close friends.

In the end, Göring contacted Galland and invited him to Karinhall. In light of his service to the fighter arm, he promised no further action would be taken against him and offered command of a unit of Me 262 jets. Galland accepted on the understanding that Gollob had no jurisdiction over him or his unit.

Surrender

By late April, the war was effectively over. On 1 May 1945, Galland attempted to make contact with United States Army

forces to negotiate the surrender of his unit. The act itself was dangerous. SS forces roamed the countryside and towns executing anyone who was considering capitulation.

The Americans requested that Galland fly his unit and Me 262s to a USAAF controlled airfield. Galland declined citing poor weather and technical problems. In reality, Galland was not going to hand over Me 262 jets to the Americans. Galland had harboured the belief that the Western Alliance would soon be at war with the Soviet Union, and he wanted to join American forces and to use his unit in the coming war to free Germany from Communist occupation. Galland replied, making his whereabouts known to the Americans, and offering his surrender once they arrived at the Tegernsee hospital where he was being treated.

Galland then ordered his unit, which had then moved to Salzburg and Innsbruck, to destroy their Me 262s. At the time of his surrender, Galland had filed claims for 104 Allied aircraft shot down. His claims included seven with the Me 262.

On 14 May 1945, Galland was flown to England and interrogated by RAF personnel about the Luftwaffe, its organisation, his role in it and technical questions. Galland returned to Germany on 24 August and was imprisoned at Hohenpeissenberg.

On 7 October, Galland was returned to England for further interrogation. Galland was

eventually released on 28 April 1947.

Post-war

After his release, he travelled to Schleswig-Holstein to join Baroness Gisela von Donner, an earlier acquaintance, on her estate and lived with her three children. During this time, Galland found work as a forestry worker. There he convalesced and came to terms with his career and Nazi war crimes.

Galland began to hunt for the family and traded the kills in the local markets to supplement meagre meat rations. Soon Galland rediscovered his love of flying. Kurt Tank, the designer of the Fw 190, requested that he go to his home in Minden to discuss a proposal. Tank had been asked to work for the British and Soviets, and had narrowly avoided being forcibly kidnapped by the latter.

Tank, through a contact in Denmark, informed Galland about the possibility of the Argentinian Government employing him as a test pilot for Tank's new generation of fighters. Galland accepted and flew to Argentina. He settled with Gisela in El Palomar, Buenos Aires.

For his services to Argentina, Galland was awarded a pilot's wings badge and the title of the Honorary Argentine Military Pilot. Later that year [when?] Galland left South America. By that time, he had begun writing his autobiography, *The First and the Last (Die Ersten und die Letzten)*, that was published in 1954 by Franz Schneekluth. It

was a best-seller in 14 languages and sold three million copies. It was well received by the RAF and USAF.

Galland returned to Germany and was approached by Amt Blank, a commissioner for Chancellor Konrad Adenauer for the purpose of joining the new Bundeswehr now that West Germany was to join NATO as a military power.

In 1955, General Nathan Twining, the chief of staff of the USAF, sent a secret telegram to General William H. Tunner, commander of United States Air Forces in Europe. Claiming Galland's alleged "strong neo-Nazi leanings", association with prominent neo-Nazis such as Hans-Ulrich Rudel, and his known service to the Perón dictatorship, which was not on good terms with the United States, Twining asked that Tunner communicate to the German government that although the United States made it clear the appointment was entirely the choice of the Germans, they disapproved of Galland for the position of Inspektor (chief of staff) to the German Air Force.

In 1969, he served as technical adviser for the film *Battle of Britain*, in which the character Major Falke is based on Galland. He became good friends with ex-RAF pilots such as Robert Stanford Tuck and Douglas Bader.

Galland took part in many engagements throughout the 1960s and 1970s. In 1974, he was part of the remaining German General Staff that took part in the

Operation Sea Lion wargame at Sandhurst in the United Kingdom, replicating the planned German invasion of Britain in 1940 (which the German side lost). In 1975, he was a guest at the RAF Museum Hendon, during the unveiling of the Battle of Britain Hall, where he was entertained by Prince Charles.

In 1980, Galland's eyesight became too poor for him to fly and he retired as a pilot. However, he continued to attend numerous aviation events, to include being a periodic guest of the U.S. Air Force for their annual "Gathering of Eagles" program at the Air Command and Staff College at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, USA.

By the 1980s, Galland was regularly attending the funerals of friends like Tuck, and also Douglas Bader, who had died on 5 September 1982 after speaking at a dinner for Arthur Harris. In June 1983 he attended the funeral of Gerhard Barkhorn (Germany's second highest ace after Erich Hartmann) and his wife Christl, who had died in a traffic accident.

In early February 1996, Galland was taken seriously ill. He had wanted to die at home and so was released from hospital and returned to his own house. With his wife Heidi, son and daughter present, he was given the last rites. Adolf Galland died at 01:15 in the morning of Tuesday, 9 February 1996 at the age of 83. His body was buried at St Laurentius Church, Oberwinter on 21 February. A memorial service was held on 31 March.

Merkava

Translated from Hebrew, the name Merkava means 'chariot' and it forms the backbone of the Israel Defence Forces Armoured Corps. It is a vehicle that was forged in battle.

The Merkava (chariot) is a series of main battle tanks used by the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) and the backbone of the IDF's Armoured Corps. Current iterations of this tank are considered broadly equivalent to the capabilities of the M1 Abrams, Leopard 2 and the Challenger 2. This vehicle also shares the same powerplant as a number

of other well known tank platforms.

Development began in 1970, and its first generation, the Merkava Mark 1, entered official service in 1979.

Four main variants have been deployed. As of 2023, Merkava

Mark 4 Barak is the latest version.

The Merkava was first used extensively in the 1982 Lebanon War. The name "Merkava" was derived from the IDF's initial development program name.

The tank was developed in the Merkava and Armoured Combat Vehicles Division of the Israeli Ministry of Defence, and most of its parts are manufactured in Israel.

The Merkava was designed to provide maximum protection for its crew, and therefore its front armour was fortified and the engine placed in the front part of the tank, unlike most other tanks.

Design criteria include rapid repair of battle damage, survivability, cost-effectiveness, and off-road performance. Following the model of contemporary self-propelled howitzers, the

turret assembly is located closer to the rear than in most main battle tanks.

With the engine in front, this layout is intended to provide additional protection against a frontal attack, so as to absorb some of the force of incoming shells and projectiles, especially for the personnel in the main hull, such as the driver.

It also creates more space in the rear of the tank that allows increased storage capacity and a rear entrance to the main crew compartment allowing easy access under enemy fire. This allows the tank to be used as a platform for medical disembar-

kation (with no ammunition, the Merkava can hold up to 4 stretchers, but this is only an emergency measure), a forward command and control station, and an infantry fighting vehicle.

The rear entrance's clamshell-style doors provide overhead protection when off- and on-loading cargo and personnel.

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Development

During the late 1960s, the Israeli Army began collaborating on design notes for the Chieftain tank which had originally been introduced to British Army service, with a view to Israel purchasing and domestically producing the vehicle.

Two prototypes were delivered as part of a four-year trial. However, it was eventually decided not to sell the Chieftain to the Israelis, as they were already being supplied to Arab countries, which prompted them to follow their own development programme.

Israel Tal, who was serving as a brigade commander after the Suez Crisis, restarted plans to produce an Israeli-made tank, drawing on lessons from the 1973 Yom Kippur War, in which Israeli forces were outnumbered by those of Middle Eastern Arab nations.

By 1974, initial designs were completed and prototypes were built. After a brief set of trials, work began to retool the Tel HaShomer ordnance depot for full-time development and construction. After the new facilities were completed, the Merkava was announced to the public in the International Defence Review periodical.

The first official images of the tank were then released to the American periodical Armed Forces Journal on May 4, 1977. The IDF officially adopted the tank in December 1979.

Variants

Merkava Mark 1

The Merkava was first used in combat during the 1982 Lebanon War, where Israel deployed

180 units. Although they were a success, the M113 APCs that accompanied them were found to have several defects and were withdrawn.

Merkavas were converted into makeshift APCs or armoured ambulances by taking out the palleted ammunition racks in storage. Ten soldiers or walking wounded could enter and exit through the rear door.

After the war, many adjustments and additions were noted and designed, including the need for the 60 mm mortar to be installed within the hull and engineered for remote firing - a valuable feature that the Israelis had initially encountered on their Centurion Mk3s with their 2" Mk.III mortar.

A shot trap was found beneath the rear of the turret bustle, where a well-placed shot could jam the turret completely. The installation of chain netting to disperse and destroy rocket propelled grenades and anti-tank rockets before impacting the primary armour increased survivability.

Merkava Mark 2

The Mark II was first introduced into general service in April 1983. It incorporated numerous small adjustments as a result of the previous year's incursion into Lebanon. The new tank was optimized for urban warfare and low intensity conflicts, with a weight and engine no greater than the Mark I.

The Mark II used the same 105 mm main gun and 7.62 mm machine guns as the Mark I, but the 60 mm mortar was redesigned during construction to be located within the hull and

configured for remote firing to remove the need to expose the operator to enemy small-arms fire.

An Israeli-designed automatic transmission and increased fuel storage for increased range was installed on all further Mark IIs. Anti-rocket netting was fitted for increased survivability against infantry equipped with anti-tank rockets.

Many minor improvements were made to the fire-control system. Updated meteorological sensors, crosswind analyzers, and thermographic optics and image intensifiers gave greater visibility and battlefield awareness.

Merkava Mark 3

The Merkava Mark 3 was introduced in December 1989 and was in production until 2003. As of 2016, the Merkava III is the most numerous tank in frontline IDF service. Compared to the Merkava II, it has upgrades to the drivetrain, powertrain, armament, and electronic systems.

The most prominent addition was the incorporation of the locally developed IMI 120 mm gun. This gun and a larger 1,200 horsepower (890 kW) diesel engine raised the total weight of the tank to 65 tonnes, but the larger engine raised the maximum cruising speed to 60 km/h.

The turret was re-engineered for movement independent of the tank chassis, allowing it to track a target regardless of the tank's movement. Many other changes were made, including:

- External two-way telephone for secure communications

between the tank crew and dismounted infantry,

- Upgraded ammunition storage containers to minimize ammunition cook-off
- Addition of laser designators
- Incorporation of the Kasag modular armour system, designed for rapid replacement and repair in the battlefield and for quick upgrading as new designs and sophisticated materials become available.

Merkava Mark 4

The Merkava Mark 4 began development in 1999, and production in 2004. The upgrade's development was announced in an October 1999 edition of the military publication *Bamachaneh* ("At the Camp").

However, the Merkava Mark 3 remained in production until 2003. The first Merkava IVs were in production in limited numbers by the end of 2004.

Removable modular armour, from the Merkava Mark 3D, is used on all sides, including the top and a V-shaped belly armour pack for the underside.

This modular system is designed to allow damaged tanks to be rapidly repaired and returned to the field. Because rear armour is thinner, chains with iron balls are attached to detonate projectiles before they hit the main armoured hull.

It is the first contemporary tank without a loader's hatch in the turret roof, because any aperture in the turret roof increases risk of penetration by ATGMs.

Tank rounds are stored in individual fire-proof canisters,

Merkava Mark 4



Specifications

- Manufacturer: Mantak, IDF Ordnance Corps
- Weight: 65 tonnes
- Length: 9.04 metres (incl. gun barrel)
- Width: 3.72 metres
- Height: 2.66 metres
- Crew: 4 (commander, driver, gunner, and loader)
- Armour: Classified composite/sloped armour modular design
- Engine: MTU 12V883 1100 kW (1475 hp) turbo-charged diesel engine

- Fuel capacity: 1400 litres
- Operational range: 500 km
- Maximum speed: 64 km/h on road; 55 km/h off road

Armament

- Main armament: 120 mm MG253 smoothbore gun, capable of firing LAHAT ATGM
- Secondary armament: 1 × 12.7 mm MG; 3 × 7.62 mm MG; 1 × Mk 19 grenade launcher; 1 × 60 mm internal mortar; 12 × smoke grenades

which reduce the chance of cook-offs in a fire inside the tank. The turret is electrically, rather than hydraulically, powered (hydraulic turrets use flammable liquid that ignites if the turret is penetrated) and "dry": no active rounds are stored in it.

Some features, such as hull shaping, exterior non-reflective paints (radar cross-section reduction), and shielding for engine heat plumes mixing with outside air (reduced infrared signature) to confuse enemy thermal imagers, were carried over from the IAI Lavi program of the Israeli Air Force to make the tank harder to spot and target by heat sensors and radar.

The Mark 4 includes the larg-

er 120 mm main gun of the previous versions, but can fire a wider variety of ammunition, including high-explosive anti-tank (HEAT), and sabot rounds like the armour-piercing fin-stabilized discarding sabot (APFSDS) kinetic energy penetrator, using an electrical semi-automatic revolving magazine for 10 rounds. It also includes a much larger 12.7 mm machine gun for anti-vehicle operations (most commonly used against technicals).

The Mark IV has the Israeli-designed TSAWS (tracks, springs, and wheels system) caterpillar track system, called "Mazkom" by troops. This system is designed to reduce

track-shedding under the harsh basalt rock conditions of Lebanon and the Golan Heights.

The model has a new fire-control system, the El-Op Knight Mark 4. An Amcoram LWS-2 laser warning receiver notifies the crew of threats like laser-guided anti-tank missiles, and the fire-control system can launch smoke grenades to obscure the tank from the laser beam. Electromagnetic warning against radar illumination is also installed.

The tank carries the Israeli Elbit Systems BMS (Battle Management System), a centralised system that takes data from tracked units and UAVs in theatre, displays it on colour screens, and distributes it in encrypted form to all other units in a given theater equipped with BMS.

The Merkava IV has been designed for fast repair and replacement of damaged armour, with modular armour that can be easily removed and replaced. It is designed to be cost-effective in production and maintenance.

The tank has a high-performance air conditioning system, and can be fitted with a toilet for long-duration missions.

Merkava Mark 4 'Barak'

The Merkava Mark 4 "Barak" (Lightning) entered service in 2023. The tank has an upgraded Trophy APS, 360-degree day/night camera coverage for boosted situational awareness, a fighter jet-style helmet-mounted display for the tank commander, and new sensors enabling it to independently acquire targets and strike them rapidly, as well as having

electronic warfare abilities and advanced processing systems, a direct energy system capable of intercepting drones and cruise missiles.

A main feature of the Barak, unveiled in July 2018, is the integration of the Iron Vision helmet-mounted augmented reality system, using high-resolution cameras arrayed around the tank to provide a 360° virtual reality view of a tank's surroundings to crew members' helmet displays while protected inside. Israeli company Elbit developed the system for the F-35 fighter aircraft.

Combat History

The Merkava has participated in the following actions:

- 1982 Lebanon War
- Second Intifada
- 2006 Lebanon War
- Operation Cast Lead
- Gaza border areas
- Operation Protective Edge 2014

2023 Israel-Hamas War

Merkava MK.3s, & MK.4s were used in the 2023 Israel-Hamas war. 15 were either destroyed or damaged in the first day of war (of which destroyed: 4, captured: 10, damaged: 1).

All captured vehicles photographed with Hamas militants on them were not moved by the militants.

Some destroyed vehicles were clearly fitted with Trophy APS however in all cases of the tanks being destroyed the Trophy system was not operational and closed as the IDF had not expected to be attacked.

A video from the same day of a Merkava 4M which was

fully operational showed that the Trophy system was indeed functioning as it managed to intercept a Kornet ATGM fired by Hezbollah in the Southern Lebanon front.

According to Forbes, Hamas forces have some tips for defeating the Merkava's Trophy system. Hamas assumes that firing a rocket-propelled grenade from 50 yards or closer should thwart the Trophy, presumably by giving it too little time to react.

Alternatively, an SPG-9 recoilless gun should defeat a Trophy, simply by virtue of its projectile's high speed. Or Hamas militants firing several RPG rounds in quick succession and overwhelming the device.

On July 14, 2011, The Jerusalem Post reported that the IDF had begun developing a successor for the Merkava series of tanks. The development was begun in part by the arrival of the Trophy active protection system.

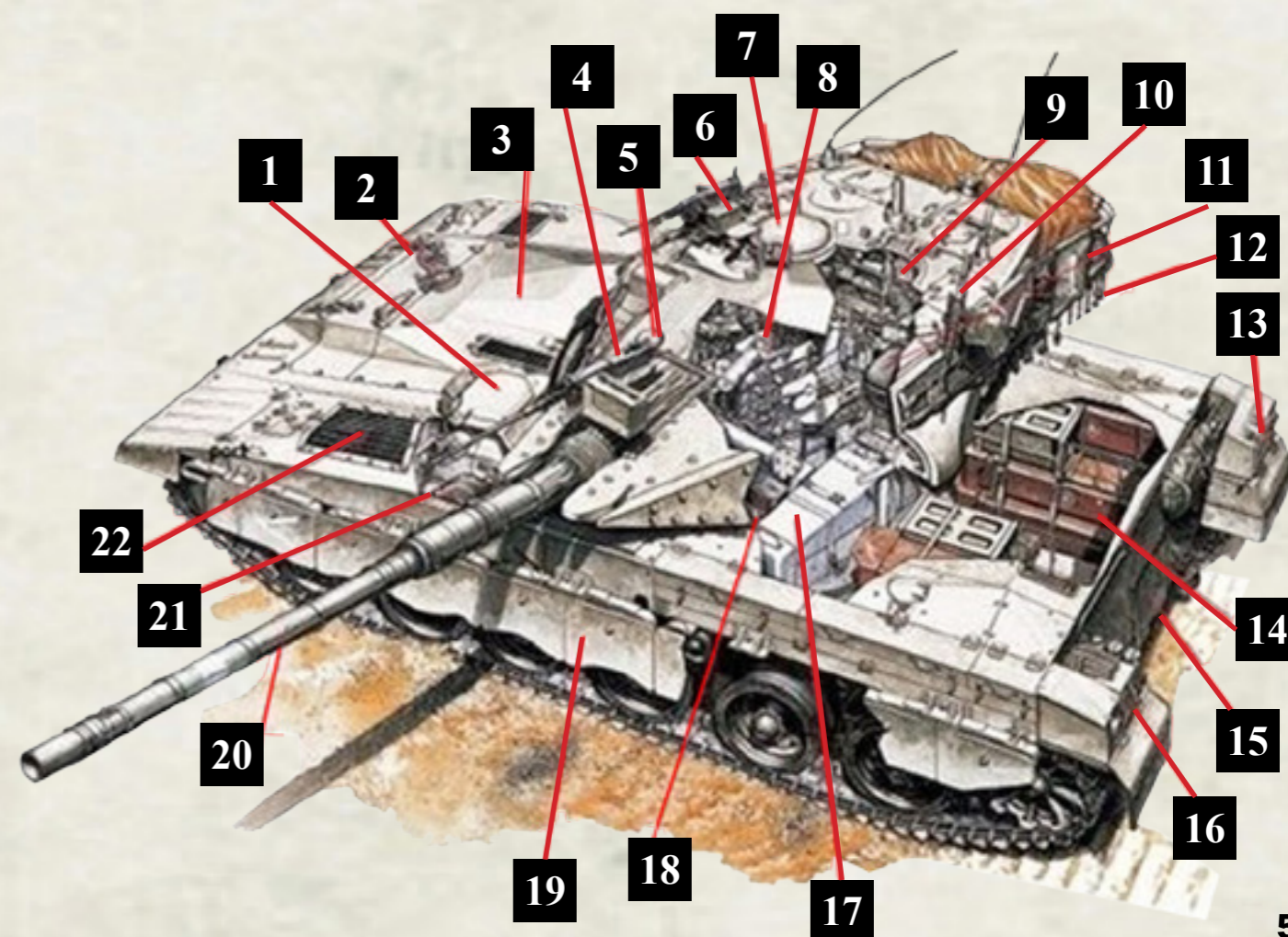
The 65-tonne Merkava is not regarded as useful for missions other than conventional warfare. The Israeli Army Armored Corps wants a lighter and highly mobile vehicle for rapid-response and urban warfare situations that can fill multiple roles.

The successor to the Merkava will be named the Carmel.

In 2021, Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) was selected to lead the next phase of Carmel's development.

Merkava

1. Driver's hatch
2. 105 mm gun mount
3. Teledyne Continental AVDS-1790-6A V-12 diesel 900 hp engine
4. Gun-mounted .50 calibre heavy machine gun
5. 60 mm mortar tube cover
6. Commander's 7.62 mm FN light machine gun
7. Commander's cupola/hatch
8. Main gun loading port
9. Gunner's communication system
10. Gunner's 7.62 mm FN light machine gun
11. Gunner's perch
12. Rear turret chain netting
13. Medical gear
14. Rear ammunition storage bin
15. Rear access door
16. Rear access communication
17. Ammunition storage bin
18. Ammunition carousel storage area
19. Side-skirt armour
20. L7/M68 105 mm rifled gun
21. Driver's compartment
22. Engine vent



While the Irish enjoy a good punch up, they have always been a neutral country and Ireland has chosen never to be the aggressor. Yet in 1961 a small company of Irish soldiers faced overwhelming odds against battle-hardened troops deep in the heart of Africa.

Ireland has never owned nor tried to conquer a sovereign nation. As a neutral country Ireland has chosen never to be the aggressor.

Yet in September 1961 a company of 155 soldiers from A Company 35th Infantry Battalion of the Irish Army found themselves under attack from an enemy force of between 3,000 and 4,000. The battle became known as the Siege of Jadotville.

The story begins 1960 when the Belgians granted independence to the Belgian Congo. In May 1960 elections were held and a month later the Congo became an independent republic.

Joseph Kasa-Vubu became the first president of the Congo and Patrice Lumumba was the prime minister. Mobutu Sese Seko was the army chief of staff.

In the resulting strife and chaos following independence, Moïse Tshombe declared the State of Katanga's secession from the rest of the Congo. The Christian, anti-communist pro-Western Tshombe declared, "We are seceding from chaos."

Favouring continued ties with Belgium, he asked the Belgian government to send military officers to recruit and train a Katangese army.

Naturally Belgium and many western countries had a strong interest in the Katanga Province. Much of the world's supply of copper, cobalt and uranium was to be found there. In fact the uranium for the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima had come from a mine in Jadotville.

The Anglo-Belgian Union Minière du Haut Katanga controlled the mines in Katanga, so it was in their interest to support Tshombe. The last thing they wanted was for their mines to be nationalised by the newly-formed Congo government.

Tshombe demanded UN recognition for independent Katanga, and he announced that any intervention by UN troops would be met with force.

Patrice Lumumba requested intervention from UN forces and UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld sent a UN force under the di-

rection of Irish representative Conor Cruise O'Brien.

President Joseph Kasa-Vubu and Mobutu Sese Seko were becoming worried about Patrice Lumumba popularity among the troops. They had him arrested and sent to Katanga where he was executed by a firing squad led by a Belgian mercenary.

A Company 35th Infantry Battalion of the Irish Army was part of the UN Peacekeeping Force sent to the Congo. The 155 Irish UN troops, under the command of Commandant Pat Quinlan, were sent to the mining town of Jadotville, approximately 100 kilometers up country from the main UN base in Elizabethville.

They had been sent to the mining town, ostensibly to assist in the protection of its citizens. But, when the Irish troops arrived at Jadotville, they were not welcomed by the local people, who were pro-Katangese and anti-UN.

Yet it had been the Belgium foreign minister that had called the UN secretary general, reporting that Belgian settlers and the local population were unprotected, and feared for their safety. It is not clear why the Katangese wanted to isolate the Irish UN troops, although some commentators have suggested that the goal may have been to take the Irish as prisoners for leverage in negotiations with the UN.

The Irish troops had a problem. Not only had none of



DIGGING IN: The Irish troops dig in and prepare fields of fire at Jadotville.

them ever seen combat, they had never even fired a shot in anger. They were also lightly armed with only light personal weapons, a small number of water-cooled Vickers machine guns and 60mm mortars.

Facing them was an enemy that numbered between 3,000 and 4,000. They were made up from Luba (also known as Baluba) warriors, and many Belgian, French and Rhodesian mercenaries.

They were well armed. Besides their personal weapons they had both 7,62mm and .50 calibre Browning machine guns mounted on Land Rovers, 81mm mortars, a 75mm field gun and a Fouga Magister trainer jet, fitted with underwing bombs and machine guns.

The field commanders were Michel de Clary and Henri Lasimone, both were French with plenty of combat experience.

The overall commander of the Gendarmerie Katangaise was Roger Faulques. He was a highly decorated French army Battalion Chief, a graduate of the École spéciale militaire de Saint-Cyr, and a paratrooper officer of

the French Foreign Legion. He was given leave by French army minister Pierre Messmer, to provide support to the Katanga rebellion.

Yet while Quinlan may not have had any combat experience he was a keen student of military tactics and history. He had read everything he could get his hands on and he was expecting that at some stage his company would be attacked.

He had noted the deep levels of hostility to his men in Jadotville and began to organise a robust defensive perimeter around their base. The 42 year-old officer ordered his men to dig 1.5 metre-deep trenches, stockpile water and carry their guns at all times.

Quinlan's instincts proved spot on. While most of his men were at mass on September 13, the Katangans attacked.

The attack was more than likely launched because another UN force had seized Katangan positions in Elisabethville. The operation, named Operation Morthor, was ordered by Conor Cruise O'Brien, probably with the nod from Dag Hammarskjöld.

Inexplicably the operation had been kept secret from Quinlan by the UN Command. Another major problem was that the Katangans had also taken a key river crossing which meant that the Irish were completely cut off from Elizabethville.

Expecting to take the men off guard, the first attackers moved in rapidly but were spotted by an alert sentry. A warning shot by Sgt. Billy Ready alerted the company to the threat. The Irish maned their positions and began to return fire. It was the start of a battle that would last six days and five nights.

The Katangese attacked in waves of 600 or so, preceded by bombardment from 81mm mortars and a French 75mm field gun. The Irish soldiers successfully defended against wave after wave of attackers from their positions.

The fire that the Irish returned was accurate and effective. Mercenary officers were reportedly observed shooting native gendarmes to stem the rout caused in Katangese lines.

Quinlan ordered his signaller to start a radio log. Every message from them to the UN Headquarters was to be logged and vice versa.

Quinlan told headquarters that he was low on both ammunition and water. He also said that they could do with some whiskey.

The Irish beat off wave after wave of attacks. The Irish Support Platoon knocked out most of the Katangese mortar and artillery positions with accurate counter-battery fire from 60 mm mortars.

The Katangese asked Quinlan

for a cease-fire to tend to their wounded. During this time they offered Quinlan an opportunity to surrender. An offer which he declined.

In the meantime 500 Irish and Swedish UN troops based in Kamma, as well as Indian Army Gurkhas, made several attempts to relieve the men at Jadotville.

The Katangese forces had dug in along the Lufira River, giving them control of the Lufira Bridge. They had heavy weapons and air support. The UN troops came under heavy and sustained ground and air fire, killing several Indian UN troops and wounding a number of Irish troops. They were unable to get across the river.

On the sixth day, with his position untenable, without any clear orders or promise of assistance, having run out of ammunition and food and low on water, Quinlan accepted the second offer to surrender to the Katangese.

At the end of the battle the Irish had suffered five wounded, but not a single one of them died. They did not lose a man.

The Katangese forces, on the other hand, were not so fortunate. They suffered 300 dead, including 30 mercenaries. They also had more than 1,000 wounded.

The Irish were taken prisoner of war and held as hostages for about a month. They were used in an effort to extort terms of ceasefire that would have been embarrassing to the UN.

The were eventually exchanged for prisoners held by the Congolese government of Joseph Kasa-Vubu.

After being released A Company returned to Elisabethville and were involved in active combat again. This time with



CALM BEFORE THE STORM: Commandant Pat Quinlan, far left, poses with soldiers of A Company, 35th Infantry Battalion, in Elisabethville, before the siege.

the support of Swedish UN troops.

After weeks of fighting their six month tour of duty came to an end and they were rotated out of the battle zone and returned to Ireland that December.

On their return to Ireland Quinlan recommended a number of his men for the Military Medal for Gallantry (MMG), Ireland's highest award for military valour, for their actions during the battle.

But there was to be no hero's welcome. The surrender of A Company was seen by some as a national embarrassment which overshadowed the men's courage and competence. Some even thought of them as cowards. The term "Jadotville Jack" was sometimes applied as a term of derision about the Irish Defence Forces.

The veterans of Jadotville were dissatisfied that the Defence Forces refused to acknowledge the battle and that there was an implied black mark on the reputation of their commander. Quinlan, who died in 1997, had his public reputa-

tion restored nine years after his death.

The veterans of A Company reportedly regarded him as an exceptional officer who had saved the lives of his men by ordering them to dig in, and who successfully led his company against an overwhelming enemy force. He was forced into an impossible situation by the apparent failings of the UN leadership. Against the odds, he had saved the lives of each of his men in a battle they had not expected nor planned for.

In 2004 Irish Minister for Defence Willie O'Dea agreed to hold a full review of the battle. A Defence Forces inquiry cleared Quinlan and "A" Company of allegations of soldierly misconduct.

A commemorative stone recognising the soldiers of "A" Company was erected on the grounds of Custume Barracks in Athlone in 2005. A commissioned portrait of Quinlan was installed in the Congo Room of the Irish Defence Forces' UN School.

5 Commando - The Wild Geese

Nicknamed 'The Wild Geese', 5 Commando was a mercenary unit of the Congolese National Army (*Armée Nationale Congolaise*) formed in response to the Simba rebellion. Many of them were South African.

In July 1964, Jerry Puren (a former mercenary officer in the Katangese Air Force) started recruiting mercenaries to support the Congolese Army on request of the Congolese Prime Minister Moïse Tshombe.

Puren focused his efforts in South Africa and alerted 200 men of possible employment as mercenaries. The ex-British military officer, Mike Hoare, had known Tshombe and had served as one of his officers in 1961 and was the designated commander for the mercenary force.

Puren was to be in charge of air operations. Second in command was former executive officer of the Rhodesian Special Air Services, Alastair Wicks, who had also served with both Hoare and Tshombe in 1961.

Recruitment centres were established in South Africa and in both North and Southern Rhodesia. Hoare placed newspaper ads in the South African Johannesburg Star newspaper and in Salisbury newspapers (modern Harare, Zimbabwe) calling upon physically fit white men "...capable of marching 20 miles per day and who were fond of combat and were "tremendous romantics" to join 5 Commando. Contracts were for six months.

"Adventurers" from South

Africa, many of whom had fought with Moïse Tshombe in the secession of Katanga Province, signed up, as did recruits from Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

The Congolese, as well as officials of other African states, deeply resented the recruitment of South Africans and Rhodesians; this led to Tshombe frequently assuring the OAU that he would replace the white mercenaries with African replacements as soon as they could be recruited and trained.

5 Commando eventually com-



prised volunteers from South Africa, Rhodesia, the United Kingdom, Belgium and Germany.

Hoare described the men from the initial batch of recruits as being of "alarmingly low" standard with a "...high proportion of alcoholics, drunks, booze artists, bums and layabouts".

Organizationally, 5 Commando was divided into eight sub-units, designated 51 to 58 Commando, with two officers

and three sergeants per sub-unit; these were reinforced, platoon-sized units.

Early on, 5 Commando was plagued by poor logistics and a lack of discipline. 5 Commando played a significant role in rescuing hostages, particularly European hostages, from Simba rebels.

These actions frequently made headlines in Europe and made the mercenaries popular heroes for a limited period. Despite these headlines, the mercenaries supplemented their wages by searching bodies for cash and robbing banks in Stanleyville.

Jerry Puren left the Congo with Tshombe for exile in Belgium. Mike Hoare and Alistair Wicks did not renew their contracts and left the Congo.

Mobutu ordered all recruitment for 5 Commando to cease in March 1967. The unit was disbanded in April on Mobutu's order. He likely did so for three reasons; to avoid the expense of paying the mercenaries, to forestall any attempts by Tshombe to use the unit in a coup attempt, and to avoid the potential embarrassment of employing white mercenaries when the Congo was due to host the Organisation of African Unity annual conference in September.



Matt O' Brien attempts to become shogun and rule Japan with an iron fist. First, however, he has to remove his iron foot from his mouth.

If you enjoy a good game of chess chances are you will enjoy Total War Shogun 2. Think of it as chess on a grander and more complex scale.

The concept of the game is simple. It is the 16th Century in Japan and where once ruled a unified government now stand many clans, all vying for honour, recognition, control and for conquest. As daiymo (warlord) of one of these clans, it is your duty to befriend, betray or destroy utterly those that stand in your way as you strive to unite the warring factions and rise up to rule them all as undisputed Shogun - the battle-proven military leader of Japan.

You begin the game by selecting one of the nine available clans. At the start you will control a single province. Besides your warlord you will have a small army.

The first thing you will need to do is increase the size and strength of your army. This you do by recruiting troops from special dojo (training halls). An archery dojo, for example, can train and recruit archers.

If you do not have a dojo then you will have to build one. This costs money, as does recruiting new units. In some cases you will have to construct special buildings that allow the construction of other buildings.

For example if you want to train and recruit cavalry troops you will first have to construct a horse breeders building.

As mentioned, all of this takes money. You start the game with a limited amount of gold coin. There are various ways of swelling your financial coffers.

The first is through tax. Your province will have a population. Besides your army there are also civilians that pay the tax. You can raise or lower the taxes at any time. This is, however, where it gets tricky. If you lower the taxes your daiymo will be popular and your citizens will be happy. The problem is that you will soon run out of money. You will be unable to construct any new buildings or recruit new troops. An even bigger problem is that you will be unable to pay your army or feed your citizens.

Raise the taxes and you will find yourself very unpopular and your citizens not happy campers. Raise them too high and they could even revolt. A revolt can lead to buildings being damaged. They will have to be repaired, and again this will cost money. Finding a happy balance with taxes is not easy.

Another way of getting in money is through trade with other provinces. You can build farms, grow crops to feed your

citizens and trade any excess crops that you have.

The final method of raising money is by conquering other provinces. When you take over a city you have the choice of occupying it or looting it and burning it to the ground.

Most buildings can be upgraded. Cities and towns will start with a fort. These can be upgraded to castles or even citadels. While a castle or citadel offers much better protection and is easier to defend, they cost a lot of time and money to build and they have to be maintained.

Your army is important. It needs to have the right balance of troop type to be successful. You can have a number of armies and some of them should be garrisoned in cities for defence. Other armies should be used to attack and take over other provinces.

Each army should have a general. They provide experience and morale to the troops. They can gain experience points in battle and can then be upgraded.

Yari (spear) infantry are excellent at defending. They can take a cavalry charge to pieces if attacked head on. They are not great on offense and are vulnerable to sword infantry.

Sword infantry are well balanced troops. If they can get in



among the enemy they can be devastating.

Naginata (heavy) infantry can defend and attack, but are not great at either.

Bow infantry are excellent at range but useless when it comes to melee combat. As soon as the enemy gets close it's time to pull them back.

Rifle infantry are expensive to train and recruit. They can put up a deadly volley of fire but their matchlock rifles are slow to reload and, like bow infantry, they are useless at melee combat. Their unit sizes are also fairly small.

Cavalry units are quick and they can charge in formation. They are vulnerable to bow and rifle fire but once they get close they will destroy these units. Don't use them to attack spear infantry head on though.

Siege units do exactly as the name suggests. They are great for attacking fortifications but are worthless if the enemy gets close enough to them.

Once you have an army you will then move them into another province. The moment you enter another province it is a declaration of war. You can then attack or lay siege to an enemy city.

You can also train and recruit special agents. These could be religious agents that will move into a province and try and convert them, or ninja that can spy on the enemy or even try and assassinate a general.

You can enter into negotiations with other clans and set up alliances or trade agreements.

The game also has naval elements and this bring in a whole new dimension.

To use ships you will first have to build a port. Your port is where you build ships.

First of all you can build fishing boats. These can bring in resources to feed your troops and civilian population. Gather enough fish and you can even trade them.

You will need ships that can

transport goods to other clans via the sea. Of course transport ships are needed to carry troops.

Above all you will need ships that can fight and offer protection to your fleet.

Total War Shogun 2 is one of the best RTS games around.



Publisher - Bohemia Interactive

Genre - RTS

Score - 8.5/10

Price - R299 (on Steam)



Movie Review

The Siege of Jadotville

Released: 2016

Running time: 108 minutes

Directed by: Richie Smyth

When Richie Smyth first read the book *The Irish Army's Forgotten Battle*, he was in his own words, "blown away by the fact the he had never heard this story."

The book was written by Declan Power, one of the Irish soldiers that had taken part in the battle.

"Once I started to learn more, I knew that I had to make this movie," says Smyth.

He secured the rights to the story and penned a script based on it.

The film is about an Irish army unit's role in the UN peacekeeping mission in the Congo in September 1961.

The film opens with the assassination of left-wing Congolese Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba and the outbreak of civil war. As the mineral rich State of Katanga secedes under the leadership of Moise Tshombe, United Nations Secretary General Dag Hammerskjöld assigns Conor Cruise O'Brien to head up a UN peacekeeping mission. Privately, Hammerskjöld tells O'Brien that the Katanga crisis could trigger World War III and orders the Irish diplomat to take offensive action.

Meanwhile, Irish Army Commandant Pat Quinlan commands an infantry company of Irish peacekeepers who arrive at the UN compound near Jadotville. After examining the compound, Quinlan decides that it is wide open to attack and orders his men to dig trenches.

While buying food in the nearest town, Quinlan meets French mercenary Rene Faulques, who has been hired by the mining companies allied to Tshombe's Government. Afterwards, he visits the estate of a Belgian colonist, Madam Lafongagne, who tells him that Jadotville contains the world's richest uranium deposits.

Meanwhile, O'Brien orders UN forces to launch an attack against Government buildings held by the Katangese in Elizabethville. While Indian peacekeepers are attempting to seize the city's radio station, thirty unarmed Katangese are killed by gunfire and grenades. O'Brien orders the incident to be swept under the rug.

In retaliation, Faulques receives orders to attack Jadotville. Katangese forces and mercenaries under Faulques, attack and besiege the Irish. During a brief ceasefire, Faulques vainly demands Quinlan's surrender.

Quinlan refuses, and his company is attacked repeatedly in separate waves by the Katangese/mercenary forces. They kill a total of 300 enemy soldiers, and wound 1,000 enemy soldiers, with zero Irish deaths and only 16 Irish wounded.

After many extended waves of battle, the Irish company is forced to surrender to Faulques's troops after running out of ammunition. They are held in a Katangese prison for about a month, then are freed in a prisoner exchange deal and are allowed to go home.

The film was shot near Johannesburg, South Africa and it was released at the 2016 Galway Film Festival where it won a number of awards. Afterwards it was released for worldwide distribution on Netflix.

Jamie Dornan stars as Commandant Pat Quinlan and Jason O'Mara plays the role of Sergeant Jack Prendergast.

If you belong to Netflix this is a movie I strongly recommend.

To watch the official trailer of the film, click on the poster below.



Journey Without Boundaries

This is the extraordinary tale of an extraordinary man. An honestly told story of his military career, of a man who was twice decorated for valour, who pioneered and developed the concept of "small team reconnaissance" within the South African Special Forces.

He was a consummate warrior and gentleman and has told his story with humility and a disarming sense that what he did was simply the job he was given, when even the most cursory reading will show that it was anything but simple or easy.

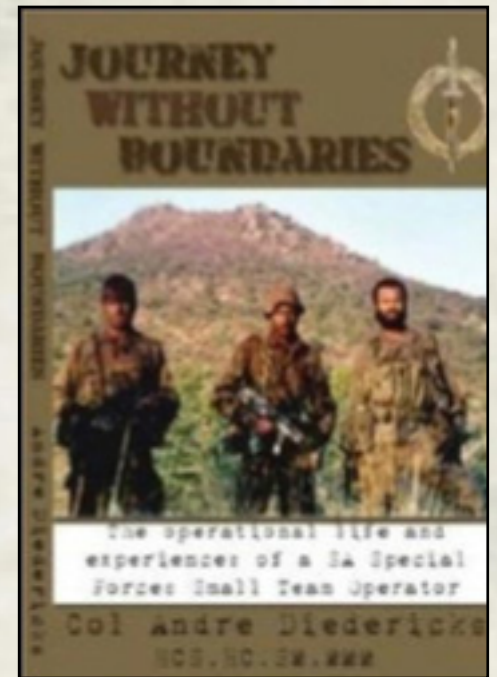
André (Diedies) Diedericks was born in Pretoria on 7 December 1955, the youngest of four children. He reported for compulsory National Military Service on

7 January 1974 and within a few weeks he volunteered for Special Forces selection, a course that he would successfully complete.

Andre would eventually serve in the Special Forces for two decades and would also pioneer the concept of small team operations. He rose to the rank of Colonel within the SADF and was also decorated twice for valour.

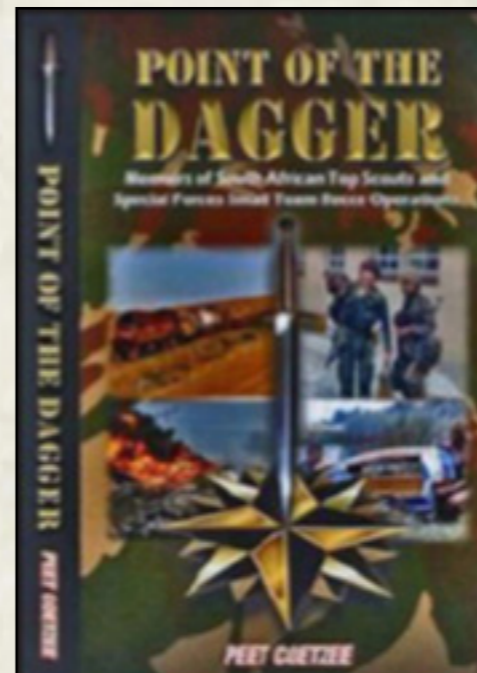
Suffering from terminal cancer, Diedies passed away on 7 May 2005.

During his service he was awarded with the Honoris Crux Silver (HCS); Honoris Crux (HC); Southern Cross Medal (SM); Military Merit Medal (MMM); Pro Patria Medal with Cunene clasp; Southern Africa Medal; General Service Medal;



Unitas Medal; Good Service Silver (20 years) & Good Service Bronze (10 years).

Softcover, 212 pages
Cost: R325



Point of the Dagger
R275



First In, Last Out
R400



Dirty War
R550

All books are available from [Bush War Books](http://www.bushwarbooks.com)

Some of the significant military events that happened in January. Highlighted in blue are the names of those members of the South African Defence Force (SADF) that lost their lives during the month of January.

1 January

- **1776** - During the American Revolution, George Washington unveiled the Grand Union Flag, the first national flag in America.
- **1776** - British seaborne raiders torch Norfolk, Virginia.
- **1887** - Wilhelm Canaris, German admiral and spy-master, who was executed by Hitler, 1945, was born on this day.
- **1915** - During World War I, the British Battleship Formidable was hit by a torpedo in the English Channel, killing 547 crewmen.
- **1915** - The first known act of German sabotage in the U.S.: The John A. Roebling Munitions Plant in Trenton is destroyed by fire.
- **1920** - Basil L. Plumley, Sgt Maj, US, veteran of three wars and five combat jumps, hero of the Ia Drang Valley in Vietnam, was born on this day.
- **1942** - Twenty six countries signed the Declaration of the United Nations, in Washington, D.C., reaffirming their opposition to the Axis powers and confirming that no single nation would make a separate peace.
- **1950** - Indo-China: Viet Minh open a major offensive against the French.
- **1951** - Massive Chinese/North Korean assault on UN lines.
- **1959** - Fidel Castro seized power in Cuba after leading a revolution that drove out Dictator Fulgencio Batista. Castro then established a Communist dictatorship.
- **1962** - The US Navy SEALs were established on this day.
- **1964** - Lieutenant Johannes Stephanus Steenkamp Enslin from 28 Squadron was critically injured when he accidentally fell from the 2nd floor balcony of the Edward Hotel during New Year's Eve celebrations. He succumbed to his injuries in 1 Military Hospital later that evening. He was 41.
- **1969** - Ian Fleming, former Royal Navy Commander and creator of James Bond, died at the age of 56.
- **1977** - Rifleman Joao Joaquim from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion during operations against enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 31.
- **1977** - Lance Corporal Geoffrey Allan Lawrie from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces near Omunduangilo, North of Beacon 28. He was 24.
- **1977** - Two members from 101 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. They were: Rifleman Thomas Amalati (26). Rifleman Joao Mathais (25).
- **1978** - Sergeant H. Daniel from 32 Battalion died from a gunshot wound apparently self-inflicted while he was stationed at Nkongo. He was 39.
- **1983** - Sapper David Batten from 97 Ammunition Depot collapsed and died after suffering a fatal heart attack at the Unit. He was 27.
- **1984** - Airman Johannes Hendrik Kok from Air Logistics Command was killed in a military vehicle accident at Ondangwa Town. He was 20.
- **1987** - Two members from 44 Parachute Regiment were killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Isingolweni when the Mamba vehicle in which they were passengers, overturned. The casualties were: Rifleman Abram Welile Zumane (24). Rifleman Matthew Damon Seekoei (23).
- **1990** - General Johan van der Merwe is appointed as new commissioner of police.
- **1991** - Sergeant Willie Kruger from Air Force Base Swartkop collapsed and died after suffering a fatal heart attack. He was 26.
- **1991** - The Defence Special Tribunal Act, 1998, providing for the expeditious adjudication of disputes concerning military institutions

- and the rationalisation process of the Department of Defence, becomes effective.
 - **1992** - Rifleman Paulus Malesela Matlakala from 116 Battalion was Killed in Action when he was shot dead by persons unknown while on guard duty at Messina. He was 24.
 - **1994** - Rifleman Bernard Maditsi Lekalakala from 115 Battalion was Killed in Action when he was shot dead by persons unknown while manning a road block at Vosloorus. He was 20.
 - **2008** - The last German veteran of WWI, Erich Kaestner, dies at the age of 107.
- ## 2 January
- **1776** - The four corner stones of the castle (Kasteel de Goede Hoop) at the Cape are laid by Zacharias Wagenaer, Johan van Arckel, Gabbema and Lacus.
 - **1837** - Voortrekker leaders Andries Hendrik Potgieter and Gerrit (Gert) Maritz, each with his own men, leave for Western Transvaal to punish Mzilikazi for the Ndebele attack on the Voortrekkers at Vechtkop (Vegkop).
 - **1883** - Battle of Boschberg during the Mapoch War takes place.
 - **1896** - Sir Leander Starr Jameson and about 500 Rhodesian police surrender at Doornkop, near Krugersdorp, after the failure of the Jameson Raid.
 - **1904** - Draft dodger and radical socialist Benito Mussolini reports for conscription into the Italian Army under an amnesty.
 - **1905** - The Russians surrendered to the Japanese after the Battle of Port Arthur during the Russian-Japanese War.
 - **1933** - US Marines withdraw from Nicaragua after a 20 year occupation.
 - **1942** - During World War II in the Pacific, the Japanese captured the Philippines capital of Manila and the nearby air base at Cavite.
 - **1942** - German troops in Bardia surrender.
 - **1944** - New Guinea: Allies land on Saidor, isolating 12,000 Japanese troops.
 - **1945** - US Navy convoys depart Leyte to invade Luzon, while beating off Kamikaze.
 - **1945** - Admiral Sir Bertram Home Ramsay, mastermind of Dunkirk, dies at the age of 61.
 - **1967** - Operation Bolo: In the largest air combat action of the Vietnam War, 28 F-4C Phantoms engage 9 MiG-21s; US aircraft down 7-9 MiGs with no loss.
 - **1977** - Sergeant A.D.B. Bernardo from 31 Battalion SWATF was killed after being struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge from a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 32.
 - **1981** - Rifleman Jose Joao from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion during counter-insurgency operations in Southern Angola. He was 21.
 - **1984** - Rifleman Petrus Daniel from 101 Battalion SWATF accidentally drowned during a river crossing in the Operational Area. He was 22.
 - **1984** - Major-General Muhammadu Buhari is declared Head of State in Nigeria, following a military coup.
 - **1988** - Major General Bantu Holomisa, who became head of a military state in Transkei after a coup in December 1987, lifts martial law and reinstates part of the constitution.
 - **1988** - Right-wing guerrillas ambush a train near Mozambique's western border, killing at least twenty-two people and injuring seventy-one.
 - **2001** - Richard Winters, who led "The Band of Brothers", Company E, 506th Parachute Infantry, dies 19 days short of his 93rd birthday.

Ian Fleming



3 January

- **1926** - Mussolini assumes the Ministries of War, Navy, & Air.
- **1931** - Joseph "Papa" Joffre, Marshal of France, dies aged 78.
- **1935** - Ethiopia asks League of Nations to guarantee peace with Italy.
- **1941** - World War 2: North Africa. Australian troops take 5,000 prisoners during a major assault on Italian forces at Bardia.
- **1946** - An Englishman known during World War II as "Lord Haw Haw" (William Joyce) was hanged for treason in London. Joyce had broadcast Nazi propaganda via radio from Germany to Britain during the war.
- **1976** - 2nd Lieutenant Daryl Quinton Brandon from 5 SAI Died of Wounds during Ops Savannah while leading a patrol in a contact against a numerically superior enemy force in Central Angola approximately 30km North of Cela. He was 19.
- **1984** - Corporal Adelino Aurelio from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 29.
- **1989** - Lance Corporal Khazamula Obed Mathebula from 907 Special Services Company stationed at Arton Villa, Messina (Soutpanberg Military Area) was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned during an

armed patrol between Masisi and Mabelikwe just outside the Western border of the Kruger National Park. He was 28.

- **1990** - Manuel Noriega, the deposed leader of Panama, surrendered to American authorities on charges of drug trafficking after spending 10 days hiding in the Vatican embassy following the U.S. invasion of Panama.
- **1993** - President George Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed the Start-II (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) Treaty, eliminating about two-thirds of each country's long range nuclear weapons.

4 January

- **1943** - Japanese GHQ orders the evacuation of Guadalcanal.
- **1944** - Operation Carpetbagger begins, the Allied campaign to airdrop arms and supplies to the Resistance in Europe.
- **1945** - Luzon: 3rd Fleet hit by kamikaze, USS 'Omaney Bay' (CVE-79) is lost.
- **1951** - Chinese and North Korean forces capture Seoul.
- **1966** - Lieutenant-Colonel Sangoulé Lamizana deposes President Maurice Yaméogo of Burkina Faso in a military coup.
- **1976** - Four members of the SADF were killed during Ops Savannah when an Aérospatiale SA 330C Puma Helicopter from 19 Squad-

ron that was flying Staff Officers between Mussende & Carriango in Central Angola, was mistaken for a hostile enemy helicopter and shot down by friendly 20mm anti-aircraft gun fire. The casualties were: Brigadier Johan Diederik Potgieter SM (40). Captain Ferdinand Immelman (30). Captain Constant Daniel de Wit (26). Sergeant George William Kellet (26).

- **1976** - Rifleman Pieter Willem Marais Snyman from 5 SAI, part of Battle Group Orange, Died of wounds received when an enemy hand grenade exploded in his position near Dondo in Central Angola during an attack by MPLA and Cuban Forces. He was evacuated by helicopter with other wounded, to Silva Porta, but succumbed to his wounds en-route. He was 18.
- **1978** - Two members from 1 and 5 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action during counter-insurgency operations in Mocambique as part of Operation Melon (SADF Name (Operation Acrobat). They were attached to "D" Squadron Rhodesian Special Air Service when their patrol walked into 30-man strong Frelimo ambush in the Gaza Province of Mozambique. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Cecil Ian Mennicke (24). Lance Corporal Christiaan Louis De Wilzem (20).
- **1984** - Six Members from

4 SAI were Killed in action when their Ratel 20, Call-sign 13B was knocked out near Cuvelai by a 100mm High Explosive Soviet T-55 tank projectile during Ops Askari. They were: Lance Corporal Wouter Theron Steenkamp (19). Rifleman George Alexander Lennox (19). Rifleman Brian Geen (18). Rifleman Hendrik Andre Heyns (22). Rifleman Daniel Abraham Louw (19). Rifleman Johannes Lodewicus Pretorius (18).

- **1981** - Corporal Gerald Christian Gildenhuys from the Technical Service Corps, was found gassed in his private motor vehicle in Bellville. No foul play was suspected. He was 27.
- **1984** - Two Members from 4 SAI, Ratel 12A (Platoon Two) were Killed in action during fierce close-quarter fighting while clearing enemy trenches near Cuvelai during Ops Askari.
- **1989** - Airman Johan Nel from the Test Flight Development Centre was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 18.
- **1989** - Second Gulf of Sidra Incident: two US Navy F-14s down two Libyan MiG-23s.
- **2010** - Tsutomu Yamaguchi, who survived both the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, dies at the age of 93.

5 January

- **1919** - The German Workers' Party (Deutsche Arbe-

iterpartei) was founded by Anton Drexler in Munich. Adolf Hitler became member No. 7 and changed the name in April of 1920 to the National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei) commonly shortened to Nazi or Nazi Party.

- **1968** - Lt Clarence W. Cote becomes the first male officer in the Navy Nurse Corps.
- **1978** - Corporal Gert Jacobus Erasmus Goosen from 11 Technical Stores Depot was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident while on his way to Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town. He was 27.
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Pieter Swanepoel from the SWA SPES Bike Squad was Killed in Action in Northern Owamboland when his motorcycle detonated a boosted Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese Mine. He was 19.
- **1982** - Three members from 19 & 31 Squadron were Killed in Action when their Aérospatiale SA330H Puma was shot down by hostile small-arms fire not long after crossing the cut-line into Southern Angola en-route to Ongiva after dropping off troops. They were: Captain John Allen Robinson (27). Lieutenant Michael John Earp (26). Flight Sergeant Kenneth George Dalgleish

(26).

- **1982** - The forty-five mercenaries alleged to have commandeered an Air India Boeing and forced it to fly to Durban, after attempting a coup in the Seychelles in November 1981, appear in magistrates' courts in five South African cities. They are all to go on trial in South Africa.
- **1983** - WO 1 Leonard Philip Rodney from the 1 Military Town Management Fire Department in Voortrekkerhoogte collapsed and died after suffering a fatal heart attack. He was 47.
- **1984** - Special Sergeant Benfried Markus 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 27.
- **1985** - Private Gregory Grant Swain from Northern Transvaal Medical Command was killed instant-



William Joyce

ly while on Guard Duty in Pretoria when he was shot through the heart as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 20.

- **1987** - Special Sergeant Uatuapeke Kandji 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 29
- **1988** - Lance Corporal John Adam Lotriet from 10 Armoured Car Squadron was killed in Northern Owamboland after being struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 19.
- **1989** - The ANC agrees to close its military training base in Angola and in return South Africa must stop aid to the rebel Angolan UNITA movement, the Angolan president, Jose Eduardo dos Santos says in an interview.

6 January

- **1412** - Joan of Arc is born in France on this day.
- **1900** - The Battle of Waggon Hill (Platrand), south of Ladysmith, takes place, in which the Boer forces make an unsuccessful attempt to bring about the fall of Ladysmith.
- **1842** - Afghanistan: Anglo-Indian forces begin a disastrous retreat from Kabul; all but one of 4,500

troops & 12,000 camp followers will be lost or captured.

- **1940** - Germans massacre Poles in Poznan.
- **1943** - Papua: US and Australian troops mass for a final assault on Sanananda.
- **1961** - Nikita Khrushchev declares that the Soviet Union will back Third World "wars of national liberation".
- **1973** - Captain Rudolf Albert Hammann from Air Force Headquarters died in 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria. He was suffering from Cancer. He was 26.
- **1980** - Rifleman Jan Pieter Uys from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland, crushing him under the vehicle. He was 18.
- **1983** - Eight men from Group 34 were Killed in Action or later Died of Wounds when their Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a double boosted anti-tank mine near the Okangwati Military Base. The casualties were: Corporal Richard Alexander Ede (27). Rifleman Abraham Aboud (22). Rifleman Johannes Hermanus Diedericks (24). Rifleman Bartholomeus Jacobus Du Toit (26). Rifleman Floris Marthinus Griesel (27). Rifleman Johannes Lodewikus van der Merwe (26). Rifleman Gerald Pereira Da Silva (28) and Rifleman Peter Uzzel (26) succumbed to

wounds on the 7th and 8th January respectively.

- **1984** - Rifleman Raymond Frederick Hildebrandt from Special Forces Headquarters was killed instantly while on guard duty at the Headquarters when he was struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge from an R4 assault rifle that a fellow soldier was in the process of making safe. He was 19.
- **1985** - Candidate Officer (Miss) Shirley Louise Mansfield from Air Force Base Pietersburg was accidentally killed in a civilian sky-diving incident in Pietersburg when her parachute failed to open during a Sunday practice jump. She was 19.
- **1985** - Rifleman Valentinus Sikerete from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 24.
- **1986** - Special Constable Simon Phillipus 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 34.
- **1988** - General Bantu Holomisa, who ousted Stella Sigcau in a coup, appoints himself as the Transkei's military and government chief.

7 January

- **1903** - The Boer generals re-

port back in Pretoria after a campaign in Europe to procure aid for the reconstruction of the country after the Second Anglo-Boer War.

- **1941** - Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto proposes a surprise attack on Pearl Harbour.
- **1943** - Guadalcanal: US strength reaches 50,000, Japanese less than 25,000.
- **1945** - British Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery tells a press conference that he won the Battle of the Bulge.
- **1953** - US President Truman announces development of the hydrogen bomb.
- **1973** - Private Johannes Jacobus Potgieter from 86 Technical Stores Depot died from a sport injury received during training while at Nyamandhlovu. He was 20.
- **1979** - Vietnamese forces capture Phnom Penh from the Khmer Rouge.
- **1982** - Candidate Officer Derek William Evans from Central Flying School Dunottar was killed when his Harvard AT-6 crashed between Endicott and Delmas while on a solo general flying training flight. He was 18.
- **1983** - Rifleman Gerald Pereira Da Silva from the Sandriver Commando attached to Group 34 Died of Wounds in 1 Military Hospital after being critically wounded in a landmine explosion near the Okangwati Military Base on 06 January

1983. He was 28.

- **1984** - Rifleman Josephat Johannes Levi from SWATF was killed in a shooting incident at Tsintsabis. He was 20.
- **1986** - Special Constable Abiud Kenahana 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 28.
- **1986** - The ANC in exile in Lusaka calls on its supporters to take the struggle into White areas.
- **1987** - The British army suggests that 600 troops returning from a tour in Kenya should take an AIDS test.
- **1989** - Emperor Hirohito of Japan, who ruled Japan during World War II died after a long illness. He had ruled for 62 years and was succeeded by his son, Crown Prince Akihito.
- **1994** - Rifleman Dario David Marco Vervey from Natal Command was killed when he accidentally fell off the back of a moving Buffel Troop Carrier in Durban. He was 19.
- **2015** - Islamist terrorists attack the office of the magazine 'Charlie Hebdo' in Paris, killing 12 and wounding several others.

8 January

- **794** - First Viking raid on Britain, Lindisfarne Abbey is destroyed.
- **1806** - The Battle of Blaauwberg takes place, and part of the defending force capitulates two days later. Cape Governor Janssens and the rest of the force capitulated on 18 January, after which the second British occupation of the Cape started.
- **1815** - The Battle of New Orleans occurred as General Andrew Jackson and American troops defended themselves against a British attack, inflicting over 2,000 casualties. Both sides in this battle were unaware that peace had been declared two weeks earlier with the signing of the Treaty of Ghent ending the War of 1812.
- **1918** - Amid the ongoing World War in Europe, President Woodrow Wilson proposed his Fourteen Points, calling for a reduction of arms, self determination for governments, and the creation of a League of Nations, all intended to serve as a ba-



Bernard Montgomery

sis for resolving the conflict and establishing a lasting peace in Europe.

- **1941** - Lord Robert Baden-Powell, British general during the siege of Mafeking during the Second Anglo-Boer War and founder of the Boy Scouts, dies in Nyeri, Kenya.
- **1943** - British turn control of Madagascar over to the Free French.
- **1966** - Two members from 17 Squadron together with a Portuguese Army Sergeant and two Portuguese Army Corporal's were killed when their Alouette III crashed east of Boane, near Lourenço Marques (Maputo), Mozambique while carrying out rescue operations at the Umbeluzi Pumping Station. The SADF casualties were: Captain Guillame Nel Shawe (43). Air Corporal Frederick Hermanus Moolman (23).
- **1973** - Two South African policemen are killed and five policemen (two South African and three Rhodesian) injured in an explosion near the Zambezi River in north-western Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).
- **1973** - Secret peace talks between US & North Vietnam resume near Paris.
- **1975** - Rifleman Adriaan Albertus Le Grange from 5 SAI was Reported Missing at Bagani while travelling as a passenger in a military vehicle that accidentally drove off the edge of the pont ferry and overturned into the

river. Despite an intensive search, his body was never recovered. He has no known grave and remains unaccounted for. He was 18.

- **1983** - Private Gerald Jeffrey Pieters from Air Force Base Swartkop suffered severe head injuries sustained in a private motor vehicle accident near Estcourt on 7 January 1983. He was admitted to the Wentworth Hospital in Durban where he sadly succumbed to his injuries on 08 January 1983. He was 23.
- **1983** - Rifleman Peter Uzzel from the Goudveld Commando attached to Group 34, Died of Wounds in 1 Military Hospital after being critically wounded in a landmine explosion near the Okangwati Military Base on 06 Jan 1983. He was 26.
- **1984** - South African security forces begin withdrawal from southern Angola.
- **1987** - Nine members from 101 Battalion Battalion Romeo Mike Team SWATF together with two attached personnel, were Killed in Action and 65 wounded during a contact with a numerically superior enemy force near Vinticet in Southern Angola. The eleven members Killed in Action were: Lieutenant Michael Cornelius Machiel Dreyer (24). Lance Corporal Emil Tamsen (18). Sapper Eugen Albert Meyer (19). Lance Corporal M. Fernando (24). Rifleman L. Alweendo (27). Rifleman P. Cerement (26). Rifleman E.

Leonard (24). Rifleman M. Ndjolonimu (23). Rifleman E. Nyawala (26). Rifleman S. Jacob (25). Rifleman J. Nangolo (23).

- **1989** - The ANC announces it will dismantle its guerrilla camps in Angola in support of peace.
- **1989** - Soviet Union promises to eliminate stockpiles of chemical weapons.
- **2007** - A United States military gunship launches air raids against hideouts of prominent members of the al-Qaeda network in southern Somalia.

9 January

- **1805** - Lord Nelson is entombed in the crypt of St. Paul's, London.
- **1861** - First Shot of the American Civil War: US steamer 'Star of the West' is fired on by South Carolina militia batteries off Charleston.
- **1916** - Gallipoli Campaign ends as the last allied troops evacuate the peninsula.
- **1936** - Garand M-1 semi-automatic rifle adopted by the US Army.
- **1941** - 6,000 Jews slaughtered in Bucharest, Romania.
- **1970** - France agrees to sell Mirage military jets to revolutionary regime in Libya.
- **1973** - Rhodesia closes its borders with Zambia to try to cut off Black liberation forces.
- **1978** - Lance Corporal Steven Leamy from Regiment

of civil war.

10 January

- **1806** - Signing of the second and final surrender of the Cape to the British under Gen. David Baird at Papendorp (presently Woodstock) after the defeat of Gen. J.W. Janssens.
- **1879** - British troops enter Zululand and the Anglo-Zulu war starts.
- **1879** - The 22-year-old Prince Imperial of France, Eugene Louis Jean Joseph Napoleon, who studied in England at the Royal Military Academy and joined the British forces, was killed in the Anglo-Zulu War.
- **1900** - Lord Frederick S. Roberts arrives at the Cape, replacing Sir Redvers Buller as commander-in-chief of the British forces in South Africa. Herbert H. Kitchenier as his chief-of-staff accompanies him.
- **1942** - Heinz Hitler (19), nephew of Adolf Hitler, is captured on the Eastern Front while serving as an NCO in the 23rd Artillery; dies in a Soviet POW camp.
- **1943** - Guadalcanal: U.S. forces begin a general offensive to eliminate Japanese.
- **1946** - The League of Nations dissolves after twenty-six years and is replaced by the United Nations, with its first meeting in London.
- **1965** - Sirr al-Khatim al-Khalifa, the Sudanese prime minister, admits to providing aid to Congolese rebels.
- **1972** - 2nd Lieutenant Johannes Daniel Burger from 6 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard, Serial No. 7034 crashed near George during a routine cross-country and tactical navigation flight. He was 22.
- **1976** - Rifleman Andries Jacobus Rautenbach from 8 SAI was killed when struck by a bullet as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle while he was stationed at Rundu. He was 18.
- **1981** - Mozambique and Zimbabwe sign a defence and security agreement under which an attack by SA on either country will be taken as an assault on both.
- **1982** - Rifleman Abel Albertus van Wyk from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed instantly after being struck

- **1978** - Rifleman Donald William Paterson from 1 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident at Bloemfontein. He was 21.
- **1979** - Two members from 24 Squadron were killed when their Hawker Siddeley Buccaneer S-50 crashed at Roedtan near Marble Hall during a night training exercise. The crew were: Captain Kenneth Brian Duncan (25). Lieutenant Pierre Paul Wahl (21).
- **1980** - Rifleman Pedro Komengo from 102 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action when the vehicle in which he was travelling detonated a landmine in Northern Owamboland. He was 22.
- **1993** - Angolan government troops capture the headquarters of UNITA rebel leader Jonas Savimbi in central Angola. Savimbi, however, escapes.
- **1996** - The National Crime Information Management Centre releases figures confirming South Africa's designation as the most violent country in the world outside a war zone.
- **2005** - After nearly three years of negotiations, Sudan's government and main rebel group sign the final agreement to the Naivasha, Kenya, peace accord to end more than twenty-one years

- **1965** - Sirr al-Khatim al-Khalifa, the Sudanese prime minister, admits to providing aid to Congolese rebels.
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Jonas Savimbi

in the head by a bullet that resulted from an accidental discharge of a MAG light machine-gun during a training exercise outside Oshivello.

11 January

- **1904** - The Herero of German Southwest Africa revolt against colonial domination.
- **1944** - Krakow-Plaszow Concentration Camp established.
- **1970** - The 32-month-old secessionist Biafran regime collapses under onslaughts by Nigerian military.
- **1976** - Military coup in Ecuador ousts Dictator/President Guillermo Rodriguez Lara.
- **1979** - Rifleman Nicolaas Johannes Myburgh from the Botha Regiment was critically injured in a private motor vehicle accident and admitted to the Hospital in Messina with bleeding on the brain. He succumbed to his injuries not long after admission. He was 25.
- **1980** - Lance Corporal Derick James Evans from 61 Mechanised Battalion Group was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned while on patrol in the Etosha Pan Game Reserve. He was 18.
- **1984** - Two members from 32 Battalion were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola during Ops Askari. They were: Rifleman Joao Dala (31). Rifleman Isaac

Malonga (35).

- **1989** - 140 nations agree to ban chemical weapons.
- **1991** - US Congress authorizes President G.H.W. Bush to undertake offensive operations against Iraq.

12 January

- **1893** - WW I flying ace and future Head of the Nazi Luftwaffe, Hermann Göring, is born on this day.
- **1915** - South African forces invade German South-West Africa at Ramansdrift.
- **1940** - Daniël Hermanus (Dan) Pienaar is appointed to command the First South African Infantry Brigade.
- **1944** - Churchill and de Gaulle confer in Marrakech.
- **1964** - One month after independence, a bloody uprising by the black majority ousts the Arab ruling minority of Zanzibar, installing a government that shortly unites with Tanganyika to form Tanzania.
- **1965** - Lieutenant Richard Johannes Oltman from 5 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard crashed near Bulwer during a night cross country flight. He was 30.
- **1974** - Corporal Willem Jacobus Reynolds from 2 SAI was accidentally killed at Ondangwa when he was struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 19.
- **1979** - Two members from 5 SAI, both attached to 54

Battalion were Killed in Action when their Buffel Troop Carrier detonated two Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese Mines that were boosted with a Soviet TM-57 Anti-Tank Mine while they were traveling from Eenhana to Ondangwa. The casualties were: Rifleman Charles Deon Bekker (19). Rifleman Christo Gerhardus Krog (20).

- **1981** - Lance Corporal Benjamin Karl Steenkamp from the Personnel Service Corps attached to Southern Cape Command Headquarters was killed in a military vehicle accident near Peddie in the Eastern Cape. He was 18.
- **1987** - Prince Edward resigns from the Royal Marines.
- **1988** - Gunner Kevin Alan Roberts from the Artillery School in Potchefstroom was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident between Vereeniging and Johannesburg. He was 27.
- **1988** - Airman Stefan Oliver Jedlika from 3 Satellite Radar Station at Klippan, Mafeking, died after suffering a cerebral haemorrhage. He was 19.
- **1992** - Algerian government cancels second round of voting in parliamentary elections that an Islamic party looks set to win. The Islamists take to arms, and ten thousands of Algerians die in the next few years.
- **2008** - Bill Stone, Royal

Navy veteran, last surviving Briton to have served in both world wars, dies at 108.

13 January

- **1915** - South African troops occupy Swakopmund, German South-West Africa.
- **1935** - The population of the Saar region bordering France and Germany voted for incorporation into Hitler's Reich.
- **1943** - General Philippe Leclerc's Free French troops merge with the British army under the command of Montgomery.
- **1943** - Hitler declares Germany must wage "Total War".
- **1961** - Fighting erupts between UN troops and supporters of Patrice Lumumba in the Congo.
- **1963** - Sgt Gnassingbe Eyadema murders West African Republic of Togo's President Sylvanus Olympio in a military coup.
- **1964** - Two members from 8 Squadron were killed when their AT-6 Harvard crashed near Bloemfontein. They were: 2nd Lieutenant Johannes Theodorus Brits (19). Air Mechanic Louis Johannes Lodewyk Rothman (20).
- **1968** - Beginning of the Tet Offensive in Vietnam.
- **1972** - A group of junior officers overthrows civilian government of Ghana in West Africa.
- **1979** - A clash between police and suspected guerrillas

is reported near the Botswana border. Botswana denies that it is being used as a springboard for attacks on his neighbours.

- **1982** - Corporal Daniel Jacobus Steenkamp from 400 Airfield Maintenance Unit (SAAF) was killed in a Military Vehicle accident in Pretoria. He was 25.
- **1986** - Thomas Chilunku was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 25.
- **1986** - Bloody coup overthrows government of South Yemen.
- **1987** - Airman Craig Anthony Lucarne from 508 SAAF Security Squadron, Air Force Base Durban, was killed when his Rhino Armoured Personnel Carrier overturned on the N3 near Louis Botha Airport in Durban. He was 19.

14 January

- **1867** - Alfred Nobel makes the first public demonstration of dynamite.
- **1942** - Malaya: Japanese capture Malacca.
- **1943** - President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill met at Casablanca in Morocco to work on strategy during World War II.

- **1967** - New York Times reports the Army is conducting secret germ warfare experiments on the public.
- **1969** - Fire aboard USS 'Enterprise' (CVN-65), off Vietnam, 28 die, 344 injured.
- **1971** - Britain proposes the sale of arms to South Africa.
- **1978** - Corporal Alan Gordon-Bennet from Northern Transvaal Command was killed in a military vehicle accident at Nelspruit. He was 21.
- **1981** - Rifleman C. Cabonga from 32 Battalion who was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola. He was 25.

15 January

- **1926** - John Harling, the last known veteran of the "Charge of the Light Brigade", dies aged 93.
- **1942** - Japanese Southern Army invades Burma from



Dan Pienaar

Thailand.

- **1945** - Red Army liberates the Krakow-Plaszow concentration camp.
- **1949** - Mao's Red army captures Tientsin.
- **1966** - Prime Minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa is killed in Nigeria's first military coup.
- **1973** - US President Nixon suspends all US offensive action over North Vietnam.
- **1981** - Two members from 1 Parachute Battalion were Killed in Action during a fierce contact with a numerically superior FAPLA and PLAN force while supporting 32 Battalion elements during the Battle of Cuamato in Southern Angola. They were: Sergeant Louis Theodorus Hermanus Wesels (22). Rifleman Leonard Truter (22).
- **1982** - Rifleman Faustinus Mushanambango from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insurgents. He was 25.
- **1984** - Gunner Gilderoy Kruger from 10 Anti-Aircraft Regiment Died of Wounds accidentally sustained at Oshivello. He was 18.
- **1986** - A military coup deposes the Lesotho Government.
- **1987** - Two members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during a contact with PLAN insur-

gents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Special Constable Mathais Fesango (27). Special Constable Shivelekeni Dhilimbulukweni (29).

16 January

- **1900** - British troops under General Neville Lyttelton and General Charles Warren cross the Tugela River.
- **1904** - Herero Revolt: Gobabis is besieged. A German company from Outjo is ambushed at Okanjande near present-day Otjiwarongo.
- **1941** - The US War Department forms a squadron for black aviation cadets.
- **1944** - General Eisenhower takes command of Operation Overlord.
- **1951** - Viet Minh offensive at Hanoi.
- **1963** - Khrushchev claims to have a 100-megaton nuclear bomb.
- **1966** - Nigerian Army chief, General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi, briefly takes power in a military coup. Over fifty government officials are killed, including the existing prime minister Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa.
- **1968** - 2nd Lieutenant Brian John Poorter from 5 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard, Serial No 7127 suffered engine failure while on a routine low level training flight and crashed into trees. He was 19.
- **1970** - Col Kadhaffi becomes premier of Libya.
- **1976** - Trooper Trevor Don-

ald Bodhill from 2 Special Service Battalion was killed while traveling along the Chitado road in Southern Angola to set up a vehicle ambush position. He was 19.

- **1977** - Mercenaries mount an unsuccessful military coup in Benin.
- **1983** - Signaler Joel Johanne Schutte from the South West Africa Command Signal Unit SWATF was killed in a private motorcycle accident in Windhoek. He was 19.
- **1986** - Sergeant John Christopher van Graan from the Far North Command Provost Unit was accidentally killed near Messina while attempting to recover a broken-down vehicle. He was 26.
- **1988** - Rifleman Manuel Thomas from 32 Battalion was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in the Caprivi Strip. He was 37.
- **1991** - The war against Iraq began as Allied aircraft conducted a major raid against Iraqi air defenses. The air raid on Baghdad was broadcast live to a global audience by CNN correspondents as operation Desert Shield became Desert Storm.
- **1992** - The twelve-year civil war in El Salvador ended with the signing of a peace treaty in Mexico City. The conflict had claimed over 75,000 lives.
- **2014** - Hiroo Onoda, Japanese Army officer who did not surrender until 1974, on his 52nd birthday. dies at the

age of 91.

17 January

- **1837** - The Voortrekkers under Hendrik Potgieter and Gerrit Maritz defeat the Ndebele under Mzilikazi at Mosega, near the present Zeerust. The Ndebele flee north and the majority cross the Limpopo River.
- **1879** - On the afternoon of 17 January 1879 the Zulu king Cetshwayo (Cetewayo) addresses 20,000 of his warriors at the great military kraal of Nodwengu: "I am sending you out against the Whites, who have invaded Zululand and driven away our cattle. You are to go against the column at Rorke's Drift and drive it back into Natal."
- **1885** - In the desperate hand to hand Battle of Abu Klea, the British under General Sir Herbert Stewart repulse the Sudanese Camel Corp of 10,000 under Command of Mohammed Ahmed.
- **1944** - HM Corvette 'Violet' sinks 'U-641' in Atlantic Ocean.
- **1945** - During World War II, Warsaw, Poland, was liberated by Soviet Russian troops.
- **1951** - China refuses cease fire in Korea.
- **1966** - A Hydrogen bomb accident occurred over Palomares, Spain, as an American B-52 jet collided with its refueling plane. Eight crewmen were killed and the bomber then released its

H-bomb into the Atlantic.

- **1977** - Rifleman Johannes Jesajus Botha from Springs Commando was critically wounded during July 1976 while stationed at Katima Mulilo when he was struck in the abdomen by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He succumbed to his wounds nearly six months later on 17 January 1977 after complications set in. He was 21.
- **1977** - Rifleman Edward Leslie Mayo from 5 SAI was accidentally shot dead by a fellow soldier while preparing an ambush east of the Kwando River. He was 19.
- **1985** - Special Constable Shopeke Hatutale from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Unit: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 32.
- **1988** - Rifleman Dumisani Ngubani from 121 Battalion was killed in a military vehicle accident in Durban. He was 24.
- **1990** - Rifleman Johan Bush from the 2nd Battalion South African Cape Corps was killed in a military vehicle accident between Bray

and Mosita. He was 17.

- **1991** - Operation Desert Storm: Coalition air offensive is unleashed over Iraq, US pilot Jeffrey Zahn is shot down and captured.

18 January

- **1900** - Mafeking siege: Two Black cattle-herds are captured and summarily executed at Mafeking by burghers, in accordance with a council of war decision on cattle-rustlers. President Kruger immediately repudiates this decision and orders this practice to cease forthwith.
- **1900** - The 104mm field-gun known as 'Long Cecil' is test fired for the first time.
- **1902** - Commandant Gideon Scheepers is executed by a firing squad near Graaff-Reinet after being found guilty by a British military court on charges of murder, arson and demolishing trains during the South African War.
- **1904** - The German bat-



Hiroo Onoda

tleship "Habicht" lands at Swakopmund, bringing fresh German troops who proceed into the interior under the command of Second Lieutenant Gygas.

- **1919** - Versailles Peace Conference begins.
- **1943** - Warsaw Ghetto uprising begins.
- **1960** - US & Japan sign joint defence treaty.
- **1976** - 2nd Lieutenant Andries Muller from the School of Armour Died of Wounds during a contact with enemy forces during Ops Savannah. He was 19.
- **1978** - Rifleman Antonio Cassamano from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with the enemy forces when his patrol was ambushed at a waterhole near Omalapapa in Southern Angola. He was 24.
- **1979** - Corporal Fritz August Ferreira from 3 SAI was killed when he accidentally electrocuted himself while stationed at Ondangwa. He was 18.
- **1980** - Two members from the 2 SAI Support Company Platoon were Killed in Action or Died of Wounds when their patrol was ambushed by a numerically superior force of SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents just North of the Cut-line. They were: Lance Corporal Phillipus Rudolf Maritz (19). Rifleman Benjamin Arthur Froneman (19).
- **1984** - Corporal Jose Antonio from 32 Battalion suf-

fered a fatal heart attack and died while stationed at Bufalo Base. He was 32.

- **1991** - Iraq launches SCUD missiles against Israel.

19 January

- **1807** - US Civil War Confederate General Robert E. Lee was born on this day.
- **1900** - Mafeking siege: General J.P. Snyman sends a starving group of Black women, who have been encouraged by the British to attempt a breakout, back under a White flag. Colonel Baden-Powell objects and threatens to commence hostilities if they should advance further.
- **1915** - Germans begin Zeppelin raids on Great Britain, bombing Great Yarmouth & King's Lynn. 20 people are killed.
- **1940** - General J.B.M. Hertzog, as leader of the Opposition, announces he will introduce a motion calling on the Union of South Africa to make a separate peace treaty with Germany.
- **1941** - The 1st SA Division enters Abyssinia from the south.
- **1941** - Kassala, on the Sudan-Eritrean border, is retaken by the British as Major General William Platt begins an offensive against Italian troops in Eritrea.
- **1943** - Guadalcanal: U.S. destroyers shell Japanese positions.
- **1964** - Major Jean de Wet

from 1 Squadron died as a result of a shooting incident at his home. He was 32.

- **1971** - Air Mechanic Jean le Roux from 35 Squadron was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in Bellville. He was 20.
- **1979** - Private Martin Eugene Weideman from the Air Force Gymnasium died of natural causes in 1 Military Hospital. He was 19.
- **1982** - Rifleman Fernando José Gaspar De Sousa from 3 Parachute Battalion was critically injured on 5 January 1982 when he was accidentally driven over by a Buffel Troop Carrier at Ondangwa. Evacuated to 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria, he succumbed to his injuries on 19 January 1982. He was 28.
- **1982** - Two members from 4 SAI were Killed in Action near Etale Base. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Johannes Gerhardus Reyneke (19). Rifleman Dudley Nel (19).
- **1982** - Flight Sergeant John Williams from 15 Squadron was killed when his Alouette III helicopter crashed while conducting dagga operations in conjunction with the South African Police who were destroying dagga plantations in the Greytown and Tugela Ferry area. He was 29.
- **1983** - Former Gestapo official Klaus Barbie, known as the "Butcher of Lyon," was arrested in Bolivia, South America.

- **1988** - Rifleman Johannes Petrus Barnard from 1 SAI was killed in action during Ops Hooper. He was 18.

20 January

- **1835** - Xhosa warriors overrun the Eastern Cape frontier.
- **1879** - British troops under Lord Chelmsford pitch their camp on the slopes of Isandhlawana, where Zulu warriors attack them two days later.
- **1900** - In the Battle of Tabanyama, Natal front, a group of Indian stretcher bearers, among whom the young Durban attorney Mohandas Ghandi, becomes intermingled with fighting troops. Six of them are killed and twelve wounded in the crossfire. The battle continued two more days.
- **1942** - During the Holocaust, Reinhard Heydrich, Himmler's second in command of the SS, convened the Wannsee Conference in Berlin with 15 top Nazi bureaucrats to coordinate the Final Solution (Endlösung) in which the Nazis would attempt to exterminate the entire Jewish population of Europe, an estimated 11 million persons.
- **1944** - Burma: Allies prepare major offensive to open the "Burma Road".
- **1944** - The Royal Air Force drops 2,500 tons of bombs on Berlin.
- **1951** - Fort Klapperkop and Fort Skanskop, Pretoria, are

opened to the public.

- **1964** - Army mutiny in Tanganyika over pay is put down with British assistance.
- **1965** - It is reported in London that the British government will not issue a permit for the export of the ground-to-air missiles South Africa requires.
- **1979** - Trooper Gregory Ernst Raaff from 1 Special Service Battalion died of injuries at Oshakati Hospital after being accidentally crushed between two vehicles at Ruacana. He was 20.
- **1981** - Corporal Donald Brooks from 3 SAI Died of Wounds received in action on 03 December 1980 when his company was based at Ondangwa. He was 19.
- **1982** - Three members from 1 Special Service Battalion, two of them twin brothers, were Killed in Action in Northern Owamboland during Ops Handsak while working with elements of 32 Battalion. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Ockert Petrus Kruger (18). Lance Corporal Pieter Kruger (18). Trooper Herman Fourie (19).
- **1983** - Two members from the Soutpansberg Military Area were Killed in a military vehicle accident on the Malala Drift Road about

46km from Messina. They were: Lance Corporal Japie Louis Nel (20). Rifleman Lovemore Phakati (22).

- **1986** - Rifleman R.M. Kröhne from 102 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1987** - Rifleman P Rutjindo from 102 Battalion SWATF died in Hospital from Malaria contracted during operations in Southern Angola. He was 20.
- **1989** - Two members from Regiment Hillcrest were killed in a military vehicle accident. They were: Sergeant Anton Bela van der Merwe (23). Corporal Cornelius Johannes Stroebel (27).
- **1991** - During an Iraqi SCUD attack on Israel, US Patriot missiles are used for the first time, with mixed success.

21 January

- **1824** - American Civil War Confederate Army Gener-



Reinhard Heydrich

al “Stonewall” Jackson was born on this day.

- **1942** - Rommel begins a new offensive against the Allies in North Africa, hoping to push them back to the east.
- **1943** - Soviet forces recapture Worosjilowsk.
- **1945** - The Red Army destroys the German Tannenberg monument in East Prussia.
- **1954** - The USS Nautilus, the world’s first nuclear powered submarine, was launched at Groton, Connecticut.
- **1968** - B-52 bomber with nuclear weapons crashes in Greenland.
- **1968** - Battle of Khe Sanh begins.
- **1977** - Two members from 3 SAI and one member from 13 Maintenance Unit were killed in a military vehicle accident at Tobias. They were: Lance Corporal Leon Steyn (19). Rifleman Jacobus Marais (19). Rifleman Ettienne Pieter van der Westhuizen (20).
- **1977** - Private Stephen Trevor Parvess from 1 Maintenance Unit Collapsed and died from heat exhaustion during Basic Training at Potchefstroom. He was 18.
- **1978** - Corporal Andre van den Boogaard from the SADF Equestrian Centre was killed in a military vehicle accident on the Ventersdorp Road. He was 18,
- **1983** - Lieutenant Frederick Christiaan van Zyl from 8

SAI accidentally drowned in the Orange River while trying to assist three soldiers who had got into difficulties while swimming. He was 21.

- **1986** - Rifleman Joshua Isaac Kuvari from 102 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 20.
- **1988** - According to Jane’s Defence Weekly, Armscor, the South African armaments producer, is the country’s largest single exporter. Armscor sales to twenty-three countries in 1987 amounted to R1,8-billion.
- **1988** - According to reports from Angola, the strategic town of Cuito Cuanavale is about to fall to an onslaught by South African and UNITA forces. The reports say South African and Cuban troops have clashed for the first time in twelve years.

22 January

- **1879** - Cetewayo’s impis wipe out British troops at Isandhlwana in one of the worst disasters in British military history, stabbing 1272 soldiers to death. The impis of the Zulu king then descend on the trading post at Rorke’s Drift. About 4000 Zulus attack the fortified buildings held by 130 men of the 24th regiment at about 4.30 p.m. At the end of the attack at about 4 a.m. early the next morning, more than 350 Zulus are killed,

while the defenders’ casualties amount to seventeen dead and ten wounded. A record eleven Victoria Crosses were awarded to the defenders of Rorke’s Drift.

- **1879** - The British (no 1) supply column moving up the North Coast towards Eshowe is attacked by about 5000 Zulus as they cross the Nyezane River. The attack is beaten off south of Eshowe, north of the Nyezane river.
- **1941** - The Australian 6th Division captures Tobruk from the Italians.
- **1943** - Axis forces pull out of Tripoli and head back towards Tunisia.
- **1943** - During World War II in the Pacific, Japanese resistance ended in New Guinea, resulting in the first land victory of the war for Allied forces.
- **1944** - Operation Shingle: Allies land at Anzio.
- **1957** - Israeli forces withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula.
- **1981** - Rifleman Marthinus Christoffel Barnard from Infantry School suffered a fatal heart attack and died at Oudtshoorn while lifting weights in the Infantry School gymnasium. He was 21.
- **1983** - Leading Marine Hendrik Jacobus Kemp from 111 Harbour Protection Unit, South African Marine Corps was Killed in Action when his Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a double boosted Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese

mine in Southern Angola near the Cut-line. He was 20.

- **1983** - Staff Sergeant Hermanus Jacobus Petrus Barkhuizen from the Technical Service Corps died in 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria after suffering a fatal heart attack at his Unit. He was 33.
- **1984** - Corporal Terence van den Dool from 3 SAI was Reported Missing while swimming with his friends at Hippo Pools, Ruacana. For administrative purposes, he was officially declared dead in 1986. He was 19.
- **1987** - Two members from 1 SWA Engineer Regiment SWATF were Killed in Action when their Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a double boosted Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese Mine on the Eupupa Road in Southern Angola. They were: Corporal Jose Miguel Rodrigues Carreira (20). Lance Corporal Nicolaas Willem Barnard (20).
- **2005** - Carlo Orelli, last Italian combat veteran to have served throughout WW I, dies at the age of 110.

23 January

- **1900** - Battle of Spion Kop: Boers defeat the British; Winston Churchill & Mohandas Gandhi are both present, but do not meet.
- **1932** - El Salvador’s army kills 4,000 protesting farmers
- **1935** - Abyssinian tribesmen in Somaliland massacre

French colonial troops.

- **1903** - Colonel Arthur Alfred Lynch is found guilty of high treason and sentenced to death for leading the “Irish Commando” against British forces in the South African War. The death sentence is commuted to life imprisonment on 24th January 1904.
- **1943** - In North Africa, British forces under General Bernard Montgomery captured Tripoli in Libya.
- **1943** - Casablanca Conference: FDR & Churchill agree on the “unconditional surrender” of the Axis.
- **1962** - Kim Philby, long-term spy in Britain, defects to the USSR.
- **1968** - The American ship USS Pueblo was seized by North Koreans in the Sea of Japan amid claims the Navy ship was spying. The ship was confiscated and its crew held in captivity until December, with one fatality.
- **1971** - After a compromise is reached at a Commonwealth Conference, Britain is allowed to sell weapons to South Africa, though African leaders oppose the step.
- **1981** - Rifleman Aubrey John Botha from 11 Commando Regiment died from gunshot wounds accidentally sustained while on special duty at Umtata. He was 19.
- **1981** - Rifleman Dieter Otto Haase from the South West

Africa Infantry Battalion SWATF was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 20.

- **1982** - Private (Miss) Karen Mona van Rensburg from the Administrative Service Corps was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in Voortrekkerhoogte while on official duty. She was 19.
- **1984** - Corporal Johannes Hendrik Roets from 4SAI was Killed in Action when his Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a landmine at Techamutete in Southern Angola during Ops Askari. He was 19.
- **1986** - Rifleman Deon Francis Du Toit from 3 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 19.
- **1987** - Corporal Marthinus Petrus van Loggerenberg from 4 SAI died from injuries received when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in the Kabokweni Township near Nelspruit during anti-riot patrol duties. He was 19.
- **1988** - Four members from

Kim Philby



54 Battalion were Killed in Action during a fierce engagement with a numerically superior force of FAPLA and SWAPO/PLAN troops in South Eastern Angola. The casualties were: Corporal Dawid Petersen (22). Rifleman Joseph Brian Harker (25). Rifleman Phillip Dawid Matroos (22). Rifleman Alfred Snyders (23).

- **1989** - Seaman (Marine) P. Thangavalu from the South African Marines was killed instantly as a result of a gunshot wound to the head, accidentally self-inflicted shortly after he returned to the Marine Base at Wenela after completing a Patrol. He was 19.
- **1991** - Rifleman Fanie Johan Jeneke from the South African Cape Corps was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Scottburgh. He was 18.

24 January

- **1891** - Capain. Kurt von Francois arrives as leader of a small German regiment in South West Africa to suppress the Herero rebellion.
- **1891** - Walter Model, German Field Marshal, is born on this day.
- **1900** - The British, under General Warren, surrenders to General Botha at Spioenkop. At least 1,000 British and sixty Boer soldiers die in this battle.
- **1901** - Emily Hobhouse, English nurse who visited

the Transvaal and Orange Free Sate Republics during the South African War, reports that she found 2,000 women and children in shocking circumstances in the concentration camp at Bloemfontein.

- **1915** - Battle of Dogger Bank: Royal Navy defeats the Germans in the North Sea.
- **1923** - The Italian Air Force was formed as the as the Regia Aerea.
- **1941** - British troops invade Italian East Africa.
- **1961** - A B-52 breaks up over the North Carolina coast, losing two H-bombs, one of which is still missing.
- **1964** - British troops are flown in to Uganda to suppress an army mutiny over low pay.
- **1965** - Winston Spencer Churchill, British Prime Minister during World War II, dies at the age of 88.
- **1978** - Private Cornelius Jacobus Borchardt from the Administrative Service Corps was killed in a military vehicle accident, at Otjiwarongo. He was 23.
- **1979** - Rifleman Gerald Wayne Williams from 6 SAI accidentally drowned during a training exercise at the Base. He was 22.
- **1981** - Trooper Eugene Margo Nel from 4 Vehicle Reserve Park was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Kroonstad. He was 19.
- **1984** - Corporal Dawid

Lambert van Niekerk from Regiment De Wet was killed instantly after being struck by lightning during a thunderstorm while in the field. He was 25.

- **1985** - Corporal Jacobus Petrus Hall from 1 Parachute Battalion was accidentally shot dead by a fellow soldier who was on guard duty while the patrol was in a TB for the night North of Okankolo. He was 19.
- **1985** - Rifleman Saul Frederick de Kock from the South African Cape Corps was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned during a follow-up operation against SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola. He was 26.
- **1985** - Rifleman J.H. Filipus from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents. He was 22.
- **1987** - Rifleman William Viljoen from 8 SAI was accidentally killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned after losing a front wheel 3km South of Ondangwa. He was thrown out of the vehicle which then rolled over him. He was 20.
- **1988** - Sergeant Ockert Barendse from the School of Artillery accidentally drowned in Potchefstroom. He was 28.
- **1986** - Guerrillas advance into Ugandan capital of Kampala as army opposition crumbles, pushing mil-

itary government to edge of collapse.

- **1991** - US Navy helicopters liberate Kuwaiti offshore oil rigs from the Iraqis.
- **1993** - Three Somalis are killed and at least five are wounded in clashes with troops of a US-led coalition trying to safeguard efforts to feed the country's starving.

25 January

- **1916** - Montenegro surrenders to Austria-Hungary.
- **1919** - At the end of the war, the Paris Peace Conference accepts the proposal to create the League of Nations. The League was eventually established by Part I of the Treaty of Versailles, which was signed on 28 June 1919.
- **1940** - Nazis decree the establishment of a Jewish ghetto in Lodz Poland.
- **1943** - Guadalcanal: Japanese in full retreat, closely pursued by U.S. forces.
- **1945** - Audie Murphy earns the Medal of Honour.
- **1951** - UN begins counter offensive in Korea.
- **1961** - Military coup in El Salvador.
- **1971** - General Idi Amin Dada takes power in Uganda by military coup while the existing president, Milton Obote, is at a Commonwealth meeting in Singapore.
- **1980** - Three MK operatives entered the Volkskas Bank in Silverton (Silverton Bank Siege) and took 25 members

of Staff and customers hostage. In the ensuing gun battle with Security Police, two civilians were killed, 5 civilians were wounded and all three MK Operatives were shot dead.

- **1981** - Rifleman Stephen Stuart Whittaker from 3 SAI was Reported Missing while hitch hiking back to his Unit in Potchefstroom. He was picked up by a motorist, Mr Pieter Du Plessis and they stopped at the Laingsburg bridge for a travel break. Unfortunately, it was that time when the river came down in flood and they were both washed away. Their bodies were never located and they remain unaccounted for. For administrative, both men were officially declared dead by Judge C.F.W. van Zyl on 03 June 1981. He was 18.
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Patrick Louis Walsh from the Air Force Gymnasium was killed instantly when he was struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle during musketry training at Haakdoringlaagte. He was 20.
- **1983** - Two members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during a Contact with SWAPO/

PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Special Constable T. Matais (33). Special Constable K. Tjimbua (31).

- **1987** - Four members from 101 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action during a fierce engagement with SWAPO/PLAN and FAPLA forces in Southern Angola. During the attack on Mongua, friendly mortar fire fell short of the target and landed on their position. They were: Sergeant Johan Martin (35) Corporal H Alugodhi (24). Rifleman W Shitongeni (26). Rifleman G Shilulu (23).
- **1987** - Sapper T. Seibib from 1 South West Africa Engineer Regiment was Killed in Action in a Landmine explosion in the Kaokoveld. He was 24.
- **1988** - Airman John Hendri Flemming from the Air Force Gymnasium collapsed and died after experiencing respiratory and heart fail-



Winston Churchill

ure during physical training exercises at the Air Force Gymnasium. He was 18.

26 January

- **1880** - General Douglas MacArthur was born on this day.
- **1885** - The Mahdist forces take Khartoum in Sudan after a nine-month siege and slaughter most inhabitants and the British garrison, including General Gordon.
- **1901** - General Christiaan de Wet, accompanied by President M.T. Steyn, starts his journey at Doornberg, near Winburg, to invade the Cape Colony for the second time.
- **1902** - General Ben Viljoen and seven men are ambushed and captured by the British. His pocket book saves his life by warding off a bullet and preventing it to strike his chest.
- **1934** - Nazi Germany and Poland sign ten year non-aggression pact.
- **1939** - Franco's Spanish Nationalists capture Barcelona.
- **1943** - Nazis began using Hitler Youths to operate anti-aircraft batteries in Germany following heavy Allied bombing of Berlin and other cities.
- **1950** - India becomes a republic within the British Commonwealth, converts the Victoria Cross to the Param Vir Chakra, 14 of the 21 awarded have been posthumous.

- **1952** - Egypt is placed under martial law in response to wide-spread riots against the British.
- **1977** - Rifleman Sabino Luciano from 32 Battalion was killed in a shooting incident in the residential camp at Buffalo. He was 25.
- **1977** - Rifleman Isak Nel Myburgh from 6 SAI Died of Wounds received in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1978** - Rifleman Petrus Wilhelmus Prinsloo from Middelburg Commando accidentally drowned in the Assegai River at Amsterdam. He was 20.
- **1980** - 2nd Lieutenant Johannes Lodewicus Buys from 6 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment was killed in a Military Vehicle accident near Grootfontein. He was 22.
- **1980** - Rifleman Hendrik Christoffel Janse van Rensburg from SWA SPES was accidentally shot dead during the night at their TB by a guard who mistook him for a SWAPO/PLAN insurgent. He was 18.
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Jacobus Adriaan Smuts Louw from 1 SAI was killed instantly when he detonated a booby-trapped Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese Mine while returning from a patrol on the Cut-line. He was 19.
- **1983** - At a special press conference it is announced that a senior South African

naval officer, commanding Simon's Town dockyard, Commodore Dieter Gerhardt and his wife, have been detained for questioning in connection with alleged espionage.

- **1986** - Two Members from 5 SAI were killed when their Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in wet weather near Nkurenkuru. The casualties were: Corporal Jan Daniel Schmidt (23). Rifleman Johannes Gerhardus Janse van Rensburg (18).
- **1986** - The National Resistance Army takes over the Ugandan capital of Kampala.
- **1991** - Rebels overrun the Somalian capital of Mogadishu.
- **1992** - Russia announces it will no longer target US cities with nuclear weapons.
- **1994** - Romania became the first former Cold War foe to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

27 January

- **1859** - German Kaiser Wilhelm II was born on this day.
- **1915** - US Marines begin occupation of Haiti.
- **1943** - SA prime minister, General Jan Smuts, asks parliament's approval to send troops to Europe, contrary to his promise in 1939 that SA troops would only fight in Africa.
- **1943** - The U.S. 8th Air

Force conducted the first all-American bombing raid on Germany as 55 bombers targeted Wilhelmshaven, losing three planes while claiming to have shot down 22 German fighters. The success of this first mission encouraged U.S. military planners to begin regular daylight bombing raids, which eventually resulted in high casualty rates for the American crewmen involved.

- **1944** - Russian Army General Govorov announced the lifting of the Nazi blockade of Leningrad. During the 900-day siege, an estimated one million Russian civilians inside the city died of disease, starvation and relentless German shelling.
- **1944** - U.S. issues a report on "The Bataan Death March".
- **1945** - The Russian Army liberated Auschwitz death camp near Krakow in Poland, where the Nazis had systematically murdered an estimated 2,000,000 persons, including 1,500,000 Jews.
- **1967** - Treaty signed banning military use of nuclear weapons in space.
- **1973** - U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War ended as North Vietnamese and American representatives signed an agreement in Paris.
- **1984** - Corporal Johannes Adam De Beer from 8 SAI was Killed in Action after

stepping on an enemy Anti-Personnel Mine while on Patrol in Southern Angola. He was 19.

- **1984** - Special Constable Paulino Kangombe 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 32.
- **1991** - President Mohamed Siad Barre of Somalia flees the capital, Mogadishu, as a coalition of rebels seize power. The country plunges into virtual anarchy.
- **1996** - Niger's first democratically elected president, Mahamane Ousmane, is ousted in a coup and army Colonel Barre Mainassara Ibrahim takes over as head of state.
- **2002** - Munitions at an army base in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital, explode, sending fireballs and shrapnel into the air and forcing hundreds of area residents to flee. As many as 600 people drown in a canal that blocked their way to safety.

28 January

- **1871** - The Franco-Prussian War ended as Paris surrendered to the Germans after a four month siege.

- **1871** - The British forces are defeated and 83 British soldiers under Sir George Colley are killed and 111 wounded in the battle of Laings Nek in the Anglo-Transvaal War, caused by the refusal of the Transvaal Boers to submit to British authority as proclaimed by Shepstone in 1877.
- **1885** - British relief force reaches Khartoum, and the Sudan is evacuated.
- **1916** - German colony of Cameroon surrenders to Britain & France.
- **1932** - Japanese capture Shanghai.
- **1942** - Five power stations are blown up by pro-Axis saboteurs in an attempt to destabilise the Rand gold mines.
- **1942** - German troops capture Benghazi, Libya.
- **1944** - RAF puts 683 bombers over Berlin.
- **1970** - Cairo suburbs are attacked by Israeli jet fighters.
- **1976** - Rifleman Chris Kruger Moorcroft from 1 Parachute Battalion died from



Jan Smuts

bronchial pneumonia and renal failure in 3 Military Hospital, Bloemfontein. He was 20.

- **1977** - Sergeant Abraham Jacobus Smith from 32 Battalion died from injuries received when a private Piper PA28 Cherokee aircraft in which he was travelling as a passenger, crashed at Grootfontein. He was 34.
- **1978** - Rifleman Domingos Augusto from 32 Battalion was killed instantly from a gunshot wound accidentally self-inflicted during operations in Southern Angola. He was 35.
- **1978** - Corporal Manuel Antonio Infante Ganhão from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was Killed in Action during an engagement with FRELIMO Troops at a railway siding south of Mapai in Gaza Province, Moçambique during Operation Melon (SADF Name Operation Acrobat). He was 28.
- **1982** - Rifleman Jacobus Frederick De Beer from 61 Base Workshops was critically injured on 25 January 1982 when he accidentally fell off the back of a moving military vehicle. He was evacuated to 1 Military Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries on 28 January 1982. He was 18.
- **1982** - Two members from 5 SAI were Killed in Action near Elundu when their patrol was ambushed by numerically superior force of SWAPO/PLAN insurgents.

The casualties were: Rifleman William Robert Dawson (20). Rifleman Alexander Forbes (19).

- **1983** - Private Peter Alan Beard from the South African Medical Corps Headquarters was killed in a Military Vehicle accident at Mooi River. He was 19.
- **1985** - Sergeant Willem Johan Gouws from Air Force Base Hoedspruit was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Pilgrims Rest. He was 40.
- **1993** - Troops in Zaire run riot, killing the French Ambassador.

29 January

- **1915** - Erwin Rommel is awarded the Iron Cross, First Class, for action in the Argonne.
- **1916** - During World War I, the first aerial bombings of Paris by German Zeppelins took place.
- **1943** - HMNZS 'Kiwi' rams & sinks Japanese sub 'I-1' off Guadalcanal.
- **1944** - Heavy Luftwaffe raid on London.
- **1979** - Rifleman Gary James Rautenbach from 6 SAI Died of Wounds after being critically injured in a landmine explosion at Endobe on the 20 Jan 1979. He succumbed to his wounds in 1 Military Hospital on 29 January 1979. He was 20.
- **1982** - Rifleman George Edmond Jacobson from the Kimberley Regiment

was killed at Katima Mulilo when he was run over by a private civilian vehicle while manning a control check point. He was 22.

- **1987** - Private Charel Andries Fourie from 5 Maintenance Unit was killed in a military vehicle accident at Ogongo. He was 22.
- **1987** - Three members of the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) were killed in a military vehicle accident in Northern Owamboland. They were: Special Sergeant Tulengepo Lungameni (36). Special Sergeant Petrus Pius (35). Constable Willem Christiaan Scheepers (24).
- **1991** - Battle of Khafji, Saudi Arabia: Iraqis capture the town.
- **1993** - French marines land in Kinshasa, Zaire, to free French nationals confined to the embassy.
- **1996** - Two serving members of the army and a third man are arrested in connection with the attack on St James's Church in Cape Town in July 1993.

30 January

- **1882** - Franklin Delano Roosevelt was born on this day.
- **1902** - Anglo-Japanese alliance formed.
- **1911** - The Royal Canadian Navy was founded on this day.
- **1915** - German submarine attack on Le Havre.

- **1930** - Magnus André De Merindol Malan, former Chief of the SADF and SA Minister of Defence, is born in Pretoria on this day.
- **1933** - Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany by President Paul von Hindenburg.
- **1939** - Hitler calls for the extermination of the Jews.
- **1943** - Hitler promotes Friedrich Paulus, commanding the Sixth Army, surrounded at Stalingrad, to field marshal, with a hint that he should commit suicide.
- **1945** - Danzig: Soviet sub sinks German ship 'Wilhelm Gustloff'. More than 7,700 die, making it the worst loss of life in a single sinking in history.
- **1952** - Martial law is imposed in Egypt as King Farouk dismisses the premier Nahas Pasha and his Wafdist government.
- **1964** - Two members from 5 SAI accidentally drowned in a boating accident at Ladysmith. They were: Rifleman Johannes Frederick Kies (19). Rifleman Cornelius Marthinus Du Plooy (19).
- **1964** - Military coup by Gen Nguyen Khanh in South-Vietnam.
- **1968** - Beginning of the Tet Offensive in Vietnam as North Vietnamese troops attacked 36 provincial capitals and 5 major cities in South Vietnam, including an attack on the U.S. Embassy in Saigon and the presidential

palace.

- **1972** - In Londonderry, Northern Ireland, 13 Roman Catholics were killed by British troops during a banned civil rights march. The event became known as Bloody Sunday.
- **1981** - Twenty-four people are killed in Operation Beanbag, an attack by the South African army on the ANC and PAC in Matola, a suburb of Maputo, Mozambique. A Portuguese engineer, Jose Ramos, is "mistakenly identified" as Joe Slovo, one of the raid's main targets, by the South African forces and is shot at a roadblock. Numbers killed vary. Some sources state that twelve were killed and three abducted.
- **1981** - Two members of 6 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action and one Reported Missing during a Special Forces Raid on the African National Congress Headquarters in Maputo, Moçambique during Operation Bean Bag. They were: Sergeant Robert Louis Hutchinson (24). Sergeant Ian Suttill (22). Lance Corporal James King Park (21). The body of Sergeant Robert Louis Hutchinson was never recovered. He has known grave and remains unaccounted for.

• **1983** - Rifleman R.R. Kufuna from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 23.

• **1992** - Argentina allowed access to numerous files of Nazis who had fled to South America from Germany after World War II, thus aiding the hunt for Nazi war criminals.

31 January

- **1901** - Generals Smuts and Liebenberg captures Modderfontein, Transvaal.
- **1915** - Battle of Bolimów: The Germans stage the first major poison gas attack, but the Russians hold.
- **1917** - Germany notifies the US that it will resume unrestricted submarine warfare.
- **1943** - German troops surrendered at Stalingrad, marking the first big defeat of Hitler's armies in World War II. During the Battle of Stalingrad, 160,000 Ger-



Adolf Hitler

- mans were killed and 90,000 taken prisoner, including the commander, Friedrich von Paulus, the first German field marshal ever to surrender. The captured Germans were forced to march to Siberia, with few ever returning to Germany.
- **1945** - Eddie Slovik, a 24 year-old U.S. Army private, was executed by a firing squad after being sentenced to death for desertion, the first such occurrence in the U.S. Army since the Civil War.
- **1972** - Military coup ousts civilian government of Ghana.
- **1982** - Sergeant (Mrs) Elizabeth Mostert from the Orange Free State Command Headquarters was killed while on duty in Voortrekkerhoogte, Pretoria when she was accidentally run over by a police vehicle. She was 50.

- **1985** - Sergeant Willem van As 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 27.
- **1985** - Rifleman K.E. Mbambo from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 22.

- **1986** - Commandant Marshall Aubrey Joseph Facer from the Highveld Air Space Control Sector at Devon was killed in a private motor vehicle accident at Delmas. He was 39.
- **1987** - Corporal Charles John Oram from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was killed in a private motor vehicle Accident between Phalaborwa and Hoedspruit. He was 26.
- **1994** - In Mogadishu, US Marines in a convoy carrying American diplomats open fire near a crowded food distribution centre. At least five Somalis are killed and many wounded. mans were killed and 90,000 taken



The execution of Private Eddie Slovik.



Memorable Order of Tin Hats

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

**From the editor of Military Despatches.
May all our readers have a
healthy, peaceful, and prosperous
New Year.**

All the best for 2024.



General Knowledge

1. Brixton Ridge in Johannesburg. It was during the Rand Rebellion in 1922.
2. Five. George Gristock, John Nettleton, Gerhard Norton, Quentin Smythe, and Edwin Swales.
3. The Panther.
4. Dad's Army.
5. Avtomat Kalashnikova.
6. None.
7. Spetsnaz.
8. Anthony Beauchamp-Proctor.
9. Government Issue.
10. Cpl Pieter Arnoldus Swane-poel, 2 SAI, HCS, 11 November 1975.
11. Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword.
12. Max Schmeling. He was a Fallschirmjäger with the German Luftwaffe.
13. Rhodesian Light Infantry (RLI).
14. Alfred Lord Tennyson.
15. 5 Reconnaissance Commando. They only became 5 Reconnaissance Regiment after they moved to Phalaborwa.
16. American actress Jane Fonda.
17. Glenn Miller.
18. 116 years.
19. William Joyce.
20. The Bridge on the River Kwai.
21. General Rudolph Hiemstra.
22. The Crimean War.
23. The American Sherman tank. They used petrol instead of diesel and were notorious for their flammability. Shermans were nicknamed "Ronsons" after a lighter with the slogan "lights every time."
24. The Huey.
25. Fishbed.

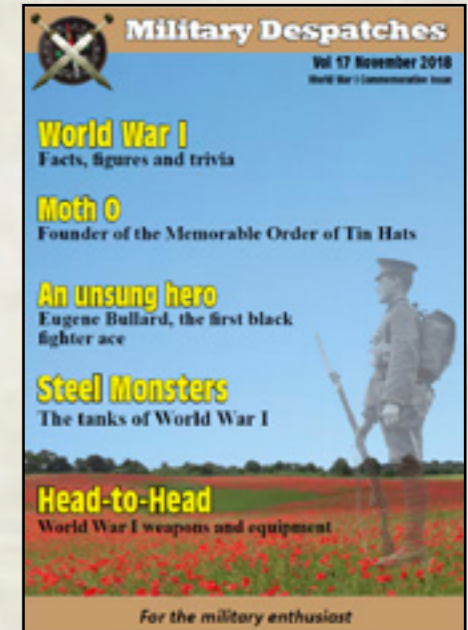
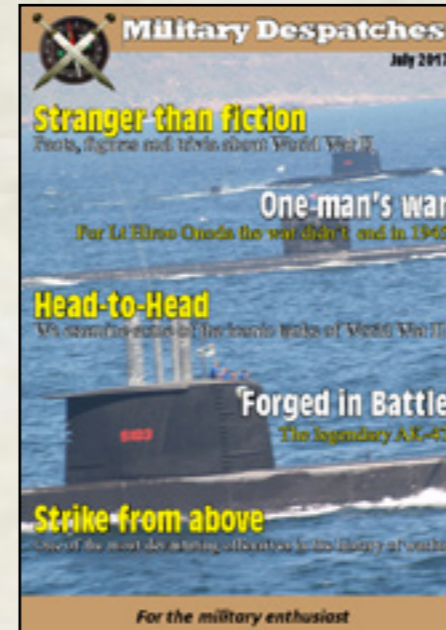
Useful links

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

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You will find articles on numerous different topics that have been published over the past five years as well as video clips and documentaries.

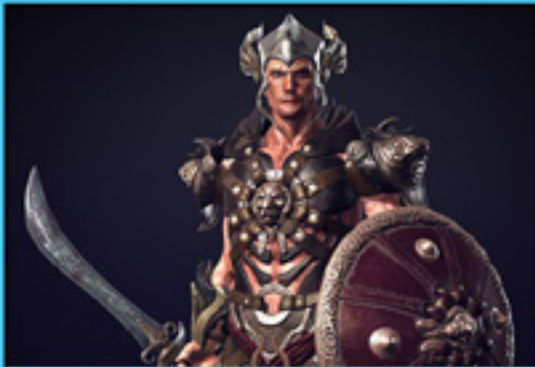
Hipe! media

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Online Magazines

Flip book magazines with pages that can be turned.



E-books

Produced in any electronic format required.



2D & 3D Animation

Produced in any video format.



Video Production

Scripting, storyboard, filming and editing done to any video format required. We also do aerial and underwater video and stills.



Still Photography

If you're thinking digital media then think Hipe Media.