



## Military History Anniversaries 1 thru 15 August

Events in History over the next 15 day period that had U.S. military involvement or impacted in some way on U.S military operations or American interests worldwide

- **Aug 01 1801 – Tripolitan War:** The schooner USS Enterprise defeated the 14-gun Tripolitan corsair Tripoli after a fierce but one-sided battle.
- **Aug 01 1907 – U.S. Army:** *Air Force Day* » On this day the U.S. Army Signal Corps established a small Aeronautical Division to take care of all matters pertaining to military ballooning, air machines and all kindred subjects. The Signal corps began testing its first airplane at Fort Myers, Virginia, on August 20, 1908. After more testing with an improved Wright Flyer, the Army formally accepted this airplane, identified as “Airplane No. 1,” on August 2, 1909.



In early 1913, the Army ordered its aviators who were training in Augusta Georgia, and Palm Beach, Florida to Texas to take part in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division maneuvers. In Galveston on 3 MAR, the chief Signal Officer designated the assembled men and equipment the “1<sup>st</sup> Provisional Aero Squadron” with Capt. Charles DeF. Chandler as squadron commander. They began flying activities a few days later. On 4 DEC, general orders redesignate the unit as the 1<sup>st</sup> Aero Squadron, effective 8 DEC. The first military unit of the U.S. Army devoted exclusively to aviation has remained continuously active since its creation.

Air Force Day was established on August 1, 1947, by President Truman "in recognition of the personnel of the victorious Army Air Forces and all those who have developed and maintained our nation's air strength." August 1 was chosen to mark the 40th anniversary of the establishment, in 1907, of the Aeronautical Division in the Office of the Chief Signal Officer of the Army.

- **Aug 01 1914 – WWI Era:** *First World War Erupts* » Four days after Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, Germany and Russia declare war against each other, France orders a general mobilization, and the first German army units cross into Luxembourg in preparation for the German invasion of France. During the next three days, Russia, France, Belgium, and Great Britain all lined up against Austria-Hungary and Germany, and the German army invaded Belgium. The “Great War” that ensued was one of unprecedented destruction and loss of life, resulting in the deaths of some 20 million soldiers and civilians.



**Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria & Sophie, Duchess of Hohenberg**

On June 28, 1914, in an event that is widely regarded as sparking the outbreak of World War I, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, was shot to death with his wife by Bosnian Serb Gavrilo Princip in Sarajevo, Bosnia. Ferdinand had been inspecting his uncle’s imperial armed forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina, despite the threat of Serbian nationalists who wanted these Austro-Hungarian possessions to join newly independent Serbia. Austria-Hungary blamed the Serbian government for the attack and hoped to use the incident as justification for settling the problem of Slavic nationalism once and for all. However, as Russia supported Serbia, an Austria-Hungary declaration of war was delayed until its leaders received assurances from German leader Kaiser Wilhelm II that Germany would support their cause in the event of a Russian intervention.

On 28 JUL, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, and the tenuous peace between Europe’s great powers collapsed. On 29 JUL, Austro-Hungarian forces began to shell the Serbian capital of Belgrade, and Russia, Serbia’s ally, ordered a troop mobilization against Austria-Hungary. France, allied with Russia, began to mobilize on 1 AUG. France and Germany declared war against each other on 3 AUG. After crossing through neutral Luxembourg, the German army invaded Belgium on the night of August 3-4, prompting Great Britain, Belgium’s ally, to declare war against Germany.

For the most part, the people of Europe greeted the outbreak of war with jubilation. Most patriotically assumed that their country would be victorious within months. Of the initial belligerents, Germany was most prepared for the outbreak of hostilities, and its military leaders had formatted a sophisticated military strategy known as the “Schlieffen Plan,” which envisioned the conquest of France through a great arcing offensive through Belgium and into

northern France. Russia, slow to mobilize, was to be kept occupied by Austro-Hungarian forces while Germany attacked France.

The Schlieffen Plan was nearly successful, but in early September the French rallied and halted the German advance at the bloody Battle of the Marne near Paris. By the end of 1914, well over a million soldiers of various nationalities had been killed on the battlefields of Europe, and a final victory for neither the Allies nor the Central Powers was in sight. On the western front—the battle line that stretched across northern France and Belgium—the combatants settled down in the trenches for a terrible war of attrition.

In 1915, the Allies attempted to break the stalemate with an amphibious invasion of Turkey, which had joined the Central Powers in October 1914, but after heavy bloodshed the Allies were forced to retreat in early 1916. The year 1916 saw great offensives by Germany and Britain along the western front, but neither side accomplished a decisive victory. In the east, Germany was more successful, and the disorganized Russian army suffered terrible losses, spurring the outbreak of the Russian Revolution in 1917. By the end of 1917, the Bolsheviks had seized power in Russia and immediately set about negotiating peace with Germany. In 1918, the infusion of American troops and resources into the western front finally tipped the scale in the Allies' favor. Bereft of manpower and supplies and faced with an imminent invasion, Germany signed an armistice agreement with the Allies in November 1918.

World War I was known as the “war to end all wars” because of the great slaughter and destruction it caused. Unfortunately, the peace treaty that officially ended the conflict—the Treaty of Versailles of 1919—forced punitive terms on Germany that destabilized Europe and laid the groundwork for World War II.

- **Aug 01 1914 – WWI Era: *Blockade of Germany*** » The British — with their overwhelming sea power — established a naval blockade of Germany immediately on the outbreak of WWI, issuing a comprehensive list of contraband that all but prohibited American trade with the Central Powers, and in early November 1914 stated the North Sea to be a war zone, with any ships entering the North Sea doing so at their own risk. The blockade was unusually restrictive in that even foodstuffs were considered "contraband of war". There were complaints about breaches of international law; however, most neutral merchant vessels agreed to dock at British ports to be inspected and then escorted—less any "illegal" cargo destined for Germany—through the British minefields to their destinations.

The Northern Patrol and Dover Patrol closed off access to the North Sea and the English Channel respectively. The German government regarded the blockade as an illegal attempt to starve its civilian population and wanted to retaliate in kind. The German High Seas Fleet set out multiple times, from 1914 to 1916, to reduce the British Grand Fleet and regain access to vital imports. The sea conflicts culminated in the Battle of Jutland in 1916.

The blockade hurt American exports. Under pressure especially from commercial interests wishing to profit from wartime trade with both sides, Washington protested vigorously. Britain did not wish to antagonize the U.S. It set up a program to buy American cotton, guaranteeing the price stayed above peacetime levels and mollifying cotton traders. When American ships were stopped with contraband, the British purchased the entire cargo, and released the empty ship. A memorandum to the British War Cabinet on 1 January 1917 stated that very few supplies were reaching Germany or its allies either via the North Sea or other areas such as Austria's Adriatic ports (which had been subject to a French blockade since 1914).

Both Germany and the United Kingdom relied heavily on imports to feed their population and supply their war industry. Imports of foodstuffs and war materiel of European belligerents came primarily from the Americas and had to be shipped across the Atlantic Ocean, thus Britain and Germany both aimed to blockade each other. The British had the Royal Navy which was superior in numbers and could operate throughout the British Empire, while the German Kaiserliche Marine surface fleet was mainly restricted to the German Bight, and used commerce raiders and unrestricted submarine warfare elsewhere. The blockade is considered one of the key elements in the eventual Allied victory in the war. The German Board of Public Health in December 1918 claimed that 763,000 German civilians died from starvation and disease caused by the blockade up until the end of December 1918. An academic study done in 1928 put the death toll at 424,000. An additional 100,000 people may have died during the continuation blockade in 1919.

- **Aug 01 1936 – Germany:** *Hitler Oversees Berlin Olympics Opening Ceremony* » As more than 5,000 athletes from 51 countries march into a stadium packed with 100,000 onlookers, Adolf Hitler makes his only public statement of the Berlin Olympics at its opening ceremony on this day in 1936: “I proclaim the Games of Berlin, celebrating the eleventh Olympiad of the modern era, to be open.”

Before his declaration, the dictator entered Olympic Stadium to the German national anthem, “Deutschland Uber Alles,” the Nazi anthem, “Horst Wessel Lied,” as well as salutes of “Sieg Heil.” As the athletes made their traditional alphabetical march into the stadium dressed in each nation’s regalia, some countries, including Austria and France, gave the Nazi salute as they passed by the Führer.

Following Hitler’s remarks, German composer Richard Strauss’ “Olympics Hymn” was performed, leading up to the ceremonial arrival of the Olympic torch. This was the first time the torch had been carried as part of a relay, starting in Olympia Greece and handled by more than 3,000 runners over its 12-day path to Berlin. The torch, incidentally, was made by German steel company Krupp, which also made Nazi weapons.

Berlin won the bid for the Summer Games in 1931, two years before the Nazi Party took power. Nations including the United States, Great Britain, Sweden and Czechoslovakia threatened—but eventually chose not to—boycott the event because of Germany’s

increasingly racist actions. In response, the Nazis used propaganda and removed anti-Semitic signage to promote a so-called “tolerant” Germany during the Games.

In the end, 18 African Americans competed for the United States, winning 14 of 56 U.S. medals, including four gold medals for track and field phenome Jesse Owens.

- **Aug 01 1940 – WW2:** Hitler signs Directive No.17, requiring the Luftwaffe and Kriegsmarine to increase their attacks against Britain and her shipping, in preparation for ‘Operation Sealion’.

Also on this date:

- Russian Foreign Minister Molotov reaffirms Soviet neutrality and Russo-German pact and verbally attacks Britain and US.

- **Aug 01 1941 – WW2:** German Army Group Centre continues its liquidation of the Smolensk pocket. Soviet troops put up fierce resistance near Orsha and Vitebsk west of Smolensk. A powerful counter-offensive is launched at Gomel south of Mogilev against German bridgeheads over the Dnieper River.

Also on this date:

- The Grumman TBF Avenger torpedo plane makes its first flight.



- **Aug 01 1942 – WW2:** Ensign Henry C. White, while flying a J4F Widgeon plane, sinks U–166 as it approaches the Mississippi River, the first U–boat sunk by the U.S. Coast Guard.

Also on this date:

- An interlocking convoy system is introduced along the entire US eastern seaboard, as well as the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean.
- The 15th Panzer Division fails to break through the British 8th Army’s lines in the battle of Alam Halfa and advance toward Alexandria, 120km away. The German lose about 30 tanks and are forced to withdraw.
- Army Group A continues to fan out into the Caucasus region, while advance units reach the Kuban River. Army Group B continues its fight to cut off the Soviet defenders near Kalach in the Don bend near Stalingrad.
- Japanese establish puppet government in Burma.

- **Aug 01 1943 – WW2: PT-109 Is Sunk** » A Japanese destroyer rams an American PT (patrol torpedo) boat, No. 109, slicing it in two. The destruction is so massive other American PT boats in the area assume the crew is dead. Two crewmen were, in fact, killed, but 11 survived, including Lt. John F. Kennedy.



**LTJG Kennedy (standing at right) in 1943 on PT-109 & being awarded for his gallantry in action**

Japanese aircraft had been on a PT boat hunt in the Solomon Islands, bombing the PT base at Rendova Island. It was essential to the Japanese that several of their destroyers make it to the southern tip of Kolombangara Island to get war supplies to forces there. But the torpedo capacity of the American PTs was a potential threat. Despite the base bombing at Rendova, PTs set out to intercept those Japanese destroyers. In the midst of battle, Japan’s Amaqiri hit PT-109, leaving 11 crewmen floundering in the Pacific.

After five hours of clinging to debris from the decimated PT boat, the crew made it to a coral island. Kennedy decided to swim out to sea again, hoping to flag down a passing American boat. None came. Kennedy began to swim back to shore, but strong currents, and his chronic back condition, made his return difficult. Upon reaching the island again, he fell ill. After he recovered, the PT-109 crew swam to a larger island, what they believed was Nauru Island, but was in fact Cross Island. They met up with two natives from the island, who agreed to take a message south. Kennedy carved the distress message into a coconut shell: “Nauru Is. Native knows posit. He can pilot. 11 alive need small boat.”

The message reached Lieutenant Arthur Evans, who was watching the coast of Gomu Island, located next to an island occupied by the Japanese. Kennedy and his crew were paddled to Gomu. A PT boat then took them back to Rendova. Kennedy was ultimately awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal, for gallantry in action. The coconut shell used to deliver his message found a place in history—and in the Oval Office. PT-109, a film dramatizing this story, starring Clift Robertson as Kennedy, opened in 1963.

- **Aug 01 1943 – WW2: Operation Tidal Wave** » B-24 bombers take off from an Allied base in Libya, bound for the oil-producing city Ploiești, Romania, nicknamed “Hitler’s gas station.” The daring raid of 177 planes, known as Operation Tidal Wave, resulted in five men being awarded the Medal of Honor—three of them posthumously—but failed to strike the fatal blow its planners had intended.

Operation Tidal Wave began ominously, with an overloaded bomber crashing shortly after takeoff and another plunging into the Adriatic Sea. 167 of the original 177 bombers made it to Ploiești, whose oil fields and refineries provided the Germans with over 8.5 million tons of oil per year. Whereas most Allied bombing in World War II was carried out from a high altitude, the bombers that raided Ploiești flew exceptionally low in order to evade the Germans' radar. The bombers lost the element of surprise, however, when one group veered off on the wrong direction, forcing the others to break radio silence in order to direct them back on course. This unplanned adjustment also led to the bombers approaching from the south, where the Nazis had concentrated their anti-aircraft batteries.



**A B-24 Liberator called "Sandman" during a bomb run over the Ploiești Astra Romana refinery during Operation Tidal Wave**

The ensuing attack was dramatic, chaotic and costly. The Allies suffered heavy casualties, and smoke from the explosions caused by the first wave of bombers made visibility difficult for subsequent waves. Survivors reported debris like branches and barbed wire hitting and even ending up on the inside of their planes. Lt. Col. Addison Baker and Maj. John Jerstad were awarded the Medal of Honor for their (unsuccessful) attempt to fly higher and allow the crew to bail out of their badly damaged plane. Another pilot, Lt. Lloyd Herbert Hughes, also received a posthumous Medal of Honor for flying his critically-damaged B-24 into its target. Col. John Kane and Col. Leon Johnson, who each led bombing groups that reached their targets, were the only men who won the Medal of Honor and survived the raid.

Although the Allies estimated that the raid had reduced Ploiești's capacity by 40 percent, the damage was quickly repaired and within months the refineries had outstripped their previous capacity. The region continued to serve as "Hitler's gas station" until the Soviet Union captured it in August of 1944. 310 airmen died, 108 were captured and another 78 were interned in neighboring Turkey. 88 of the original 177 B-24s returned, most of them seriously damaged. Despite setting the record for most Medals of Honor awarded to airmen in a single mission, Operation Tidal wave was never repeated—the Allies never again attempted a low-altitude assault against German air defenses.

Also on this date:

- The USAAF loses 54 B24s out of 178 in a disastrous raid (the longest yet attempted) on the Ploesti oil fields in Romania while inflicting only superficial damage.
- Increasingly heavy fighting continues on Sicily, with some of the fiercest fighting yet seen.

- Lydia Litvak, the top scoring Russian female fighter pilot of the war (12 kills), is shot down and killed.
- **Aug 01 1944 – WW2: Warsaw Revolt Begins** » During World War II, an advance Soviet armored column under General Konstantin Rokossovski reaches the Vistula River along the eastern suburb of Warsaw, prompting Poles in the city to launch a major uprising against the Nazi occupation. The revolt was spearheaded by Polish General Tadeusz Bor-Komorowski, who was the commander of the Home Army, an underground resistance group made up of some 40,000 poorly supplied soldiers. In addition to accelerating the liberation of Warsaw, the Home Army, which had ties with the Polish government-in-exile in London and was anti-communist in its ideology, hoped to gain at least partial control of Warsaw before the Soviets arrived.



Although the Poles in Warsaw won early gains—and Soviet liberation of the city was inevitable—Nazi leader Adolf Hitler ordered his authorities to crush the uprising at all costs. The elite Nazi SS directed the German defense force, which included the Kaminski Brigade of Russian prisoners and the Dirlewanger Brigade of German convicts. In brutal street fighting, the Poles were gradually overcome by the superior German weaponry. As the rebels were suppressed, the Nazis deliberately razed large portions of the city and massacred many civilians.

Meanwhile, the Red Army gained several bridgeheads across the Vistula River but made no efforts to aid the rebels in Warsaw. The Soviets also rejected a request by the British to use Soviet air bases to airlift supplies to the beleaguered Poles. The rebels and the city's citizens ran out of medical supplies, food, and eventually water. Finally, on 2 OCT, the surviving rebels, including Bor-Komorowski, surrendered.

During the 63-day ordeal, three-fourths of the Home Army perished along with 200,000 civilians. As a testament to the ferocity of the fighting, the Germans also suffered high casualties: 10,000 killed, 9,000 wounded, and 7,000 missing. During the next few months, German troops deported the surviving population, and demolition squads destroyed what buildings remained intact in Warsaw. All of its great treasures were looted or burned. The Red Army remained dormant outside Warsaw until January 1945, when the final Soviet offensive against Germany commenced. Warsaw, a city in ruins, was liberated on 17 JAN. With Warsaw out of the way, the Soviets faced little organized opposition in establishing a communist government in Poland.



- **Aug 01 1944 – WW2: Holocaust / Anne Frank Writes Her Last Diary Entry** » The young Jewish girl Anne Frank, hiding out in Nazi-occupied Holland whose diary came to serve as a symbol of the Holocaust, writes her final entry three days before she and her family are arrested and placed in concentration camps.

Frank, 15 at the time, received the diary on her 13th birthday, writing in it faithfully during the two years she and seven others (including her parents, Otto and Edith, and sister, Margot; her father's business associate Hermann van Pels, his wife, Auguste, and son, Peter; and Fritz Pfeffer, the dentist of Otto Frank's secretary) lived in a secret annex behind her father's business in Amsterdam during World War II. In her final entry, Frank wrote of how others perceive her, describing herself as "a bundle of contradictions." She wrote:

"As I've told you many times, I'm split in two. One side contains my exuberant cheerfulness, my flippancy, my joy in life and, above all, my ability to appreciate the lighter side of things. By that I mean not finding anything wrong with flirtations, a kiss, an embrace, an off-color joke. This side of me is usually lying in wait to ambush the other one, which is much purer, deeper and finer. ...." She continued that what she says is not what she feels, which is why, in her words, she had a reputation for being "boy-crazy as well as a flirt, a smart aleck and a reader of romances." "The happy-go-lucky Anne laughs, gives a flippant reply, shrugs her shoulders and pretends she doesn't give a darn. The quiet Anne reacts in just the opposite way. If I'm being completely honest, I'll have to admit that it does matter to me, that I'm trying very hard to change myself, but that I'm always up against a more powerful enemy."

Of the eight prisoners, Otto Frank was the only survivor. Anne Frank died in 1945 from typhus at Germany's Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Her diary was published by her father in 1947; it has since become a worldwide bestseller.

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- **Aug 01 1944 – WW2: *Destruction of Warsaw (1 Aug thru 16 Jan)*** » The destruction of the Polish capital was planned before the start of World War II. On 20 June 1939, while Adolf Hitler was visiting an architectural bureau in Würzburg am Main, his attention was captured by a project of a future German town – "Neue deutsche Stadt Warschau". According to the Pabst Plan Warsaw was to be turned into a provincial German city. It was soon included as a part of the great Germanization plan of the East; the genocidal Generalplan Ost. The failure of the Warsaw Uprising provided an opportunity for Hitler to begin the transformation.

After the remaining population had been expelled, the Germans continued the destruction of the city. Special groups of German engineers were dispatched to burn and demolish the remaining buildings. According to German plans, after the war Warsaw was to be turned into nothing more than a military transit station, or even an artificial lake – the latter of which the Nazi leadership had already intended to implement for the Soviet/Russian capital of Moscow in 1941. The demolition squads used flamethrowers and explosives to methodically destroy house after house. They paid special attention to historical monuments, Polish national archives and places of interest.

By January 1945, 85% of the buildings were destroyed: 25% as a result of the Uprising, 35% as a result of systematic German actions after the uprising, and the rest as a result of the earlier Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and the September 1939 campaign. Material losses are estimated at 10,455 buildings, 923 historical buildings (94%), 25 churches, 14 libraries including the National Library, 81 primary schools, 64 high schools, University of Warsaw and Warsaw University of Technology, and most of the historical monuments. Almost a million inhabitants lost all of their possessions. The exact amount of losses of private and public property as well as pieces of art, monuments of science and culture is unknown but considered enormous. Studies done in the late 1940s estimated total damage at about US\$30 billion. In 2004, President of Warsaw Lech Kaczyński, later President of Poland, established a historical commission to estimate material losses that were inflicted upon the city by German authorities. The commission estimated the losses as at least US \$31.5 billion at 2004 values.

Those estimates were later raised to US \$45 billion 2004 US dollars and in 2005, to \$54.6 billion.

- **Aug 01 1944 – WW2: *Battle of Normandy (1 thru 13 AUG phase)*** » The U.S. advance following Operation Cobra was extraordinarily rapid. Between 1 and 4 August, seven divisions of Patton's Third Army had swept through Avranches and over the bridge at Pontaubault into Brittany. The Westheer (German army in the west) had been reduced to such a poor state by the Allied offensives that, with no prospect of reinforcement in the wake of Operation Bagration, the Soviet summer offensive against Army Group Centre, very few Germans believed they could now avoid defeat. Rather than order his remaining forces to withdraw to the Seine, Adolf Hitler sent a directive to von Kluge demanding "an immediate counterattack between Mortain and Avranches" (Unternehmen Lüttich) to "annihilate" the enemy and make contact with the west coast of the Cotentin peninsula.

Eight of the nine Panzer divisions in Normandy were to be used in the attack but only four (one of them incomplete) could be relieved from their defensive tasks and assembled in time. German commanders immediately protested that such an operation was impossible given their remaining resources but these objections were overruled and the counter-offensive commenced, on 7 AUG around Mortain. The 2nd, 1st SS and 2nd SS Panzer Divisions led the assault, although with only 75 Panzer IVs, 70 Panthers and 32 self-propelled guns. Hopelessly optimistic, the offensive was over within 24 hours, although fighting continued until 13 August. By 8 AUG the city of Le Mans—the former headquarters of the German 7th Army—had fallen to the Americans. With von Kluge's few remaining battle worthy formations destroyed by the First Army, the Allied commanders realized that the entire German position in Normandy was collapsing.

Also on this date:

- U.S. Marines complete the capture of Tinian Island losing 389 killed for 9,000 Japanese.
- **Aug 01 1950 – Korean War:** Lead elements of the U.S. 2nd Infantry Division arrive in country from the U.S in defense of Pusan/Naktong Perimeter.
- **Aug 01 1950 – Cold War: *America's Plan to Develop the H-Bomb Announced*** » U.S. President Harry S. Truman publicly announces that his administration was committed to developing a Hydrogen bomb. This bomb was going to be many more times more powerful than the Atomic bombs that were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

Truman was eager to support the development of the Hydrogen or H-bomb in order to regain American nuclear supremacy. Some months earlier the Soviets had successfully detonated their own A-bomb at a test site in Central Asia. The Soviet nuclear program had been greatly helped by Communist spies in the American nuclear weapons program. This came as a great shock to the Americans and they were forced to come to the conclusion that the Soviets knew

everything about their A-bomb program, Truman was worried because he believed that only the American A-bomb was preventing the Soviets from attacking the west in order to spread communism. Now that the Soviets had the bomb they might be more willing to attack America or its allies.

President Truman was also deeply worried by events in China, because some months previous the communists had seized power in the Asian Giant. He and his administration believed that they needed to develop a weapon that was even more powerful than the A-bomb. This was essential if the Reds were to be kept in check and to maintain America as the most powerful nation on earth. Truman announced on the radio to the American public that he intended to provide the US military and scientific community with all the resources that they needed in order to develop the H-bomb. The President assured the public that the 'superweapon' would only be used as a deterrent.



The Americans raced to develop the H-bomb and it took them over two years. On November 1st the Americans successfully detonated a device, with the codename of Mike on a South Pacific Atoll in the Marshall Islands. The device was 10.4 thermo-nuclear device was developed using the principles of Teller-Ulan. The H-bomb was so powerful that it obliterated the atoll. The mushroom cloud from the explosion climbed to a height of over 50,000 feet within two minutes of its detonation. The cloud stretched for over sixty miles.

The detonation of the H-bomb was deemed to be a great success and many Americans believed that it make them stronger and that the Soviets would never risk a war with the US. However, only three years later, the Soviet's detonated their own H-Bomb and this ushered in a new and more dangerous phase in the Cold War.

- **Aug 01 1957 – U.S.\*Canada:** The United States and Canada form the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD)
- **Aug 01 1964 – Vietnam War:** *North Vietnamese Accusations* » The North Vietnamese government accuses South Vietnam and the United States of having authorized attacks on Hon Me and Hon Ngu, two of their islands in the Tonkin Gulf.

They were partly correct; the attacks, conducted just after midnight on 30 JUL, were part of a covert operation called Oplan 34A, which involved raids by South Vietnamese

commandos operating under American orders against North Vietnamese coastal and island installations. Although American forces were not directly involved in the actual raids, U.S. Navy ships were on station to conduct electronic surveillance and monitor North Vietnamese defense responses under another program called Operation De Soto.

The Oplan 34A attacks played a major role in events that led to what became known as the Gulf of Tonkin Incident. On 2 AUG, North Vietnamese patrol boats attacked the destroyer USS *Maddox* which was conducting a De Soto mission in the area. Two days after the first attack, there was another incident that still remains unclear. The *Maddox*, joined by destroyer USS *C. Turner Joy*, engaged what were thought at the time to be more North Vietnamese patrol boats attacking!

Although it was questionable whether the second attack actually happened or not, the incident provided the rationale for retaliatory air attacks against the North Vietnamese and the subsequent Tonkin Gulf Resolution, which became the basis for the initial escalation of the war in Vietnam and ultimately the insertion of U.S. combat troops into the area.

- **Aug 01 1969 – Vietnam War:** The U.S. command in Saigon announces that 27 American aircraft were lost in the previous week, bringing the total losses of aircraft in the conflict to date to 5,690.
- **Aug 01 1970 – Cold War:** *Helsinki Final Act signed* » The United States, the Soviet Union, Canada and every European nation (except Albania) sign the Helsinki Final Act on the last day of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). The act was intended to revive the sagging spirit of detente between the Soviet Union and the United States and its allies.

During Richard M. Nixon's presidency, he and National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger fashioned a foreign policy toward the Soviet Union that came to be known as "detente"—literally, a lessening of tensions between Russia and America. The policy enjoyed some success during the early 1970s, as Nixon visited the Soviet Union and discussions about arms reduction began. By the summer of 1975, however, the spirit of detente was flagging. Nixon resigned in disgrace in August 1974 over the Watergate scandal. The United States withdrew from Vietnam without securing victory; in April 1975, South Vietnam fell to communist forces. Progress on arms reduction talks with the Soviets came to a standstill.

In July 1975, however, the Soviet Union and the United States attempted to reinvigorate the policy of detente by calling the CSCE in Helsinki. On 1 AUG, the attendees signed the Helsinki Final Act. The act established the CSCE as an ongoing consultative organization, and set out a number of issues (grouped together in what came to be known as "baskets") to be discussed in the coming months and years. These included economic and trade issues, arms reduction, and the protection of human rights.

For a brief moment, detente seemed to have been revived, but the CSCE soon became the cause for heated debates between the United States and the Soviet Union, primarily over the issue of human rights in Russia. After the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, dissidents and reformers in the Soviet Union formed what was known as the Helsinki Group, a watchdog organization to monitor the Russian government's adherence to the protection of human rights. The Soviets crushed the Helsinki Group, arresting many of its top leaders.

Human rights groups in the United States and elsewhere loudly protested the Soviet actions. The U.S. government criticized the Russians for not adhering to the spirit of the Helsinki agreement. The Soviets resented what they referred to as intrusions into their domestic matters. By mid-1978, the CSCE ceased to function in any important sense. It was revived by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in the 1980s, and served as a foundation for his policy of closer and friendlier relations with the United States.

- **Aug 01 1990– Kuwait\*Iraq: *British Airways Flight 149*** » At 18:05 GMT this British Airways flight departed from London Heathrow Airport, its route to Kuala Lumpur taking the flight via Kuwait City and Madras. At 01:13 GMT on 2 August 1990, it landed at Kuwait International Airport and the passengers were disembarked for what should have been an hour wait. The airport was deserted and there was little-to-no staff on the ground; at the point of its landing, all other scheduled flights by other airlines had been cancelled for several hours already at this point.

After leaving the aircraft, all the passengers and crew were captured on the ground by Iraqi forces who had overrun Kuwait City. The majority of the detained passengers were initially transferred to the airport hotel within the boundaries of the airport. Later on, the passengers were confined to various hotels in Kuwait, also designated by the Iraqis for other foreigners to report to. The Iraqis claimed the passengers to be "honored guests", and were moved in the following week under armed escort by a mix of policemen and soldiers from Iraq, to locations in Kuwait and Iraq. During the early stages of the crisis, Captain Brunyate stayed with the passengers and crew to reassure them but later escaped with help from members of the Kuwaiti resistance. Brunyate later explained that his father, who had worked in Iraq, had personally run afoul of Saddam Hussein and he feared reprisals if his surname was recognized.

According to statements made by some of the ex-hostages, multiple passengers have claimed to have witnessed various atrocities during their detention, such as attacks made upon Kuwaiti citizens by Iraqi forces; some hostages had been themselves subjected to forms of mental and physical abuse, which included instances of mock executions or rape, and were kept in unsanitary conditions with little food. During a location transfer of the hostages by bus, a British Airways stewardess was raped by an Iraqi soldier. The soldier was reportedly executed near the hostages after cabin purser Clive Earthy complained about the incident to the lead officer of the Iraqi troops detaining them. One passenger Jennifer Chappell stated that she witnessed Iraqi tanks driving over cars with Kuwaiti civilians trapped inside while her

brother John saw the execution of a Kuwaiti soldier at the hands of Iraqi troops. Another hostage, David Fort was injured after an Iraqi guard pushed him down a flight of stairs.

After ten days, the detainees were dispersed to various military-industrial sites. Women and children were given the opportunity to return home in late August, whereas those who remained were used as human shields, and transferred between sites. Sites would contain between eight and 20 detainees of mixed nationalities, typically British and American citizens, as well as French, German, Japanese and others.

Different groups of detainees were released at various stages, often dependent upon their nationality, but also including criteria such as ill health and the bodies of those individuals who died during their captivity. While some passengers were detained only for a few weeks, others were detained for months, often in poor conditions. Former British Prime Minister Edward Heath travelled in person to Baghdad for direct talks with Iraq's President Saddam Hussein, and is credited with leading negotiations to successfully release the hostages taken. During mid December 1990, the last of the remaining American and British hostages were released by Iraq.

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- **Aug 02 1776 – American Revolution:** *Delegates Sign Declaration of Independence* (date most accepted by modern historians) » Members of Congress affix their signatures to an enlarged copy of the Declaration of Independence.

Fifty-six congressional delegates in total signed the document, including some who were not present at the vote approving the declaration. The delegates signed by state from North to South, beginning with Josiah Bartlett of New Hampshire and ending with George Walton of Georgia. John Dickinson of Pennsylvania and James Duane, Robert Livingston and John Jay of New York refused to sign. Carter Braxton of Virginia; Robert Morris of Pennsylvania; George Reed of Delaware; and Edward Rutledge of South Carolina opposed the document but signed in order to give the impression of a unanimous Congress. Five delegates were absent: Generals George Washington, John Sullivan, James Clinton and Christopher Gadsden and Virginia Governor Patrick Henry.

Exactly one month before the signing of the document, Congress had accepted a resolution put forward by Richard Henry Lee that stated “Resolved: That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.”

Congress adopted the more poetic Declaration of Independence, drafted by Thomas Jefferson, two days later, on July 4. The president of Congress, John Hancock, and its secretary, Charles Thompson, immediately signed the handwritten draft, which was dispatched to nearby printers. On 19 JUL, Congress decided to produce a handwritten copy to bear all the delegates’

signatures. Secretary Thompson's assistant, Philadelphia Quaker and merchant Timothy Matlack, penned the draft.

News of the Declaration of Independence arrived in London eight days later, on 10 AUG. The draft bearing the delegates' signatures was first printed on January 18 of the following year by Baltimore printer Mary Katharine Goddard.

- **Aug 02 1813 – War of 1812: *Ft. Stephenson Successfully Defended*** » Fort Stephenson, located on the Sandusky River in Ohio, was commanded by Major George Croghan and garrisoned with 160 regular army troops. General William Harrison considered the fort unnecessary and ordered it abandoned. Major Croghan refused that command saying that his men could defend it and that withdrawing would leave his men susceptible to attack. On July 31st British ships and troops commanded by General Proctor arrived at the fort. They demanded that the fort surrender, and if it did not the British would leave the defenders in the hands of the Indians. Croghan refused.

On 1 AUG the British opened fire on the fort. They fired through the night, but their bombardment left no mark on the fort whose walls withstood the attack without a problem. The next day the British and their Indian allies launched a ground assault. The Americans waited until the British and Indians were 100 feet away before opening fire and caused the opposing forces to retreat.

- **Aug 02 1865 – Civil War: *CSS Shenandoah Learns The War Is Over*** » The captain and crew of the C.S.S. Shenandoah, still prowling the waters of the Pacific in search of Yankee whaling ships, is finally informed by a British vessel that the South has lost the war.



CSS Shenandoah in dry dock in Williamstown, Victoria, Australia, 1865

The Shenandoah was the last major Confederate cruiser to set sail. Launched as a British vessel in September 1863, it was purchased by the Confederates and commissioned in October 1864. The 230-foot-long craft was armed with eight large guns and a crew of 73 sailors. Commanded by Captain James I. Waddell, the Shenandoah steered toward the Pacific and targeted Yankee whaling ships. Waddell enjoyed great success, taking six ships in the South Pacific before slipping into Melbourne, Australia, for repairs in January 1865.

Within a month, the Shenandoah was back on the loose, wreaking havoc in the waters around Alaska. The Rebel ship captured 32 additional Union vessels, most of which were burned. The damage was estimated at \$1.6 million, a staggering figure in such a short period



of time. Although the crew heard rumors that the Confederate armies had surrendered, Waddell continued to fight. He finally accepted an English captain's report on August 2, 1865. The Shenandoah pulled off another remarkable feat by sailing from the northern Pacific all the way to Liverpool, England, without stopping at any ports. Arriving on 6 NOV, Waddell surrendered his ship to British officials.

- **Aug 02 1914 –WWI Era: German Propaganda** » The German government's idea was to make the people think that they were entering a defensive war and were in no way the aggressors. With the assassination of Archduke Franz-Ferdinand, the Austro-Hungarian Empire engaged the hostilities. On the 2nd of August, while France was mobilizing its forces and sending them to the borders, Germany had already crossed the borders of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg. The same day German press falsely claimed that France had bombed Nuremberg and for the public opinion, it meant that France was one of the aggressors of this war, and that Germany had the perfect right to defend itself.
- **Aug 02 1914 –WWI Era: German Belgium Ultimatum** » Germany demands that Belgium grant free passage across its territory to German troops, to enable them to invade France and reach Paris most expeditiously. The ultimatum gave Belgium two alternatives: grant free passage or suffer occupation as an enemy of Germany. On 3 AUG, Belgium replied to the German note, courageously refusing (in the name of its internationally guaranteed neutrality) the request for free passage and the British government guaranteed military support to Belgium. The German government declared war on Belgium on 4 AUG and German troops crossed the border and began the Battle of Liège.
- **Aug 02 1914 –WWI Era: German troops Overthrow Luxembourg** » German 69th infantry regiment enters Luxembourg. German Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg justified the complete occupation of Luxembourg in terms of military necessity, arguing that France was ready to invade Luxembourg itself. The French minister in Luxembourg dismissed this argument, claiming that it would not have considered violating Luxembourg's neutrality unless Germany had done so first. Bethmann Hollweg attempted to prove his country's regret by offering Luxembourg compensation for the losses due to the military presence. On 4 AUG, Bethmann Hollweg told the Reichstag: "We have been forced to ignore the just protestations of Luxembourg and the Belgian government. We shall make amends for this injustice as soon as our military goal is accomplished."



However, when it seemed that Germany was on the verge of victory, the Chancellor began to revise his statements. In his Septemberprogramm, Bethmann Hollweg called for Luxembourg to become a German federal state, and for that result to be forced upon the Luxembourgish people once Germany achieved victory over the Triple Entente. However, the British and French halted the German advance at the Battle of the Marne in mid-September. This resulted in the indefinite continuation of German occupation.

- **Aug 02 1914 – Germany\*Turkey: *Secret Treaty of Alliance*** » Germany and Turkey sign a secret treaty, meant to go into effect in the event of war between Germany and Russia. Subsequently, Russia declared war on Turkey on November 3, 1914, and on November 5, 1914, Great Britain and France also declared against Turkey. Following were the treaty conditions:
  1. The two contracting parties agree to observe strict neutrality in regard to the present conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia.
  2. In case Russia should intervene with active military measures, and should thus bring about a casus foederis for Germany with relation to Austria-Hungary, this casus foederis would also come into existence for Turkey.
  3. In case of war, Germany will leave her military mission at the disposal of Turkey. The latter, for her part, assures the said military mission an effective influence on the general conduct of the army, in accordance with the understanding arrived at directly between His Excellency the Minister of War and His Excellency the Chief of the Military Mission.
  4. Germany obligates herself, if necessary by force of arms ... [cipher group lacking] Ottoman territory in case it should be threatened.
  5. This agreement which has been concluded for the purpose of protecting both Empires from international complications which may result from the present conflict goes into force as soon as it is signed by the above-mentioned plenipotentiaries, and shall remain valid, together with any similar mutual agreements, until December 31, 1918.
  6. In case it shall not be denounced by one of the high contracting parties six months before the expiration of the term named above, this treaty shall remain in force for a further period of five years.
  7. This present document shall be ratified by His Majesty the German Emperor, King of Prussia, and by His Majesty the Emperor of the Ottomans, and the ratifications shall be exchanged within a period of one month from the date of its signing.
  8. The present treaty shall remain secret and can only be made public as a result of an agreement arrived at between the two high contracting parties. In testimony whereof, etc.

- **Aug 02 1914 –WWI Era:** *Paris Mobilizes* » On June 28, 1914, the news reached Paris of the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria by Serbian nationalists in Sarajevo. Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on 28 JUL, and following the terms of their alliances, the German Empire joined Austria-Hungary, while Russia, Great Britain and France went to war against Austria-Hungary and Germany in quick succession. The war was opposed by some prominent socialists and pacifists, but the press and most political leaders pressed for war. On 31 JUL, one day before a general mobilization was declared in France, one of the most prominent leaders of the French Left, the socialist politician Jean Jaurès, an outspoken opponent of going to war, was assassinated at the Café Croissant on Montmartre, not far from the offices of the socialist newspaper L'Humanité, by Raoul Villain, a mentally-unstable man who considered Jaurès an "enemy of France."

Most male Parisians of military age were required to report on 2 AUG to designated stations around the city for mobilization into the army. The army command expected that up to thirteen percent would not appear, but to their surprise all but one percent appeared as ordered. The poet and novelist Anatole France, at the age of seventy, appeared at the recruitment station to show his support. The Ministry of the Interior was prepared to arrest prominent pacifists and socialists who opposed the war, but, in the face of little opposition to the war, the arrests were never carried out.] The next day, August 3, Germany declared war on France.

- **Aug 02 1916 – WWI Era:** *Battleship Leonardo da Vinci* » Completed just before the beginning of World War I, the ship saw no action and was sunk by a magazine explosion in 1916 with the loss of 248 officers and enlisted men. The Italians blamed Austro-Hungarian saboteurs for her loss, but it may have been accidental. Leonardo da Vinci was refloated in 1919 and plans were made to repair her. Budgetary constraints did not permit this and her hulk was sold for scrap in 1923.



- **Aug 02 1917 – U.S. Army:** Army Air Corps formed as Army takes 1st delivery from Wright Brothers.
- **Aug 02 1917 – WWI:** *Mutiny Breaks Out On German Battleship* » With British forces settling into new positions captured from the Germans in the much-contested Ypres Salient on the Western Front of World War I, Germany faces more trouble closer to home, as a mutiny breaks out aboard the German battleship Prinzregent Luitpold, anchored at the North Sea port of Wilhelmshaven.

During the 2 AUG mutiny, some 400 sailors marched into town calling for an end to the war and proclaiming their unwillingness to continue fighting. Although the demonstration was quickly brought under control by army officials and the sailors were persuaded to return to their ships without real violence that day, some 75 of them were arrested and imprisoned and the ringleaders of the mutiny were subsequently tried, convicted and executed. “I die with a curse on the German-militarist state,” one of them, Albin Kobis, wrote his parents before he was shot by an army firing squad at Cologne. As Willy Weber, another convicted sailor, whose death sentence was later commuted to 15 years in prison, put it: “Nobody wanted a revolution, we just wanted to be treated more like human beings.”



German battleship Prinzregent Luitpold & Albin Kobis

Discontent and rebellion within the German Imperial High Seas Fleet continued throughout the following year, as things went abysmally for Germany on the battlefields of the Western Front after the initial success of their spring offensive in 1918. It was rumored that naval commanders were plotting a last-ditch attempt, against the orders of Kaiser Wilhelm II and the Reichstag government, to confront the mighty British navy and break the Allied blockade in the North Sea. The force of this rumor, combined with sinking morale, led to an even more significant mutiny at Wilhelmshaven on October 29, 1918, sparked by the arrest of some 300 sailors who had refused to obey orders.

The unrest soon spread to another German port city, Kiel, where on 3 NOV some 3,000 German sailors and workers rose in revolt, taking over ships and buildings and brandishing the red flag of communism. The following day, 4 NOV, the rebels at Kiel formed the first Workers' and Soldiers' Council in Germany, defying the national government and seeking to act in the spirit of the Russian soviets. On the same day, the government of the Austro-Hungarian Empire asked the Allies for an armistice, which they were granted. An isolated and internally divided Germany was forced to sue for its own armistice barely a week later, and the First World War came to an end.

- **Aug 02 1918 – Japan\*Siberia:** *Siberian Intervention (Expedition) of 1919-1922* » This was the dispatch of troops of the eleven Entente powers to the Russian Maritime Provinces as part of a larger effort by the western powers and Japan and China to support White Russian forces against Soviet Russia and its allies during the Russian Civil War. The Imperial Japanese Army continued to occupy Siberia even after other Allied forces withdrew in 1920.



Allied commanders of the Siberian Intervention

- **Aug 02 1934 – Germany:** *Hitler Becomes Dictator of Germany* » With the death of German President Paul von Hindenburg, Chancellor Adolf Hitler becomes absolute dictator of Germany under the title of Fuhrer, or “Leader.” The German army took an oath of allegiance to its new commander-in-chief, and the last remnants of Germany’s democratic government were dismantled to make way for Hitler’s Third Reich. The Fuhrer assured his people that the Third Reich would last for a thousand years, but Nazi Germany collapsed just 11 years later.

Adolf Hitler was born in Braunau am Inn, Austria, in 1889. As a young man he aspired to be a painter, but he received little public recognition and lived in poverty in Vienna. Of German descent, he came to detest Austria as a “patchwork nation” of various ethnic groups, and in 1913 he moved to the German city of Munich in the state of Bavaria. After a year of drifting, he found direction as a German soldier in World War I, and was decorated for his bravery on the battlefield. He was in a military hospital in 1918, recovering from a mustard gas attack that left him temporarily blind, when Germany surrendered.



He was appalled by Germany’s defeat, which he blamed on “enemies within”—chiefly German communists and Jews—and was enraged by the punitive peace settlement forced on Germany by the victorious Allies. He remained in the German army after the war, and as an intelligence agent was ordered to report on subversive activities in Munich’s political parties. It was in this capacity that he joined the tiny German Workers’ Party, made up of embittered army veterans, as the group’s seventh member. Hitler was put in charge of the party’s propaganda, and in 1920 he assumed leadership of the organization, changing its name to Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei (National Socialist German Workers’ party), which was abbreviated to Nazi.

The party's socialist orientation was little more than a ploy to attract working-class support; in fact, Hitler was fiercely right-wing. But the economic views of the party were overshadowed by the Nazis' fervent nationalism, which blamed Jews, communists, the Treaty of Versailles, and Germany's ineffectual democratic government for the country's devastated economy. In the early 1920s, the ranks of Hitler's Bavarian-based Nazi party swelled with resentful Germans. A paramilitary organization, the Sturmabteilung (SA), was formed to protect the Nazis and intimidate their political opponents, and the party adopted the ancient symbol of the swastika as its emblem.

In November 1923, after the German government resumed the payment of war reparations to Britain and France, the Nazis launched the "Beer Hall Putsch"—an attempt at seizing the German government by force. Hitler hoped that his nationalist revolution in Bavaria would spread to the dissatisfied German army, which in turn would bring down the government in Berlin. However, the uprising was immediately suppressed, and Hitler was arrested and sentenced to five years in prison for treason.

Imprisoned in Landsberg fortress, he spent his time there dictating his autobiography, *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle), a bitter and rambling narrative in which he sharpened his anti-Semitic and anti-Marxist beliefs and laid out his plans for Nazi conquest. In the work, published in a series of volumes, he developed his concept of the Fuhrer as an absolute dictator who would bring unity to German people and lead the "Aryan race" to world supremacy.

Political pressure from the Nazis forced the Bavarian government to commute Hitler's sentence, and he was released after nine months. However, Hitler emerged to find his party disintegrated. An upturn in the economy further reduced popular support of the party, and for several years Hitler was forbidden to make speeches in Bavaria and elsewhere in Germany.

The onset of the Great Depression in 1929 brought a new opportunity for the Nazis to solidify their power. Hitler and his followers set about reorganizing the party as a fanatical mass movement, and won financial backing from business leaders, for whom the Nazis promised an end to labor agitation. In the 1930 election, the Nazis won six million votes, making the party the second largest in Germany. Two years later, Hitler challenged Paul von Hindenburg for the presidency, but the 84-year-old president defeated Hitler with the support of an anti-Nazi coalition.

Although the Nazis suffered a decline in votes during the November 1932 election, Hindenburg agreed to make Hitler chancellor in January 1933, hoping that Hitler could be brought to heel as a member of his cabinet. However, Hindenburg underestimated Hitler's political audacity, and one of the new chancellor's first acts was to exploit the burning of the Reichstag (parliament) building as a pretext for calling general elections. The police under Nazi Hermann Goering suppressed much of the party's opposition before the election, and the Nazis won a bare majority. Shortly after, Hitler took on dictatorial power through the Enabling Acts.

Chancellor Hitler immediately set about arresting and executing political opponents, and even purged the Nazis' own SA paramilitary organization in a successful effort to win support from the German army. With the death of President Hindenburg on August 2, 1934, Hitler united the chancellorship and presidency under the new title of Fuhrer. As the economy improved, popular support for Hitler's regime became strong, and a cult of Fuhrer worship was propagated by Hitler's capable propagandists.

German remilitarization and state-sanctioned anti-Semitism drew criticism from abroad, but the foreign powers failed to stem the rise of Nazi Germany. In 1938, Hitler implemented his plans for world domination with the annexation of Austria, and in 1939 Germany seized all of Czechoslovakia. Hitler's invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, finally led to war with Germany and France. In the opening years of World War II, Hitler's war machine won a series of stunning victories, conquering the great part of continental Europe. However, the tide turned in 1942 during Germany's disastrous invasion of the USSR.

By early 1945, the British and Americans were closing in on Germany from the west, the Soviets from the east, and Hitler was holed up in a bunker under the chancellery in Berlin awaiting defeat. On 30 APR, with the Soviets less than a mile from his headquarters, Hitler committed suicide with Eva Braun, his mistress whom he married the night before.

Hitler left Germany devastated and at the mercy of the Allies, who divided the country and made it a major battlefield of Cold War conflict. His regime exterminated nearly six millions Jews and an estimated 250,000 Gypsies in the Holocaust, and an indeterminable number of Slavs, political dissidents, disabled persons, homosexuals, and others deemed unacceptable by the Nazi regime were systematically eliminated. The war Hitler unleashed upon Europe took even more lives—close to 20 million people killed in the USSR alone. Adolf Hitler is reviled as one of history's greatest villains.

- **Aug 02 1943 – Holocaust: *Treblinka Extermination Camp Revolt*** » In early 1943, an underground Jewish resistance organization was formed at Treblinka with the goal of seizing control of the camp and escaping to freedom. The planned revolt was preceded by a long period of secret preparations. The clandestine unit was first organized by a former Jewish captain of the Polish Army, Dr. Julian Chorażycki, who was described by fellow plotter Samuel Rajzman as noble and essential to the action. Chorażycki (who treated the German patients) killed himself with poison on 19 APR when faced with imminent capture, so that the Germans could not discover the plot by torturing him. Another former Polish Army officer, Dr. Berek Lajcher took his place



**Dr. Julian Chorążycki**

**Dr. Berek Lajcher**

The uprising was launched on Monday 2 AUG, a regular day of rest from gassing, when a group of Germans and 40 Ukrainians drove off to the River Bug to swim. The conspirators silently unlocked the door to the arsenal near the train tracks, with a key that had been duplicated earlier. They had stolen 20–25 rifles, 20 hand grenades, and several pistols, and delivered them in a cart to the gravel work detail. At 3:45 p.m., 700 Jews launched an insurgency that lasted for 30 minutes. They set buildings ablaze, exploded a tank of petrol, and set fire to the surrounding structures. A group of armed Jews attacked the main gate, and others attempted to climb the fence. Machine-gun fire from about 25 Germans and 60 Ukrainian Trawniki resulted in near-total slaughter. Lajcher was killed along with most of the insurgents.

About 200 Jews escaped from the camp. Half of them were killed after a chase in cars and on horses. The Jews did not cut the phone wires, and the camp Commandant Stangl called in hundreds of German reinforcements, who arrived from four different towns and set up roadblocks along the way. Partisans of the Armia Krajowa (Polish: Home Army) transported some of the surviving escapees across the river and others ran 19 miles and were then helped and fed by Polish villagers. Of those who broke through, around 70 are known to have survived until the end of the war, including the future authors of published Treblinka memoirs.

- **Aug 02 1944 – WW2:** U.S. Ninth Air Force stops bombing bridges over the Loire and Seine Rivers in France in order to speed the Allied advance. Also on this date:
  - While in action with the German submarine (U 804), USS Fiske (DE 143) is torpedoed mid-ship, breaks in two and sinks. Thirty of her crew members are lost with her.
  - Neutral Turkey breaks diplomatic relations with Germany.
- **Aug 02 1945 – WW2:** Potsdam Conference Concludes (Jul 18 - -2 Aug) » The last wartime conference of the “Big Three” –the Soviet Union, the United States, and Great Britain–concludes after two weeks of intense and sometimes acrimonious debate. **The conference failed to settle most of the important issues at hand and thus helped set the stage for the Cold War that would begin shortly after World War II came to an end.**



The meeting at Potsdam was the third conference between the leaders of the Big Three nations. The Soviet Union was represented by Joseph Stalin, Britain by Winston Churchill, and the United States by President Harry S. Truman. This was Truman's first Big Three meeting. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who died in April 1945, attended the first two conferences—in Tehran in 1943 and Yalta in February 1945. As historian David McCullough recounts in his 1992 biography, Truman, the new president wasn't eager to go so soon for his first meeting with the other two leaders of the Big Three that had defeated Nazi Germany. "I have a briefcase filled up with information on past conferences and suggestions on what I'm to do and say," he wrote in a letter to his mother and sister. Nevertheless, he sailed to Europe on the U.S. cruiser *Augusta*, his first visit to the continent since he had fought in World War I. After Truman arrived, he got a chance to tour the conquered city of Berlin, where he was disturbed by hordes of homeless civilians, many of them children, struggling to survive in the bombed-out ruins. (Truman later described Berlin as "a ghost city" in a radio address to Americans.)

At the Potsdam meeting, the most pressing issue was the postwar fate of Germany. The Soviets wanted a unified Germany, but they also insisted that Germany be completely disarmed. Stalin had pressured FDR at the previous Yalta Conference in February 1945 to force the defeated Germans to pay heavy postwar reparations, half of which would go to the Soviet Union. Roosevelt had agreed to that demand. Truman, along with a growing number of U.S. officials, had deep suspicions about Soviet intentions in Europe. The massive Soviet army already occupied much of Eastern Europe. A strong Germany might be the only obstacle in the way of Soviet domination of all of Europe. Ultimately they worked out a deal.

- They confirmed plans to disarm and demilitarize Germany, which would be divided into four Allied occupation zones controlled by the United States, Great Britain, France and the Soviet Union.
- The Soviets got to take German industrial machinery from their occupation zone.
- The three went ahead with plans to drastically remake German society, by repealing laws passed by the Nazi regime and removing Nazis from the German education and court systems, and to arrest and try Germans who had committed war crimes.
- They approved the formation of a Council of Foreign Ministers, which would act on behalf of the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union and China to write peace treaties with former German allies, such as Italy and Bulgaria.
- Discussions of German reunification would be deferred until a later date.
- Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, which wanted to expel the ethnic German populations within their borders, were to do so "in an orderly and humane manner." The idea was to head off a massive influx of refugees into a Germany where existing residents already were having difficulty getting by. But the redrawing of Poland's border with Germany was left unresolved.

The other notable issue at Potsdam was one that was virtually unspoken. Just as he arrived for the conference, Truman was informed that the United States had successfully tested the first atomic bomb. Hoping to use the weapon as leverage with the Soviets in the postwar world, Truman casually mentioned to Stalin that America was now in possession of a weapon of monstrously destructive force. The president was disappointed when the Soviet leader merely responded that he hoped the United States would use it to bring the war with Japan to a speedy end.

The Potsdam Conference ended on a somber note. By the time it was over, Truman had become even more convinced that he had to adopt a tough policy toward the Soviets. Stalin had come to believe more strongly that the United States and Great Britain were conspiring against the Soviet Union. As for Churchill, he was not present for the closing ceremonies. His party lost in the elections in England, and he was replaced midway through the conference by the new Prime Minister, Clement Attlee. Potsdam was the last postwar conference of the Big Three.

- **Aug 02 1964 – Pre Vietnam War:** *North Vietnamese Torpedo Boats Attack U.S. Destroyer*
  - » The USS Maddox (DD-731) had been cruising around the Tonkin Gulf monitoring radio and radar signals following an attack by South Vietnamese PT boats on North Vietnamese facilities on Hon Me and Hon Nhieu Islands (off the North Vietnamese coast) under Oplan 34A. U.S. crews interpreted one North Vietnamese message as indicating that they were preparing “military operations,” which the Maddox’s Captain John Herrick assumed meant some sort of retaliatory attack. His superiors ordered him to remain in the area.



Early that afternoon, three North Vietnamese patrol boats began to chase the Maddox. About 3 p.m., Captain Herrick ordered his crew to commence firing as the North Vietnamese boats came within 10,000 yards of his ship; at the same time he radioed the aircraft carrier USS Ticonderoga for air support. The North Vietnamese boats each fired one torpedo at the Maddox, but two missed and the third failed to explode. U.S. gunfire hit one of the North Vietnamese boats, and then three U.S. Crusader jets proceeded to strafe them. Within 20 minutes, Maddox gunners sunk one of the boats and two were crippled; only one bullet hit the Maddox and there were no U.S. casualties. The Maddox was ordered to withdraw and await further instructions.

In Washington, President Lyndon B. Johnson, alarmed by this situation, at first rejected any reprisals against North Vietnam. In his first use of the “hot line” to Russia, Johnson informed Khrushchev that he had no desire to extend the conflict. In the first U.S. diplomatic note ever sent to Hanoi, Johnson warned that “grave consequences would inevitably result from any further unprovoked offensive military action” against U.S. ships “on the high seas.” Meanwhile, the U.S. military command took several critical actions. U.S. combat troops were placed on alert and additional fighter-bombers were sent to South Vietnam and Thailand. The carrier USS Constellation was ordered to the South China Sea to join the USS Ticonderoga. Admiral U.S. Grant Sharp, commander of the Pacific Fleet, ordered a second destroyer, the USS C. Turner Joy, to join the Maddox on station and to make daylight approaches to within eight miles of North Vietnam’s coast and four miles of its islands to “assert the right of freedom of the seas.”

- **Aug 02 1965 –Vietnam War: *1st Vietnam Report Indicating the US Was Losing*** » In 1964, CBS hired Morley Safer as a London-based correspondent. He worked from the same desk that had once been used by Edward R. Murrow. The following year, in 1965, he became the first full-time staff reporter of the CBS News bureau in Saigon to cover the growing military conflict in Vietnam. Safer's 1965 Vietnam broadcast, "The Burning of Cam Ne," was notable and controversial because he had accompanied a company of Marines to the village for what was described as a "search and destroy" mission. When the Marines arrived, they were fired on by snipers. They told the inhabitants to evacuate the village, which the Marines then burned down.

Safer's report was among the earliest to paint a bleak picture of the Vietnam War, showing apparently innocent civilians as victims. However, many American military and political leaders judged the story to be harmful to United States interests and criticized CBS News for showing it. United States President Lyndon Johnson reacted to this report angrily, calling CBS's president and accusing Safer and his colleagues of having undermined America's role there.



Some ex-Marines who saw Safer's story on television during the war shared President Johnson's opinion. They claim that Safer never had time to be properly briefed on the operation, and was therefore not aware that four Marines had already been killed there and twenty-seven

wounded. Ex-Marine Larry Engelmann, author of a story on the Vietnam War, claimed Safer's story was "highly sensational". He alleged: "The fact is that this village had been a pretty tough village and these people had been warned repeatedly that the village would be torched if they continued to shoot at Marines... But there was none of that in Morley Safer's story."

In the PBS series, *Reporting America At War*, Safer himself said, "...the denials themselves were absurd. [Officials claimed] I had gone on a practice operation in a model village — a village the Marines had built to train guys how to move into a village. Or the whole thing was a kind of "Potemkin" story that I had concocted. There are still people who believe that." After the incident was broadcast, Marines were forbidden from burning any more villages.

- **Aug 02 1971 – Vietnam War:** *Nixon Administration Acknowledges Secret Army in Laos* » The Nixon administration officially acknowledges that the CIA is maintaining a force of 30,000 'irregulars' fighting the Communist Pathet Lao in Laos. The CIA trained and equipped this force of mountain tribesman, mostly from the Hmong tribe, to fight a secret war against the Communists and to sever the Ho Chi Minh Trail into South Vietnam. According to a once top-secret report released this date by the U.S. Defense and State Departments, U.S. financial involvement in Laos had totaled \$284,200,000 in 1970.
- **Aug 02 1990 – Iraq\*Kuwait:** *Iraq Invades Kuwait* » At about 2 a.m. local time, Iraqi forces invade Kuwait, Iraq's tiny, oil-rich neighbor. Kuwait's defense forces were rapidly overwhelmed, and those that were not destroyed retreated to Saudi Arabia. The emir of Kuwait, his family, and other government leaders fled to Saudi Arabia, and within hours Kuwait City had been captured and the Iraqis had established a provincial government. By annexing Kuwait, Iraq gained control of 20 percent of the world's oil reserves and, for the first time, a substantial coastline on the Persian Gulf. The same day, the United Nations Security Council unanimously denounced the invasion and demanded Iraq's immediate withdrawal from Kuwait. On 6 AUG, the Security Council imposed a worldwide ban on trade with Iraq.

On 8 AUG, Operation Desert Shield, the American defense of Saudi Arabia, began as U.S. forces raced to the Persian Gulf. Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, meanwhile, built up his occupying army in Kuwait to about 300,000 troops. On 29 NOV, the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq if it failed to withdraw by January 15, 1991. Hussein refused to withdraw his forces from Kuwait, which he had established as a province of Iraq, and some 700,000 allied troops, primarily American, gathered in the Middle East to enforce the deadline.



At 4:30 p.m. EST on January 16, 1991, Operation Desert Storm, the massive U.S.-led offensive against Iraq, began as the first fighter aircraft were launched from Saudi Arabia and off U.S. and British aircraft carriers in the Persian Gulf. All evening, aircraft from the U.S.-led military coalition pounded targets in and around Baghdad as the world watched the events transpire on television footage transmitted live via satellite from Iraq. Operation Desert Storm was conducted by an international coalition under the supreme command of U.S. General Norman Schwarzkopf and featured forces from 32 nations, including Britain, Egypt, France, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait.

During the next six weeks, the allied force engaged in an intensive air war against Iraq's military and civil infrastructure and encountered little effective resistance from the Iraqi air force or air defenses. Iraqi ground forces were helpless during this stage of the war, and Hussein's only significant retaliatory measure was the launching of SCUD missile attacks against Israel and Saudi Arabia. Saddam hoped that the missile attacks would provoke Israel to enter the conflict, thus dissolving Arab support of the war. At the request of the United States, however, Israel remained out of the war.

On 24 FEB, a massive coalition ground offensive began, and Iraq's outdated and poorly supplied armed forces were rapidly overwhelmed. By the end of the day, the Iraqi army had effectively folded, 10,000 of its troops were held as prisoners, and a U.S. air base had been established deep inside Iraq. After less than four days, Kuwait was liberated, and the majority of Iraq's armed forces had either surrendered, retreated to Iraq, or been destroyed.

On 28 FEB, U.S. President George Bush declared a cease-fire, and on 3 APR the U.N. Security Council passed Resolution 687, specifying conditions for a formal end to the conflict. According to the resolution, Bush's cease-fire would become official, some sanctions would be lifted, but the ban on Iraqi oil sales would continue until Iraq destroyed its weapons of mass destruction under U.N. supervision. On 6 APR, Iraq accepted the resolution, and on 11 APR the Security Council declared it in effect. During the next decade, Saddam Hussein frequently violated the terms of the peace agreement, prompting further allied air strikes and continuing U.N. sanctions.

In the Persian Gulf War, 148 American soldiers were killed and 457 wounded. The other allied nations suffered about 100 deaths combined during Operation Desert Storm. There are no official figures for the number of Iraqi casualties, but it is believed that at least 25,000 soldiers were killed and more than 75,000 were wounded, making it one of the most one-sided military conflicts in history. It is estimated that 100,000 Iraqi civilians died from wounds or from lack of adequate water, food, and medical supplies directly attributable to the Persian Gulf War. In the ensuing years, more than one million Iraqi civilians have died as a result of the subsequent U.N. sanctions.

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- **Aug 03 1797 – Post American Revolution:** *Lord Jeffrey Amherst Dies* » 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Jeffrey Amherst, who twice refused the position of commander of British forces against the rebelling American patriots, dies at his estate, called Montreal, in England.



Amherst is remembered foremost for victory against the French in the Seven Years' War, culminating in the surrender of Montreal—after which Amherst named his estate—and Canada by the French to the British in 1760. This triumph was matched in magnitude by the notoriety he gained through his mishandling of Indian affairs following the war. Amherst ignored British Superintendent of Indian Affairs Sir William Johnson's advice to continue the tradition of gift exchange with British-allied Indians following the surrender of Canada; Amherst believed in the efficacy of punishment for poor behavior instead of rewards for good behavior. Thus, he curtailed gift-giving and would eventually become the first military strategist to knowingly engage in biological warfare. Most infamous was Amherst's use of smallpox-infected blankets to spread the deadly disease among Native Americans.

Western Indians had begun a series of frontier attacks known as Pontiac's Rebellion in the spring of 1763. After this pan-native uprising enjoyed some success, Amherst suggested to Colonel Henry Bouquet that the British might expose the rebelling Indians to smallpox. Bouquet suggested infected blankets as an effective means of achieving Amherst's goal, a supposition that proved correct when a smallpox epidemic engulfed Ohio Valley natives a few months later. Although exact numbers are difficult to ascertain, typically three-quarters of the population died in such outbreaks.

Although Amherst became the governor of Virginia in 1759 as a reward for his military success, he never served in the role, returning to Britain in November 1763. He was later twice asked to return to North America to lead Britain's efforts to put down the Patriot rebellion, but he declined, first in 1775 and again in 1778.

- **Aug 03 1914 – WWI Era: Germany and France Declare War on Each Other** » On the afternoon of this day in 1914, two days after declaring war on Russia, Germany declares war on France, moving ahead with a long-held strategy, conceived by the former chief of staff of the German army, Alfred von Schlieffen, for a two-front war against France and Russia. Hours later, France makes its own declaration of war against Germany, readying its troops to move into the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, which it had forfeited to Germany in the settlement that ended the Franco-Prussian War in 1871.

With Germany officially at war with France and Russia, a conflict originally centered in the tumultuous Balkans region—with the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife by a Serbian nationalist in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914, and the subsequent standoff between Austria-Hungary, Serbia and Serbia's powerful Slavic supporter, Russia—had erupted into a full-scale war. Also on 3 AUG, the first wave of German troops assembled on the frontier of neutral Belgium, which in accordance with the Schlieffen Plan would be crossed by German armies on their way to an invasion of France. The day before, Germany had presented Belgium and its sovereign, King Albert, with an ultimatum demanding passage for the German army through its territory.



This threat to Belgium, whose perpetual neutrality had been mandated by a treaty concluded by the European powers—including Britain, France and Germany—in 1839, united a divided British government in opposition to German aggression. Hours before Germany's declaration of war on France on August 3, the British foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey, went before Parliament and convinced a divided British government—and nation—to give its support to Britain's entrance into the war if Germany violated Belgian neutrality.

“The lamps are going out all over Europe; we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime,” Grey famously remarked to a friend on the night of 3 AUG. The next day, Britain sent its own ultimatum to Berlin: halt the invasion of Belgium or face war with Britain as well. A reply was

demanded by midnight that night. At noon that day, King Albert finally made a concerted appeal for help to France and Britain, as guarantors of Belgium's neutrality according to the Treaty of 1839. To do so earlier, to call in the French and British too soon, would have risked violating his country's neutrality before Germany had done so. When London received no answer to its ultimatum—the first German troops had in fact crossed the Belgian frontier at Gemmerich, 30 miles from the fortress city of Liege, that morning—Britain declared war on Germany.

In August 1914, as the great powers of Europe readied their armies and navies for a fight, no one was preparing for a long struggle—both sides were counting on a short, decisive conflict that would end in their favor. “You will be home before the leaves have fallen from the trees,” Kaiser Wilhelm assured troops leaving for the front in the first week of August 1914. Even though some military leaders, including German Chief of Staff Helmuth von Moltke and his French counterpart, Joseph Joffre, foresaw a longer conflict, they did not modify their war strategy to prepare for that eventuality.

One man, the controversial new war secretary in Britain, Lord Horatio Kitchener, did act on his conviction that the war would be a lasting one, insisting from the beginning of the war—against considerable opposition—on the need to build up Britain's armed forces. “A nation like Germany,” Kitchener argued, “after having forced the issue, will only give in after it is beaten to the ground. This will take a very long time. No one living knows how long.”

Battle of Romani --- Allied forces, under the command of Archibald Murray, defeat an attacking Ottoman army, under the command of Friedrich Freiherr Kress von Kressenstein, securing the Suez Canal, and beginning the Ottoman retreat from the Sinai

- **Aug 03 1917 - WWI: *Battle of Romani (3-5 Aug)*** » The last ground attack of the Central Powers (German and Ottoman Empires, Austria, and Hungary) on the Suez Canal at the beginning of the Sinai and Palestine Campaign. The battle was fought near the Egyptian town of Romani and the site of ancient Pelusium on the Sinai Peninsula, 23 miles east of the Suez Canal. This victory by the Allied 52nd (Lowland) Division and the Anzac Mounted Division of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force (EEF) over a joint Ottoman and German force, which had marched across the Sinai, marked the end of the Defense of the Suez Canal campaign which had begun on 26 January 1915. It secured the Suez Canal, and was the beginning of the Ottoman retreat from the Sinai. Casualties and losses: Allied 1,400 – Central Powers 9,200 including 4,000 prisoners
- **Aug 03 1917 - WWI: *Battle of Mărășești (6 Aug - 3 Sep)*** » The last major battle between the German Empire and the Kingdom of Romania on the Romanian front begins. Romania was mostly occupied by the Central Powers, but the Battle of Mărășești kept the northeastern region



of the country free from occupation. This was the most important battle ever fought by the Romanian Army, as it managed to completely stop the intended invasion of Moldavia. The German commander halted the attack on 3 SEP in order to transfer troops to the Italian Front. The Germans had pushed forward 3.7-4.3 miles along a front of 18.6 miles, but at great cost and without achieving any major objective. German casualties (killed, wounded and missing) amounted to around 60,000 men, while Romanian casualties amounted to 27,000.

- **Aug 03 1918 – WWI:** German train carrying ammunition at the Hamont Station Belgium got triggered and caught fire resulting in massive destruction and the death of 1,750 people.
- **Aug 03 1934 – Germany:** Adolf Hitler, ym"sh, becomes the supreme leader of Germany by joining the offices of President and Chancellor into “Führer” (leader).
- **Aug 03 1940 – WW2 Era:** *Italian Conquest of British Somaliland (03-14 Aug)* » Part of the East African Campaign which took place in August 1940 between the Italian, Eritrean and Somali forces of Fascist Italy and British, Commonwealth and Somali irregulars. The Italian invasion of British Somaliland was to be based on mobility and speed but was hampered by the terrain, rainy weather and British resistance.

At the Battle of Tug Argan (11–15 August) Italian attacks had the advantage of artillery and the outnumbered British, Commonwealth and Imperial forces were gradually worn down and slowly outflanked, until the remaining fortified hilltops were vulnerable to being captured piecemeal. After the failure of a counter-attack towards the Mirgo Pass, the local commander, Major-General Reade Godwin-Austen had too few men to retrieve the situation and to keep open an escape route at the same time and was given permission to retreat towards Berbera.

The British fought a rearguard action at Barkasan on 17 AUG and retreated after dark but the improvised evacuation went better than expected and the second blocking position at Nasiyeh was not needed. The rainy weather continued to slow the Italian advance and when the airstrip near Berbera was found still to be garrisoned, an Italian coup de main was impractical. The British defeat was controversial and caused a deterioration in relations between General Archibald Wavell, the theatre commander, his subordinates and the Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

- **Aug 03 1941 – WW2:** German troops conquer Roslavl USSR.
- **Aug 03 1943 – WW2:** *Patton Slaps Hospitalized GI* » On this day Lt. Gen. George S. Patton, commander of the Seventh U.S. Army, visited a military hospital in Sicily. He traveled past the beds of wounded soldiers, asking them about their injuries. Coming to the bed of a soldier who lacked visible signs of injury, Patton inquired about his health. The soldier, 18-year-old Pvt. Charles H. Kuhl, had been tentatively diagnosed as having a case of

psychoneurosis. He told Patton that he couldn't mentally handle the battle lines. "It's my nerves," he said. "I can hear the shells come over but I can't hear them burst."



Enraged, Patton slapped Kuhl across the face and called him a coward. As Patton left the tent, he heard Kuhl crying and turned back, striking the soldier again and ordering him to leave the infirmary tent. It later emerged that Kuhl had malaria and a high fever. A week later, in a far less publicized incident, Patton slapped Pvt. Paul G. Bennet, who had been hospitalized for his "nerves." News of both incidents reached Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, who on 17 AUG sent a letter to Patton reprimanding him. "I am well aware of the necessity for hardness and toughness on the battle field. ... But this does not excuse brutality, abuse of the 'sick,' nor exhibition of uncontrollable temper in front of subordinates," Eisenhower wrote.

Eisenhower ordered Patton to apologize to the men, but, feeling that he was too valuable a leader to lose, allowed to retain his command. Months later, on 21NOV, radio broadcaster Drew Pearson revealed to U.S. audiences that Patton had slapped Kuhl. Many members of Congress and the press called for Patton's removal from command, and outrage over the alleged "cover-up" was also widespread. The Senate delayed Patton's confirmation as major general and Eisenhower relieved him of his command of the Seventh Army. He would go on to serve as a decoy during the invasion of Normandy and be given command of the Third Army, which he brilliantly led in an Allied victory in the Battle of the Bulge.

- **Aug 03 1944 – WW2: *Siege of Myitkyina Ends*** » The fighting in the Burma Campaign in 1944 was among the most severe in the South-East Asian Theatre of World War II. It took place along the borders between Burma and India, and Burma and China, and involved the British Commonwealth, Chinese and United States forces, against the forces of Imperial Japan and the Indian National Army. British Commonwealth land forces were drawn primarily from the United Kingdom, British India and Africa.

On 19 May, the Chinese 22nd and 38th Divisions encircled Kamaing, a town in the Kachin State of the northernmost part of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Two days before, on 17 May, Merrill's Marauders captured the airfield in its capital city of Myitkyina after a march across the Kumon Bum Mountains which nearly crippled the already weary Marauders. If Chinese troops from Ledo had been flown in that afternoon to attack the town immediately

they could have overwhelmed the small garrison, but support and logistic units were flown in first and the opportunity to capture the town easily was lost, as Japanese reinforcements arrived in the town.



**Spent 75-mm howitzer shells piling up outside the besieged city Myitkyina, Burma**

The resulting prolonged siege was not very well directed and cost the allies many men, particularly amongst the Marauders who were kept in the line for reasons of American prestige, and among the Chindits who were forced to remain in the field to disrupt Japanese relief attempts far longer than had been planned. However, because of the deteriorating situation on the other fronts, the Japanese never regained the initiative on the Northern Front.

The long siege also resulted in heavy Japanese losses. When the airfield was captured, the Japanese in the town at first intended to fight a delaying action only, aided by the monsoon rains. On 10 JUN, Major General Genzo Mizukami, who had been sent with reinforcements and placed in charge of the garrison, was ordered personally to "Defend Myitkyina to the death". The Japanese dug in and repelled several Chinese attacks. Further resistance appeared hopeless by the end of July. Mizukami evacuated the survivors of the garrison before fulfilling the letter of his orders by taking his own life inside the defended perimeter. Myitkyina was finally captured on 3 AUG. It was the largest seizure of Japanese-held territory to date in the Burma campaign. The airfield at Myitkyina became a vital link in the air route over the Hump.

- **Aug 03 1948 – Cold War:** *Chambers Accuses Hiss Of Being A Communist Spy* » In hearings before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), Whittaker Chambers accuses former State Department official Alger Hiss of being a communist and a spy for the Soviet Union. The accusation set into motion a series of events that eventually resulted in the trial and conviction of Hiss for perjury.



**Whittaker Chambers & Alger Hiss**

Chambers was a little known figure prior to his 1948 appearance before HUAC. He was a self-professed former member of the Communist Party. Chambers also admitted to having served as a spy for the Soviet Union. He left the Communist Party in 1938 and offered his services to the FBI as an informant on communist activities in the United States. By 1948, he was serving as an editor for Time magazine. At that time, HUAC was involved in a series of hearings investigating communist machinations in the United States. Chambers was called as a witness, and he appeared before the committee on August 3, 1948. He dropped a bombshell during his testimony. Chambers accused former State Department official Alger Hiss of having been a communist and a spy during the 1930s. Hiss was one of the most respected men in Washington. He had been heavily involved in America's wartime diplomacy and attended the Yalta and Potsdam conferences as an American representative. In 1948, he was serving as president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Hiss angrily denied the charges and declared that he did not even know Whittaker Chambers. He later admitted that he knew Chambers, but at the time he had been using a different name—George Crosley. In the weeks that followed Chambers' appearance before HUAC, the two men exchanged charges and countercharges and their respective stories became more and more muddled. Finally, after Chambers publicly declared that Hiss had been a communist "and may be one now," Hiss filed a slander suit. During the course of that trial, Chambers produced microfilmed copies of classified State Department documents from the 1930s, which he had hidden in hollowed-out pumpkins on his farm. The "Pumpkin Papers" were used as evidence to support his claim that Hiss had passed the papers to him for delivery to the Soviets. Based on this evidence, Hiss was indicted for perjury for lying to HUAC and a federal grand jury about his membership in the Communist Party. The statute of limitations had run out for other charges related to his supposed activities in the 1930s. After the first trial ended with a hung jury, Hiss was convicted in January 1950 and served 44 months in jail. Hiss always maintained his complete innocence. For his part, Chambers remained equally adamant in his accusations about Hiss.

- **Aug 03 1958 – Cold War:** *Nautilus Travels Under North Pole* » The U.S. nuclear submarine Nautilus accomplishes the first undersea voyage to the geographic North Pole. The world's first nuclear submarine, the Nautilus dived at Point Barrow, Alaska, and traveled nearly 1,000

miles under the Arctic ice cap to reach the top of the world. It then steamed on to Iceland, pioneering a new and shorter route from the Pacific to the Atlantic and Europe.



The USS Nautilus was constructed under the direction of U.S. Navy Captain Hyman G. Rickover, a brilliant Russian-born engineer who joined the U.S. atomic program in 1946. In 1947, he was put in charge of the navy's nuclear-propulsion program and began work on an atomic submarine. Regarded as a fanatic by his detractors, Rickover succeeded in developing and delivering the world's first nuclear submarine years ahead of schedule. In 1952, the Nautilus' keel was laid by President Harry S. Truman, and on January 21, 1954, first lady Mamie Eisenhower broke a bottle of champagne across its bow as it was launched into the Thames River at Groton, Connecticut. Commissioned on September 30, 1954, it first ran under nuclear power on the morning of January 17, 1955.

Much larger than the diesel-electric submarines that preceded it, the Nautilus stretched 319 feet and displaced 3,180 tons. It could remain submerged for almost unlimited periods because its atomic engine needed no air and only a very small quantity of nuclear fuel. The uranium-powered nuclear reactor produced steam that drove propulsion turbines, allowing the Nautilus to travel underwater at speeds in excess of 20 knots.

In its early years of service, the USS Nautilus broke numerous submarine travel records and on July 23, 1958, departed Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on "Operation Northwest Passage"—the first crossing of the North Pole by submarine. There were 116 men aboard for this historic voyage, including Commander William R. Anderson, 111 officers and crew, and four civilian scientists. The Nautilus steamed north through the Bering Strait and did not surface until it reached Point Barrow, Alaska, in the Beaufort Sea, though it did send its periscope up once off the Diomedes Islands, between Alaska and Siberia, to check for radar bearings. On 1 AUG, the submarine left the north coast of Alaska and dove under the Arctic ice cap.

The submarine traveled at a depth of about 500 feet, and the ice cap above varied in thickness from 10 to 50 feet, with the midnight sun of the Arctic shining in varying degrees through the blue ice. At 11:15 p.m. EDT on August 3, 1958, Commander Anderson announced to his crew: "For the world, our country, and the Navy—the North Pole." The Nautilus passed under the geographic North Pole without pausing. The submarine next surfaced in the

Greenland Sea between Spitzbergen and Greenland on 5 AUG. Two days later, it ended its historic journey at Iceland. For the command during the historic journey, President Dwight D. Eisenhower decorated Anderson with the Legion of Merit.

After a career spanning 25 years and almost 500,000 miles steamed, the Nautilus was decommissioned on March 3, 1980. Designated a National Historic Landmark in 1982, the world's first nuclear submarine went on exhibit in 1986 as the Historic Ship Nautilus at the Submarine Force Museum in Groton, Connecticut.

- **Aug 03 1965 – Vietnam War:** *TV News Shows Marines Burning Village* » CBS-TV news shows pictures of men from the First Battalion, Ninth Marines setting fire to huts in the village of Cam Na, six miles west of Da Nang, despite reports that the Viet Cong had already fled the area. The film report sparked indignation and condemnation of the U.S. policy in Vietnam both at home and overseas. At the same time, the Department of Defense announced that it was increasing the monthly draft call from 17,000 in August to 27,400 in September and 36,000 in October. It also announced that the Navy would require 4,600 draftees, the first such action since 1956.
- **Aug 03 1966 – Vietnam War:** *Marines Launch Operation Prairie* » U.S. Marine units commence Operation Prairie, a sequel to an earlier operation in the area (Operation Hastings), which involves a sweep just south of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) against three battalions of the North Vietnamese 324B Division. An additional 1,500 Marines from Seventh Fleet ships off Quang Tri Province conducted amphibious landings on September 15 to assist in the operation, which lasted until 19 SEP and resulted in a reported 1,397 communist casualties.
- **Aug 03 1972 – Cold War:** *ABM Missile Treaty w/Soviet Union Ratified* » This was an arms control treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union on the limitation of the anti-ballistic missile (ABM) systems used in defending areas against ballistic missile-delivered nuclear weapons. Under the terms of the treaty, each party was limited to two ABM complexes, each of which was to be limited to 100 anti-ballistic missiles. Signed in 1972, it was in force for the next 30 years. In 1997, five years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, four former Soviet republics agreed with the United States to succeed the USSR's role in the treaty. In June 2002 the United States withdrew from the treaty, leading to its termination.
- **Aug 03 1988 – Cold War:** *Soviets Release Mathias Rust* » Soviet authorities free Mathias Rust, the daring young West German pilot who landed a rented Cessna on Moscow's Red Square in 1987. Rust was serving a four-year sentence at a labor camp when the Soviets approved his extradition as a goodwill gesture to the West.



On May 28, 1987, Rust, then a 19-year-old with less than 40 hours of flying time, flew the light plane from Helsinki, Finland, to Red Square, the site of the Kremlin, Lenin's Tomb, and frequent Soviet patriotic demonstrations. He had not been detected once during the 500-mile flight. Rust said his flight was in the interest of world peace, and he signed autographs in Red Square until he was arrested. His seemingly effortless penetration of Soviet air space raised serious questions about the USSR's ability to defend itself from air attack.

- **Aug 03 2007 – Terrorism:** U.S. Congress passed a bill allowing the National Security Agency to monitor e-mail and telephone communications between the United States and foreign countries without a court warrant if terrorism was believed to be involved.

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- **Aug 04 1790 – U.S. Coast Guard:** The Revenue Cutter Service, forerunner of the COAST GUARD was established by Alexander Hamilton when the first Congress authorized the construction of 10 vessels to enforce tariff and trade laws, prevent smuggling, and protect the collection of federal revenue.
- **Aug 04 1864 – Civil War:** *Union Generals Squabble Outside Of Atlanta* » A Union operation against Confederate defenses around Atlanta, Georgia, stalls when infighting erupts between Yankee generals.

The problem arose when Union General William T. Sherman began stretching his force—consisting of the Army of the Ohio, the Army of the Tennessee, and the Army of the Cumberland—west of Ezra Church, the site of a major battle on 28 JUL, to Utoy Creek, west of Atlanta. The Confederate army inside of Atlanta, commanded by General John Bell Hood, had attacked Sherman's army three times in late July and could no longer mount an offensive operation. Sherman now moved General John Schofield, who commanded the Army of the Ohio, from the east side of Atlanta to the west in an attempt to cut the rail lines that supplied the city from the south and west. Schofield's force arrived at Utoy Creek on 3 AUG.



**Generals Schofield and Palmer**

The Army of the Cumberland's Fourteenth Corps, commanded by General John Palmer, had also been sent by Sherman to assist Schofield. But on 4 AUG, the operation came to a standstill because Palmer refused to accept orders from anyone but General George Thomas, commander of the Army of the Cumberland. Although Schofield was the director of the operation, Palmer felt that Schofield was his junior. The two men had been promoted to major general on the same day in 1862, but Schofield's appointment had expired four months later. Schofield had been reappointed with his original date of promotion, November 29, 1862, but Palmer insisted that the reappointment placed Schofield behind him in seniority.

Agreeing only to relay Schofield's order to his division commanders, Palmer refused even to accept Sherman's orders. On August 5, Sherman declared that Schofield was senior to Palmer, upon which Palmer resigned and returned to his Illinois home. The delay provided the Confederates ample time to extend their defenses and protect their western rail links.

An example of how generals' egos could be both large and fragile, the incident would be laughable if it were not for the event's consequences. When the Yankees attacked on 6 AUG, they suffered 300 casualties, which might have been prevented if the squabble had not occurred.

- **Aug 04 1873 – Native Americans:** *Custer and 7th Cavalry Attacked by Indians* » While protecting a railroad survey party in Montana, Custer and his 7th Cavalry clash for the first time with the Sioux Indians, who will defeat them three years later at Little Big Horn.



During the previous two years, Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer and his 7th Cavalry had not fought a single battle against the hostile Indians of the western Plains. Hungry



for action, Custer was pleased when the 7th Cavalry was ordered to help protect a party of surveyors laying out the route for the proposed Northern Pacific Railroad. The new transcontinental railroad (the third in the United States) was to pass through territory controlled by hostile Sioux Indians. Custer was optimistic that the assignment would give him a chance to improve his reputation as an Indian fighter.

Initially, the military escort saw little action. The hostile Indians seemed to be avoiding or ignoring the survey party. For Custer, the mission turned into something of a lark. He spent much of his time shooting buffalo, antelope, elk, and other animals. To find good hunting, he often led the 7th Cavalry far away from the survey party and the main body of the military escort.

On this day Custer was far ahead of the rest of the force, camping along the Tongue River in southeastern Montana. Suddenly, a large band of Sioux warriors appeared on the horizon and attacked. The Indians were led by Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull, but the young braves seemed to have attacked impetuously and with little planning. Custer, who had been taking an afternoon nap, reacted quickly and mounted an effective defense. After a brief skirmish, the Indians withdrew.

Since only one soldier and one Indian were killed in the skirmish, Custer's short battle along the Tongue River seemed relatively insignificant at the time. However, Custer's easy escape in his first encounter with Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse may have given him a dangerously scornful view of their fighting abilities. It helped to confirm his belief that the Plains warriors tended to flee rather than fight. As a result, when Custer again encountered Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse at the Little Big Horn River three years later, his greatest fear was that they would withdraw before he could attack, and he rushed in without proper reconnaissance. That time, though, the Indians stood and fought, leaving Custer and more than 200 of his men dead.

- **Aug 04 1914 – WWI Era:** *Germany Invades Belgium* » In response, the United Kingdom declares war on Germany. German military operations in Belgium were intended to bring the 1st, 2nd and 3rd armies into positions in Belgium from which they could invade France, which, after the fall of Liège on 7 AUG, led to sieges of Belgian fortresses along the Meuse river at Namur and the surrender of the last forts (16–17 Aug). The government abandoned the capital, Brussels, on 17 Aug and after fighting on the Gete river, the Belgian field army withdrew westwards to the National Redoubt at Antwerp on 19 Aug. Brussels was occupied the following day and the Siege of Namur began on 21 Aug
- **Aug 04 1914 – USA:** *U.S. Proclaims Neutrality in World War I* » As World War I erupts in Europe, President Woodrow Wilson formally proclaims the neutrality of the United States, a position that a vast majority of Americans favored. Wilson's initial hope that America could

be “impartial in thought as well as in action” was soon compromised by Germany’s attempted quarantine of the British Isles. Britain was one of America’s closest trading partners, and tension arose between the United States and Germany when several U.S. ships traveling to Britain were damaged or sunk by German mines.

In February 1915, Germany announced unrestricted warfare against all ships, neutral or otherwise, that entered the war zone around Britain. One month later, Germany announced that a German cruiser had sunk the William P. Frye, a private American vessel that was transporting grain to England when it disappeared. President Wilson was outraged, but the German government apologized and called the attack an unfortunate mistake.

In early May 1915, several New York newspapers published a warning by the German embassy in Washington that Americans traveling on British or Allied ships in war zones did so at their own risk. The announcement was placed on the same page as an advertisement for the imminent sailing of the British-owned Lusitania ocean liner from New York to Liverpool. On 7 MAY, the Lusitania was torpedoed without warning by a German submarine just off the coast of Ireland. Of the nearly 2,000 passengers, 1,201 were killed, including 128 Americans.

It was revealed that the Lusitania was carrying about 173 tons of war munitions for Britain, which the Germans cited as further justification for the attack. The United States eventually sent three notes to Berlin protesting the action, and Germany apologized and pledged to end unrestricted submarine warfare. In November, however, a U-boat sank an Italian liner without warning, killing 272 people, including 27 Americans. Public opinion in the United States began to turn irrevocably against Germany.

In late March, Germany sank four more U.S. merchant ships, and on 2 APR, President Wilson appeared before Congress and called for a declaration of war against Germany. On 4 APR, the Senate voted 82 to six to declare war against Germany. Two days later, the House of Representatives endorsed the declaration by a vote of 373 to 50, and America formally entered World War I. On 26 JUN, the first 14,000 U.S. infantry troops landed in France to begin training for combat. After four years of bloody stalemate along the Western Front, the entrance of America’s well-supplied forces into the conflict was a major turning point in the war. By the time the war finally ended on November 11, 1918, more than 2 million American soldiers had served on the battlefields of Western Europe, and some 50,000 of these men had lost their lives.

- **Aug 04 1918 – WWI Era:** On the recommendation of his Jewish commanding officer Lieutenant Hugo Gutmann., Adolf Hitler receives the Iron Cross first class for bravery for his role as a messenger running important information between units under fire. Unlike some dictators, who have military honors bestowed upon them after the fact, or simply have them

invented for them, Hitler only wore his Iron Cross, Wound Badge in Black (for numerous wounds sustained under fire), and his Nazi Party Badge.

- **Aug 04 1944 - Holocaust: *Anne Frank Captured*** » Acting on tip from a Dutch informer, the Nazi Gestapo captures 15-year-old Jewish diarist Anne Frank and her family in a sealed-off area of an Amsterdam warehouse. The Franks had taken shelter there in 1942 out of fear of deportation to a Nazi concentration camp. They occupied the small space with another Jewish family and a single Jewish man, and were aided by Christian friends, who brought them food and supplies. Anne spent much of her time in the “secret annex” working on her diary. The diary survived the war, overlooked by the Gestapo that discovered the hiding place, but Anne and nearly all of the others perished in the Nazi death camps.



Annelies Marie Frank was born in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, on June 12, 1929. She was the second daughter of Otto Frank and Edith Frank-Hollander, both of Jewish families that had lived in Germany for centuries. With the rise of Nazi leader Adolf Hitler in 1933, Otto moved his family to Amsterdam to escape the escalating Nazi persecution of Jews. In Holland, he ran a successful spice and jam business. Anne attended a Montessori school with other middle-class Dutch children, but with the German invasion of the Netherlands in 1940 she was forced to transfer to a Jewish school. In 1942, Otto began arranging a hiding place in an annex of his warehouse on the Prinsengracht Canal in Amsterdam.

On her 13th birthday in 1942, Anne began a diary relating her everyday experiences, her relationship with her family and friends, and observations about the increasingly dangerous world around her. Less than a month later, Anne’s older sister, Margot, received a call-up notice to report to a Nazi “work camp.” Fearing deportation to a Nazi concentration camp, the Frank family took shelter in the secret annex the next day. One week later, they were joined by Otto Frank’s business partner and his family. In November, a Jewish dentist—the eighth occupant of the hiding place—joined the group.

For two years, Anne kept a diary about her life in hiding that is marked with poignancy, humor, and insight. The entrance to the secret annex was hidden by a hinged bookcase, and former employees of Otto and other Dutch friends delivered them food and supplies procured at high risk. Anne and the others lived in rooms with blacked-out windows, and never flushed the toilet during the day out of fear that their presence would be detected. In June 1944, Anne’s

spirits were raised by the Allied landing at Normandy, and she was hopeful that the long-awaited liberation of Holland would soon begin.

On August 1, 1944, Anne made her last entry in her diary. Three days later, 25 months of seclusion ended with the arrival of the Nazi Gestapo. Anne and the others had been given away by an unknown informer, and they were arrested along with two of the Christians who had helped shelter them. They were sent to a concentration camp in Holland, and in September Anne and most of the others were shipped to the Auschwitz death camp in Poland. In the fall of 1944, with the Soviet liberation of Poland underway, Anne was moved with her sister Margot to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany. Suffering under the deplorable conditions of the camp, the two sisters caught typhus and died in early March 1945. The camp was liberated by the British less than two months later.

Otto Frank was the only one of the 10 to survive the Nazi death camps. After the war, he returned to Amsterdam via Russia, and was reunited with Miep Gies, one of his former employees who had helped shelter him. She handed him Anne's diary, which she had found undisturbed after the Nazi raid. In 1947, Anne's diary was published by Otto in its original Dutch as *Diary of a Young Girl*. An instant best-seller and eventually translated into more than 50 languages, *The Diary of Anne Frank* has served as a literary testament to the nearly six million Jews, including Anne herself, who were silenced in the Holocaust.

The Frank family's hideaway at Prinsengracht 263 in Amsterdam opened as a museum in 1960. A new English translation of Anne's diary in 1995 restored material that had been edited out of the original version, making the work nearly a third longer.

- **Aug 04 1944 - WW2:** British Eighth Army occupies southern Florence, Italy below the Arno; Germans have destroyed all bridges except the historic Ponte Vecchio. Also on this date French Resistance leaders parachute into Brittany to organize the uprising against the Germans.
- **Aug 04 1953 – Cold War:** *Eisenhower Warns of “Ominous” Situation in Asia* » Speaking before the Governor's Conference in Seattle, President Dwight D. Eisenhower warns that the situation in Asia is becoming “very ominous for the United States.” In the speech, Eisenhower made specific reference to the need to defend French Indochina from the communists.



By 1953, U.S. officials were becoming increasingly concerned with events in Asia and elsewhere in the so-called “Third World.” During the early years of the Cold War (1945 to 1950), the focus of America’s anticommunist foreign policy was on Europe. With the outbreak of war in Korea in 1950, however, the American government began to shift its focus to other areas of the globe, particularly Asia. During the presidential campaign of 1952, Eisenhower was harshly critical of President Harry S. Truman’s foreign policy, declaring that too little attention had been paid to Asia and that the Korean War was the result of ignoring communist intentions in that corner of the world. Shortly after taking office in early 1953, the victorious Eisenhower adopted a “get tough” policy toward the situation in Korea, even hinting that nuclear weapons might be employed to break the military stalemate between U.S. and communist forces. On July 27, 1953, an armistice was signed, bringing the Korean War to an end.

Just over a week later, Eisenhower addressed the Governor’s Conference and suggested that the communist danger in Asia was far from over. He specifically noted the communist threat in French Indochina, where the French military was battling Vietnamese revolutionaries for control of Vietnam. Eisenhower defended his decision to approve a \$400 million aid package to help the French in their effort as “the cheapest way that we can prevent the occurrence that would be of most terrible significance to the United States.” According to Eisenhower, communist victory in Indochina would have far-reaching consequences. “Now let us assume that we lose Indochina. If Indochina goes, several things happen right away. That last little bit of land hanging on down there, the Malay Peninsula, would be scarcely defensible. The tin and tungsten that we so greatly value from that area would cease coming.” One by one, other Asian nations would be toppled. “So you see, somewhere along that line, this must be blocked and it must be blocked now.”

Eisenhower’s speech marked the first appearance of what would come to be known as the “domino theory”—the idea that the loss of Indochina to communism would lead to other Asian nations following suit, like a row of dominos. The speech also indicated that the United States was fully committed to the defense of Indochina to prevent this possibility. After the defeat of the French in 1954, America took France’s place in fighting the Vietnamese communist revolutionaries, thus beginning its slow but steady immersion into the Vietnam War.

- **Aug 04 1964 – Vietnam:** *Reported North Vietnamese PT Boat Attacks Result in Retaliation Strikes* » At 8 p.m., the destroyers USS Maddox and USS C. Turner Joy, operating in the Gulf of Tonkin, intercept radio messages from the North Vietnamese that give Captain John Herrick of the Maddox the “impression” that Communist patrol boats are planning an attack against the American ships, prompting him to call for air support from the carrier USS Ticonderoga.

Eight Crusader jets soon appeared overhead, but in the darkness, neither the pilots nor the ship crews saw any enemy craft. However, about 10 p.m. sonar operators reported torpedoes approaching. The U.S. destroyers maneuvered to avoid the torpedoes and began to fire at the North Vietnamese patrol boats. When the action ended about two hours later, U.S. officers reported sinking two, or possibly three of the North Vietnamese boats, but no American was sure of ever having seen any enemy boats nor any enemy gunfire. Captain Herrick immediately communicated his doubts to his superiors and urged a “thorough reconnaissance in daylight.” Shortly thereafter, he informed Admiral U. S. Grant Sharp, commander of the Pacific Fleet, that the blips on the radar scope were apparently “freak weather effects” while the report of torpedoes in the water were probably due to “overeager” radar operators.

Because of the time difference, it was only 9:20 a.m. in Washington when the Pentagon received the initial report of a potential attack on the U.S. destroyers. When a more detailed report was received at 11 a.m. there was still a lot of uncertainty as to just what had transpired. President Johnson, convinced that the second attack had taken place, ordered the Joint Chiefs of Staff to select targets for possible retaliatory air strikes. At a National Security Council meeting, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, and McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, recommended to the president that the reprisal strikes be ordered. Johnson was cautious at first, but in a follow-up meeting in the afternoon, he gave the order to execute the reprisal, code-named Pierce Arrow.

The President then met with 16 Congressional leaders to inform them of the second unprovoked attack and that he had ordered reprisal attacks. He also told them he planned to ask for a Congressional resolution to support his actions. At 11:20 p.m., McNamara was informed by Admiral Sharp that the aircraft were on their way to the targets and at 11:26, President Johnson appeared on national television and announced that the reprisal raids were underway in response to unprovoked attacks on U.S. warships. He assured the viewing audience that, “We still seek no wider war.” However, these incidents proved to be only the opening moves in an escalation that would eventually see more than 500,000 U.S. troops in Vietnam.

- **Aug 04 1967 – Vietnam War:** *Conviction of Court-Martialed Officer who Participated in Demonstration Upheld* » The U.S. Court of Military Appeals in Washington upholds the 1965 court-martial of Second Lieutenant Henry H. Howe, who had been sentenced to dismissal from the service and a year at hard labor for participating in an antiwar demonstration.

- **Aug 04 1969 – Vietnam War:** *Secret Negotiations are Initiated in Paris* » The first secret negotiating session takes place between Henry Kissinger and North Vietnamese representative Xuan Thuy, at the apartment of French intermediary Jean Sainteny in Paris.



**Xuan Thuy and Jean Sainteny**

Kissinger reiterated an earlier proposal put forth on 14 MAY for a mutual withdrawal of North Vietnamese and U.S. troops and also warned that if no progress was made by 1 NOV toward ending the war, the United States would consider measures of “grave consequences.” Xuan Thuy responded with the standard North Vietnamese line that the United States would have to withdraw all its troops and abandon the Thieu government before there would be any “logical and realistic basis for settling the war.” The negotiations ended with only an agreement to keep open the new secret channel of communications. These secret talks would continue, but would not bear fruit until late 1972, after the North Vietnamese Nguyen Hue Offensive had failed and President Nixon had launched Operation Linebacker II, the “Christmas bombing” of North Vietnam.

- **Aug 04 1988 – U.S. Congress:** Congress votes \$20,000 to each Japanese-American interned in WW II.
- **Aug 04 1992 – WWII:** Yōhei Kōno, Chief Cabinet Secretary of Japan, issued a formal apology for forcing women into sexual slavery during World War II.
- **Aug 04 1995 – Croatian War:** *Operation Storm Begins* » ‘Storm’ was the last major battle of the Croatian War of Independence and a major factor in the outcome of the Bosnian War. It was a decisive victory for the Croatian Army (HV), which attacked across a 630-kilometre (390 mi) front against the Republic of Serbian Krajina (RSK), and a strategic victory for the Army of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina (ARBiH).

The HV was supported by the Croatian special police advancing from the Velebit Mountain, and the ARBiH located in the Bihać pocket, in the Army of the Republic of Serb Krajina's (ARSK) rear. The battle, launched to restore Croatian control of 4,000 square miles of territory, representing 18.4% of the territory it claimed, and Bosnian control of Western Bosnia, was the largest European land battle since the Second World War. Operation Storm commenced at

dawn on 4 August 1995 and was declared complete on the evening of 7 AUG, despite significant mopping-up operations against pockets of resistance lasting until 14 AUG.

It was a strategic victory in the Bosnian War, effectively ending the siege of Bihać and placing the HV, Croatian Defence Council (HVO) and the ARBiH in a position to change the military balance of power in Bosnia and Herzegovina through the subsequent Operation Mistral 2. The operation built on HV and HVO advances made during Operation Summer '95, when strategic positions allowing the rapid capture of the RSK capital Knin were gained, and on the continued arming and training of the HV since the beginning of the Croatian War of Independence, when the RSK was created during the Serb Log revolution and Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) intervention. The operation itself followed an unsuccessful United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission and diplomatic efforts to settle the conflict.

- **Aug 04 2005 – Terrorism:** Al-Qaida's No. 2, Ayman al-Zawahiri, threatened the United States with tens of thousands of military dead if it did not withdraw from Iraq; President George W. Bush responded by saying, "We will stay the course, we will complete the job." The Rewards for Justice Program of the U.S. Department of State offered a reward of up to US\$25 million for information about his location



# MOST WANTED TERRORIST

## AYMAN AL-ZAWAHIRI

**Murder of U.S. Nationals Outside the United States; Conspiracy to Murder U.S. Nationals Outside the United States; Attack on a Federal Facility Resulting in Death**



**DESCRIPTION**

<b>Aliases:</b> Abu Muhammad, Abu Fatima, Muhammad Ibrahim, Abu Abdallah, Abu al-Muriz, The Doctor, The Teacher, Nur, Ustaz, Abu Mohammed, Abu Mohammed Nur al-Deen, Abdel Muz, Dr. Ayman al Zawahiri	
<b>Date(s) of Birth Used:</b> June 19, 1951	<b>Place of Birth:</b> Egypt
<b>Hair:</b> Brown/Black	<b>Eyes:</b> Dark
<b>Height:</b> Unknown	<b>Weight:</b> Unknown
<b>Build:</b> Unknown	<b>Complexion:</b> Olive
<b>Sex:</b> Male	<b>Citizenship:</b> Egyptian
<b>Languages:</b> Arabic, French	<b>Scars and Marks:</b> None known



- **Aug 04 2020 – Lebanon:** Nearly 3,000 tons of ammonium nitrate that had been improperly stored for years in the port of Beirut, Lebanon, exploded, killing more than 200 people, injuring more than 6,000 and devastating nearby neighborhoods; it was one of the largest non-nuclear explosions ever recorded.

**-o-o-O-o-o-**

- **Aug 05 1812 – War of 1812: *Battle of Brownstone*** » In an early scimmages of the war as U.S. Forces forded Brownstown creek south of Fort Detroit, 200 U.S. soldiers were set upon by two dozen Indians led by the Shawnee war chief Tecumseh, Chickamauga war chief Daimee, Wyandot chief Roundhead, and several others. Faced with such opposition, OIC Major Thomas Van Horne ordered a retreat, whereupon the untrained American militia scattered in a panic. Van Horne was able to save only half of his command; 18 men were killed, 12 were wounded, and 70 went missing. Most of those listed as "missing" were dispersed during the battle and returned to Detroit during the ensuing days.

Josiah Snelling, known colloquially as the Prairie Chicken, was cited for gallantry for his actions during the Battle and promoted to Major. Later, after Fort Detroit's Commander Brigadier General William Hull surrendered it to Tecumseh, Snelling's testimony was used at Hull's court-martial. One minor chief, Blue Jacket, died in the battle. This was not the famous Shawnee chief Blue Jacket, but most likely was one of his sons. By an act of the United States Congress on June 1, 1813, the widows of those men killed in the battle were awarded half pay for five years.

- **Aug 05 1861 – Civil War:** In order to help pay for the war effort, the United States government issues the first income tax as part of the Revenue Act of 1861 (3% of all incomes over US \$800; rescinded in 1872).
- **Aug 05 1861 – U.S. Army: *Flogging*** » As the number of civilians drafted voluntarily entered and were drafted into Civil War service grew, the United States Army finally abolished flogging. An attempt had been made earlier in the century but the punishment had been reinstated in 1833 for desertion. Congress had abolished flogging in the Navy in 1850, after a public campaign by Herman Melville, although other corporal punishments were retained.
- **Aug 05 1862 – Civil War: *Battle of Baton Rouge, Louisiana*** » The Battle was a ground and naval battle fought in East Baton Rouge Parish. On the evening of 4 AUG as Maj. Gen. John C. Breckinridge marched 5,000 Confederate troops closer to the city the element of surprise was lost when they were discovered by Union sentries. Despite this, the attack was launched at daybreak. The Union troops were in the center of Baton Rouge, while the

Confederates were lined up in two divisions, north of the city. The action occurred around Florida Street, and began with the Confederates pushing their opponents all the way across town. Bitter fighting took place, especially around Magnolia Cemetery. The Union commander, Brigadier General Thomas Williams, was killed in action. Colonel Thomas W. Cahill took over.

The colonel led a retreat back to prepared defensive lines near the Penitentiary, under the protection of the Union warships. The Confederate troops began coming under fire from the gunboats. The Confederate ram Arkansas arrived not long after but her engines failed just four miles above the city. Her commander ordered her set afire to prevent her capture. Without any prospect of naval support, Breckenridge was unable to attack the Union positions and withdrew. Union troops evacuated the city a week later, concerned for the safety of New Orleans, but returned that autumn. Confederates occupied Port Hudson, which they held for almost another year. The Union victory halted Confederate attempts to recapture the capital city of Louisiana.

- **Aug 05 1864 – Civil War: *Battle of Mobile Bay*** » Union Admiral David Farragut leads his flotilla through the Confederate defenses at Mobile, Alabama, to seal one of the last major Southern ports. The fall of Mobile Bay was a huge blow to the Confederacy, and the victory was the first in a series of Yankee successes that helped secure the re-election of Abraham Lincoln later that year.



**At left foreground is the CSS Tennessee; at the right the USN Tecumseh is sinking**

Mobile became the major Confederate port on the Gulf of Mexico after the fall of New Orleans, Louisiana, in April 1862. With blockade runners carrying critical supplies from Havana, Cuba, into Mobile, Union General Ulysses S. Grant made the capture of the port a top priority after assuming command of all Federal forces in early 1864.

Opposing Farragut's force of 17 warships was a Rebel squadron of only four ships; however, it included the CSS Tennessee, said to be the most powerful ironclad afloat. Farragut also had to contend with two powerful Confederate batteries inside of forts Morgan and Gaines. On the morning of August 5, Farragut's force steamed into the mouth of Mobile Bay in two columns led by four ironclads and met with devastating fire that immediately sank one of its

iron-hulled, single-turret monitors, the U.S.S. Tecumseh. The rest of the fleet fell into confusion but Farragut allegedly rallied them with the words: “**Damn the torpedoes. Full speed ahead!**” Although the authenticity of the quote has been questioned, it nevertheless became one of the most famous in U.S. military history.

The Yankee fleet quickly knocked out the smaller Confederate ships, but the Tennessee fought a valiant battle against overwhelming odds before it sustained heavy damage and surrendered. The Union laid siege to forts Morgan and Gaines, and both were captured within two weeks. Confederate forces remained in control of the city of Mobile, but the port was no longer available to blockade runners.

The Battle of Mobile Bay lifted the morale of the North. With Grant stalled at Petersburg, Virginia, and General William T. Sherman unable to capture Atlanta, Georgia, the capture of the bay became the first in a series of Union victories that stretched to the fall election.

- **Aug 05 1914 – U.S.\*Nicaragua:** *Bryan-Chamorro Treaty* » Signed between the United States and Nicaragua. The United States gained the right to construct a canal across Nicaragua, an option to build a naval base on the Gulf of Fonseca, and a long-term lease on the Corn Islands in the Caribbean. Nicaragua’s neighbors protested, claiming the treaty imperiled their security, and the Central American Court of Justice upheld the validity of their claim. The United States and Nicaragua ignored the ruling; the treaty remained in effect, but the United States used it only to build a lighthouse on the Corn Islands. The refusal of the United States to honor the ruling of the court destroyed the influence of that body, and in March 1918 the court formally ceased to exist. The Bryan-Chamorro Treaty was abrogated in 1970.
- **Aug 05 1914 – WWI Era:** *Battle of Liège (5-16 Aug)* » First battle of the war. By 4 AUG, the German 1st, 2nd and 3rd Armies—some 34 divisions of men—were in the process of aligning themselves on the right wing of the German lines, poised to move into Belgium. In total, seven German armies, with a total of 1.5 million soldiers, were being assembled along the Belgian and French frontiers, ready to put the long-held Schlieffen Plan—a sweeping advance through Belgium into France envisioned by former German Chief of Staff Alfred von Schlieffen—into practice. The 2nd Army, commanded by Field Marshal Karl von Bulow, was charged with taking the city of Liege, located at the gateway into Belgium from Germany. Built on a steep 500-foot slope rising up from the Meuse River, some 200 yards wide, and defended by 12 heavily armed forts—six on either side of the river, stretching along a 30-mile circumference—Liege was considered by many to be the most heavily fortified spot in Europe.

Bulow’s 2nd Army, numbering some 320,000 men, began its attack on Liege and its 35,000 garrison troops on 5 AUG. Six brigades, commanded by General Otto von Emmich, were detached from the 2nd Army to form a special “Army of the Meuse” that would open the way

for the rest of its comrades through Liege. Confident of an easy victory with little significant Belgian resistance, the Germans assumed Emmich's men could topple Liege while the rest of the German troops were still assembling. In fact, the Belgians put up a valiant defense from the first moment—a struggle led by their sovereign, King Albert, who had earlier urged his subjects to fight this threat to their neutrality and independence at all costs. By the end of the first day all of Liege's 12 fortresses remained in Belgian hands.



Liege eventually fell to the Germans on 15 AUG, but only after they had brought up the most powerful land weapons in their arsenal, the enormous siege cannons. One type of cannon, built by the Austrian munitions firm Skoda, had a barrel measuring 12-inches (305mm); the other, manufactured by Krupps in Essen, Germany, was even more massive at 16.5 inches (420mm). Until that point, the largest guns had measured 13.5 inches and were used by the British navy; the largest on land had only measured 11 inches. The heavy shelling of Liege began on 12 AUG; on 15 AUG, after taking 11 of Liege's 12 forts and exploding the walls of the 12th, Fort Loncin, with a shell, Emmich and his comrade Erich Ludendorff entered Loncin to find Liege's commander, General Gerard Mathieu Leman, alive but unconscious. Taken prisoner by the Germans, he later wrote to King Albert from Germany, "I would gladly have given my life, but Death would not have me." For their parts, Emmich and Ludendorff were awarded Germany's highest military medal, the Pour la Merite cross, for their capture of Liege.

The main German advance through Belgium, towards France, began three days later. Fearful of civilian resistance, especially from snipers, or franc-tireurs, shooting at them from hidden positions in trees and bushes, German troops from the first day in Belgium took a hard line against the native population. As early as 5 AUG, the Germans had begun not only the shooting of ordinary civilians but the deliberate execution of Belgian priests, whom German propaganda at home insisted were encouraging franc-tireur (free shooter) activity. "Our advance in Belgium is certainly brutal," wrote German Chief of Staff Helmuth von Moltke to his Austrian counterpart, Conrad von Hotzendorff, on 5 AUG. "But we are fighting for our lives and all who get in the way must take the consequences."

In total, German troops killed 5,521 civilians in Belgium and 896 in France, earning Germany the full measure of Belgian hatred and damning it in the eyes of many foreign observers. The steadfast Belgian resistance, meanwhile, at Liege and elsewhere during the German advance, would earn the small country and its valiant king the world's respect, and

provide a shining example, and a worthy cause, to the other Allied nations then entering what would become Europe's most devastating conflict.

- **Aug 05 1915 – WWI Era:** *Germans Occupy Warsaw, Poland* » By early spring of 1915, the Germans and Austrians were prepared for a major invasion of Russia. In April, as a diversion for its strike into Poland and Galicia, the Germans launched an offensive from East Prussia deep into Lithuania. Among the advancing German forces were thousands of ethnic Lithuanians recruited in East Prussia. As the Russians moved north to meet this threat, the main German offensive commenced on the night of 1 MAY, striking towards Warsaw. After putting up a valiant fight, the Russians were forced to retreat on 17 JUN, when the Germans overran the Gorlice-Tarnow fortifications. As the Germans pursued the retreating Russians, they overran Fort Ivang-rod, which was the last obstacle to Warsaw. Evacuated on 4 AUG, Warsaw was free of Russian occupation for the first time in a hundred years.
- **Aug 05 1917 – WWI:** British troops attack canal of Ypres in Boesinghe, Belgium.
- **Aug 05 1918 – WWI:** *Last Air Attack on England* » The best known German strategic bombing campaign during World War I was the campaign against Britain, although strategic bombing raids were carried out or attempted on other fronts. The main campaign against Britain started in January 1915 using airships. From then until the end of World War I the German Navy and Army Luftstreitkräfte mounted over 50 bombing raids on the United Kingdom. These were generally referred to as "Zeppelin raids": although both Zeppelin and Schütte-Lanz airships were used, the Zeppelin company was much better known and was responsible for producing the majority of the airships used.

Weather conditions and night flying conditions made airship navigation and maintaining bombing accuracy difficult. Bombs were often dropped miles off target (one raid on London actually bombed Hull) and accurate targeting of military installations was impossible. The civilian casualties made the Zeppelins an object of hatred, and they were dubbed "baby-killers". With the development of effective defensive measures the airship raids became increasingly hazardous, and in 1917 the airships were largely replaced by airplanes.

Although the military effect of the raids was small, they caused widespread alarm, leading to the diversion of substantial resources from the Western Front and some disruption to industrial production. Concern about the conduct of defiance against the raids, the responsibility for which was divided between the Admiralty and the Army, led to a parliamentary inquiry under Jan Smuts, whose report led to the creation of the Royal Air Force (RAF) on 1 April 1918. The defense organization developed by the British was an important precursor of the fighter direction system that would prove vital in winning the Battle of Britain

in the next war. The raids were also influential because they led to an overestimation of both the material and psychological effects of the bombing of cities. A minor consequence of the risk of being driven out of bed at night was the development of night clothes for women.

Airships made about 51 bombing raids on Britain during the war. These killed 557 and injured another 1,358 people. More than 5,000 bombs were dropped on towns across Britain, causing £1.5 million in damage. 84 airships took part, of which 30 were either shot down or lost in accidents. Airplanes carried out 27 raids, dropping 246,774 lb of bombs for the loss of 62 aircraft, resulting in ground casualties of 835 dead, 1,972 injured and £1,418,272 of material damage.

- **Aug 5 1941 – WW2:** *First Battle of Smolensk ends (6 Jul – 5 Aug)* » Red army evacuates Smolensk. It was the first major battle during Operation Barbarossa (22 Jun – 5 Dec) that significantly delayed the advance of Hitler's Wehrmacht in the USSR. It took place in the region around the city of Smolensk about 400 km west of Moscow between. At that point the Wehrmacht had advanced 500 km into the USSR without major difficulties in the mere 18 days that had elapsed since the initial invasion of June 22, 1941.

The Wehrmacht fielded Army Group Centre's 2nd Panzer Group and the 3rd Panzer Group and the Red Army fielded the Western Front, the Soviet Reserve Front, the Soviet Central Front, and the Soviet Bryansk Front. Ultimately, the Soviet 16th, 19th and the 20th Armies were encircled and destroyed just to the south of Smolensk, though significant numbers from the 19th and 20th Army managed to escape the pocket. Albeit a huge temporary success for Hitler, the losses in terms of men and materiel incurred by the Wehrmacht during this drawn-out battle were enormous and—together with the 2-month delay in the march towards Moscow—proved decisive for the Wehrmacht's defeat by the Red Army at the end of the Battle of Moscow three months later in December 1941.

- **Aug 05 1942 – WW2:** In their drive to Moscow German forces cross the Kuban River on the border of Russia.
- **Aug 05 1943 – WW2:** Nazi occupiers attack city of Orel, Russia and leave it on fire during the Oryol strategic offensive operation "Kutuzov" on the Oryol-Kursk Bulge. The city was almost completely destroyed.
- **Aug 05 1944 – WW2:** *Uprising against the German Occupiers of Warsaw* » As the Red Army advanced on Warsaw in July, Polish patriots, still loyal to their government-in-exile back in London, prepared to overthrow their German occupiers. On 29 JUL, the Polish Home Army (underground), the People's Army (a communist guerilla movement), and armed civilians took back two-thirds of Warsaw from the Germans.

On 4 AUG, the Germans counterattacked, mowing down Polish civilians with machine-gun fire. During the next weeks between 40,000 and 50,000 civilians (men, women, and children) were methodically rounded-up and executed by the Einsatzkommando of the Sicherheitspolizei under Heinz Reinefarth's command and the amnestied German criminals from Dirlewanger. By 5 AUG, more than 15,000 Poles were dead. The Polish command cried to the Allies for help. Churchill telegraphed Stalin, informing him that the British intended to drop ammunition and other supplies into the southwest quarter of Warsaw to aid the insurgents. The prime minister asked Stalin to aid in the insurgents' cause. Stalin balked, claiming the insurgency was too insignificant to waste time with.



On 5 AUG the Nazi Governor-General of Poland, Hans Frank wrote: “Almost every part of the city of Warsaw is on fire.” Far from being limited to using its resources in attacking military objectives, the Nazis attack with fury houses, monuments and the Polish cultural heritage: they demolished the Sigismund Column with a cannon, destroyed the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, blew up the Royal Castle and burned libraries and archives.

In addition, German forces, especially the Gestapo and SS, perpetrate mass crimes unprecedented against the Polish population, and display the most repulsive techniques to try to gain advantage over the AK. They used civilians, including children, as human shields, even tying them to their battle tanks so the insurgents will not dare shoot them. In the Varsovian district of Ochota the SS Sturmbrigade RONA, formed by Russians, commit all kinds of crimes against Polish civilians: robberies, fires, murders, tortures and mass rapes, often in groups, of both women and girls. No patients are rescued from the oncology center Maria Sklodowska-Curie Institute: on 6 AUG SS unit sets it on fire, lighting the mattresses of the beds of the sick, who are burned alive. On 19 AUG they executed and burned 60 patients who had been evacuated from that hospital. Only 10,000 people are killed in the Ochota district. In the district of Wola more than 40,000 are massacred: the biggest slaughter suffered by Poland in all its history.

Britain succeeded to getting some aid to the Polish patriots, but the Germans also succeeded-in dropping incendiary bombs. The Poles fought on, and on 5 AUG they freed Jewish forced laborers who then joined in the battle, some of whom formed a special platoon dedicated solely to repairing captured German tanks for use in the struggle. The Poles would



battle on for weeks against German reinforcements, and without Soviet help, as Joseph Stalin had his own plans for Poland.

Until the end of September 1944, Polish resistance fighters were not considered by Germans as combatants; thus, when captured, they were summarily executed. One hundred sixty-five thousand surviving civilians were sent to labor camps, and 50,000 were shipped to concentration camps, while the ruined city was systematically demolished. Neither Reinefarth nor Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski were ever tried for their crimes committed during the suppression of the uprising.

- **Aug 05 1951 – Korean War:** The United Nations Command suspends armistice talks with the North Koreans when armed troops are spotted in neutral areas.
- **Aug 05 1953 – Korean War:** *Operation Big Switch* » This was the repatriation of all remaining prisoners of the Korean War. Ceasefire talks had been going on between Communist and UN forces since 1951, with one of the main stumbling blocks being the Communist insistence that all prisoners be returned home, with the UN insisting that prisoners who wished to remain where they were be allowed to do so. After talks dragged on for two years, the Chinese and North Koreans relented on this point, and the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed on July 27, 1953.

Big Switch began in August 1953 and lasted until December. 75,823 Communist prisoners (70,183 North Koreans and 5,640 Chinese) were returned. Over 22,600 Communist soldiers, the majority of whom were former Republic of China soldiers who fought against the Communists in the Chinese Civil War and were pressed into Foreign Service in the People's Volunteer Army following their defeat, declined repatriation. The Communists repatriated 12,773 United Nations Command (UNC) POWs (7,862 South Koreans, 3,597 Americans, 945 British, 229 Turks, 40 Filipinos, 30 Canadians, 22 Colombians, 21 Australians, 12 Frenchmen, 8 South Africans, 2 Greeks, 2 Dutch, and 1 prisoner each from Belgium, New Zealand, and Japan). Much to the surprise of the UN forces, 23 Americans and one Briton, along with 333 South Korean UN soldiers, also declined repatriation.

Prisoners who declined repatriation were given ninety days to change their minds. 137 Chinese soldiers did so, and were returned to China. Two Americans and eight South Koreans also did so, and were returned to the UNC. That left 325 Koreans, 21 Americans and 1 Briton who voluntarily decided to stay with the Communists, and over 22,000 Communist soldiers who decided to remain in the Western sphere of influence.



Operation Little Switch was an exchange of sick and wounded prisoners during the Korean War in April and May 1953. The U.N. released 6,670 Chinese and North Korean prisoners, and the Communist forces returned 684 U.N. coalition prisoners (including 149 Americans).

- **Aug 05 1963 – Cold War: *Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Signed*** » Representatives of the United States, the Soviet Union, and Great Britain sign the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which prohibited the testing of nuclear weapons in outer space, underwater, or in the atmosphere. The treaty was hailed as an important first step toward the control of nuclear weapons.

Discussions between the United States and the Soviet Union concerning a ban on nuclear testing began in the mid-1950s. Officials from both nations came to believe that the nuclear arms race was reaching a dangerous level. In addition, public protest against the atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons was gaining strength. Nevertheless, talks between the two nations (later joined by Great Britain) dragged on for years, usually collapsing when the issue of verification was raised. The Americans and British wanted on-site inspections, something the Soviets vehemently opposed. In 1960, the three sides seemed close to an agreement, but the downing of an American spy plane over the Soviet Union in May brought negotiations to an end.

The Cuban Missile Crisis provided a major impetus for reinvigorating the talks in October 1962. The Soviets attempted to install nuclear-capable missiles in Cuba, bringing the Soviet Union and the United States to the brink of a nuclear war. Cooler heads prevailed and the crisis passed, but the other possible scenarios were not lost on U.S. and Russian officials. In June 1963, the test ban negotiations resumed, with compromises from all sides. On 5 AUG, British, American, and Russian representatives signed the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. France and China were asked to join the agreement but refused.

The Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was a small but significant step toward the control of nuclear weapons. In the years to come, discussions between the United States and the Soviet Union grew to include limits on many nuclear weapons and the elimination of others.

- **Aug 05 1964 – Vietnam War: *Beginning*** » The Vietnam Era began for purposes of federal law pertaining to members of the United States Armed Forces, which defines the period of American involvement in the war as "the period beginning on August 5, 1964, and ending on March 27, 1973".

On this date China ordered its military forces near the border with North Vietnam to be in a state of readiness and to "be ready to cope with any possible sudden attack" by the United States and a Vietnam People's Navy gunboat was on fire after a U.S. Navy air attack. Also, in retaliation for the 2 AUG Tonkin Gulf Incident, Operation Pierce Arrow was initiated. It

consisted of 64 strike sorties of aircraft from the aircraft carriers USS Ticonderoga and USS Constellation against the torpedo boat bases of Hon Gai, Loc Chao, Quảng Khê and Phuc Loi and the oil storage depot at Vinh. The U.S. lost two aircraft to anti-aircraft fire, Lieutenant Richard Sather was killed in his A-1 Skyraider while Lieutenant (junior grade) Everett Alvarez's A-4 Skyhawk was shot down and became the first U.S. Navy Prisoner of War. He was held until 12 February 1973.

- **Aug 05 1974 – Vietnam War:** *Congress Cuts South Vietnam's Military Aid* » Congress places a \$1 billion ceiling on military aid to South Vietnam for fiscal year 1974. This figure was trimmed further to \$700 million by 11 AUG. Military aid to South Vietnam in fiscal year 1973 was \$2.8 billion; in 1975 it would be cut to \$300 million. Once aid was cut, it took the North Vietnamese only 55 days to defeat the South Vietnamese forces when they launched their final offensive in 1975.
- **Aug 05 2002 – Post Civil War:** *USS Monitor Gun Turret Recovered After 140 years* » The rusty iron gun turret of the U.S.S. Monitor broke from the water and into the daylight for the first time in 140 years. The ironclad warship was raised from the floor of the Atlantic, where it had rested since it went down in a storm off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina, during the Civil War. Divers had been working for six weeks to bring it to the surface.

Nine months before sinking into its watery grave, the Monitor had been part of a revolution in naval warfare. On March 9, 1862, it dueled to a standstill with the C.S.S. Virginia (originally the C.S.S. Merrimack) in one of the most famous moments in naval history—the first time two ironclads faced each other in a naval engagement. During the battle, the two ships circled one another, jockeying for position as they fired their guns. The cannon balls simply deflected off the iron ships. In the early afternoon, the Virginia pulled back to Norfolk. Neither ship was seriously damaged, but the Monitor effectively ended the short reign of terror that the Confederate ironclad had brought to the Union navy.



Designed by Swedish engineer John Ericsson, the Monitor had an unusually low profile, rising from the water only 18 inches. The flat iron deck had a 20-foot cylindrical turret rising from the middle of the ship; the turret housed two 11-inch Dahlgren guns. The ship had a draft of less than 11 feet so it could operate in the shallow harbors and rivers of the South. It was

commissioned on February 25, 1862, and arrived at Chesapeake Bay just in time to engage the Virginia.

After the famous duel, the Monitor provided gun support on the James River for George B. McClellan's Peninsular Campaign. By December 1862, it was clear the ship was no longer needed in Virginia, so she was sent to Beaufort, North Carolina, to join a fleet being assembled for an attack on Charleston. The Monitor served well in the sheltered waters of Chesapeake Bay, but the heavy, low-slung ship was a poor craft for the open sea. The U.S.S. Rhode Island towed the ironclad around the rough waters of Cape Hatteras. As the Monitor pitched and swayed in the rough seas, the caulking around the gun turret loosened and water began to leak into the hull. More leaks developed as the journey continued. High seas tossed the craft, causing the ship's flat armor bottom to slap the water. Each roll opened more seams, and by nightfall on December 30, the Monitor was in dire straits.

That evening, the Monitor's commander, J.P. Bankhead, signaled the Rhode Island that he wished to abandon ship. The wooden side-wheeler pulled as close as safety allowed to the stricken ironclad, and two lifeboats were lowered to retrieve the crew. Many of the sailors were rescued, but some men were terrified to venture onto the deck in such rough seas. The ironclad's pumps stopped working, and the ship sank before 16 of its crew members could be rescued. The remains of two of these sailors were discovered by divers during the Monitor's 2002 reemergence.

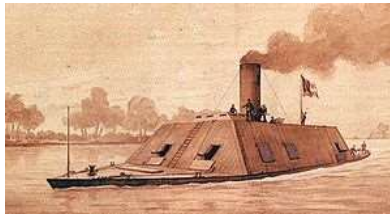
Many of the ironclad's artifacts are now on display at the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Virginia.

- **Aug 05 2017 – North Korea:** UN Security Council votes to impose more sanctions on North Korea for its continued missile program. North Korea has been under U.N. sanctions since 2006 over its nuclear and missile tests. The new sanctions cap North Korean coal exports at \$400.9 million or 7.5 million metric tonnes annually, whichever is lower, starting on 1 JAN. Over the first 10 months of this year China had imported 18.6 million tonnes of coal from North Korea, up almost 13 percent from 2016. Coal is one of North Korea's only sources of hard currency and its largest single export item. The draft U.N. resolution also banned exports of copper, nickel, silver and zinc, which the U.S. official said is worth about \$100 million a year.

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- **Aug 06 1777 – American Revolution:** The bloody Battle of Oriskany prevents American relief of the Siege of Fort Stanwix. Casualties and losses: US 465 - GB & Indians 93.

- **Aug 06 1787 – Post American Revolution:** In Philadelphia, four years after the Treaty of Paris which officially ended the American Revolution, delegates to the Constitutional Convention begin debating the first complete draft of the proposed Constitution of the United States. Today, the U.S. Constitution is the oldest written constitution in operation in the world.
- **Aug 06 1862 – Civil War:** *Confederate Ship Blown Up By Own Crew* » The CSS Arkansas, the most feared Confederate ironclad on the Mississippi River, is blown up by her crew after suffering mechanical problems during a battle with the USS Essex near Baton Rouge, Louisiana.



7

The Arkansas's career lasted just 23 days. In August 1861, the Confederate Congress appropriated \$160,000 to construct two ironclad ships for use on the Mississippi. Similar in style to the more famous C.S.S. Virginia (Merrimack), the ships were both 165 feet long and 35 feet wide, and were constructed in Memphis. Since a labor shortage delayed completion, they were not finished when the Union captured Memphis in May 1862. One ironclad was burned to prevent capture, and the Arkansas was towed south to the Yazoo River.

Lieutenant Isaac Brown, the ship's commander, showed great innovation and determination in completing construction of the craft. A sunken barge loaded with railroad rails was raised so that the rails could be bolted to the hull of the Arkansas, and local planters opened their forges to the builders. On 12 JUL, the work was completed and Brown steered the ship down the Yazoo and into the Mississippi.

The Arkansas came out of the Yazoo with guns blazing. She ran off three Union ships, inflicting heavy damage on two of them, and ran a gauntlet of 16 Union ships, damaging several as she slipped down the river toward Vicksburg, Mississippi. The Union commander, Admiral David Farragut, was furious that a single ship could cause so much damage to his flotilla, so he sent his ships in pursuit of the Confederate menace. At dusk, Farragut marked the position of the Arkansas as it lay anchored at Vicksburg. In the dark, he sent his ships one by one past this position, and each ship fired a volley into the spot where the Arkansas should have been. But Brown had fooled the Yankees by moving his ship after dark.

The Arkansas sparred with two other Union ships on 22 JUL, successfully running off the ships but suffering damage to her engines. The ship was ordered south to Baton Rouge on 3 AUG to support Confederate operations there, but the Arkansas suffered more engine problems and ran aground. While the crew worked on repairs, the USS Essex steamed up for a confrontation. The Arkansas set sail, but a propeller shaft broke and left the vessel circling helplessly. She ran aground again, and the crew blew up the ship before the Essex could move in for the kill. Although the Arkansas was never defeated, unreliable engines doomed the craft to an early death.

- **Aug 06 1864 – Civil War:** *Confederate Forces Evacuate Fort Gaines In Mobile Bay, Alabama* » The Mobile Bay joint land-sea operation began when Major General Gordon Granger landed with 1,500 Union soldiers on the west side of Dauphin Island, seven miles from Fort Gaines, on 3 AUG. The Confederate troops burned their outbuildings and retreated into the fort the next day as Granger's forces moved within 1,700 yards of the fort.



Fort Gaines, with only one gun able to reach the channel, inflicted no damage on the Union fleet. Granger's troops had begun shelling the fort, intent on using it as a staging area in the taking of Mobile. The sand dunes gave Federal sharpshooters the advantage of looking down into the fort, like a shooting gallery. In addition to the land-based artillery, the Union monitors Chickasaw and Winnebago lobbed shells at the fort from the north. The officers' quarters and quartermaster's building, which stood higher than the fort's walls, took damage.

Colonel Charles Anderson led Fort Gaines's 800-man garrison, which included a battalion of cadets aged twelve to sixteen from the Pelham Military Academy in Mobile. Anderson had orders to hold the fort at any cost. On 6 AUG, the majority of Fort Gaines's officers presented a petition to Anderson, declaring their position indefensible and therefore requesting the fort be surrendered. Although Anderson disagreed with his officers' sentiments, the veiled threat of mutiny prompted Anderson to respond favorably to Union Rear Admiral Farragut's demand for surrender.

- **Aug 06 1914 – WWI:** Austria-Hungary declares war on Russia and Serbia declares war against Germany.

- **Aug 06 1914 – WWI:**
- **Aug 06 1914 – WWI:** *Montenegro Declares War Against Austria-Hungary* » Shortly after Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia on 28 JUL, Montenegro lost little time in declaring war on the Central Powers – on Austria-Hungary in the first instance – on 6 August 1914, despite Austrian diplomacy promising to cede Shkoder to Montenegro if it remained neutral.

For purposes of coordination in the fight against the enemy army, Serbian General Bozidar Jankovic was named head of High Command of both Serbian and Montenegrin armies. Montenegro received 30 artillery pieces and financial help of 17 million dinars from Serbia. France contributed a colonial detachment of 200 men located in Cetinje at the beginning of war, as well as two radio-stations – located on top of Mount Lovćen and in Podgorica. Until 1915 France supplied Montenegro with necessary war material and food through the port of Bar, which was blockaded by Austrian battleships and submarines. In 1915 Italy took over this role, running supplies unsuccessfully and irregularly across the line Shengjin-Bojana-Lake Skadar, an unsecured route because of constant attacks by Albanian irregulars organized by Austrian agents. Lack of vital materials eventually led Montenegro to surrender.

Austria-Hungary dispatched a separate army to invade Montenegro and to prevent a junction of the Serbian and Montenegrin armies. This force, however, was repulsed, and from the top of the strongly fortified Lovćen, the Montenegrins carried on the bombardment of Kotor held by the enemy. The Austro-Hungarian army managed to capture the town of Pljevlja while on the other hand the Montenegrins took Budva, then under Austrian control. The Serbian victory at the Battle of Cer (15–24 AUG) diverted enemy forces from Sandjak, and Pljevlja came into Montenegrin hands again. On August 10, 1914, the Montenegrin infantry delivered a strong attack against the Austrian garrisons, but they did not succeed in making good the advantage they first gained. They successfully resisted the Austrians in the second invasion of Serbia (September 1914) and almost succeeded in seizing Sarajevo.

With the beginning of the third Austro-Hungarian invasion, however, the Montenegrin army had to retire before greatly superior numbers, and Austro-Hungarian, Bulgarian and German armies finally overran Serbia in DEC 1915. However, the Serbian army survived, and led by King Peter I of Serbia, started retreating across Albania. In order to support the Serbian retreat, the Montenegrin army, led by Janko Vukotic, engaged in the Battle of Mojkovac (6–7 January 1916). Montenegro also suffered a large scale invasion in JAN 1916 and for the remainder of the war remained in the possession of the Central Powers. The Austrian officer Viktor Weber Edler von Webenau served as the military governor of Montenegro between 1916 and 1917. Afterwards Heinrich Clam-Martinic filled this position.

King Nicholas fled to Italy in JAN 1916 and then to France; the government transferred its operations to Bordeaux. Eventually the allies liberated Montenegro from the Austrians. A newly convened National Assembly of Podgorica accused the King of seeking a separate peace with the enemy and consequently deposed him, banned his return and decided that Montenegro should join the Kingdom of Serbia on December 1, 1918. A part of the former Montenegrin military forces still loyal to the King started a rebellion against the amalgamation, the Christmas Uprising (7 January 1919).

- **Aug 06 1914 – WWI Era:** First Battle of the Atlantic - two days after the United Kingdom had declared war on Germany over the German invasion of Belgium, ten German U-boats leave their base in Heligoland to attack Royal Navy warships in the North Sea.
- **Aug 06 1914 – WWI Era:** *Germany Initiates U-Boat Campaign* » A flotilla of nine U-boats sailed from their base in Heligoland to attack Royal Navy warships in the North Sea in the first submarine war patrol in history. Their aim was to sink capital ships of the British Grand Fleet, and so reduce the Grand Fleet's numerical superiority over the German High Seas Fleet. The first sortie was not a success. Only one attack was carried out, when U-15 fired a torpedo (which missed) at HMS Monarch. Two of the ten U-boats were lost.

Later in the month, the U-boats achieved success, when U-21 sank the cruiser HMS Pathfinder. In September, SM U-9 sank three armored cruisers (Aboukir, Hogue, and Cressy) in a single action. Other successes followed. In October U-9 sank the cruiser Hawke, and on the last day of the year SM U-24 sank the pre-dreadnought battleship Formidable. By the end of the initial campaign, the U-boats had sunk nine warships while losing five of their own number. Overall between 28 July 1914 and 11 November 1918 casualties and losses totaled 5,000 merchant ships sunk, 15,000 merchant sailors killed, 104 warships sunk, 42 warships damaged, and 61 Q-ships sunk in allied service at a cost of 217 U-boats lost to all causes and 6,000 sailors killed to Germany.

- **Aug 06 1915 – WWI Era:** As part of the ‘August Offensive’ Allied forces land at Suvla Bay on the Aegean Sea to launch a fresh but largely unsuccessful attack against Turkish and German forces on the Gallipoli Peninsula. In total, the Allies suffered nearly 20,000 casualties during the landings.
- **Aug 06 1917 - WWI:** *Battle of Mărășești* (6 Aug – 3 Sep) » The last major battle between the German Empire and the Kingdom of Romania on the Romanian front. On July 22, 1917, the Romanians launched a joint offensive with Russia (Allied Powers) against the Austro-Hungarian 1st Army, around Mărăști and the lower part of the Siret river, which resulted in the Battle of Mărăști. Although there was some initial success, a counter-offensive by the Central Powers (Austria-Hungary & Germany) in Galicia stopped the Romanian-Russian offensive.

On 22 AUG, the Central Powers ceased their offensive, organized for defense, and settled into trench warfare. On 23 AUG, the Germans started bringing up more artillery. On 28 AUG, German Field Marshal August von Mackensen launched another attack, causing the Russians to leave the battlefield in large numbers after showing little resistance. The Romanians were able to reinforce their lines before Mackensen could exploit the Russian collapse, completely stopping his advance.

This was the most important battle ever fought by the Romanian Army, as it managed to completely stop Mackensen's intended invasion of Moldavia. Field Marshal Mackensen halted the attack on 3 SEP in order to transfer troops to the Italian Front. The Germans had pushed forward approximately four miles along a front 18.6 miles, but at great cost and without achieving any major objective. German casualties (killed, wounded and missing) amounted to around 60,000 men, while Romanian casualties amounted to 27,000. Romania was mostly occupied by the Central Powers, but the Battle of Mărășești kept the northeastern region of the country free from occupation.

- **Aug 06 1918 - WWI:** Second Battle of the Marne ends.
- **Aug 06 1919 - WWI:** Romanian forces bring down Hungarian Soviet Republic in Budapest.
- **Aug 06 1934 – U.S.\*Haiti:** US troops leave Haiti, which had been occupied since 1915.
- **Aug 06 1940 – Pre WW2:** *Estonia Becomes a Soviet Union Republic* » In April 1940 Germany invaded Denmark and Norway and started its offensive against the Benelux countries and France. In mid-June, when the Wehrmacht was about to march into Paris and the world's attention was focused on this event, the Soviet Union threatened Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with military action and presented them with an ultimatum, demanding they allow additional troops into the country and that they install pro-Soviet governments. On 14 JUN, Tallinn and the northern coast of Estonia were blocked by the Soviet Baltic fleet. All three Baltic countries accepted the ultimatums and were soon occupied by the Red Army.

Estonia was occupied on the basis of the enforced 'dictate of Narva' on 17 JUN; the government of Jüri Uluots resigned. On 21 JUN a pro-Soviet puppet government was formed and the Sovietization process began. In July, parliamentary elections were quickly carried out, which were not free and did not correspond with the constitution of the Republic of Estonia. The convened puppet parliament declared Estonia a 'Soviet socialist republic' and indicated its aim was to join the Soviet Union. In order to present the coup d'état as a popular revolution, numerous meetings were organized in which Estonian communists made speeches and the Red Army kept an eye on the proceedings.



The change in power was not considered legitimate in Estonia or abroad. On 23 JUL U.S. Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles announced that the USA did not recognize the changes carried out in the Baltic countries by force. This was the beginning of the Western countries' politics of non-recognition. On 6 AUG Estonia was incorporated as a union republic into the Soviet Union.

- **Aug 06 1942 – WW2:** *HMCS Assiniboine sinks U-210* » Germany's U-210 submarine undertook a single war patrol, departing Kiel on 18 July 1942 under the command of Rudolf Lemcke and heading for the north central Atlantic Ocean. The patrol was uneventful until 6 AUG when Convoy SC 94 was located. Despite heavy fog, U-210 was spotted on radar by the Canadian destroyer Assiniboine. The U-boat nearly escaped into the fog but the destroyer suddenly reappeared a mere 50 yards away as U-210 crossed its bow. Both ships opened fire; while the range was too close for the destroyer's main guns, her machine gun fire shot up the bridge and conning tower, preventing use of 210's deck gun. As the destroyer passed astern, a shell from her rear battery hit the conning tower, killing the entire bridge crew; fifty caliber machine gun fire silenced the submarine's flak gun.

The senior surviving officer of U-210 ordered her to dive, but forced a slow straight course which allowed Assiniboine to ram her just abaft the conning tower as she dove. This resulted in the submarine's electric motors failing and damage to the propellers. The ballast tanks were blown and the attacking destroyer rammed again as U-210 surfaced; a pattern of shallow-set depth charges were dropped at the same time. As the submarine sank, Assiniboine hit her with another 4.7-inch (119 mm) shell. 37 survivors were pulled from the water and became prisoners of war. Six men of her crew died during this battle.

- **Aug 06 1942 – WW2:** *Churchill fires His Middle-East Commander* » Like his foe Rommel (and his predecessor Wavell and successor Montgomery), Auchinleck was subjected to constant political interference, having to weather a barrage of hectoring telegrams and instructions from Prime Minister Churchill throughout late 1941 and the spring and summer of 1942. Churchill constantly sought an offensive from Auchinleck, and was downcast at the military reverses in Egypt and Cyrenaica. Churchill was desperate for some sort of British victory before the planned Allied landings in North Africa, Operation Torch, scheduled for November 1942.



Churchill badgered Auchinleck immediately after the Eighth Army had all but exhausted itself after the first battle of El Alamein. Churchill and the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Alan Brooke, flew to Cairo in early August 1942, to meet him, where it emerged he had lost the confidence of both men. He was replaced as Commander-in-Chief Middle East Command by General Sir Harold Alexander (later Field Marshal Earl Alexander of Tunis).

Joseph M. Horodyski and Maurice Remy both praise Auchinleck as an underrated military leader who contributed the most to the successful defence of El Alamein and consequently the final defeat of Rommel in Africa. The two historians also criticize Churchill for the unreasonable decision to put the blame on Auchinleck and to relieve him.

- **Aug 06 1945 – WW2: *Atomic Bomb Dropped On Hiroshima Japan*** » The United States becomes the first and only nation to use atomic weaponry during wartime when it drops an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. Though the dropping of the atomic bomb on Japan marked the end of World War II, many historians argue that it also ignited the Cold War.



**Little Boy Atomic Bomb and her deliverer Enola Gay on the city of Hiroshima**

Since 1940, the United States had been working on developing an atomic weapon, after having been warned by Albert Einstein that Nazi Germany was already conducting research into nuclear weapons. By the time the United States conducted the first successful test (an atomic bomb was exploded in the desert in New Mexico in July 1945), Germany had already been defeated. The war against Japan in the Pacific, however, continued to rage. President Harry S. Truman, warned by some of his advisers that any attempt to invade Japan would result in horrific American casualties, ordered that the new weapon be used to bring the war to a speedy end.

On August 6, 1945, the American bomber Enola Gay dropped a five-ton bomb over the Japanese city of Hiroshima. A blast equivalent to the power of 15,000 tons of TNT reduced four square miles of the city to ruins and immediately killed 80,000 people and another 35,000 are injured. At least another 60,000 would be dead by the end of the year from the effects of the fallout. The dropping of the bomb on Hiroshima by the Americans did not have the effect intended: unconditional surrender by Japan. Half of the Japanese inner Cabinet, called the Supreme War Direction Council, refused to surrender unless guarantees about Japan's future were given by the Allies, especially regarding the position of the emperor, Hirohito. The only Japanese civilians who even knew what happened at Hiroshima were either dead or suffering terribly.

In the years since the two atomic bombs were dropped on Japan, a number of historians have suggested that the weapons had a two-pronged objective. First, of course, was to bring the war with Japan to a speedy end and spare American lives. It has been suggested that the second objective was to demonstrate the new weapon of mass destruction to the Soviet Union. By August 1945, relations between the Soviet Union and the United States had deteriorated badly. The Potsdam Conference between U.S. President Harry S. Truman, Russian leader Joseph Stalin, and Winston Churchill (before being replaced by Clement Attlee) ended just four days before the bombing of Hiroshima.

The meeting was marked by recriminations and suspicion between the Americans and Soviets. Russian armies were occupying most of Eastern Europe. Truman and many of his advisers hoped that the U.S. atomic monopoly might offer diplomatic leverage with the Soviets. In this fashion, the dropping of the atomic bomb on Japan can be seen as the first shot of the Cold War. If U.S. officials truly believed that they could use their atomic monopoly for diplomatic advantage, they had little time to put their plan into action. By 1949, the Soviets had developed their own atomic bomb and the nuclear arms race began.

- **Aug 06 1945 – WW2:** USS Bullhead (SS-332) missing. Most likely sunk by Japanese Army aircraft (73rd Chutai) off Bali in the Java Sea. 84 killed.
- **Aug 06 1964 – Vietnam War:** The British Consul General in Hanoi cabled London that the only "plausible explanation" for the 2 AUG Tonkin Gulf incident "seems to be that it was a deliberate attempt by the Americans to provoke the North Vietnamese into hostile reaction.
- **Aug 06 1964 – Vietnam War:** *Johnson Administration Officials Argue for Resolution* » Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara and Secretary of State Dean Rusk appear before a joint Congressional committee on foreign affairs to present the Johnson administration's arguments for a resolution authorizing the president "to take all necessary measures." The New

York Stock Exchange, reacting to the news of the crisis in Vietnam, experienced its sharpest decline since the death of President Kennedy. There were various rallies and peace vigils held across the United States protesting the bombing raids. Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater said he supported President Johnson's ordering of the retaliatory raids, but that he intended to make the whole question of Vietnam a campaign issue.

- **Aug 06 1969 – Vietnam War:** *Green Berets Charged With Murder* » The U.S. Army announces that Colonel Robert B. Rheault, Commander of the Fifth Special Forces Group in Vietnam, and seven other Green Berets have been charged with premeditated murder and conspiracy to commit murder in the summary execution of a Vietnamese national, Thai Khac Chuyen, who had served as an agent for Detachment B-57. Chuyen was reportedly summarily executed for being a double agent who had compromised a secret mission. The case against the Green Berets was ultimately dismissed for reasons of national security when the Central Intelligence Agency refused to release highly classified information about the operations in which Detachment B-57 had been involved. Colonel Rheault subsequently retired from the Army.
- **Aug 06 1971 – Vietnam War:** *First U.S. Army Troops Deployed to Vietnam Stand-down for Withdrawal* » The last remaining troops of the Fourth Battalion, 503rd Infantry of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, (the first U.S. Army ground combat unit to arrive in Vietnam in May 1965), cease combat operations and begin preparations to leave Vietnam.

The first U.S. ground combat unit of any branch to reach Vietnam was the Third Marine Regiment, Third Marine Division, which began arriving on March 8, 1965. The initial U.S. combat forces were followed by a vast array of combat, combat support, and logistics units that together with U.S. Navy and Air Force personnel in-country reached a peak of 543,400 in April 1969. In June 1969, President Richard Nixon gave the order, as part of his "Vietnamization" policy, which began the process of reducing American troop strength; the troop withdrawals began the following fall and continued until the Paris Peace Accords were signed in January 1973.

- **Aug 06 1990 – Gulf War:** The United Nations Security Council orders a global trade embargo against Iraq in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.
- **Aug 06 2011 – Afghanistan:** *U.S. Helicopter Downed* » Insurgents shoot down a U.S. military helicopter during fighting in eastern Afghanistan, killing 30 Americans, most of them belonging to the same elite unit as the Navy SEALs who killed former Al Qaeda leader Usama bin Laden. It was the deadliest single loss for American forces in the decade-old war against the Taliban. The dead included 25 Navy SEALs from SEAL Team Six, the unit that carried out the raid in Pakistan in May that killed bin Laden. They were being flown by a crew of the

160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment. A total number of 38 people died in the crash, killing 7 Afghans and one interpreter. The Taliban claimed they downed the helicopter with rocket fire while it was taking part in a raid on a house where insurgents were gathered in the province of Wardak.

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- **Aug 07 1760 – Native Americans: *Siege of Fort Loudoun*** » An engagement during the Anglo-Cherokee War fought from February 1760 to August 1760 between the warriors of the Cherokee led by Ostenaco and the garrison of Fort Loudoun (in what is now Tennessee) composed of British and colonial soldiers commanded by Captain Paul Demeré.

During the French and Indian War the Cherokee were sought after as allies by the British and Provincial Colonial Governments to help contest the frontiers against the French and their Indian allies. An alliance was formed and both sides initially fulfilled each other's expectations. The Cherokee provided warriors and in return the British and Provincials provided supplies and protection of the warrior's homelands. However, the alliance unraveled and soon incidents by both sides provoked the Anglo-Cherokee War in 1758.

At the commencement of the siege the warriors fired their rifles for a few days at the soldiers in the fort but soon ceased in order to conserve precious ammunition. The Cherokee prevented the soldiers and settlers from leaving the fort to hunt or gather foodstuffs. However, some soldiers were married to Indian women and these women were allowed to come and go because the Cherokee did not wish to start feuds with the women's tribes and families. The women were able to smuggle in some much needed food. However this was not enough to indefinitely sustain the garrison and Demeré had reported to Lyttleton in January that his supplies could only last four months.

The siege ground on through June, July and into August with the garrison reduced to eating the horses and getting progressively weaker every day from hunger and sickness. Several soldiers deserted and others threatened to desert. On 6 AUG a council of the officers agreed to seek surrender terms. Captain Demeré was refused when he asked to surrender but Captain Stuart, who was well liked by the Indians, reached an agreement with the Cherokee chiefs at Chota.

The failure to relieve Fort Loudoun forced the garrison to surrender with Captain Demeré and the garrison allowed to retain their arms and enough ammunition to make the trip back to the colony provided they left the remaining arms and stores of ammunition to the Cherokee led by Ostenaco. The garrison marched out of the fort on 9 AUG with a Cherokee escort. The Indians entered the fort and found 10 bags of powder and ball buried and the cannon and small

arms thrown in the river to keep them from the Cherokee. Some of the Indians, angered by the broken agreement, held a secret council and decided to go after the garrison

The next morning the garrison's Indian escort had drifted off and the garrison was attacked in the woods by perhaps 700 Indians. Some 22 soldiers, including all the officers except Stuart, equal to the number of Cherokee chief hostages killed at Fort Prince George, and 3 civilians were killed and 120 or more were taken prisoners. Captain Demeré alone was tortured, scalped, made to dance and beaten until he died for betraying the surrender agreement.

- **Aug 07 1782 – American Revolution:** *Badge of Military Merit* » General George Washington established the Badge of Military Merit for soldiers as an award to recognize military merit in privates and non-commissioned officers. It is considered the first military award of the United States Armed Forces. Only 3 were given by Washington himself but he authorized his subordinate officers to issue them as appropriate.



Although never abolished, the award of the badge was not proposed again officially until after World War I. As we know it today it was reestablished in 1932 to coincide with the 200th anniversary of the birth of George Washington. The War Department authorized the new Purple Heart Medal for soldiers who had previously received either a Wound Chevron or the Army Wound Ribbon. At that time, it was also determined that the Purple Heart Medal would be considered the official "successor decoration" to the Badge of Military Merit.

- **Aug 07 1789 – DOD:** Shortly after the establishment of a strong government under President George Washington Congress created the United States War Department as a civilian agency to administer the field army under the president (as commander in chief) and the secretary of war. Retired senior General Henry Knox, then in civilian life, served as the first United States Secretary of War. In September 18, 1947, it was split into Department of the Army and Department of the Air Force and joined the Department of the Navy as part of the new joint National Military Establishment (NME), renamed the United States Department of Defense in 1949.
- **Aug 07 1791 – Native Americans:** In the Northwest Indian War United States troops destroy the Miami town of Kenapacomaqua near the site of present-day Logansport, Indiana. Casualties and losses: Indians 43 – US 3.
- **Aug 07 1794 – USA:** U.S. President George Washington invokes the Militia Law of 1792 to suppress the Whiskey Rebellion in western Pennsylvania.

- **Aug 07 1864 – Civil War:** *Battle of Moorefield, WV* » On 30 JUL, Confederate cavalry commanded by Brigadier General John McCausland moved north of the Potomac River and burned most of the town of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. He then moved west to threaten more towns and the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. McCausland was pursued by a smaller Union cavalry force commanded by Brigadier General William W. Averell. McCausland's troops, with fresh horses, were able to escape the Union cavalry and threaten more towns. After re-crossing the Potomac River, McCausland moved south and camped between the West Virginia towns of Moorefield and Romney—closer to Moorefield.

McCausland positioned a brigade led by General Bradley Johnson on the north side of the South Branch of the Potomac River, while his own brigade camped on the south side. Those campsites were better suited for grazing their tired horses than they were for providing for the security of the troops—McCausland assumed that Averell's pursuing force was still 60 miles away in Hancock, Maryland. He was correct that Averell had been forced to rest his horses near Hancock, but Averell was reinforced and ordered to continue the pursuit a few days later.

On the night of 6 AUG, Averell's cavalry cautiously moved toward the Confederate camps. Using an advance guard disguised as Confederate soldiers, Averell's cavalry quietly captured all of the Confederate pickets that separated the Union force from the sleeping Confederates. On the early morning of 7 AUG, Averell's first brigade attacked the Confederate brigade camped on the north side of the river. Many of these rebels were sleeping and did not have their horses saddled. In some cases, entire Confederate regiments simply tried to run away, leaving behind weapons and loot taken from Chambersburg.

Although the Confederates attempted to offer resistance on the south side of the river that separated the two Confederate camps, many of those men were also caught unprepared. Averell added his second brigade to the fight, and it charged across the river. The disorganized Confederate force was no match for Averell's cavalry, which was armed with sabers, 6-shot revolvers (hand guns) and 7-shot repeating rifles. Over 400 men were either killed or captured, while the Union force lost less than 50. Averell's victory inflicted permanent damage on the Confederate cavalry, and it was never again the dominant force it once was in the Shenandoah Valley.

- **Aug 07 1914 – WWI Era:** *Battle of Mulhouse Begins (7 thru 23 Aug)* » The Battle, also called the Battle of Alsace, which began at five o'clock on the morning on 7 AUG, was the opening attack of the WWI by the French Army against Germany. The battle was part of a French attempt to recover the province of Alsace, which France had ceded to the new German Empire following defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871. The French occupied Mulhouse on 8 AUG and were then forced out by German counter-attacks on 10 AUG. The

French retired to Belfort, where General Louis Bonneau, the French VII Corps commander, was sacked along with the commander of the 8th Cavalry Division. Events further north led to the German XIV and XV corps being moved away from Belfort and a second French offensive by the French VII Corps, reinforced and renamed the French Army of Alsace (General Paul Pau), began on 14 AUG.

During the Battle of Lorraine, the principal French offensive by the First and Second armies, the Army of Alsace advanced cautiously into the border province of Lorraine (Lothringen). The French reached the area west of Mulhouse by 16 AUG and fought their way into the city by 19 AUG. The German survivors were pursued eastwards over the Rhine and the French took 3,000 prisoners. Joffre ordered the offensive to continue but by 23 AUG, preparations were halted as news of the French defeats in Lorraine and the Ardennes arrived. On 26 AUG, the French withdrew from Mulhouse to a more defensible line near Altkirch, to provide reinforcements for the French armies closer to Paris. The Army of Alsace was disbanded, the VII Corps was transferred to the Somme area in Picardy and the 8th Cavalry Division was attached to the First Army, to which two more divisions were sent later. The German 7th Army took part in the counter-offensive in Lorraine with the German 6th Army and in early September was transferred to the Aisne.

- **Aug 07 1914 – WWI Era:** *Battle of the Frontiers Begins (7 Aug thru 6 Sep)* » This was a series of battles fought along the eastern frontier of France and in southern Belgium, shortly after the outbreak of WWI. The battles resolved the military strategies of the French Chief of Staff General Joseph Joffre with Plan XVII and an offensive interpretation of the German Aufmarsch II deployment plan by Helmuth von Moltke the Younger: the German concentration on the right (northern) flank, to wheel through Belgium and attack the French in the rear.

The German advance was delayed by the movement of French Fifth Army (General Charles Lanrezac) towards the north-west to intercept them, and the presence of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) on left flank of the French. The Franco-British troops were driven back by the Germans, who were able to invade northern France. French and British rearguard actions delayed the German advance, allowing the French time to transfer forces on the eastern frontier to the west to defend Paris, resulting in the First Battle of the Marne. Casualties and losses: French 329,000, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland 29,597, and German Empire 305,594.

- **Aug 07 1941 – WW2 Era:** U.S. Congress approves extension of National Service from 12 months to 18 months.



- **Aug 07 1942 – WW2: *U.S. Forces Invade Guadalcanal*** » The U.S. 1st Marine Division begins Operation Watchtower, the first U.S. and Allied Pacific offensive of the war, by landing on Guadalcanal, one of the Solomon Islands.



On June 8, 1942, the Japanese landed on Guadalcanal Island and began constructing an airfield there. Operation Watchtower was the codename for the U.S. plan to invade Guadalcanal and the surrounding islands two months later. During the attack, American troops landed on five islands within the Solomon chain. Although the invasion came as a complete surprise to the Japanese (bad weather had grounded their scouting aircraft), the landings on Florida, Tulagi, Gavutu, and Tananbogo met much initial opposition from the Japanese defenders.

But the Americans who landed on Guadalcanal met little resistance—at least at first. More than 11,000 Marines had landed, and 24 hours had passed, before the Japanese manning the garrison there knew of the attack. The U.S. forces quickly took their main objective, the airfield, and the outnumbered Japanese troops retreated, but not for long. Reinforcements were brought in, and fierce hand-to-hand jungle fighting ensued. “I have never heard or read of this kind of fighting,” wrote one American major general on the scene. “These people refuse to surrender.”

The Americans were at a particular disadvantage, being assaulted from both the sea and air. But the U.S. Navy was able to reinforce its troops to a greater extent, and by February 1943, the Japanese had retreated on secret orders of their emperor (so secret, the Americans did not even know it had taken place until they began happening upon abandoned positions, empty boats, and discarded supplies). In total, the Japanese had lost more than 25,000 men, compared with a loss of 1,600 by the Americans. Each side lost 24 warships.

The first Medal of Honor given to a Marine was awarded to Sgt. John Basilone for his fighting during Operation Watchtower. According to the recommendation for his medal, he “contributed materially to the defeat and virtually the annihilation of a Japanese regiment.” To learn more about the Army’s role on Guadalcanal, visit <https://history.army.mil/brochures/72-8/72-8.htm>.

- **Aug 07 1943 – WW2:** *The 2<sup>nd</sup> Battle of Smolensk (7 AUG – 2 OCT)* » This was the beginning of a Soviet strategic offensive operation conducted by the Red Army as part of the Summer-Autumn Campaign of 1943. In it Soviet forces reconquered Smolensk. Staged almost simultaneously with the Lower Dnieper Offensive (13 August–22 September), the offensive lasted two months and was led by General Andrei Yeremenko, commanding the Kalinin Front, and Vasily Sokolovsky, commanding the Western Front. Its goal was to clear the German presence from the Smolensk and Bryansk regions. Smolensk had been under German occupation since the first Battle of Smolensk in 1941.

Despite an impressive German defense, the Red Army was able to stage several breakthroughs, liberating several major cities, including Smolensk and Roslavl. As a result of this operation, the Red Army was able to start planning for the liberation of Belarus. However, the overall advance was quite modest and slow in the face of heavy German resistance, and the operation was therefore accomplished in three stages: 7–20 August, 21 August–6 September, and 7 September–2 October.

Although playing a major military role in its own right, the Smolensk Operation was also important for its effect on the Battle of the Dnieper. It has been estimated that as many as 55 German divisions were committed to counter the Smolensk Operation — divisions which would have been critical to prevent Soviet troops from crossing the Dnieper in the south. In the course of the operation, the Red Army also definitively drove back German forces from the Smolensk land bridge, historically the most important approach for a western attack on Moscow. Casualties and losses: German 70,593 – Soviet 107,645 killed, missing or captured and 343,821 wounded and sick).

- **Aug 07 1943 – WW2:** Red Army recaptures Bogodukov, a city in eastern Ukraine, for the second time. Bogodukhov was occupied by the German Army from 16 October 1941 to 17 February 1943 and again from 11 March to 7 August 1943. It was liberated by the Russian 1st Tank Army.
- **Aug 07 1944 – WW2:** *Volkswagen Halts Beetle Production* » Under the threat of Allied bombing during World War II, the German car manufacturer Volkswagen halts production of the “Beetle,” as its small, insect-shaped automobile was dubbed in the international press.

Ten years earlier, the renowned automotive engineer Ferdinand Porsche had signed a contract with Germany’s Third Reich to develop a prototype of a small, affordable “people’s car.” The German chancellor, National Socialist (Nazi) leader Adolf Hitler, called the car the KdF (Kraft-durch-Freude)-Wagen (or “Strength-Through-Joy” car), after a Nazi-led movement ostensibly aimed at helping the working people of Germany. Porsche didn’t like that moniker; he preferred Volkswagen (meaning “people’s car”), the name under which the

car had originally been developed. In 1938, the government built a factory to produce the car in the city of KdF-stat. The first production-ready Beetle debuted at the Berlin Motor Show in 1939. Several months later, Germany invaded Poland, sparking the conflict that would explode into world war.

During the war years, the German army's need for a lightweight utility vehicle took precedence over the production of affordable passenger cars. The result was the Type 62 Kubelwagen, a convertible vehicle with a modified Beetle chassis, four doors and 18-inch wheels (compared with the Beetle's 16-inch ones) to give it better ground clearance. Though production at the KdF-stat factory was dedicated primarily to the Kubelwagen and its amphibious counterpart, the Schwimmwagen, the factory did continue to produce Beetles from 1941 to August 7, 1944, when production was halted under threat of Allied bombing.



**Type 62 Kubelwagen**

In the war's aftermath, a devastated Germany was divided into four sectors. Those under British, French and American control would combine to form West Germany, while the region under Soviet control became East Germany. KdF-stat (soon renamed Wolfsburg), which was in the British sector, and its auto factory remained in relatively good shape for having been a target of Allied bombs. Volkswagen, then under the control of the British military, began turning out Beetles again in December 1945. By 1949, the company (now called Volkswagen GmbH) was back in German hands, and in 1972 the Beetle passed the iconic Ford Model T as the top-selling car in history.

- **Aug 07 1944 – WW2: *Operation Lüttich*** » German counter-attack from 7 to 13 AUG during the Battle of Normandy, which took place around the American positions near Mortain in northwestern France. The German offensive is also referred to in American and British histories of the Battle of Normandy as the Mortain counterattack. The assault was ordered by Adolf Hitler, to eliminate the gains made by the First United States Army during Operation Cobra and the subsequent weeks, and by reaching the coast in the region of Avranches at the base of the Cotentin peninsula, cut off the units of the Third United States Army which had advanced into Brittany.

The main German striking force was the XLVII Panzer Corps, with one and a half SS Panzer Divisions and two Heer Panzer Divisions. Although they made initial gains against the

defending U.S. VII Corps, they were soon halted and the Allies inflicted severe losses on the attacking troops, eventually destroying most of the German tanks involved in the attack. Although fighting continued around Mortain for six days, the American forces had regained the initiative within a day of the opening of the German attack. As the German commanders on the spot had warned Hitler in vain, there was little chance of the attack succeeding, and the concentration of their armored reserves at the western end of the front in Normandy soon led to disaster, as they were outflanked to their south and the front to their east collapsed, resulting in many of the German troops in Normandy being trapped in the Falaise Pocket.

By 13 AUG, the offensive had fully halted, with German forces being driven out of Mortain. The Germans had lost 120 tanks and assault guns to Allied counter-attacks and air strikes, more than two-thirds of their committed total. As Hitler ordered German forces in Normandy to hold their positions, the U.S. VII and XV Corps were swinging east and north toward Argentan. The German attack west left their 7th Army and Panzergruppe West in danger of being encircled by Allied forces. As American forces advanced on Argentan, British and Canadian forces advanced on Falaise, threatening to cut off both armies in the newly formed Falaise Pocket.

Although American casualties in Operation Lüttich were significantly lighter than in previous operations, certain sectors of the front took severe casualties. Notably the positions held by the U.S. 30th Division around Mortain. By the end of 7 AUG alone, nearly 1,000 men of the 30th Division had been killed. Estimates for American casualties from 6–13 AUG vary from 2,000-3,000 fatalities, with an unknown number of wounded.

- **Aug 07 1944 – WW2:** U.S. 3rd Army reaches suburbs of Brest, Brittany (France).
- **Aug 07 1944 – WW2:** *The Falaise Pocket* » During the Normandy Invasion on the western flank, the Americans launched Operation Cobra. This smashed a hole in the German lines, through which an armored column poured. American forces swept south and east, getting into the Germans' rear. As that American advance turned back north, a large force of Germans became contained in a pocket of ground west of the town of Falaise. Tens of thousands of soldiers, many retreating from the Allied offensives, were crammed together in a shrinking space.

The Allied commanders realized that they had been presented with a huge opportunity. The Germans were surrounded on three sides. If the Allies could complete this encirclement, then all the Germans in the Falaise pocket would be forced to surrender. The first attempt to cut off the Germans was Operation Totalize, launched by II Canadian Corps on the night of the 7th of August. Following a swift and effective aerial bombardment, Canadian, British, and Polish

troops advanced out of the north towards Falaise. At first, Totalize seemed to go well. A night attack by mobile troops led to significant advances against vulnerable German forces.

But the Germans, many of them fanatical SS troopers, swiftly pulled together. Their 88mm guns, one of the most effective weapons in Normandy, took a toll on Allied armor. Canadian morale wavered, undermined by the inconsistency of their leaders, who varied from highly effective to what the official Canadian historian referred to as “not fully competent”. By the 11th of August, the advance had ground to a halt, still a dozen miles from Falaise. Totalize drew to a close.

The more time passed, the more of the Germans might slip out to continue the war elsewhere. The Americans were impatient to get the job done but faced their own internal divisions. General Patton wanted to ride in and close the pocket in a pincer movement. Bradley overrode him, conserving resources. And so, on the 14th of August, another offensive, Operation Tractable, was launched by the First Canadian Army, a force which included Polish troops. This time, the Canadians used smoke instead of the night to conceal their advance. They again used tactical bombing to disrupt German formations as the ground troops moved in.

From early on, Operation Tractable was beset by problems. The Laison River proved harder to cross than expected, slowing the advance. A failure of communication between army and air force led to ground units using yellow smoke to identify themselves while pilots were using it to mark targets, leading Allied planes to attack their own side. The Germans continued to use the terrain and their superior equipment to their advantage, making the Allies pay in blood for every step forward. Despite these setbacks, Tractable increased the pressure on the Germans. By the end of the 15th, the Canadians were a mile from the edge of Falaise, while Canadian and Polish divisions were pushing south around Trun. Only a narrow gap separated the Canadian Army in the north from the Americans in the south.

The writing was on the wall for the Germans west of Falaise. They began efforts in earnest to escape through the gap so that they could continue the war further east. Field Marshal von Kluge ordered a retreat, for which he was relieved of command by an enraged Hitler, who was unwilling to accept the reality of their difficulties. As Germans streamed through the gap, Allied planes rained carnage down upon them, trying to destroy as many of these easy targets as they could. Meanwhile, the Poles and Canadians were ordered to close the gap. Their experiences with friendly fire made them even more cautious of advancing with so many planes in the air. They faced counter-attacks from SS forces and continuing resistance from those Germans fighting to keep the gap open. It took until the 19th for the Poles to link up with the Americans at Chambois. Even then, the gap was not yet sealed, as Germans were still fighting their way past hills held by Canadian and Polish forces.

At last, on the evening of the 21st, the Poles and Canadians linked their formations into a complete line, cutting off the gap. The Germans still in the pocket were completely surrounded. The survivors soon surrendered and the tide of war moved east. The Germans lost an estimated 60,000 men in the Falaise pocket – 10,000 dead and 50,000 captured. Hundreds of tanks and assault guns were taken. It was a huge victory for the Allies. On the other hand, 20-50,000 Germans had escaped from the pocket while the Allies struggled to close the gap.

- **Aug 07 1944 – WW2:** Cherbourg Harbor opens for Allied traffic in France.
- **Aug 07 1946 – Cold War:** *Turkish Straits Crisis* » A territorial conflict between the Soviet Union and Turkey. Turkey had remained officially neutral throughout most of the Second World War. When the war ended, Turkey was pressured by the Soviet government to allow Soviet shipping to flow freely through the Turkish Straits, which connected the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. As the Turkish government refused the Soviet Union's request, tensions arose in the region, leading to a Soviet show of naval force.

In the summer and autumn of 1946, the Soviet Union increased its naval presence in the Black Sea, having Soviet vessels perform maneuvers near Turkish shores. A substantial number of ground troops were dispatched to the Balkans. Buckling under the mounting pressure from the Soviets, in a matter of days Turkey appealed to the United States for aid. The situation served as a deciding factor in the issuing of the Truman Doctrine. After consulting his administration, President Truman sent a naval task force to Turkey. On 9 OCT the respective governments of the United States and United Kingdom reaffirmed their support for Turkey. On 26 OCT, the Soviet Union withdrew its specific request for a new summit on the control of the Turkish Straits (but not its opinions) and sometime shortly thereafter pulled out most of the intimidatory military forces from the region.

Turkey abandoned its policy of neutrality and accepted USD \$100 million in economic and defense aid from the US in 1947 under the Truman Doctrine's plan of ceasing the spread of Soviet influence into Turkey and Greece. Both nations joined NATO in 1952. After the death of Joseph Stalin, motivation behind a regime change declined within the Soviet government, and on May 30, 1953, Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov disowned the Russian claims over the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, as well as the other territorial disputes along the Turkish-Armenia-Georgian border. The Montreux Treaty of 1936, with revisions, is still in place in the present day between the successor states of the USSR and Turkey.

- **Aug 07 1956 – Colombia:** *Mysterious Explosions Kill 1,000+* » Seven army ammunition trucks explode in Cali, Colombia, killing more than 1,000 people and injuring thousands more. The cause of the explosions remains a mystery. The previous day, 20 trucks fully loaded with

dynamite departed the Colombian city of Buenaventura. The trucks stopped in Cali and then 13 of the trucks headed toward Bogota, Colombia's capital city. The remaining seven were headed to other destinations and were parked in downtown Cali overnight.

Just after midnight, all seven trucks suddenly exploded in a quick chain reaction. A nearby rail station was demolished, as was an army barracks. Five hundred soldiers in the barracks lost their lives in an instant. A three-block area of the densely populated city was absolutely razed. Virtually every window within several miles shattered. The trucks themselves were obliterated and a large crater was left in the ground. The heavy bronze doors of St. Paul's Cathedral, more than 10 blocks away, were blown right off the church. The president of Colombia, General Gustavo Pinilla, publicly charged that terrorists were to blame for the disaster, but no evidence was ever found that the explosion was deliberate.

- **Aug 07 1964 – Vietnam War: Tonkin Gulf Resolution Is Passed** » The U.S. Congress passes Public Law 88-408, which becomes known as the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, giving President Johnson the power to take whatever actions he deems necessary to defend Southeast Asia including “the use of armed force.”

The resolution passed 82-2 in the Senate, where Wayne K. Morse (D-OR) and Ernest Gruening (D-AK) were the only dissenting votes; the bill passed 416-0 in the House of Representatives. President Johnson signed it into law on August 10. It became the legal basis for every presidential action taken by the Johnson administration during its conduct of the war. Despite the initial support for the resolution, it became increasingly controversial as Johnson used it to increase U.S. commitment to the war in Vietnam. It would be repealed in May 1970.

- **Aug 07 1967 – Vietnam War: North Vietnam and People's Republic Of China Sign Aid Agreement** » The North Vietnamese newspaper Nhan Dan reports that the People's Republic of China (PRC) has signed a new agreement to give Hanoi an undisclosed amount of aid in the form of an outright grant.

Chinese support to the Communists in Vietnam had begun with their backing of the Vietminh in their war against the French. After the French were defeated, the PRC continued its support of the Hanoi regime. In April 1965, the PRC signed a formal agreement with Hanoi providing for the introduction of Chinese air defense, engineering, and railroad troops into North Vietnam to help maintain and expand lines of communication within North Vietnam. China later claimed that 320,000 of its troops served in North Vietnam during the period 1965 to 1971 and that 1,000 died there. It is estimated that the PRC provided over three-quarters of the total military aid given to North Vietnam during the war.

- **Aug 07 1990 – U.S.\*Iraq:** *Bush Orders Operation Desert Shield* » President George Herbert Walker Bush orders the organization of Operation Desert Shield in response to Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait on 2 AUG. The order prepared American troops to become part of an international coalition in the war against Iraq that would be launched as Operation Desert Storm in January 1991. To support Operation Desert Shield, Bush authorized a dramatic increase in U.S. troops and resources in the Persian Gulf.

Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein and hard-line Iraqi nationalists had always believed Kuwait should be part of Iraq, but nationalist propaganda aside, acquiring control of Kuwait’s oil fields was Hussein’s primary interest. In addition, control of Kuwait represented a strategic military objective should Iraq be forced into a war with its western-friendly Arab neighbors. Hussein calculated incorrectly that the United States and the United Nations, who were closely tracking Iraq’s military buildup along Kuwait’s borders, would not try to stop him. However, when Iraqi ground forces entered Kuwait on August 2, 1990, President Bush immediately proclaimed that the invasion “would not stand” and vowed to help Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in their efforts to force the Iraqis from Kuwaiti land.



On November 29, 1990, the United Nations Security Council authorized the use of “all means necessary” to remove Hussein’s forces from Kuwait, giving Iraq the deadline of midnight on January 16, 1991, to leave or risk forcible removal. After negotiations between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and Iraq’s foreign minister, Tariq Aziz, failed, Congress authorized President Bush to use American troops in the coming conflict.

Just after midnight on 17 JAN in the U.S., Bush gave the order for U.S. troops to lead an international coalition in an attack on Saddam Hussein’s army. U.S. General Norman Schwarzkopf led “Operation Desert Storm,” which began with a massive bombing of Hussein’s armies in Iraq and Kuwait. The ensuing campaign, which is remembered in part for the United States’ use of superior military technology, introduced the term “smart bombs” to the global vernacular—precision-bombing devices aimed primarily at destroying infrastructure and minimizing civilian casualties. In response, Hussein launched SCUD missiles into Saudi Arabia and Israel. Iraq’s use of SCUDs, notoriously inaccurate weapons designed to terrorize civilian targets, nearly succeeded in inciting the Israelis to retaliate. Hussein hoped an Israeli military response would draw neighboring Arab nations into the fight on Iraq’s side, but he again committed a grave miscalculation. Bush reassured Israelis that the U.S. would protect them from Hussein’s terrifying SCUD attacks and Israel resisted the urge to retaliate. Soon



after, U.S. –installed Patriot missiles destroyed SCUD missiles in flight and further foiled Hussein’s plan to goad Israel into a holy war.

Following an intense bombing of Baghdad, U.S.-led coalition ground forces marched into Kuwait and across the Iraq border. Regular Iraqi troops surrendered in droves, leaving only Hussein’s hard-line Republican Guard to defend the capital, which they were unsuccessful in doing. After pushing Hussein’s forces out of Kuwait, Schwarzkopf called a ceasefire on 28 FEB; he accepted the surrender of Iraqi generals on 3 MAR.

- **Aug 07 1998 – U.S.\*International Terrorism: U.S. Embassies in East Africa Bombed** »  
At 10:30 a.m. local time, a massive truck bomb explodes outside the U.S. embassy in Nairobi, Kenya. Minutes later, another truck bomb detonated outside the U.S. embassy in Dar es Salaam, the capital of neighboring Tanzania. The dual terrorist attacks killed 224 people, including 12 Americans, and wounded more than 4,500. The United States accused Saudi exile Osama bin Laden, a proponent of international terrorism against America, of masterminding the bombings. On 20 AUG, President Bill Clinton ordered cruise missiles launched against bin Laden’s terrorist training camps in Afghanistan and against a pharmaceutical plant in Sudan, where bin Laden allegedly made or distributed chemical weapons.

Osama bin Laden was born in 1957 into one of Saudi Arabia’s wealthiest and most prominent families. His father, an immigrant from South Yemen, had built a small construction business into a multibillion-dollar company. When his father died in 1968, bin Laden inherited an estimated \$30 million but for the next decade drifted without focus and lived a jet-setting lifestyle. In 1979, however, everything changed when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Like tens of thousands of other Arabs, bin Laden volunteered to aid Afghanistan in repulsing what he saw as the godless communist invaders of the Muslim country.



For the first few years of the Afghan War, he traveled around Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf raising money for the anti-Soviet Afghan fighters. In 1982, he traveled to the front lines of the war for the first time, where he donated construction equipment for the war effort. Bin Laden directly participated in a handful of battles, but his primary role in the anti-Soviet jihad was as financier. During the war, he made contact with numerous Islamic militants, many of whom who were as anti-Western as they were anti-Soviet.

In 1989, the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan, and bin Laden returned to Saudi Arabia. He grew increasingly critical of the ruling Saudi family, especially after hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops were welcomed onto Saudi soil during the Persian Gulf War. Although his passport was taken away, he slipped out of Saudi Arabia in 1991 and settled in the Sudan. From there, he spoke out against the Saudi government and the continuing U.S. military presence in Saudi Arabia, which he likened to the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

After the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center in New York, the United States began to suspect that bin Laden was involved in international terrorism against the United States. The military organization he built during the Afghan War—al Qaeda, or “the Base”—was still in existence, and U.S. intelligence believed he was transforming it into an anti-U.S. terrorist network. In 1995, bin Laden called for guerrilla attacks against U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia, and three months later a terrorist attack against a U.S. military installation killed five Americans. Under U.S. and Saudi pressure he was expelled from the Sudan in May 1996. One month later, a truck bomb killed 19 U.S. servicemen in Saudi Arabia. Whether or not bin Laden was involved in planning these attacks has not been established.

With 200 of his followers, bin Laden returned to Afghanistan, which was then falling under the control of the Taliban, a faction of extreme Islamic fundamentalists. Bin Laden provided funding for the Taliban military campaign against the city of Kabul, which fell to the militia in September 1996. Soon after his arrival in Afghanistan, bin Laden issued a fatwah, or religious decree, calling for war on Americans in the Persian Gulf and the overthrow of the Saudi government. In February 1998, he issued another fatwah stating that Muslims should kill Americans, including civilians, anywhere in the world.

On August 7, 1998—the eighth anniversary of the deployment of U.S. troops to Saudi Arabia—two U.S. embassies in East Africa were bombed almost simultaneously. The attack at the Nairobi embassy, which was located in a busy downtown area, caused the greater devastation and loss of life. There, a truck loaded with 2,000 pounds of TNT forced its way to the back entrance of the embassy and was detonated, shattering the embassy, demolishing the nearby Ufundi Coop House, and gutting the 17-story Cooperative Bank. By the time rescue operations came to an end, 213 people were dead, including 12 Americans. Thousands of people were wounded, and hundreds were maimed or blinded. The attack against the U.S. embassy in Dar es Saalam killed 11 and injured 85.



## **Aftermath of 1993 World Trade Center (left) and 1998 Nairobi and Dar es Salaam U.S. Embassy Bombings (center & right)**

By 1997, American intelligence officers knew that bin Laden operatives were active in East Africa but were unable to break up the terrorist cell before the embassies were attacked. They had even heard of a possible plot to bomb the U.S. embassy in Nairobi but failed to recommend an increase in security before the attack. Meanwhile, Prudence Bushnell, the U.S. ambassador to Kenya, independently asked the State Department to move the Nairobi embassy because of its exposed location, but the request was not granted. Revelations of these pre-bombing security issues provoked much controversy and concern about the United States' vulnerability abroad. Few, however, voiced concern that the proliferation of terrorists eager to kill innocent civilians and themselves in order to strike a blow against the U.S. would soon shatter America's sense of invulnerability at home.

Within days of the 7 AUG bombings, two bin Laden associates were arrested and charged with the attacks. However, with bin Laden and other key suspects still at large, President Clinton ordered a retaliatory military strike on 20 AUG. In Afghanistan, some 70 American cruise missiles hit three alleged bin Laden training camps. An estimated 24 people were killed, but bin Laden was not present. Thirteen cruise missiles hit a pharmaceutical plant in the Sudan, and the night watchman was killed. The United States later backed away from its contention that the pharmaceutical plant was making or distributing chemical weapons for al Qaeda.

In November 1998, the United States indicted bin Laden and 21 others, charging them with bombing the two U.S. embassies and conspiring to commit other acts of terrorism against Americans abroad. To date, nine of the al Qaeda members named in the indictments have been captured; six are in the United States, and three are in Britain fighting extradition to the United States.

In February 2001, four of the suspects went on trial in New York on 302 criminal counts stemming from the embassy attacks. On 29 MAY, all four were convicted on all counts. Saudi citizen Mohamed Rashed Daoud al-'Owhali and Tanzanian Khalfan Khamis Mohamed admitted to directly taking part in the terrorist attacks but claimed they did not knowingly engage in a conspiracy against the United States. Lebanese-born U.S. citizen Wadih El-Hage and Jordanian Mohammed Saddiq Odeh admitted ties to bin Laden but denied involvement in any terrorist acts. All four were sentenced to life in prison without parole.

On September 11, 2001, the world learned that the U.S. embassy attacks were merely a prelude to a far more devastating strike against the United States. On that day, 19 al Qaeda terrorists deftly exploited weaknesses in U.S. domestic security and hijacked four U.S. airliners that they flew into the World Trade Center towers in New York; the Pentagon in Arlington,

Virginia; and a rural field in western Pennsylvania. Four thousand people were killed in the almost simultaneous attacks and 10,000 were wounded. On October 7, America struck back with Operation Enduring Freedom, the U.S.-led international effort to oust the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, destroy the al Qaeda network based there, and capture bin Laden dead or alive.

- **Aug 07 2005 – Cold War:** *Trapped Russian Sub Rescued* » A Russian Priz AS-28 mini-submarine, with seven crew members on board, is rescued from deep in the Pacific Ocean.

On 4 AUG, the vessel had been taking part in training exercises in Beryozovaya Bay, off the coast of Russia's far-eastern Kamchatka peninsula, when its propellers became entangled in cables that were part of Russia's coastal monitoring system. Unable to surface, the sub's crew was stranded in the dark, freezing submarine for more than three days. At 1 p.m. on August 4, the Priz, trapped at 190 meters below the ocean surface, issued a mayday call. The Russian navy soon began to organize a rescue mission, asking for help from the United Kingdom, United States and Japan. In the ensuing days, while the three countries mobilized rescue crews for the trip to eastern Russia, the Russian navy attempted to first lift the sub from the water and later to drag it to shallower water where it could be reached by divers. Both approaches were complicated by the 60-ton anchor attached to the cables that had ensnared the sub. Finally, with fears mounting that the trapped crew's oxygen supply would soon run out, the six-man crew of a British-owned-and-operated Scorpio-45 rescue sub arrived and was able to cut the sub loose. All seven on board, which included six Russian navy seamen and one representative of the company that made the sub, survived the ordeal.

The Priz incident occurred just five years after the Kursk, a Russian nuclear submarine, sank, killing all 118 people on board. In that disaster, the Russian government had delayed asking for outside help for some 30 hours and was widely blamed for the sailor's deaths. As the disaster unfolded, Russian President Vladimir Putin stunned the public by failing to address the nation and even refused to cut short his vacation in light of the tragedy. Although Russians everywhere were relieved and happy that the Priz was successfully rescued, others could not believe that the Russian navy had not acquired its own rescue equipment in the five years since the Kursk tragedy. For many, the Priz incident highlighted the effect of a decade of decay on the once-mighty Russian military.

- **Aug 07 2014 – U.S.\*Iraq:** U.S. President Barack Obama said he authorized targeted airstrikes as needed against Islamic militants in northern Iraq.
- **Aug 07 2014 – National Holiday:** *Purple Heart Day* » Observed on 7 AUG of each year as a time for Americans to pause to remember and honor the brave men and women who were either wounded on the battlefield or paid the ultimate sacrifice with their lives. Purple Heart Day is also known as National Purple Heart Day, Purple Heart Recognition Day and Purple

Heart Appreciation Day. The holiday was first observed in 2014, is considered an unofficial observance meaning that businesses, government offices etc. do not close on this day. Observance guidance is:

- States, Counties, and Cities pause in recognition of the service and sacrifice of their local sons and daughters as do sports and entertainment entities.
- Major League Baseball teams pay homage to their local Purple Heart recipients during special pre-game and 7th inning ceremonies.
- Veteran and military organizations hold remembrance meetings for fallen heroes and special events to thank soldiers, veterans, and Purple Heart recipients on this day.
- The Purple Heart Foundation, the fundraising arm of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, recommends donating time and money to the foundation or to other organizations working with Purple Heart recipients.
- People take the time to listen to soldiers and veterans and learn more about their life stories and their military service.
- American flags are flown at homes and businesses.

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- **Aug 08 1775 – American Revolution:** *Morgan and Virginians Arrive in Cambridge* » Captain Daniel Morgan and his Virginia riflemen arrive in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Earlier, Morgan had earned the nickname “The Old Waggoneer” from a young George Washington during the Seven Years’ War in 1755, when he removed the wounded from the site of the disastrous Battle of the Wilderness in his wagon.

Morgan continued to lead the Virginia militia between the Seven Years’ War and the outbreak of rebellion in New England at the Battle of Lexington and Concord in 1775. When New England Patriots laid siege to British-occupied Boston in 1775, the Continental Congress requested that other colonies send men to aid in the effort. Virginia’s House of Burgesses selected Morgan to recruit and lead one of the colony’s two rifle companies.



Morgan needed only 10 days to assemble 96 men and only 21 days to march them to Massachusetts, where he would serve under his old compatriot, the newly appointed commander in chief of the Continental Army, General George Washington. Fighting under

Washington, Morgan's men's extraordinary skill as snipers earned them the nickname "Morgan's Sharpshooters." Later, Morgan led the three companies from Boston to the failed invasion of Canada, resulting in Morgan's spending a year as a prisoner of war but also earning him a promotion to colonel.

Upon his release, Colonel Morgan was placed in charge of creating the 11th Virginia Regiment, which he would command. His test for potential riflemen was reputed to be simple: they had to hit a broadside print of a British officer of King George from 100 yards away at their first attempt. Morgan earned Washington's further respect with a stunning victory at Cowpens, South Carolina, in 1781. In 1794, when President Washington was faced with the need to suppress the Whiskey Rebellion in western Pennsylvania, which threatened to shatter the still fragile Union, he called on Daniel Morgan yet again. In this, his last military command, Morgan managed to assemble such an overwhelming force that he put down the rebellion without firing a single shot.

- **Aug 08 1863 – Civil War: *Lee Offers Resignation*** » In the aftermath of his defeat at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, Confederate General Robert E. Lee sends a letter of resignation as commander of the Army of Northern Virginia to Confederate President Jefferson Davis.

The letter came more than a month after Lee's retreat from Pennsylvania. At first, many people in the South wondered if in fact Lee had lost the battle. Lee's intent had been to drive the Union army from Virginia, which he did. The Army of the Potomac suffered over 28,000 casualties, and the Union army's offensive capabilities were temporarily disabled. But the Army of Northern Virginia absorbed 23,000 casualties, nearly one-third of its total. As the weeks rolled by and the Union army reentered Virginia, it became clear that the Confederacy had suffered a serious defeat at Gettysburg. As the press began to openly speculate about Lee's leadership, the great general reflected on the campaign at his headquarters in Orange Courthouse, Virginia.



The modest Lee took the failure at Gettysburg very personally. In his letter to Davis, he wrote, "I have been prompted by these reflections more than once since my return from Pennsylvania to propose to Your Excellency the propriety of selecting another commander for this army... No one is more aware than myself of my inability for the duties of my position. I

cannot even accomplish what I myself desire... I, therefore, in all sincerity, request your Excellency to take measure to supply my place.”

Lee not only seriously questioned his ability to lead his army, he was also experiencing significant physical fatigue. He might also have sensed that Gettysburg was his last chance to win the war. Regardless, President Davis refused the request. He wrote, “To ask me to substitute you by someone... more fit to command, or who would possess more of the confidence of the army... is to demand an impossibility.”

- **Aug 08 1910 – U.S. Army:** The US Army installs the first tricycle landing gear on the Army's Wright Flyer
- **Aug 08 1918 – WWI:** *Hundred Days Offensive Begins (8 Aug – 11 Nov)* » This was a series of massive Allied offensives which ended the First World War. Beginning with the Battle of Amiens on the Western Front, the Allies pushed the Central Powers back, undoing their gains from the Spring Offensive. The Germans retreated to the Hindenburg Line, but the Allies broke through the line with a series of victories, starting with the Battle of St Quentin Canal on 29 SEP. The offensive, together with a revolution breaking out in Germany, led to the Armistice of 11 November 1918 which ended the war with an Allied victory. The term "Hundred Days Offensive" does not refer to a battle or strategy, but rather the rapid series of Allied victories against which the German armies had no reply. Casualties and losses: France, British Empire, U.S. 1,070,000 – German Empire 1,172,075 (~100,000+ killed, 685,733 wounded, 386,342 captured, and 6,700 artillery pieces) + Austria-Hungary 17,500 (2,000 killed, 5,000 captured, 19,000 wounded).
- **Aug 08 1918 – WWI:** *Battle of Amiens Begins* » The Allies launch a series of offensive operations against German positions on the Western Front during World War I with a punishing attack at Amiens, on the Somme River in northwestern France. Amiens was one of the first major battles involving armored warfare.

After heavy casualties incurred during their ambitious spring 1918 offensive, the bulk of the German army was exhausted, and its morale was rapidly disintegrating amid a lack of supplies and the spreading influenza epidemic. Some of its commanders believed that the tide was turning irrevocably in favor of Germany's enemies; as one of them, Crown Prince Rupprecht, wrote on 20 JUL, “We stand at the turning point of the war: what I expected first for the autumn, the necessity to go over to the defensive, is already on us, and in addition all the gains which we made in the spring—such as they were—have been lost again.” Still, Erich Ludendorff, the German commander in chief, refused to accept this reality and rejected the advice of his senior commanders to pull back or begin negotiations.



Meanwhile, the Allies prepared for the war to stretch into 1919, not realizing victory was possible so soon. Thus, at a conference of national army commanders on 24 JUL, Allied generalissimo Ferdinand Foch rejected the idea of a single decisive blow against the Germans, favoring instead a series of limited attacks in quick succession aimed at liberating the vital railway lines around Paris and diverting the attention and resources of the enemy rapidly from one spot to another. According to Foch: “These movements should be exacted with such rapidity as to inflict upon the enemy a succession of blows....These actions must succeed each other at brief intervals, so as to embarrass the enemy in the utilization of his reserves and not allow him sufficient time to fill up his units.” The national commanders—John J. Pershing of the United States, Philippe Petain of France and Sir Douglas Haig of Britain—willingly went along with this strategy, which effectively allowed each army to act as its own entity, striking smaller individual blows to the Germans instead of joining together in one massive coordinated attack.

Haig’s part of the plan called for a limited offensive at Amiens, on the Somme River, aimed at counteracting a German victory there the previous March and capturing the Amiens railway line stretching between Mericourt and Hangest. The British attack, begun on the morning August 8, 1918, was led by the British 4th Army under the command of Sir Henry Rawlinson. The German defensive positions at Amiens were guarded by 20,000 men; they were outnumbered six to one by advancing Allied forces. The British—well assisted by Australian and Canadian divisions—employed some 400 tanks in the attack, along with over 2,000 artillery pieces and 800 aircraft.

By the end of 8 AUG the Allies had penetrated German lines around the Somme with a gap some 15 miles long. Of the 27, 000 German casualties on 8 AUG, an unprecedented proportion—12,000—had surrendered to the enemy. Though the Allies at Amiens failed to continue their impressive success in the days following 8 AUG, the damage had been done. “We have reached the limits of our capacity,” Kaiser Wilhelm II told Ludendorff on that “black day.” “The war must be ended.”

The Kaiser agreed, however, that this end could not come until Germany was again making progress on the battlefield, so that there would be at least some bargaining room. Even faced with the momentum of the Allied summer offensive—later known as the Hundred Days Offensive—the front lines of the German army continued to fight on into the final months of



the war, despite being plagued by disorder and desertion within its troops and rebellion on the home front. Casualties and losses: Allies 1,070,000 of which 127,000 were US - Ger & Aus-Hung 1,172,075.

- **Aug 08 1942 – WW2: German Saboteurs Executed in Washington** » Six German saboteurs who secretly entered the United States on a mission to attack its civil infrastructure are executed by the United States for spying. Two other saboteurs who disclosed the plot to the FBI and aided U.S. authorities in their manhunt for their collaborators were imprisoned.

In 1942, under Nazi leader Adolf Hitler's orders, the defense branch of the German Military Intelligence Corps initiated a program to infiltrate the United States and destroy industrial plants, bridges, railroads, waterworks, and Jewish-owned department stores. The Nazis hoped that sabotage teams would be able to slip into America at the rate of one or two every six weeks. The first two teams, made up of eight Germans who had all lived in the United States before the war, departed the German submarine base at Lorient, France, in late May.



Just before midnight on 12 JUN, in a heavy fog, a German submarine reached the American coast off Amagansett, Long Island, and deployed a team who rowed ashore in an inflatable boat. Just as the Germans finished burying their explosives in the sand, John C. Cullen, a young U.S. Coast Guardsman, came upon them during his regular patrol of the beach. The leader of the team, George Dasch, bribed the suspicious Cullen, and he accepted the money, promising to keep quiet. However, as soon as he passed safely back into the fog, he sprinted the two miles back to the Coast Guard station and informed his superiors of his discovery. After retrieving the German supplies from the beach, the Coast Guard called the FBI, which launched a massive manhunt for the saboteurs, who had fled to New York City.

Although unaware that the FBI was looking for them, Dasch and another saboteur, Ernest Burger, decided to turn themselves in and betray their colleagues, perhaps because they feared capture was inevitable after the botched landing. On 15 JUL, Dasch called the FBI in New York, but they failed to take his claims seriously, so he decided to travel to FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C. On 18 JUL, the same day that a second four-man team successfully landed at Ponte Verdra Beach, Florida, Dasch turned himself in. He agreed to help the FBI capture the rest of the saboteurs.

Burger and the rest of the Long Island team were picked up by 22 JUN, and by 27 JUN the whole of the Florida team was arrested. To preserve wartime secrecy, President Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered a special military tribunal consisting of seven generals to try the saboteurs. At the end of July, Dasch was sentenced to 30 years in prison, Burger was sentenced to hard labor for life, and the other six Germans were sentenced to die. The six condemned saboteurs were executed by electric chair in Washington, D.C., on August 8. In 1944, two other German spies were caught after a landing in Maine. No other instances of German sabotage within wartime America has come to light. In 1948, Dasch and Burger were freed by order of President Harry Truman, and they both returned to Germany.

- **Aug 08 1942 – WW2:** U.S. Marines capture the Japanese airstrip on Guadalcanal.
- **Aug 08 1943 – WW2:** *Battle of Troina, Sicily Ends (31 Jul – 8 Aug)* » On 29 July 1943, after 20 days of combat, it was clear to both the Allied and German high commands that Sicily was lost and 80,000-100,000 American and British troops would break through the German and Italian Etna Line. The US 7th Army commander, Lieutenant General George S. Patton Jr, had ordered the US 1st and 9th Infantry Divisions to be moved into the valley to attack the city of Troina. Generals Omar Bradley (the commander of US II Corps) and Patton ordered the two divisions be pulled out of the line once Troina fell. Troina was considered one of the main anchors of the Etna Line. It was defended by the 15th Panzer Grenadier Division and four battalions of the 28 Infantry Division Aosta. The Axis forces, in deep trenches, had a clear view of the oncoming Allied soldiers, who had little cover.

The Battle began on 31 July, when the Germans repelled an advance by the 39th Infantry, a 9th Infantry Division formation temporarily attached to the 1st Infantry Division, commanded by Major General Terry Allen. This setback forced Bradley and Allen to orchestrate a massive assault. Over the next six days the men of the 1st Infantry Division, together with elements of the 9th Division, a French Moroccan infantry battalion, 165 artillery pieces (divided among 9 battalions of 105-mm howitzers, 6 battalions of 155-mm howitzers, and 1 battalion of 155-mm "Long Tom" guns), and numerous Allied aircraft, were locked in combat with Troina's tenacious defenders. Control of key hilltop positions changed hands often, with the Germans and Italians launching more than two dozen counterattacks during the week-long battle. During one Italian counterattack, its 1st Battalion, 5th Regiment of the 'Aosta' managed to take 40 American prisoners.

The experience of Colonel John Bowen's 26th Infantry Regiment was fairly typical of the action around Troina. The 26th's assignment was to outflank Troina by seizing Monte Basilio two miles north of the town. From here, the regiment would be positioned to cut the Axis line of retreat. Bowen moved his soldiers forward on 2 AUG supported by the fire of 1 battalion of 155-mm howitzers, 4 battalions of 105-mm howitzers and 4 "Long Tom" batteries. Despite

this weighty arsenal, German artillery fire and difficult terrain limited the regiment's advance to half a mile. The next morning one of the regiment's battalions lost its bearings in the hilly terrain and wandered around ineffectually for the remainder of the day. A second battalion reached Monte Basilio with relatively little difficulty, only to be pounded by Axis artillery fire directed from neighboring hills. The 115th Panzergrenadier Regiment launched a failed offensive to retake the mountains; they were repelled by machine gun fire.

For the next two days the men on Monte Basilio were pinned down by artillery fire. Determined to hold Troina for as long as possible, the Germans reacted strongly to the threat the 26th Regiment posed to their line of communications. Axis pressure practically cut off the men on Monte Basilio from the rest of the 1st Division, and attempts to resupply them from the air were only partially successful. By 5 AUG food and ammunition were low and casualties had greatly depleted the regiment, with one company mustering only seventeen men effective for duty.

It was at this point that the German infantry attacked again, touching off another round of furious fighting. During the battle, Pvt. James W. Reese moved his mortar squad to a position from which he could effectively engage the advancing German infantry. The squad maintained a steady fire on the attackers until it began to run out of ammunition. With only three mortar rounds left, Reese ordered his crew to the rear while he advanced to a new position and knocked out a German machine gun with the last rounds. He then shouldered a rifle and continued to engage the enemy until he was killed by a barrage of hostile fire. Through the efforts of men like Reese, the 26th Infantry held its position. The United States recognized Reese's heroism posthumously by awarding him the Medal of Honor.

The Germans evacuated Troina later that night. Hard pressed by American forces throughout the Troina sector and unable to dislodge the 26th Regiment from its position threatening his line of retreat, the badly damaged 15th Panzer Grenadier Division toward Randazzo was withdrawn. As the 9th Infantry Division took up the pursuit, the 1st Division retired for rest.

While the 1st Infantry Division battled for possession of Troina, Major General Lucian Truscott's 3rd Division encountered opposition at San Fratello, the northern end of the Etna Line. Here the 29th Panzer Grenadier Division along with the Italian 26th Assietta Infantry Division, that had been allocated the most exposed section of the line, had entrenched itself on a ridge overlooking the coastal highway. Truscott made repeated attempts to crack the San Fratello position beginning on 3 AUG, but failed to gain much ground. The strength of the German position prompted him to try to outflank it by an amphibious end run.

On the night of 7–8 AUG, while the 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, and 3rd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, seized a key hill along the San Fratello Line, Lieutenant Colonel Lyle Bernard led the 2nd Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, reinforced by two batteries from the 58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, a platoon of medium tanks, and a platoon of combat engineers, in an amphibious landing at Sant'Agata, a few miles behind San Fratello. The amphibious assault force achieved complete surprise and quickly blocked the coastal highway. Unfortunately, the Germans had selected that night to withdraw from San Fratello, without advising the Italian defenders, and most of their troops had already retired past Bernard's position by the time the Americans arrived. Nevertheless, the 3rd Infantry Division's combined land and sea offensive took over 1,000 prisoners.

- **Aug 08 1944 – WW2:** Eight German officers are hanged in Berlin for their role in the July 20 Hitler assassination plot; by February 3, 1945, 4980 would be executed. Also on this date:
  - Japanese take Hengyang in their drive south across China, taking the US Fourteenth Air Force air base at Hengyang.
  - U.S. forces complete the capture of the Marianas Islands.
- **Aug 08 1945 – WWII:** *Soviets Declare War on Japan; Invade Manchuria* » Honoring the promise Joseph Stalin made at the 1943 Tehran Conference and repeated at the FEB 1945 Yalta Conference the Soviet Union officially declares war on Japan, pouring 1.5 million Soviet soldiers into Japanese-occupied Manchuria, northeastern China, to take on the 700,000-strong Japanese army. The declaration voids the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact of April 31, 1941



Japan had not been too worried about the Soviet Union, so busy with the Germans on the Eastern front. The Japanese army went so far as to believe that they would not have to engage a Soviet attack until spring 1946. But the Soviets surprised them with their invasion of Manchuria, an assault so strong (of the 850 Japanese soldiers engaged at Pingyanchen, 650 were killed or wounded within the first two days of fighting) that Emperor Hirohito began to plead with his War Council to reconsider surrender. The recalcitrant members began to waver.

- **Aug 08 1945 – Cold War: *Truman Signs United Nations Charter*** » President Harry S. Truman signs the United Nations Charter and the United States becomes the first nation to complete the ratification process and join the new international organization. Although hopes were high at the time that the United Nations would serve as an arbiter of international disputes, the organization also served as the scene for some memorable Cold War clashes.



August 8, 1945, was a busy day in the history of World War II. The United States dropped a second atomic bomb on Japan, devastating the city of Nagasaki. The Soviet Union, following through with an agreement made earlier in the war, declared war on Japan. All observers agreed that the combination of these two actions would bring a speedy end to Japanese resistance. At the same time, in Washington, D.C., President Truman took a step that many Americans hoped would mean continued peace in the post-World War II world. The president signed the United Nations Charter, thus completing American ratification of the document. Secretary of State James F. Byrnes also signed. In so doing, the United States became the first nation to complete the ratification process. The charter would come into full force when China, Russia, Great Britain, France, and a majority of the other nations that had constructed the document also completed ratification.

The signing was accomplished with little pomp and ceremony. Indeed, President Truman did not even use one of the ceremonial pens to sign, instead opting for a cheap 10-cent desk pen. Nonetheless, the event was marked by hope and optimism. Having gone through the horrors of two world wars in three decades, most Americans—and people around the world—were hopeful that the new international organization would serve as a forum for settling international disagreements and a means for maintaining global peace.

Over the next decades, the United Nations did serve as the scene for some of the more notable events in the Cold War: the decision by the Security Council to send troops to Korea in 1950; Khrushchev pounding the table with his shoe during a U.N. debate; and continuous and divisive discussion over admission of communist China to membership in the UN. As for its role as a peacekeeping institution, the record of the U.N. was not one of great success during the Cold War. The Soviet veto in the Security Council stymied some efforts, while the U.S. desire to steer an independent course in terms of military involvement after the unpopular

Korean War meant less and less recourse to the U.N. to solve world conflicts. In the years since the end of the Cold War, however, the United States and Russia have sometimes cooperated to send United Nations forces on peacekeeping missions, such as the effort in Bosnia.

- **Aug 08 1950 – Korean War:** U.S. troops repel the first North Korean attempt to overrun them at the battle of Naktong Bulge, which continued for 10 days. Casualties and losses: US 1,800 - NKA 3,500.
- **Aug 08 1953 – U.S.\*South Korea:** *Mutual Security Pact* » Foreign Minister Byeon Yeong-tae and US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles initial a mutual security pact. The agreement committed the two nations to provide mutual aid if either faces external armed attack and allows the United States to station military forces in South Korea in consultation with the South Korean government. Two months after the signing of the Korean Armistice Agreement which brought a halt to the fighting in the Korean a Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of Korea was signed 1 OCT.
- **Aug 08 1968 – Vietnam War:** *Nixon and Agnew Receive the Republican Party Nomination* » At the Republican National Convention in Miami, Richard M. Nixon and Spiro T. Agnew are chosen as the presidential and vice-presidential nominees for the upcoming election. In his speech accepting the nomination, Nixon promised to “bring an honorable end to the war in Vietnam” and to inaugurate “an era of negotiations” with leading Communist powers, while restoring “the strength of America so that we shall always negotiate from strength and never from weakness.” The party subsequently adopted a platform on the war that called for “progressive de-Americanization” of the war. Nixon was successful in his campaign bid and once in office, he instituted a program of “Vietnamization” (the turning over of the war to the South Vietnamese) and U.S. troop withdrawals.
- **Aug 08 1973 – Vietnam War:** *Vice President Agnew under Attack* » Vice President Agnew branded reports that he took kickbacks from government contracts in Maryland as “damned lies.” Agnew had taken a lot of heat in the media when he assumed a lead position as Nixon’s point man on Vietnam. He frequently attacked the student protest movement, blaming the intellectual community, which he referred to as “impudent snobs,” for campus unrest. Despite the charges of bribery and income tax evasion, Agnew vowed that he would never resign and blamed his troubles on the press, who, he said, were out to get him for his controversial stand on the war. Ultimately, however, he resigned from office on October 10, 1973.
- **Aug 08 1980 – Iran-Iraq War:** *Ceasefire Holding* » After almost eight years of a war that had claimed an estimated one million lives, a cease-fire between Iran and Iraq was reported holding. The truce, arranged by the United Nations, went into effect at 7 A.M. local time. By nightfall, there were no reports of violations. A team of 350 United Nations observers spread

out along the 740-mile border between the combatants. "They are on the ground in large numbers from north to south, and the cease-fire is holding," Col. William Phillips, the Irish operations chief of the 24-nation Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group said.

The war - fought on land and in the air, in the oil lanes of the Persian Gulf and with missile and chemical weapons attacks - produced no major territorial gains for either side. Yet Iraq, which invaded Iran on Sept. 22, 1980, has proclaimed victory. Motorists and demonstrators poured onto the streets of Baghdad overnight, blowing horns, beating tambourines and spraying water. The response in Teheran, the capital of Iran - which accepted United Nations peace terms the previous month after delaying for a year - was more cautious. It reflected the uncertainties provoked by an Iranian about-face described by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the Iranian leader, as deadlier than poison. "We will abide by the cease-fire completely, and there will be no shooting," the Iranian President, Hojatolislam Ali Khamenei, reportedly told Iranian soldiers.

- **Aug 08 1990 – Gulf War:** Iraq occupies Kuwait and the state is annexed to Iraq as its 19th province. This would lead to the Gulf War shortly afterward.
- **Aug 08 2000 – Post Civil War:** Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley is raised to the surface after 136 years on the ocean floor and 30 years after its discovery.



**During raising in 200 and immersion in sodium hydroxide bath, July 2017**

- **Aug 08 2008 – Russo-Georgian War: 5-Day Long War Begins** » On this day a long-simmering conflict between Russia and Georgia boiled over into a shooting war between the small Caucasian nation and the superpower of which it was once a part. The brief Russo-Georgian War was the most violent episode in a conflict that began more than a decade before.

Georgia declared independence from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as the latter was breaking up in 1991. A short time later, pro-Russian separatists took control of two regions composing a combined 20 percent of Georgia's territory, Abkhazia and South Ossetia. A stalemate ensued. In 2008, American President George W. Bush announced his support for Georgia's and Ukraine's membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, a move that Russia viewed as tantamount to putting a hostile military on its borders. Relations between Russia and Georgia had already been tense, with the aggressive Vladimir Putin in power in

Russia and Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili declaring his intent to bring Abkhazia and South Ossetia back under Georgian control.

After accusations of aggression from both sides throughout the spring and summer, South Ossetian troops violated the ceasefire by shelling Georgian villages on 1 AUG. Sporadic fighting and shelling ensued over the coming days, until Saakashvili declared a ceasefire on 7 AUG. Just before midnight, seeing that the separatists would not, in fact, cease firing, Georgia's military launched an attack on Tskhinvali in South Ossetia. Russian troops had already entered South Ossetia—illegally—and responded quickly to the Georgian attack. As Georgian troops seized Tskhinvali, the fighting spilled over into Abkhazia. The initial Georgian advance was repulsed, however, and within a few days Russia seized most of the disputed territory and was advancing into Georgia proper. The two sides agreed to a ceasefire in the early hours of 13 AUG.

In the aftermath of the war, Russia formally recognized Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states. Russia subsequently occupied them, in violation of the ceasefire. Russia conducted a similar maneuver in Ukraine in 2014, annexing the Crimean Peninsula and backing separatists in the west of the country. The Russo-Georgian War displaced an estimated 192,000 people, many of whom fled ethnic cleansing of Georgians in the separatist territories.

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- **Aug 09 1757 – French & Indian War:** *Fort William Henry Surrenders in N.Y.* » The Siege of Fort William Henry was conducted by French General Louis-Joseph de Montcalm against the British-held Fort William Henry. The fort, located at the southern end of Lake George, on the frontier between the British Province of New York and the French Province of Canada, was garrisoned by a poorly supported force of British regulars and provincial militia led by Lieutenant Colonel George Monro. After several days of bombardment, Monro surrendered to Montcalm, whose force included nearly 2,000 Indians from a large number of tribes. The terms of surrender included the withdrawal of the garrison to Fort Edward, with specific terms that the French military protect the British from the Indians as they withdrew from the area.

In one of the most notorious incidents of the French and Indian War, Montcalm's Indian allies violated the agreed terms of surrender and attacked the British column, which had been deprived of ammunition, as it left the fort. They killed and scalped many soldiers, took as captive's women, children, servants, and slaves, and slaughtered sick and wounded prisoners. Early accounts of the events called it a massacre and implied that as many as 1,500 people were killed, although it is unlikely more than 200 people (less than 10% of the British fighting strength) were actually killed in the massacre.



On the afternoon after the massacre, most of the Indians left, heading back to their homes. Montcalm was able to secure the release of 500 captives they had taken, but they still took with them another 200. The French remained at the site for several days, destroying what remained of the British works before leaving on 18 AUG and returning to Fort Carillon. For unknown reasons, Montcalm decided not to follow up his victory with an attack on Fort Edward. Many reasons have been proposed justifying his decision, including the departure of many (but not all) of the Indians, a shortage of provisions, the lack of draft animals to assist in the portage to the Hudson, and the need for the Canadian militia to return home in time to participate in the harvest.

The exact role of Montcalm and other French leaders in encouraging or defending against the actions of their allies, and the total number of casualties incurred as a result of their actions, is a subject of historical debate. The memory of the killings influenced the actions of British military leaders, especially those of British General Jeffery Amherst, for the remainder of the war.

- **Aug 09 1776 – American Revolution:** *Guy Johnson Predicts Indian Allegiances* » On Staten Island Guy Johnson, British Superintendent of Indian Affairs, returns from England and shares his confidence that the Iroquois will choose to ally themselves with the British crown.



Johnson reassured British Secretary of State for the American Colonies Lord George Germain that the Iroquois Six Nations would cooperate with the royal troops as soon as Generals William Howe and John Burgoyne initiated the “grand operation” to quell the American rebellion. The Patriots, he felt, could depend only on those Indians who came under the influence of New England missionaries, which was a small fraction of the total number of Indians in the Northern provinces. Johnson was correct in his assessment. The Iroquois attempted to maintain their neutrality at the beginning of the conflict, but by 1777, Joseph Brant (also known as Thayendanegea), a formally educated Mohawk and Freemason, led the Iroquois into an alliance with Britain.

Most Native Americans saw Great Britain as their last defense against the land-hungry European settlers who were encroaching into their ancestral territory. Racist settlers managed

to undermine any goodwill toward them remaining in the Native American population during the revolution by committing atrocities such as the massacre of neutral, Christian Indian women and children at prayer in Gnaddenhutten, Ohio in 1778. In another example, a Continental officer undermined his own cause with the murder of Cornplanter, a Shawnee leader and Patriot ally, in 1777.

At the close of the War for Independence, the Patriots' few Indian allies received worse treatment at the hands of their supposed friends than natives who had sided with Britain. Having promised Continental soldiers land in return for their service, Congress seized land from its Indian allies in order to cede it to officers on the verge of mutiny in 1783.

- **Aug 09 1862 – Civil War: *Battle of Cedar Mountain*** » In this battle, also known as Slaughter's Mountain or Cedar Run, Confederate General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson narrowly defeats a Union force led by General John Pope at Cedar Mountain, Virginia.

Jackson had moved north in July 1862 after it became clear that the primary Union force in the east, General George McClellan's Army of the Potomac, was not going to attack Richmond, Virginia. McClellan was camped on the James Peninsula southeast of Richmond, where General Robert E. Lee stopped him at the Seven Days' Battles in late June. Frustrated with McClellan's lack of action, President Abraham Lincoln began shifting troops from the peninsula to Pope's newly formed Army of Virginia, which was operating near Washington, D.C.



Jackson, who was sent north by Lee to counter the growing Yankee presence in northern Virginia, fell on part of Pope's force at Cedar Mountain on 9 AUG. Despite being severely outnumbered, Pope's army dealt Jackson a near-humiliating defeat. Jackson attacked in the afternoon, but a fierce Union counterattack, led by General Nathaniel Banks, almost broke Jackson's line. The arrival of Confederate General Ambrose P. Hill provided Jackson with enough troops to launch another assault that evening. That attack drove the Federals from the field, and only nightfall prevented a complete rout of the Yankees.

Union losses totaled 2,300 out of 8,000. The Confederates suffered 1,300 casualties out of 18,000. But the battle was nearly a disaster; Jackson miscalculated, and the Confederates almost lost to an army half their size.

- **Aug 09 1862 – Civil War:** *Battle at Calfkiller Creek (Dug Hill)* » This was a minor skirmish that occurred in White County Tennessee. The major players in this battle were Confederates Gen. George Gibbs Dibrell and guerilla Champ Ferguson and Union Col. William B. Stokes and guerilla Tinker Dave Beaty. Stokes had been sent by Governor Andrew Johnson to try and locate Champ Ferguson. Stokes was unable to get anybody in Sparta to talk until he finally threatened to burn the town down. Stokes was able to locate Ferguson along the Calfkiller River. Stokes and his army camped out along the Calfkiller in an effort to perfect their plan to capture Champ Ferguson.

Historians do not know when Tinker Dave Beaty joined Stokes, but he was at the battle. Beaty may have been motivated by the opportunity to capture or kill Ferguson. The next morning the Union forces were unaware that the Confederates led by Dibrell and Ferguson were hiding in the bushes along the road. As the Union troops were traveling along the road to carry out their plan, the Confederate troops jumped out of the bushes and fought the Union troop's right there in the road. The battle took the Union troops by surprise, and was a total rout for them. Champ Ferguson and Tinker Dave Beaty, according to historians, came face to face with each other. Beaty was able to wound Ferguson, and lay him up for a few months, so all was not lost. In general the Battle of Dug Hill is vital to our understanding of the Civil War in the Upper Cumberland area.

- **Aug 09 1864 – Civil War:** *Siege of Fort Morgan* » The Siege occurred as part of the battle for Mobile Bay, in Alabama. Union ground forces led by General Gordon Granger conducted a short siege of the Confederate garrison at the mouth of Mobile Bay under the command of General Richard L. Page. Granger's soldiers landed at Pilot Town on 9 AUG and began moving siege artillery within range. The Union fleet also turned their guns on the fort. For the next two weeks Union forces kept up a heavy and consistent artillery fire. On 16 AUG the Confederates abandoned two batteries of the outer defenses and Granger moved his siege mortars within 500 yards of the fort and his 30-pounder rifled guns to within 1,200 yards.

On 23 AUG General Page unconditionally surrendered the fort. Indignant, he broke his sword over his knee instead of surrendering it to the Federals. Page's situation was further worsened when he was suspected of destroying munitions and works within the fort after the surrender agreement. For this he was arrested by the Federal authorities and imprisoned. The fall of Fort Morgan to the Union forces sealed the mouth of Mobile Bay. The Confederate surrender helped shut down Mobile, Alabama, as an effective Confederate port city.

The city of Mobile, Alabama would fall on April 12, 1865, at the end of the Civil War, after the Battle of Fort Blakeley on April 9, 1865. General Page remained imprisoned until July 1865. A court of inquiry was convened in New Orleans to investigate the charges against Page for violating the laws of war. The court, however, found him "Not Guilty". The court found that much of the destruction of ammunition resulted from a fire in the Citadel and that Confederates had spiked the artillery pieces before they had raised a white flag of surrender.

- **Aug 09 1877 – Native Americans:** *Battle of Big Hole* » Having refused government demands that they move to a reservation, a small band of Nez Perce Indians clash with the U.S. Army near the Big Hole River in Montana.



The conflict between the U.S. government and the Nez Perce was one of the most tragic of the many Indian wars of the 19th century. Beginning with the tribe's first contact with the explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, the peaceful Nez Perce had befriended and cooperated with the Americans. Even when hordes of white settlers began to flood into their homelands along the Snake River (around the present-day intersection of the Oregon, Washington, and Idaho state borders), most of the Nez Perce peacefully moved to a reservation.

However, about a quarter of the Nez Perce, most of them stockmen and buffalo hunters, refused to accept internment on a reservation. Government pressure to force these last resisters to comply finally led to the outbreak of the Nez Perce War of 1877. A small band of warriors—never more than 145 men, though burdened with about 500 noncombatants—fought U.S. soldiers at four major battles.

The third battle of the Nez Perce War occurred on this day in 1877. Fleeing eastward with hopes of escaping to Canada, the Nez Perce made camp in the Big Hole Basin in present-day western Montana. At 3:30 a.m., Colonel John Gibbon attacked the sleeping Indians with a force of 183 men. Raking the Indian lodges with withering rifle fire, the soldiers initially seemed to be victorious. The Nez Perce, however, soon counterattacked from concealed positions in the surrounding hills. After four days of sporadic fighting, the Nez Perce withdrew.

Both sides suffered serious casualties. The soldiers lost 29 men with 40 wounded. The army body count found 89 Nez Perce dead, mostly women and children. The battle dealt the Nez

Perce a grave, though not fatal, blow. The remaining Indians were able to escape, and they headed northeast towards Canada. Two months later, on 5 OCT, Colonel Nelson Miles decisively defeated the Nez Perce at the Battle of the Bear Paw Mountains. Those who were not killed surrendered and reluctantly agreed to return to the reservation. The Nez Perce were only 40 miles short of the Canadian border.

- **Aug 09 1914 – WWI Era:** Walter Rathenau Of AEG Takes Charge Of German War Production » Barely one week after the outbreak of the First World War, German Minister of War Erich von Falkenhayn puts Walter Rathenau of the large electronics firm Allgemeine-Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG) in charge of organizing all the raw materials for Germany's war production.



The issue of how to effectively collect and utilize raw materials for the production of munitions and other war supplies was especially important for Germany, who was prevented from importing anything by the Allied naval blockade in the North Sea, in place from the beginning of the war. Rathenau, the son of AEG's founder, had approached the German War Department proposing to "save Germany from strangulation" with an idea of centralizing the management of the war production process under a single organization, a raw materials agency. In Rathenau's vision, the agency would take inventory of the raw materials available—not only in Germany but in all German-occupied territories, such as Belgium—and allocate them to the firms that could use them best. Each commodity used in war production would have its own raw materials company, with a board of directors drawn from the firms that used the given commodity.

In this way, Rathenau convinced Falkenhayn, he would combine the best aspects of the capitalist free-market system would be united with the principles of collective management to enable a smooth, optimally effective war production process. Falkenhayn was convinced, and made Rathenau the head of what became the KRA, the German war production organization. Appointing Rathenau—who was Jewish—to head war production was an extraordinary step for a Prussian military officer to take at the time.

In the end, however, Rathenau served in the new post only briefly, as many of the businesses the KRA administered bristled under an organization directed by a Jew. In April 1915, Rathenau was forced to resign; he subsequently returned to his post at AEG, becoming

chairman of the company upon his father's death in June 1915. Rathenau remained active in politics, and worked to support the creation of the Third Supreme Command, an effective military dictatorship under Paul von Hindenburg and Erich Ludendorff, in August 1916. He opposed some of the Command's decisions, however, including the resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare in 1917 and Ludendorff's desire to annex territory on the Eastern Front.

After the war, Rathenau joined the Democratic Party; he served as minister for reconstruction from 1919 to 1921 and became foreign minister in 1922. In June of that year, shortly after signing the controversial Treaty of Rapallo with the Soviet Union—which reestablished diplomatic relations between the two countries—Rathenau was murdered in Berlin by right-wing anti-Semitic extremists.

- **Aug 09 1914 – WWI Era: German U-15 Sunk** » U-15 became the first U-boat loss to an enemy warship after it was rammed by British light cruiser HMS Birmingham. Constructed by Kaiserliche Werft Danzig, U-15 was ordered on 23 February 1909 and was commissioned three years later on 7 July 1912. The boat left port for its first patrol on 1 AUG, but on 9 AUG was forced to lie stopped on the surface off the coast of Fair Isle, in Shetland, Scotland, after its engines had failed. While stranded on the surface, the British warship HMS Birmingham spotted the boat through a thick fog and could hear hammering from inside the boat as the crew tried to repair the damaged engines. The Birmingham's Captain Arthur Duff ordered his crew to fire on the U-boat, but missed. As U-15 attempted to dive to avoid the attack, Duff ordered for his ship to ram the submarine at full speed, cutting it in half and killing all 23 members of its crew.
- **Aug 09 1942 – WW2: Battle of Savo Island (8-9 Aug)** » Naval battle of the Pacific Campaign also known as First Battle of the Solomon Sea and the Battle of the Five Sitting Ducks, was fought between the Imperial Japanese Navy and Allied naval forces. It was the first major naval engagement of the Guadalcanal campaign, and the first of several naval battles in the straits later named Iron Bottom Sound, near the island of Guadalcanal.

The Imperial Japanese Navy, in response to Allied amphibious landings in the eastern Solomon Islands, mobilized a task force of seven cruisers and one destroyer under the command of Vice Admiral Gunichi Mikawa. The task forces sailed from Japanese bases in New Britain and New Ireland down New Georgia Sound (also known as "the Slot"), with the intention of interrupting the Allied landings by attacking the supporting amphibious fleet and its screening force.

The Allied screen consisted of eight cruisers and fifteen destroyers under British Rear Admiral Victor Crutchley VC, but only five cruisers and seven destroyers were involved in the

battle. In a night action, Mikawa thoroughly surprised and routed the Allied force, sinking one Australian and three American cruisers, while suffering only light damage in return.

After the initial engagement, Mikawa, fearing Allied carrier strikes against his fleet in daylight, decided to withdraw under cover of night rather than attempt to locate and destroy the Allied invasion transports. The Japanese attacks prompted the remaining Allied warships and the amphibious force to withdraw earlier than planned (before unloading all supplies), temporarily ceding control of the seas around Guadalcanal to the Japanese. This early withdrawal of the fleet left the Allied ground forces (primarily United States Marines), which had landed on Guadalcanal and nearby islands only two days before, in a precarious situation, with limited supplies, equipment, and food to hold their beachhead.

Mikawa's decision to withdraw under cover of night rather than attempt to destroy the Allied invasion transports was primarily founded on concern over possible Allied carrier strikes against his fleet in daylight. In reality, the Allied carrier fleet, similarly fearing Japanese attack, had already withdrawn beyond operational range. This missed opportunity to cripple (rather than interrupt) the supply of Allied forces on Guadalcanal contributed to Japan's failure to recapture the island. At this critical early stage of the campaign, it allowed the Allied forces to entrench and fortify themselves sufficiently to defend the area around Henderson Field until additional Allied reinforcements arrived later in the year.

The battle has often been cited as the worst defeat in a fair fight in the history of the United States Navy. Casualties and losses: Allies - 3 heavy cruisers sunk, 1 heavy cruiser heavily damaged (later scuttled), 2 destroyers damaged, and 1,077 killed, Japan - 3 cruisers lightly damaged, 129 killed.

Battle of Savo Island was the first of five costly, large-scale sea and air-sea actions fought in support of the ground battles on Guadalcanal itself, as the Japanese sought to counter the American offensive in the Pacific. These sea battles took place after increasing delays by each side to regroup and refit, until the November 30, 1942 Battle of Tassafaronga (sometimes referred to as the Fourth Battle of Savo Island or, in Japanese sources, as the Battle of Lunga Point – after which the Japanese, eschewing the costly losses, attempted resupplying by submarine and barges. The final naval battle, the Battle of Rennell Island took place months later on January 29–30, 1943, by which time the Japanese were preparing to evacuate their remaining land forces and withdraw.

- **Aug 09 1945 – WW2: A-Bomb Dropped on Nagasaki** » The United States planned to drop their second atom bomb (Fat Man), on August 11 in the event of the Japanese rejecting the offer to surrender and end the war. However, weather conditions meant that August 11th was not ideal so the USAAF decided that the best date for dropping the second Atomic Bomb was

sooner. In the early morning of August the 9th a specially adapted B-29 bomber, called “Bock’s Car,” took off with the world’s second atomic bomb. The primary target of Kokure was obscured from by smoke from an earlier bombing raid and from a steel plant in the area.



**The crew and plane (left) that dropped the Fat Man bomb (right)**

Bockscar and her escorts switched to their secondary target of Nagasaki which was an industrial center and very important in the shipbuilding centers. The bomb was dropped on Nagasaki at 11:02:35 a.m. as the citizens were at work or at school. The explosion had the force of some 22,000 tons of TNT. Although the blast was stronger than the first atomic bomb the hills that surrounded the city did a better job of containing the destructive force. The bomb still did unimaginable damage and it is estimated that up to 80,000 died, nearly all of them civilians. The number will never be known because of the scarcity of records. The bomb obliterated many and some people were simply turned to dust. Unknown numbers died of radiation sickness and other developed cancers, caused by the bomb, years after it was dropped. The bomb divested the city and left it in smoldering ruins, with dangerously high levels of radioactivity. The city’s infrastructure collapsed and with it the health services. Japan was too exhausted at this stage to stage an effective response and relieve the victims.

The General in charge of the Atomic bomb project (known as the Manhattan project) and who oversaw the development of the world’s first nuclear weapon, believed that he could have another, atom bomb ready by the 18th of August. Despite the devastation caused there were, still some in the Japanese military who opposed any efforts to agree to an unconditional surrender. However, the majority knew that Japan could not continue and that it had lost the war. The Emperor of Japan gave his permission for unconditional surrender and the government agreed to the allies terms of and eventually the country was occupied by western soldiers under the command of General MacArthur.

- **Aug 09 1945 – WW2: *Soviet Occupation of Manchuria*** » On 11 February 1945, the Big Three (Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin) signed the Yalta Agreement. Yalta obligated the Soviet Union to enter the war against Japan within three months after Germany's surrender, in exchange for territorial concessions and Soviet influence in post-war Manchuria.



Stalin would order the invasion of Manchukuo on 9 AUG, exactly three months after the German surrender on 8 MAY (9 May, 0:43 Moscow time) according to conditions of Tehran Conference. It inaugurated one of the largest campaigns in the Second World War. The massive Red Army steamrolled into Manchuria, brushing aside scattered Japanese resistance, and they liberated Mengjiang (Inner Mongolia), southern Sakhalin, and the northern half of the Korean peninsula as well. The rapid defeat of the Kwantung Army in Manchuria, along with the recent atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the Americans, contributed significantly to the Japanese surrender on the 15th.

The invasion, along with the surrender, prompted the Kuomintang to jockey for position vis-a-vis the Chinese Communists in mainland China. The Kuomintang signed the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance with the Soviet Union on 14 August 1945, which affirmed Chinese sovereignty over Manchuria in exchange for Chinese recognition of the Soviet-aligned Mongolian People's Republic. The Soviets began withdrawing from Manchuria within three weeks of Japan's surrender, although they would delay the process several times. The resumption of the Chinese Civil War in early 1946 prompted the Red Army to finish the withdrawal on 3 MAY, but not before secretly turning Manchuria over to the Chinese Communists in March in violation of the Agreement.

The Soviets claimed losses of 9,780–12,031 killed, 24,425 wounded, and 300+ tanks destroyed vs. Japanese losses of 83,737 killed, 20,000 wounded, 594,000–609,000 POWs, 861–925 aircraft, 369–600 tanks, 2,576–3,704 guns and mortars captured, and 2,129–2,300 other vehicles captured. The Japanese disputed these figure claiming their losses were 21,389 killed, unknown number captured in combat, large amounts of equipment captured, and that most of their troops had deserted beforehand.

- **Aug 9 1952 – Korean War:** *Battle of Bunker Hill (Hill 122) Began* » First Major Marine Combat in Western Korean fought between 9 August and 30 September 1952 between United Nations Command (UN) and Chinese forces over several frontline outposts. Despite regular small ambushes and artillery attacks UN forces would hold Bunker Hill until the end of the war. As Bunker Hill lay within the Korean Demilitarized Zone set out in the Korean Armistice Agreement the Marines had only 72 hours after the ceasefire began to evacuate the position.
- **Aug 09 1967 – Vietnam War:** *Marines Launch Operation Cochise* » First Marine Division launches Operation Cochise to strike the enemy wherever possible within the Que Son Basin and surrounding hills, with emphasis on the Hiep Duc area which intelligence officers believed contained the 2d NVA Division's headquarters and logistic base. Meanwhile, the First Cavalry Division continued with Operation Pershing, a major clearing operation in the Binh Dinh province designed to improve the security situation in support of the ongoing pacification

effort. Final casualty results for COCHISE included 156 enemy killed and 13 captured. Marine casualties were light in comparison, 10 killed and 93 wounded.

- **Aug 09 1985 – Cold War:** *Arthur Walker Found Guilty of Spying for Soviet Union* » Arthur Walker, a retired U.S. Navy officer, is found guilty of espionage for passing top-secret documents to his brother, who then passed them to Soviet agents. Walker was part of one of the most significant Cold War spy rings in the United States.



**Convicted spy Arthur J. Walker is escorted into Federal Court in Norfolk, Va. on Nov. 12, 1985**

The arrest of Arthur Walker on May 29, 1985, came just one day after the arrest of his brother, John, and John's son, Michael. All three were charged with conducting espionage for the Soviet Union. John Walker, also a Navy veteran, was the ringleader, and government officials charged that he had been involved in spying for the Soviets since 1968. He recruited his son, who was serving in the U.S. Navy, a short time later. Arthur Walker was drawn into the scheme in 1980 when, at his brother's suggestion, he took a job with VSE, a Virginia defense contractor.

Over the next two years, the government charged, Arthur Walker provided John with a number of highly classified documents dealing with the construction of naval vessels. For his services, Arthur Walker received about \$12,000. A nasty divorce between John Walker and his wife eventually brought the spy ring to light when his wife, angry after their separation, went to the FBI to inform on her husband. It was revealed at their trials that the motivation of all the Walker men was the repayment of large debts they had accrued.

Arthur Walker was found guilty of seven counts of espionage on August 9, 1985. He was sentenced to life in prison and fined \$250,000. John and Michael Walker later pled guilty to espionage charges, with John receiving two life sentences and Michael receiving 25 years in prison. A fourth conspirator, Jerry Whitworth, a friend of John Walker's, was convicted in 1986 on 12 counts of espionage and sentenced to 365 years in prison. With the arrests and convictions, the U.S. government claimed that it had broken one of the most destructive spy rings in the United States in the history of the Cold War.

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- **Aug 10, 1776 – American Revolution:** *London Learns of Declaration of Independence* » News reaches London that the Americans had drafted the Declaration of Independence. Until the Declaration of Independence formally transformed the 13 British colonies into states, both Americans and the British saw the conflict centered in Massachusetts as a local uprising within the British Empire. To King George III, it was a colonial rebellion, and to the Americans, it was a struggle for their rights as British citizens. However, when Parliament continued to oppose any reform and remained unwilling to negotiate with the American rebels and instead hired Hessians, German mercenaries, to help the British army crush the rebellion, the Continental Congress began to pass measures abolishing British authority in the colonies.

In January 1776, Thomas Paine published *Common Sense*, an influential political pamphlet that convincingly argued for American independence from the British monarchy. It sold more than 500,000 copies in just a few months. By the spring of 1776, support for independence had swept through the colonies, the Continental Congress called for states to form their own governments and a five-man committee was assigned to draft a document declaring independence from the British king.

The Declaration of Independence was largely the work of Virginian Thomas Jefferson. In justifying American independence, Jefferson drew generously from the political philosophy of John Locke, an advocate of natural rights, and from the work of other British theorists. The declaration features the immortal lines “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” It then goes on to present a long list of grievances that provided the American rationale for rebellion.

- **Aug 10 1861 – Civil War:** *Rebels Defeat Union Force at the Battle of Wilson’s Creek* » The struggle for Missouri erupts with the Battle of Wilson’s Creek, where a motley band of raw Confederates defeat a Union force in the southwestern section of the state.

Union General Nathaniel Lyon, who commanded a force of 6,400 soldiers near Springfield, Missouri, was up against two Rebel forces commanded by Generals Sterling Price and Ben McCulloch. Although the Confederates were poorly equipped and trained at this early stage of the war, Price and McCulloch had a combined force nearly twice the size of Lyon’s. But the impetuous Union commander did not want to cede the region without a fight, and so he planned an attack on 10 AUG.

Lyon sent General Franz Sigel with 1,200 men to attack the rear while he struck the surprised Confederates just after dawn. At first, the artillery barrage sent the Rebel camp into a panic, and the day seemed to belong to the Yankees. But Sigel mistook a force emerging from the smoke for an Iowa regiment, when it was actually a Louisiana regiment clad in similar

uniforms since many of the Rebel units were dressed in colors of their own choosing. The Confederates pushed Sigel back, and the tide turned against Lyon's force as well. In intense heat and humidity, the armies battled throughout the morning. Lyon was killed during one of the Confederate assaults, but the Union line managed to hold their ground. Although the Rebels withdrew from the field, the Union army was disorganized and running low on ammunition. Losses were heavy, with both sides each suffering about 1,200 casualties. The Federals soon retreated to Springfield and then back to the railhead at Rolla, Missouri, 100 miles to the northeast. Southwestern Missouri was secured for the Confederates.

- **Aug 10 1862 – Civil War: Nueces Massacre** » A violent confrontation between Confederate soldiers and German Texans in Kinney County, Texas. Many first-generation immigrants from Germany settled in Central Texas in a region known as the Hill Country. They tended to support the Union and were opposed to the institution of slavery. Because of these sentiments, the Confederate States of America imposed martial law on Central Texas. A group of Germans, fleeing from the Hill Country to Mexico and onward after that to Union-controlled New Orleans, was confronted by a company of Confederate soldiers on the banks of the Nueces River. The ensuing German defeat represented an end to overt German resistance to Confederate governance in Texas, but it also fueled outrage among the German-Texan population. Disputes over the confrontation and the efficacy of Confederate actions after the battle, according to historian Stanley McGowen, continue to plague the Hill Country into the 21st century. Casualties and losses: Confederate States- 2 dead, 18 wounded - Texas-German Unionists 37 dead, unknown wounded and fled.
- **Aug 10 1904 – Russo\*Japanese War: Battle of the Yellow Sea** » The first major confrontation between modern steel battleship fleets. The battle foiled an attempt by the Russian fleet at Port Arthur to break out and form up with counterparts from Vladivostok, forcing them to return to port. Four days later, the Battle off Ulsan similarly ended the Vladivostok group's sortie, forcing both fleets to remain at anchor.

The Yellow Sea engagement lasted some 6 to 7 hours, with about 4 of those hours being direct combat. During those nearly four hours of fighting, roughly 7,382 rounds were expended by both sides. The long range gunnery duel commenced at a range of over 8 miles, The nearly seven hours of naval combat coupled with the number of fired shells produced a hit rate of 1.7%. The Russians wanted to break out and sail to Vladivostok. Relocating the fleet to there would have left the Japanese needing to mount a new campaign if it wanted to besiege the Russian fleet again and such a campaign would have overtaxed the resources of commander-in-chief of the Japanese Second Army Field Marshal Ōyama.

The Japanese had an underlying objective to destroy the Russian fleet while minimizing their own losses, as these were the last of their battleships. Once the Russian fleet left Port

Arthur the Japanese initially sought to prevent it returning there. When the Japanese realized the Russians were not returning to Port Arthur they also sought to prevent the Russians reaching an alternative port. The Japanese prevented the Russians from reaching Vladivostok but failed to stop most of the fleet returning to Port Arthur. Neither side achieved its tactical goals. The Japanese, however, were successful in preventing the breakout, and the returning Russian ships were stripped of their guns in order to reinforce the shore batteries. They were later eliminated in the course of the Siege of Port Arthur, leaving the Japanese with undisputed naval control of the area.

- **Aug 10 1914 – WWI Era:** *German Ships Goeben and Breslau Reach Constantinople* » After eluding their British pursuers—not once but several times—in a dramatic chase through the Mediterranean Sea, the German cruisers Goeben and Breslau safely anchor off the Dardanelles—the waterway connecting the Aegean Sea to the Sea of Marmara and the only passage from the Mediterranean to the Black Sea—at five o’clock on the afternoon of August 10, 1914, and are subsequently escorted by the Turks to safety in Constantinople.



**German ships Goeben and Breslau**

When World War I broke out in August 1914, Germany had only two warships stationed in the Mediterranean: the battle cruiser Goeben and the light cruiser Breslau, both under the command of Wilhelm Souchon. Souchon, having heard over wireless radio on the afternoon of 3 AUG that Germany had declared war on France, was preparing to engage the French fleet in the Mediterranean when the order came at 2 a.m. on 4 AUG from the chief commander of the German navy, Admiral Alfred von Tirpitz, to head for Constantinople instead. Germany had decided to put every possible pressure on Turkey, with whom it had signed a treaty of alliance the day before, to declare war on the Allies. With Turkey on its side, Germany would control the Black Sea passage and effectively cut Russia off from the other Allies, as well as its supply routes. A landing of Souchon’s ships at Constantinople, it was reasoned, would help force Turkey out of its neutrality and into active participation in the war.

Meanwhile, the British Royal Navy, focusing on the Goeben and Breslau as the leading threat to the transport of French colonial troops from North Africa to France, had already ordered its Mediterranean fleet, commanded by Admiral Sir Berkeley Milne, to locate and track the two German ships, particularly the swift and powerful Goeben. As war had not yet been declared in Britain, Milne’s fleet could pursue, but not attack. On the morning of 4 AUG,

the British ships *Indomitable* and *Indefatigable*, unexpectedly encountered the *Goeben* and *Breslau* off the coast of Algeria. Neither ship fired, but each trained their guns on the other and their crews neglected to make the customary mutual salute. A chase ensued, as *Indomitable* and *Indefatigable* followed the two German ships toward Messina, Italy, where Souchon planned to obtain coal from German merchant steamers anchored there before making the trip to Constantinople, 1,200 miles away. The *Goeben* and *Breslau* outran their pursuers, pulling out of sight close to the end of that day.

Souchon maneuvered his ships into neutral Italian waters and anchored off Messina; the British ships, observing international law, did not pursue him. Thinking Souchon was either going to try to return to port in the Adriatic Sea or make an attempt to reach the western Mediterranean—and thus the Atlantic Ocean—Milne sent the *Indomitable* and *Indefatigable* west of Messina to block his path, never guessing the German ships were actually heading east, to Turkey. While refueling with difficulty in Messina, Souchon received a telegram canceling the order to go to Constantinople, as the Turkish leaders had rescinded permission for the *Goeben* and *Breslau* to pass through the Dardanelles. Under pressure from Italian authorities to leave immediately and knowing the British ships—their country now openly at war with Germany—were waiting for him in the Mediterranean, Souchon decided to head for Constantinople anyway, deciding “to force the Turks, even against their will, to spread the war to the Black Sea against their ancient enemy, Russia.”

When the *Goeben* and *Breslau* left Messina they were seen and pursued by only one light cruiser, the *Gloucester*. Equal to the *Breslau* in speed and gun power but easily outmatched by the *Goeben*, the *Gloucester* engaged in a brief trade of gunfire but mostly simply trailed the German ships as they headed in the direction of the Adriatic Sea, which a British squadron commanded by Rear-Admiral Ernest Troubridge had earlier been sent to monitor in case of action by the Austrian navy. On the morning of 7 AUG, in a massive opportunity lost, Troubridge declined to pursue the *Goeben*, believing that the ship, if intercepted, could use its 11-inch guns with their superior range—compared to the 9.2-inch guns on Troubridge’s ships—to destroy his four cruisers one after another. Troubridge justified his withdrawal by citing the order the British Admiralty had given the Mediterranean fleet not to engage “superior forces”—an order certainly intended not to prohibit action against the *Goeben* itself but against the Austrian navy if it appeared to accompany the German ships to safety.

Thus the *Goeben* and *Breslau* sped on, pursued only by the *Gloucester*. On the afternoon of 8 AUG, with the *Goeben* poised to enter the Aegean Sea, the *Gloucester* gave up the chase, leaving Souchon free to meet up with another fuel ship in the Greek Isles and head on to Constantinople. The Turkish leader, Enver Pasha, under pressure from German authorities, finally agreed to allow the ships to enter the straits, and to fire on any British pursuer who tried

to come after them. At nine o'clock on the evening of August 10, the Goeben and Breslau entered the Dardanelles.

The Goeben and Breslau were repaired, renamed and taken into the Turkish navy—on October 29, 1914, they took part in the attack by the Turkish fleet—commanded by Souchon—on Russia's ports in the Black Sea, marking the Ottoman Empire's official entrance into the First World War.

- **Aug 10 1944 – WW2:** American forces defeat the last Japanese troops on Guam.
- **Aug 10 1945 – WW2:** *Japan Accepts Potsdam Terms of Surrender* » Just a day after the bombing of Nagasaki, Japan submits its acquiescence to the Potsdam Conference terms of unconditional surrender.

Emperor Hirohito, having remained aloof from the daily decisions of prosecuting the war, rubber-stamping the decisions of his War Council, including the decision to bomb Pearl Harbor, finally felt compelled to do more. At the behest of two Cabinet members, the emperor summoned and presided over a special meeting of the Council and implored them to consider accepting the terms of the Potsdam Conference, which meant unconditional surrender. “It seems obvious that the nation is no longer able to wage war, and its ability to defend its own shores is doubtful.”

The Council had been split over the surrender terms; half the members wanted assurances that the emperor would maintain his hereditary and traditional role in a postwar Japan before surrender could be considered. But in light of the bombing of Hiroshima on 6 AUG, Nagasaki on 9 AUG, and the Soviet invasion of Manchuria, as well as the emperor's own request that the Council “bear the unbearable,” it was agreed: Japan would surrender. Tokyo released a message to its ambassadors in Switzerland and Sweden, which was then passed on to the Allies. The message formally accepted the Potsdam Declaration but included the proviso that “said Declaration does not comprise any demand which prejudices the prerogatives of His Majesty as sovereign ruler.”

When the message reached Washington, President Truman, unwilling to inflict any more suffering on the Japanese people, especially on “all those kids,” ordered a halt to atomic bombing. He also wanted to know whether the stipulation regarding “His Majesty” was a deal breaker. Negotiations between Washington and Tokyo ensued. Meanwhile, savage fighting continued between Japan and the Soviet Union in Manchuria.

- **Aug 10 1949 – Cold War:** *Truman Signs National Security Bill* » President Harry S. Truman signs the National Security Bill, which establishes the Department of Defense. As the

Cold War heated up, the Department of Defense became the cornerstone of America's military effort to contain the expansion of communism.

- **Aug 10 1950 – Korean War:** President Harry S. Truman calls the National Guard to active duty to fight in the War.
- **Aug 10 1950 – First Indochina War:** The French Union withdrew its forces from Operation Camargue against the Việt Minh in central modern-day Vietnam.
- **Aug 10 1955 – Vietnam War:** *Premier Diem Refuses to Negotiate with Communists* » Declaring that South Vietnam is “the only legal state,” Ngo Dinh Diem, Premier of the State of Vietnam, announces that he will not enter into negotiations with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam) on elections as long as the Communist government remains in power in Hanoi.

The elections had been scheduled for 1956 under the provisions of the Geneva Peace Accords of 1954 that brought an end to the First Indochina War. Diem reaffirmed the position laid down in his broadcast of July 6 in which he stated that South Vietnam was not bound by the Geneva Accords.

- **Aug 10 1961 – Vietnam War:** *First Use of the Agent Orange by the U.S. Army* » In 1969, it became widely known that the 2, 4, 5-T component of Agent Orange was contaminated with dioxin, a toxic chemical (chemical structure illustrated above) found to cause adverse health effects and birth outcomes in laboratory studies. In April 1970, the US government restricted use of 2, 4, 5-T, and therefore Agent Orange, in both Vietnam and the US.
- **Aug 10 1966 – Vietnam War:** *Marines Fight Bitter Battle in Quang Tin Province* » Troops of the First Battalion, Fifth Marines fight a bitter battle against NVA forces in Quang Tin province, 60 miles west of Tam Ky. In Thailand, a U.S.-built air base is opened in Sattahib. Ultimately, there would be five major airbases and over 49,000 U.S. military personnel in Thailand. The bases would be turned over to the Thais and the U.S. troops withdrawn in 1973.
- **Aug 10 1972 – Vietnam War:** *North Vietnamese Forces Attempt To Cut Off Saigon* » North Vietnamese forces block Routes 1, 4, and 13, all major South Vietnamese ground supply routes to Saigon. For the next two months, Communist forces repeatedly interdicted these and other key supply routes critical to Saigon's survival in an attempt to strangle the city. This was all part of the Nguyen Hue Offensive, which had been launched in late March.

In an invasion by more than 120,000 communist troops, the North Vietnamese had taken Quang Tri and lay siege to An Loc and Kontum. Despite desperate fighting on a level



heretofore unseen in the war, the South Vietnamese forces, with American advisors and U.S. tactical air support, had withstood the invasion and were preparing to retake Quang Tri. At one point, the North Vietnamese forces had been less than 60 miles from Saigon, but were stopped by the South Vietnamese forces at An Loc, on Highway 13 north of the city.

- **Aug 10 1988 – Japanese Americans:** *Civil Liberties Act of 1988* » A United States federal law that granted reparations to Japanese Americans who had been interned by the United States government during World War II. The act granted each surviving internee US\$20,000 in compensation with payments beginning in 1990. The legislation stated that government actions had been based on "race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership" as opposed to legitimate security reasons. A total of 82,219 received redress checks.

Because the law was restricted to American citizens, and to legal permanent residents, ethnic Japanese who had been taken from their homes in Latin America (mostly from Peru), were not covered in the reparations, regardless of whether they had remained in the United States, had returned to Latin America, or had been deported to Japan after the war. In 1996, Carmen Mochizuki filed a class-action lawsuit, and, from what was left of the funds from the CLA, won a settlement of around \$5,000 per person for those who were eligible. One hundred and forty-five of those affected were able to receive the \$5,000 settlement before funds ran out. In 1999, funds were approved for the US Attorney General to pay compensation to the remaining claimants.

- **Aug 10 1997– U.S.\*Panama:** US and Panama sign Panama Canal Zone accord, guaranteeing Panama would have control of the canal after 1999.
- **Aug 10 1997– England\*China:** The last British troops leave Hong Kong. After 156 years of British rule, the island is returned to China.
- **Aug 10 2017 – U.S.\*North Korea:** *Missile Threat Rhetoric* » North Korea has announced it was finalizing a plan to fire four of its Hwasong-12 missiles over Japan and into waters around the tiny island, which hosts 7,000 U.S. military personnel on two main bases and has a population of 160,000. It said the plan, which involves the missiles hitting waters 19 to 25 miles from the island, could be sent to leader Kim Jong Un for approval within a week or so. It would be up to Kim whether the move is actually carried out. ... North Korea, no stranger to bluffing, frequently uses extremely bellicose rhetoric with warnings of military action to keep its adversaries on their heels. If carried out, it would have been the North's most provocative missile launch to date.

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- **Aug 11 1864 – Civil War: *Confederates Abandon Winchester VA*** » As Union General Philip Sheridan approaches the city General Jubal Early, wary of his new foe, moved away to avoid an immediate conflict.

Since June, Early and his 14,000 troops had been campaigning in the Shenandoah Valley and the surrounding area. He had been sent there by General Robert E. Lee, who's Army of Northern Virginia was pinned near Richmond, Virginia by the army of Union General Ulysses S. Grant. Early's expedition was intended to distract Grant, and he carried out his mission well. In July, Early moved down the Shenandoah Valley to the Potomac River, brushing aside two Federal forces before arriving on the outskirts of Washington, D.C. Grant dispatched troops from his army to drive Early away, but Early simply returned to the Shenandoah and continued to operate with impunity.



**Generals Jubal Early and Philip Sherman**

Now Grant sent General Philip Sheridan to deal with Early. Sheridan had been appointed on 1 AUG to command the Army of the Shenandoah, and he was quick to take action when he arrived on the scene. On August 10, he marched his force toward Winchester. Early was alarmed, and pulled out of the city on 11 AUG to a more defensible position 20 miles south of Winchester. Sheridan followed with his force, settling his troops along Cedar Creek—just north of Strasburg, Virginia.

As ordered by Grant, Sheridan stopped to await reinforcements. His army, consisting of both infantry and cavalry, would eventually total about 37,000 troops. Sheridan waited for a few days, but Confederate raider John Mosby and his Rangers burned a large store of Sheridan's supplies. Alarmed and nearly out of food, Sheridan pulled back on 16 AUG. This retreat was reminiscent of many Union operations in Virginia during the war. Early and others thought Sheridan was as timid and uncertain as other Federal commanders. That opinion changed little in the next month as Sheridan continued to wait and gather his force.

However, Sheridan would later prove he was very different from previous Yankee leaders. In September, he began a campaign that drove the Confederates from the valley and then rendered the area useless to the Southern cause by destroying all the crops and supplies.

- **Aug 11 1919 – Post WWI:** Weimar Constitution Adopted in Germany » Friedrich Ebert, a member of the Social Democratic Party and the provisional president of the German Reichstag (government), signs a new constitution, known as the Weimar Constitution, into law, officially creating the first parliamentary democracy in Germany.



**Friedrich Ebert**

Even before Germany acknowledged its defeat at the hands of the Allied powers on the battlefields of the First World War, discontent and disorder ruled on the home front, as the exhausted and hunger-plagued German people expressed their frustration and anger with large-scale strikes among factory workers and mutinies within the armed forces. Beginning in 1916, Germany had basically been operating under a military dictatorship, the Supreme Army Command, led by Paul von Hindenburg and Erich Ludendorff. In late October 1918, however, with defeat looming on the horizon, Hindenburg pushed Kaiser Wilhelm II and the German government to form a civil government in order to negotiate an armistice with the Allies. The Kaiser and Reichstag subsequently amended the latter organization's constitution of 1871, effectively creating a parliamentary democracy in which the chancellor of Germany, Prince Max von Baden, was responsible not to Wilhelm but to the Reichstag.

This was not enough, however, to satisfy the far leftist forces within Germany, who capitalized on the chaos of the last days of a losing war effort to lead a general workers' strike that 7 NOV, and call for the establishment of a socialist republic along the lines of the Bolshevik government in Russia. Hoping to pacify the radical socialists, von Baden transferred his powers to Ebert, the leader of Germany's Social Democratic Party (SPD), on 9 NOV. Over the next six months, the Reichstag, led by the SPD, worked to write a new constitution that would solidify Germany's status as a parliamentary democracy. Meanwhile, many within Germany blamed the government for what they saw as the humiliating terms imposed on the country by the victorious Allies in the Treaty of Versailles, particularly the treaty's demands for German war reparations, justified by a clause that placed blame for the war squarely on the shoulders of Germany.

Under vicious attack from both the militarist right and the radical socialist left and identified by both sides with the shame of Versailles, the Weimar government and its constitution—signed into law on August 11, 1919—seemed to have a dim chance of survival. In this atmosphere of confrontation and frustration, exacerbated by poor economic conditions, right

wing elements began to take an ever more pervasive hold over the Reichstag. This process, intensified by the worldwide depression that began in 1929, would culminate in the rise to power of Adolf Hitler, who exploited the weakness of the Weimar system to lay the foundations for himself and his National Socialist German Workers' (or Nazi) Party to dissolve the parliamentary government and take absolute control over Germany.

- **Aug 11 1940 – WWII Era:** German air raid on Portland British port in Weymouth Harbor results in 38 German aircraft being shot down over England.
- **Aug 11 1942 – Holocaust:** The SS begins exterminating 3,500 Jews over a period of six-weeks in Zelov Lodz Poland.
- **Aug 11 1942 – WWII:** *HMS Eagle Sunk* » During the battle of Malta's Operation Pedestal she was ambushed in the afternoon 70 nautical miles south of Cape Salinas by U-73, a Type VIIB U-Boat. Its commander, Helmut Rosenbaum, took no chances and fired all four torpedoes from its bow tubes. The Eagle's ASW compartmentation and ballasts were designed back in 1919 and has not been designed to support the explosive power of four modern torpedoes. As a result, water rushed into the ship's belly, which filled in four minutes. In sinking, Eagle carried with her 131 officers and sailors. Most of the victims were in the ship's lower level, the machinery area. The destroyers HMS Laforey and Lookout rescued the remaining 67 officers and 862 sailors stranded in the water. The wreck was found years later.
- **Aug 11 1943 – WWII:** *Germans Begin to Evacuate Sicily* » German forces begin a six-day evacuation of the Italian island of Sicily, having been beaten back by the Allies, who invaded the island in July.



The Germans had maintained a presence in Sicily since the earliest days of the war. But with the arrival of Gen. George S. Patton and his 7th Army and Gen. Bernard Montgomery and his 8th Army, the Germans could no longer hold their position. The race began for the Strait of Messina, the 2-mile wide body of water that separated Sicily from the Italian mainland. The Germans needed to get out of Sicily and onto the Italian peninsula. While Patton had already reached his goal, Palermo, the Sicilian capital, on 22 JUL (to a hero's welcome, as the Sicilian people were more than happy to see an end to fascist rule), Montgomery, determined to head off the Germans at Messina, didn't make his goal in time. The German

29th Panzergrenadier Division and the 14th Panzer Corps were brought over from Africa for the sole purpose of slowing the Allies' progress and allowing the bulk of the German forces to get off the island. The delaying tactic succeeded. Despite the heavy bombing of railways leading to Messina, the Germans made it to the strait on 11 AUG.

Over six days and seven nights, the Germans led 39,569 soldiers, 47 tanks, 94 heavy guns, 9,605 vehicles, and more than 2,000 tons of ammunition onto the Italian mainland. (Not to mention the 60,000 Italian soldiers who were also evacuated, in order to elude capture by the Allies.) Although the United States and Britain had succeeded in conquering Sicily, the Germans were now reinforced and heavily supplied, making the race for Rome more problematic.

- **Aug 11 1944 – WWII:** In France, the U.S. Third Army crossed the Loire River and at Nantes, France, Germans scuttled ships as Allies approached.
- **Aug 11 1967 – Vietnam War:** *U.S. Pilots Cleared to Bomb Hanoi-Haiphong Area* » For the first time, U.S. pilots are authorized to bomb road and rail links in the Hanoi-Haiphong area, formerly on the prohibited target list. This permitted U.S. aircraft to bomb targets within 25 miles of the Chinese border and to engage other targets with rockets and cannon within 10 miles of the border. The original restrictions had been imposed because of Johnson's fear of a confrontation with China and a possible expansion of the war.
- **Aug 11 1970 – Vietnam War:** *South Vietnamese Troops Assume Responsibility for Guarding Border* » As part of the Vietnamization effort, South Vietnamese troops relieve U.S. units of their responsibility for guarding the Cambodian and Laotian borders along almost the entire South Vietnamese frontier. Nixon's strategy in Vietnam was to improve the fighting capability of the South Vietnamese forces so that they could assume the responsibility for the war and, allowing for the withdrawal of U.S. forces. The assumption of the responsibility for the border areas was significant because those areas had previously required the presence of large U.S. combat formations.
- **Aug 11 1972 – Vietnam War:** *Last U.S. Ground Combat Unit Departs South Vietnam* » The Third Battalion, Twenty-First Infantry, departs for the United States. The unit had been guarding the U.S. air base at Da Nang. This left only 43,500 advisors, airmen, and support troops left in-country. This number did not include the sailors of the Seventh Fleet on station in the South China Sea or the air force personnel in Thailand and Guam.
- **Aug 11 1984 – Cold War:** *Reagan Jokes About "Outlawing" the Soviet Union* » A joke about "outlawing" the Soviet Union by President Ronald Reagan turns into an international

embarrassment. The president's flippant remarks caused consternation among America's allies and provided grist for the Soviet propaganda mill.



As President Reagan prepared for his weekly radio address on this day he was asked to make a voice check. As part of his pre-speech, non-over-the-air sound check just moments before the broadcast, Reagan made the following joke: *"My fellow Americans, I'm pleased to tell you I just signed legislation which outlaws Russia forever. The bombing begins in five minutes."* The embarrassing comment was a parody of the actual opening line in his prepared remarks: "My fellow Americans, I'm pleased to tell you that today I signed legislation that will allow student religious groups to begin enjoying a right they've too long been denied, the freedom to meet in public high schools during non-school hours." Unfortunately Reagan, whose career actually began as a radio announcer in Iowa, was a victim of what's known as a "hot mic" or "live mic," a microphone inadvertently left on to broadcast or record off-the-record remarks.

Since the voice check was not actually broadcast, it was not until after he delivered his radio address that news of his "joke" began to leak out. In Paris, a leading newspaper expressed its dismay, and stated that only trained psychologists could know whether Reagan's remarks were "a statement of repressed desire or the exorcism of a dreaded phantom." A Dutch news service remarked, "Hopefully, the man tests his missiles more carefully." Other foreign newspapers and news services called Reagan "an irresponsible old man," and declared that his comments were "totally unbecoming" for a man in his position. In the Soviet Union, commentators had a field day with Reagan's joke. One stated, "It is said that a person's level of humor reflects the level of his thinking. If so, aren't one and the other too low for the president of a great country?" Another said, "We would not be wasting time on this unfortunate joke if it did not reflect once again the fixed idea that haunts the master of the White House."

Reagan's tasteless joke provided additional ammunition for commentators at home and abroad who believed that the anticommunist crusader was a reckless "cowboy" intent on provoking a conflict with the Soviet Union. Ironically, the man who also referred to Russia as an "evil empire" went on to establish a close personal relationship with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev after the latter came to power in 1985. The two men later signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in 1987, which eliminated an entire class of nuclear weapons.

- **Aug 11 2003 – NATO\*Afghanistan:** NATO takes over command of the peacekeeping force in Afghanistan, marking its first major operation outside Europe in its 54-year-history.

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- **AUG 12 1676 – Colonial America:** King Philip's War Ends » In colonial New England, King Philip's War effectively comes to an end when Philip, chief of the Wampanoag Indians, is assassinated by a Native American in the service of the English.



**Chief Metacombet (King Philip)**

In the early 1670s, 50 years of peace between the Plymouth colony and the local Wampanoag Indians began to deteriorate when the rapidly expanding settlements forced land sales on the tribe. Reacting to increasing Native American hostility, the English met with King Philip, chief of the Wampanoag, and demanded that his forces surrender their arms. The Wampanoag did so, but in 1675 a Christian Native American who had been acting as an informer to the English was murdered, and three Wampanoag were tried and executed for the crime.

On 24 JUN, King Philip responded by ordering a raid on the border settlement of Swansea, Massachusetts. His warriors massacred the English colonists there, and the attack set off a series of Wampanoag raids in which several settlements were destroyed and scores of colonists massacred. The colonists retaliated by destroying a number of Indian villages. The destruction of a Narragansett village by the English brought the Narragansett into the conflict on the side of King Philip, and within a few months several other tribes and all the New England colonies were involved.

In early 1676, the Narragansett were defeated and their chief killed, while the Wampanoag and their other allies were gradually subdued. King Philip's wife and son were captured, and his secret headquarters in Mount Hope, Rhode Island, were discovered. On August 12, 1676, Philip was assassinated at Mount Hope by a Native American in the service of the English. The English drew and quartered Philip's body and publicly displayed his head on a stake in Plymouth. King Philip's War, which was extremely costly to the colonists of southern New

England, ended the Native American presence in the region and inaugurated a period of unimpeded colonial expansion.

- **Aug 12 1776 – American Revolution:** Washington Anticipates British Blockade of New York  
» General George Washington writes to Major General Charles Lee that the Continental Army's situation had deteriorated due to an outbreak of smallpox and problems with desertion. Washington feared that the superior British navy might blockade New York, thus isolating the city from communications with other states.

Washington was correct that the British intended to capture New York City and gain control of the Hudson River, a victory that would divide the rebellious colonies in half. British General William Howe's large army landed on Long Island, however, 10 days later than they had planned, on 22 AUG. Finally, on 27 AUG, the Redcoats marched against the Patriot position at Brooklyn Heights, overcoming the Americans at Gowanus Pass and then outflanking the entire Continental Army. The Americans suffered 1,000 casualties to the British loss of only 400 men during the fighting. After the victory, Howe chose not to follow the advice of his subordinates and did not storm the Patriot redoubts at Brooklyn Heights, where he could have taken the Patriots' military leadership prisoner and ended the rebellion.

General Washington ordered a retreat to Manhattan by boat. The British could easily have prevented this retreat and captured most of the Patriot officer corps, including Washington. General William Howe and his brother, Admiral Richard Howe, however, still hoped to convince the Americans to rejoin the British Empire in the wake of the humiliating defeat, instead of forcing the former colonies into submission after executing Washington and his officers as traitors. Indeed, on 11 SEP, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams and other congressional representatives reopened negotiations with the Howe brothers on Staten Island; the negotiations fell through when the British refused to accept American independence.

The British captured New York City on 15 SEP; it would remain in British hands until the end of the war.

- **Aug 12 1861 – Native Americans:** A 16-man Confederate detachment rode into an ambush set by Chief Nicholas of the Mescalero Apaches in the Big Bend country south of Fort Davis, Texas. The only person from the detachment to escape was the Mexican guide.
- **Aug 12 1867 – Post Civil War:** Secretary of War Edwin Stanton Suspended » President Andrew Johnson attempted to fire Secretary of War Edwin Stanton on multiple occasions because Stanton opposed Johnson's more lenient attitude toward the South during Reconstruction. Johnson wanted to readmit states from the Confederacy without any



guarantees of civil rights for the freed slaves, and Stanton strongly opposed this policy and favored much harsher treatment of the former rebellious states.

In 1867, President Johnson decided that Stanton's opposition was crippling his presidency, so he attempted to remove Stanton from office. Stanton refused to leave, claiming that the Tenure of Office Act prevented his removal. In 1868, Johnson suspended him and appointed Ulysses S. Grant as his replacement, but the Senate overruled President Johnson and Stanton continued in his position. Johnson tried a third time to remove him from office, appointing General Lorenzo Thomas as a replacement, but Congress again backed Stanton.

Radical Republican forces in Congress began an impeachment trial against Johnson over his continued attacks on Stanton, but they were unable to gather enough votes in the Senate to remove the president from office. In the end, Edwin Stanton resigned his post on May 26, 1868. Stanton was eventually appointed to the Supreme Court by Ulysses S. Grant in 1869, but he died before he could take office.

- **Aug 12 1898 – Spanish American War: *Armistice Ends the War*** » The brief and one-sided Spanish-American War comes to an end when Spain formally agrees to a peace protocol on U.S. terms: the cession of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Manila in the Philippines to the United States pending a final peace treaty.



The Spanish-American War had its origins in the rebellion against Spanish rule that began in Cuba in 1895. The repressive measures that Spain took to suppress the guerrilla war, such as herding Cuba's rural population into disease-ridden garrison towns, were graphically portrayed in U.S. newspapers and enflamed public opinion. In January 1898, violence in Havana led U.S. authorities to order the battleship USS Maine to the city's port to protect American citizens. On 15 FEB, a massive explosion of unknown origin sank the Maine in the Havana harbor, killing 260 of the 400 American crewmembers aboard. An official U.S. Naval Court of Inquiry ruled in March, without much evidence, that the ship was blown up by a mine but did not directly place the blame on Spain. Much of Congress and a majority of the American public expressed little doubt that Spain was responsible, and called for a declaration of war.

In April, the U.S. Congress prepared for war, adopting joint congressional resolutions demanding a Spanish withdrawal from Cuba and authorizing President William McKinley to use force. On 23 APR, President McKinley asked for 125,000 volunteers to fight against Spain. The next day, Spain issued a declaration of war. The United States declared war on 25 APR. On 1 MAY, the U.S. Asiatic Squadron under Commodore George Dewey destroyed the Spanish Pacific fleet at Manila Bay in the first battle of the Spanish-American War. Dewey's decisive victory cleared the way for the U.S. occupation of Manila in August and the eventual transfer of the Philippines from Spanish to American control.

On the other side of the world, a Spanish fleet docked in Cuba's Santiago harbor in May after racing across the Atlantic from Spain. A superior U.S. naval force arrived soon after and blockaded the harbor entrance. In June, the U.S. Army Fifth Corps landed in Cuba with the aim of marching to Santiago and launching a coordinated land and sea assault on the Spanish stronghold. Included among the U.S. ground troops were the Theodore Roosevelt-led "Rough Riders," a collection of Western cowboys and Eastern blue bloods officially known as the First U.S. Voluntary Cavalry. On July 1, the Americans won the Battle of San Juan Hill, and the next day they began a siege of Santiago. On 3 JUL the Spanish fleet was destroyed off Santiago by U.S. warships under Admiral William Sampson, and on 17 JUL the Spanish surrendered the city—and thus Cuba—to the Americans.

In Puerto Rico, Spanish forces likewise crumbled in the face of superior U.S. forces, and on 12 AUG an armistice was signed between Spain and the United States. On 10 DEC, the Treaty of Paris officially ended the Spanish-American War. The once-proud Spanish empire was virtually dissolved, and the United States gained its first overseas empire. Puerto Rico and Guam were ceded to the United States, the Philippines were bought for \$20 million, and Cuba became a U.S. protectorate. Philippine insurgents who fought against Spanish rule during the war immediately turned their guns against the new occupiers, and 10 times more U.S. troops died suppressing the Philippines than in defeating Spain.

- **Aug 12 1914 – WW1 Era:** *The Battle of Halen* » The Battle, also known as 'The Battle of the Silver Helmets' in Belgian folklore because of the many cavalry helmets left behind on the battlefield by the German cuirassiers, comprised the first cavalry action of the war. It was fought at a river crossing at Halen (Haelen) in Belgium, around 30km from the main Belgian line at Louvain. The significance of the engagement lay chiefly in its being the first cavalry attack of the war, although the Belgian army's success in driving back repeated German cavalry charges all day on the 12th was also worthy of note. It was also one of the few setbacks encountered by the Germans during their successful invasion of neutral Belgium. Advance squadrons of Georg von der Marwitz's cavalry corps proved unable to defeat a single Belgian

cavalry division under de Witte guarding the Haelen Bridge, despite numerous attempts with sabers and lances from early in the morning.

De Witte repulsed the German cavalry attacks by ordering his men (which included a company of cyclists and another of pioneer engineers) to dismount and meet the attack with massed rifle fire, which succeeded in inflicting significant casualties upon the Germans. Although the Belgian success was hailed by some as a huge setback to German ambitions - it wasn't - it did provide an early demonstration of the modern-day irrelevance of the cavalry in offensive situations. In all the Germans suffered 150 dead, 600 wounded and some 200-300 prisoners; the number of dead horses was placed at 800+. The Belgian army suffered 1,122 casualties, including 160 dead and 320 wounded.

- **Aug 12 1914 – WW1 Era:** Russian troops take East-Prussia and occupy the town of Marggrabowa.
- **Aug 12 1914 – WW1 Era:** *Big Bertha Fires On Forts Around Liege* » Big Bertha, German Dicke Bertha, a type of 16.5-inch howitzer was first used by the German army to bombard Belgian and French forts during World War I. The gun was nicknamed “Big Bertha” by German soldiers after one of its projectiles completely destroyed Fort Loncin during the siege of Liège, Belgium. A total of 12 Big Berthas were put into service.

The gun was designed and built under great secrecy by the firm Krupp, Germany’s largest armaments manufacturer, in the years before the war for the sole purpose of overcoming modern Belgian and French forts built of reinforced concrete. At the time of their construction, the Big Berthas were the largest, most-powerful mobile artillery pieces in use by any army. The gun could fire projectiles weighing up to 1,785 pounds to a distance of almost six miles. The most widely used type of shell was equipped with a delayed-action fuse that exploded after having penetrated up to 40 feet of concrete and earth.



The gun and its carriage, when fully assembled, weighed about 47 tons. The Big Berthas generally operated in pairs, and each was crewed and serviced by about 240 men. For transport to the battlefield, the howitzer was disassembled into components and loaded onto five special wagons pulled by gasoline-powered motor tractors. For long-distance travel, the road wagons and other equipment were moved by railway cars. After detraining, the transport wagons were

hauled by tractor to the firing site, where the guns were reassembled. Under ideal conditions a Big Bertha could be assembled in six hours.

At the start of war, the German army had only two Big Berthas, and both saw their first action against the complex of Belgian forts around Liège. In five days, they destroyed a succession of forts and compelled the surrender of the city, thereby opening the way for the German army to advance westward through southern Belgium on its way to invading northern France. Farther to the west, the forts around the city of Namur were similarly battered into surrender by the Big Berthas and Škoda 12-inch mortars on August 21–25. Two more successful sieges followed at Maubeuge (August 25–September 8) and Antwerp (September 28–October 10). In 1915, as more Big Berthas were built and fielded (for a total of 12 guns), they produced similar results against Russian forts. The Battle of Verdun in 1916 proved to be the swan song for the Big Berthas, which were unable to penetrate the reinforced concrete of the modernized French forts at Douaumont and Vaux.

According to some sources, the nickname “Big Bertha” was bestowed on the guns in honor of Bertha Krupp von Bohlen und Holbach, owner of the Krupp firm. In popular usage, the name Big Bertha was also applied, incorrectly, by members of the Allied forces to the extreme long-range cannons with which the Germans shelled Paris in 1918; those guns are properly known as Paris Guns.

- **Aug 12 1918 – WW1: *Battle of Amiens Ends*** » Allies defeat Germans in the last great battle on the Western Front. It was a major turning point in the tempo of the war. The Germans had started the war with the Schlieffen Plan before the Race to the Sea slowed movement on the Western Front and the war devolved into trench warfare. The German Spring Offensive earlier in 1918 had once again given Germany the offensive edge on the Western Front. Armored support helped the Allies tear a hole through trench lines, weakening once impregnable trench positions: the British Third Army, with no armored support, had almost no effect on the line, while the Fourth, with fewer than a thousand tanks, broke deep into German territory.

The British war correspondent Philip Gibbs noted Amiens' effect on the war's tempo, saying on 27 AUG that, "the enemy...is on the defensive" and, "the initiative of attack is so completely in our hands that we are able to strike him at many different places." Gibbs also credits Amiens with a shift in troop morale, saying, "the change has been greater in the minds of men than in the taking of territory. On our side the army seems to be buoyed up with the enormous hope of getting on with this business quickly" and that, "there is a change also in the enemy's mind. They no longer have even a dim hope of victory on this western front. All they hope for now is to defend themselves long enough to gain peace by negotiation."

- **Aug 12 1920 – Polish\*Soviet War: Battle of Warsaw** » The battle, fought from August 12–25 as Red Army forces commanded by Mikhail Tukhachevsky approached the Polish capital of Warsaw and the nearby Modlin Fortress, was a decisive Polish victory. Poland, on the verge of total defeat, repulsed and defeated the Red Army in what Vladimir Lenin, the Bolshevik leader, called it "an enormous defeat" for his forces.

After the Polish Kiev Offensive Soviet forces launched a successful counterattack in the summer of 1920, forcing the Polish army to retreat westward in disarray. The Polish forces seemed on the verge of disintegration and observers predicted a decisive Soviet victory. On 16 AUG, Polish forces commanded by Józef Piłsudski counterattacked from the south, disrupting the enemy's offensive, forcing the Russian forces into a disorganized withdrawal eastward and behind the Neman River. Estimated Russian losses were 10,000 killed, 500 missing, 30,000 wounded, and 66,000 taken prisoner, compared with Polish losses of some 4,500 killed, 10,000 missing, and 22,000 wounded.

In the following months, several more Polish follow-up victories saved Poland's independence and led to a peace treaty with Soviet Russia and Soviet Ukraine later that year, securing the Polish state's eastern frontiers until 1939. The British diplomat Edgar Vincent, 1st Viscount D'Abernon regards this event as one of the most important battles in history on his expanded list of most decisive battles, since the Polish victory over the Soviets stopped the spread of communism to Europe.

- **Aug 12 1938 – Germany: Hitler's Mother's Cross** » Adolf Hitler institutes the Mother's Cross, to encourage German women to have more children. The German Reich needed a robust and growing population and encouraged couples to have large families. It started such encouragement early. Once members of the distaff wing of the Hitler Youth movement, the League of German Girls, turned 18, they became eligible for a branch called Faith and Beauty, which trained these girls in the art of becoming ideal mothers. One component of that ideal was fecundity. And so each year on 12 AUG, in honor of his beloved mother, Klara, and in memory of her birthday, a gold medal was awarded to women with seven children, a silver to women with six, and a bronze to women with five.



- **Aug 12 1940 – WW2 Era: Luftwaffe Bombs British Radar Stations** » The Luftwaffe attacked the [Radar] Chain as well as airfields in its attempt at 'destroying Britain's ground organization.' Heavy attacks, with the loss of 31 aircraft, were made on six stations in the

southeast on 12 AUG. Considerable damage was done; one, Ventnor, was knocked out for eleven days, but an ordinary radio transmitter was soon putting out pulses on the same frequency and 'though these produced no echo, the enemy, hearing them, could only suppose that the station had been repaired.' Meanwhile, the Reichsmarschall cancelled any further attacks on radar targets, arguing, 'It is doubtful whether there is any point in continuing the attacks on radar sites, in view of the fact that not one of those attacked has so far been put out of action.'

The Germans did not understand how the Britain's Dowding air defense system worked. It was built by the Royal Air Force just before the start of war, and proved decisive in the Battle of Britain. During the early war period, the Luftwaffe consistently underestimated the value of the system. A 16 July 1940 Luftwaffe intelligence report failed to even mention it, in spite of being aware of it through signals intercepts and having complete details of its WWI predecessor. A later report on 7 AUG did make mention of the system, but only to suggest that it would tie fighters to their sectors, reducing their flexibility and ability to deal with large raids.

It was not just about radar which gave early warning of high flying aircraft from about 150 miles out to the coast. It gave no information about height nor about the passage of aircraft once they did reach the British coast. Britain had created an "integrated air defense system" Its real strength was the C3 system which collected information from radar, wireless intercepts, the observer corps and other sources, assessed this information and used the information to give real time directions to aircraft, AA guns and the civil defense system. Impressive stuff without any computers. There was also a degree of redundancy.

The Germans missed the weakest links in the Air defense network. This was not the radars, which were hard to hit and well defended, but the sector control stations which directed up to four squadrons to raids. The sector stations had to be built on Air Ministry land and were typically in wooden huts. The Germans did hit the sector station at Biggin Hill crippling the station until an alternative could be occupied outside the base. After the war, the fighter control system was largely demobilized. The explosion of the Soviet atomic bomb in 1949 and the presence of Tupolev Tu-4 "Bull" aircraft that could deliver it to the UK led to the rapid construction of the ROTOR system. ROTOR re-used many existing GCI and CH systems with more sophisticated control rooms in fortified underground bunkers. ROTOR was itself replaced by AMES Type 80 Master Control rooms and then the Linesman/Mediator system in the 1960s.

- **Aug 12 1941 – WW2 Era:** *Atlantic Charter Proposed* » President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill meet on board aboard the USS Augusta at Placentia

Bay, Newfoundland, to confer on issues ranging from support for Russia to threatening Japan to postwar peace.



When Roosevelt and Churchill met for the first time as leaders of their respective nations, chief among the items on their agenda was aid to the USSR “on a gigantic scale,” as it was desperate in its war against its German invaders. A statement was also drafted, which Roosevelt chose to issue under his name, that made it plain to Japan that any further aggression would “produce a situation in which the United States government would be compelled to take counter-measures,” even if it meant “war between the United States and Japan.”

The president and the prime minister also agreed to compose and make public a document in which the United States and Britain declared their intention “to ensure life, liberty, independence, and religious freedom, and to preserve the rights of man and justice.” They also promised to strive for a postwar world free of “aggrandizement, territorial or other,” addressing those nations currently under German, Italian, or Japanese rule, offering hope that the integrity of their sovereign borders would be restored to them. This document would be called the Atlantic Charter and, when finally ratified by 26 nations in January 1942, would comprise the founding principles of the United Nations.

- **Aug 12 1942 – WW2:** *Churchill Visits Stalin* » Churchill flies to Moscow for four days, makes speech and meets Stalin and US representative W. Averell Harriman. Video at <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/mr-churchill-in-moscow> contains a lengthy sequence illustrating Russian war effort: wrecked German planes in Russian fields; Russian tanks; Cossack troops marching along road; men and women in arms factory making shells, tanks, guns; new Russian anti-tank gun in action on test range.
- **Aug 12 1944 – WW2:** *Operation Aphrodite* » Aphrodite and Anvil were the World War II code names of United States Army Air Forces and United States Navy operations to use B-17 and PB4Y bombers as precision-guided munitions against bunkers and other hardened/reinforced enemy facilities, such as those targeted during Operation Crossbow. The plan called for B-17 aircraft that had been taken out of operational service (various nicknames existed such as "robot", "baby", "drone" or "weary Willy") to be loaded to capacity with

explosives, and flown by radio control into bomb-resistant fortifications such as German U-boat pens and V-weapon sites.



**Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy Jr.**

It was hoped that it would match the British success with Tallboy and Grand Slam ground penetration bombs but the project was dangerous, expensive and unsuccessful. Of 14 missions flown, none resulted in the successful destruction of a target. Many aircraft lost control and crashed or were shot down by flak, and many pilots were killed. However, a handful of aircraft scored near misses. One notable pilot death on 12 AUG was that of Lt Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr., USNR, the elder brother of future US President John F. Kennedy.

The program effectively ceased on January 27, 1945 when General Spaatz sent an urgent message to Doolittle: "Aphrodite babies must not be launched against the enemy until further orders".

- **Aug 12 1944 – WW2:** Winston Churchill and Marshal Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia meet in Naples, Italy.
- **Aug 12 1944 – WW2:** *Operation PLUTO* » First Pipeline under the Ocean (PLUTO) becomes operational, taking fuel from Isle of Wight, England to Cherbourg, France. The scheme was developed by Arthur Hartley, chief engineer with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. Allied forces on the European continent required a tremendous amount of fuel. Pipelines were considered necessary to relieve dependence on oil tankers, which could be slowed by bad weather, were vulnerable to German submarines, and were also needed in the Pacific War. Geoffrey William Lloyd, the Secretary for Petroleum, in 1942 met Admiral Mountbatten, Chief of Combined Operations, whose area this was, and then the Chairman of Anglo-Iranian. Hartley's idea of using adapted submarine telephone cable was adopted.

The battle of Normandy was won without a drop of fuel being delivered via the Pluto cross-channel pipelines. Only eight per cent of the fuel delivered to the Allied forces in North-West Europe between D-Day and VE Day was via those pipelines; the rest being by tanker, either in bulk or in cans, or by airlift.



- **Aug 12 1944 – WW2:** *Sant'Anna di Stazzema Massacre* » German troops of the 2nd Battalion of SS Panzergrenadier Regiment 35 of 16th SS Panzergrenadier Division Reichsführer-SS, commanded by SS-Hauptsturmführer Anton Galler, entered the mountain village of Sant'Anna di Stazzema. With them came some fascists of the 36th Brigata Nera Benito Mussolini based in Lucca, dressed in German uniforms.

The soldiers immediately proceeded to round up villagers and refugees, locking up hundreds of them in several barns and stables, before systematically executing them. The killings were done mostly by shooting groups of people with machine guns or by herding them into basements and other enclosed spaces and tossing in hand grenades. At the 16th-century local church, the priest Fiore Menguzzo was shot at point-blank range, after which machine guns were then turned on some 100 people gathered there. The victims included at least 107 children (the youngest of whom, Anna Pardini, was only 20 days old), as well as eight pregnant women (one of whom, Evelina Berretti, had her stomach cut with a bayonet and her baby pulled out and killed separately).

Subsequently, other people were killed throughout the village, their corpses were set on fire at the church from which the soldiers used its pews for a bonfire to dispose of the bodies. The livestock were also exterminated and the whole village was burnt down. All this took three hours. The SS men then sat down outside the burning Sant'Anna and ate lunch. In all 560 people were killed.

After the war the divisional commander Max Simon was sentenced to death for war crimes. The sentence was later commuted to life in prison. He was pardoned in 1954 and died in 1961. Apart from Simon, no one else was prosecuted for this massacre until July 2004, when a trial of ten former Waffen-SS officers and NCOs living in Germany was held before a military court in La Spezia, Italy. On 22 June 2005, the court found the accused guilty of participation in the killings and sentenced them in absentia to life imprisonment. However, extradition requests from Italy were rejected by Germany. In 2012, German prosecutors shelved their investigation of 17 unnamed former SS soldiers (eight of whom were still alive) who were part of the unit involved in the massacre because of a lack of evidence.

- **Aug 12 1945– WW2:** Emperor Hirohito of Japan informs the imperial family that he has decided to surrender. The Allies, in response to the Emperor's 10 AUG telegram to the Allies about agreeing to the Potsdam terms, respond that the Japanese government would be subject to the supreme allied Commander in Japan. Truman does, however, order no further uses of the atomic bomb without his instructions. Another bomb was expected to be ready a week later and then three more in SEP and another three in OCT.

- **Aug 12 1948 – Post WW2:** Court of justice sentences General Friedrich Christiansen, commander of the German Wehrmacht in the Netherlands, to 12 years imprisonment.
- **Aug 12 1948 – U.S. Navy:** USS Nevada (BB-36), which served in both WWI and WWII, is struck from the naval record. At the end of World War II, the Navy decided that Nevada was too old to be retained, so they assigned it to be a target ship in the atomic experiments at Bikini Atoll in July 1946 (Operation Crossroads). The ship was hit by the blast from the first atomic bomb, Able, and was left heavily damaged and radioactive. Unfit for further service, Nevada was decommissioned on 29 August 1946 and sunk for naval gunfire practice on 31 July 1948.
- **Aug 12 1950 – Korean War:** Battle of the Bowling Alley (12-25 Aug) » United Nations Command forces defeated North Korean forces early in the Korean War near the city of Taegu, South Korea. The battle took place in a narrow valley, dubbed the "Bowling Alley", which was north of Taegu. It followed a week of fighting between the Korean People's Army 13th Division and the Republic of Korea Army's 1st Division along the latter's last defensible line in the hills north of the city. Reinforcements, including the US Army's 27th and 23rd Infantry Regiments were committed to bolster the ROK defenses. This battle and several others were smaller engagements of the Battle of Pusan Perimeter.

For another week, KPA divisions launched all the troops they had in massed attacks against the ROK and U.S. lines. Their attacks, which usually occurred at night and were supported by armor and artillery, advanced with infantry and tanks in close support of one another. Each KPA attack ran into well-established UN lines, where U.S. tanks, mines and entrenched infantry were positioned to counter them. Strikes by US aircraft ravaged the attacking KPA. The fighting was fierce with many casualties on both sides, particularly where the KPA and ROK fought one another. The repeated attacks eventually broke and pushed back the ROK forces. The KPA continued their push against the Pusan Perimeter until they were outflanked in the Battle of Inchon. Casualties and losses: South Korea - 2,300 killed, United States - 8 killed, North Korea 5,690 killed.

- **Aug 12 1950 – Korean War:** Bloody Gulch Massacre » A war crime that took place west of Masan, South Korea. After a very successful attack on two undefended US artillery battalions that killed or injured hundreds of US soldiers, members of North Korea's Korean People's Army (KPA) 13th Regiment murdered seventy-five captured US Army prisoners of war during one of the smaller engagements of the Battle of Pusan Perimeter. The murdered soldiers were from the 555th Field Artillery Battalion of the US 24th Infantry Division and the 90th Field Artillery Battalion of the US 25th Infantry Division.

The deaths at Bloody Gulch, combined with the subsequent Hill 303 massacre led UN commander General Douglas MacArthur to broadcast to the KPA on 20 AUG, denouncing the

atrocities. The USAF dropped many leaflets over enemy territory, addressed to KPA commanders. MacArthur warned that he would hold North Korea's senior military leaders responsible for the event, and any other war crimes. The incident at Bloody Gulch would be only one of the first of a series of atrocities that US forces accused KPA soldiers of committing. In late 1953, the United States Senate Committee on Government Operations, led by Joseph McCarthy, conducted an investigation of up to 1,800 reported incidents of war crimes allegedly committed throughout the Korean War. The US government concluded that the KPA violated the terms of the Geneva Convention, and condemned its actions.

Historians agree there is no evidence that the KPA High Command sanctioned the shooting of prisoners during the early phase of the war. The Hill 303 massacre and similar atrocities are believed to have been conducted by "uncontrolled small units, by vindictive individuals, or because of unfavorable and increasingly desperate situations confronting the captors." T. R. Fehrenbach, a military historian, wrote in his analysis of the event that KPA troops committing these events were likely accustomed to torture and execution of prisoners due to decades of rule by oppressive armies of the Empire of Japan up until World War II.

- **Aug 12 1953 – Cold War:** *Soviets Test “Layer-Cake” bomb* » Less than one year after the United States tested its first hydrogen bomb, the Soviets detonate a 400-kiloton device in Kazakhstan. The explosive power was 30 times that of the U.S. atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, and the mushroom cloud produced by it stretched five miles into the sky. Known as the “Layer Cake,” the bomb was fueled by layers of uranium and lithium deuteride, a hydrogen isotope. The Soviet bomb was smaller and more portable than the American hydrogen bomb, so its development once again upped the ante in the dangerous nuclear arms race between the Cold War superpowers.



Shortly after the "BRAVO" test, Sakharov's team had the same idea of using radiation implosion. Work on the "Layer Cake" design was halted. On November 22, 1955, the Soviet Union exploded its first true hydrogen bomb at the Semipalatinsk test site. It had a yield of 1.6 megatons. This began a series of Soviet hydrogen bomb tests culminating on October 23, 1961, with an explosion of about 58 megatons. Khrushchev boasted, "It could have been bigger, but then it might have broken all the windows in Moscow, 4,000 miles away."

- Aug 12 1965 – Vietnam War:** *Henry Cabot Lodge Sworn In As Ambassador To Vietnam* » At the swearing-in ceremony for the new Ambassador to Vietnam, Henry Cabot Lodge, President Johnson proclaims that the United States would not continue to fight in Vietnam “if its help were not wanted and requested.” The appointing of Lodge and the recall of former Ambassador Frederick Nolting, Jr., signaled a change in U.S. policy in South Vietnam. Lodge was a firm believer in the domino theory and when he became convinced that the United States could not win in Vietnam with President Ngo Dinh Diem, he became very critical of Diem’s regime in his dispatches back to Washington. Diem was ultimately removed from office and assassinated during a coup by opposition South Vietnamese generals that began on November 1, 1963. Diem and his brother, Ngo Dinh Nhu, were assassinated sometime after midnight on 2 NOV.
- Aug 12 1969 – Vietnam War:** *Viet Cong Launch New Offensive* » Viet Cong forces launch a new offensive with attacks on 150 cities, towns, and bases, including Da Nang and Hue. The heaviest attacks were aimed at the area adjacent to the Cambodian border northwest of Saigon; an estimated 2,000 Communists attacked Tay Ninh, Quan Loi, Loc Ninh, and An Loc. Further north, North Vietnamese commandos fought their way into the U.S. First Marine Division headquarters in Da Nang. They were eventually driven out by the Marines, who killed 40 Communist soldiers, sustaining five killed and 23 wounded in the process.
- Aug 12 1998 – Holocaust:** *Swiss Bank Settlement* » As the threat from Hitler’s Nazi regime became more ominous in the 1930s, tens of thousands of European Jews deposited their money in Swiss banks for safe-keeping, expecting to get it back when the Nazi threat was over. But after World War II ended, both Holocaust survivors and the relatives of those who perished in the Nazi gas chambers were unable to regain the funds--in some instances being told that they needed nonexistent death certificates from the concentration camps in order to prove they were entitled to the money.

The plaintiffs in the class-action suits accused the banks of stonewalling. Under pressure from a federal judge and state and local officials, two Swiss banks agreed to a global settlement requiring them to pay \$1.25 billion in compensation for unreturned Holocaust-era assets after months of frequently bitter negotiations. The agreement meant an end to several cases against the banks, Credit Suisse and UBS, by tens of thousands of Holocaust survivors and an end to threatened sanctions against the banks by about 20 U.S. states and 30 municipalities. The banks conceded that they made mistakes handling the funds but have denied that they deliberately kept them without justification. There are still pending class-action lawsuits against a dozen major European insurance companies stemming from Holocaust-era claims.

- Aug 12 2000 – Russian Navy:** *Russian Sub, the “Kursk,” Sinks* » A Russian nuclear submarine sinks to the bottom of the Barents Sea; all 118 crew members are later found dead.

The exact cause of the disaster remains unknown. Kursk left port on 10 AUG to take part in war games with the Russian military. Russian ships, planes and submarines met up in the Barents Sea, which is above the Arctic Circle, to practice military maneuvers. On 12 AUG, the Oscar class submarine K-141 Kursk was scheduled to fire a practice torpedo; at 11:29 a.m., before doing so, two explosions spaced shortly apart occurred in the front hull of the submarine and it plunged toward the bottom of the sea. Kursk was 500 feet long and weighed 24,000 tons. It had two nuclear reactors and could reach speeds of 28 knots. It was the largest attack submarine in the world, approximately three times the size of the largest subs in the United States Navy.

With the fate of the 118 Russian crew onboard Kursk unknown, several nations offered to contribute to the rescue effort, but the Russian government refused any assistance. When divers finally reached Kursk a week later, they found no signs of life. Under a great deal of pressure, Russian President Vladimir Putin agreed to raise the submarine from the sea bottom for an investigation, although no ship or object that size had ever before been recovered from the ocean floor. Furthermore, given that the Barents Sea is frozen for most of the year, the operation had only a small window in which to work.

Using \$100 million, the best available technology and an international team of experts, Kursk was raised on September 26, 2001, about a year after the accident. Unfortunately, however, the team was forced to cut off the front hull from the rest of the sub in order to bring it to the surface, leaving the best evidence of what caused the explosions at the bottom of the sea.

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- **Aug 13 1779 – American Revolution: Penobscot Expedition** » This was a 44-ship American naval armada mounted during the Revolutionary War by the Provincial Congress of the Province of Massachusetts Bay. The flotilla of 19 warships and 25 smaller support vessels sailed from Boston on July 19, 1779 for the upper Penobscot Bay in the District of Maine carrying an expeditionary force of more than 1,000 colonial Marines and militiamen. Also included was a 100-man artillery detachment under the command of Lt. Colonel Paul Revere. The Expedition's goal was to reclaim control of what is now mid-coast Maine from the British who had seized it a month earlier and renamed it New Ireland. It was the largest American naval expedition of the war. The fighting took place over a period of three weeks in July and August on land and at sea,



**Britain defending New Ireland from the Penobscot Expedition under command of  
British Commander George  
Collier who destroyed the American Fleet**

The Americans landed troops in late July and attempted to besiege Fort George in actions that were seriously hampered by disagreements over control of the expedition between land forces commander Brigadier General Solomon Lovell and the expedition commander, Commodore Dudley Saltonstall, who was later dismissed from the Navy for ineptitude. For almost three weeks General McLean held off the assault until a British relief fleet under the command of Sir George Collier arrived from New York on 13 AUG, driving the American fleet to destruction up the Penobscot River. The survivors of the American expedition were forced to make an overland journey back to more populated parts of Massachusetts with minimal food and armament.

Contents

One of its greatest victories of the war for the British, the Expedition was also the United States' worst naval defeat until Pearl Harbor 162 years later in 1941.

- **Aug 13 1781 – American Revolution:** Patriot forces led by Colonel William Harden and Brigadier General Francis Marion, known as the “Swamp Fox,” lure British commander Major Thomas Fraser and his 450 soldiers into an ambush at Parker’s Ferry, 30 miles northwest of Charleston, South Carolina. Meanwhile, 3,000 soldiers set sail with the French fleet on their way to aid the Patriot cause.
- **Aug 13 1812– War of 1812:** *USS Essex Defeats HMS Alert* » The USS Essex commanded by Captain Porter encountered the British Sloop of war the Alert. The Essex clearly outgunned the Alert, but the Alert commanded by Captain Laugharne hoped to get a jump on the Essex by being disguised as a merchant ship.



### **32-gun sailing frigate USS Essex (left & capturing the HMS Alert (right)**

The Essex was not fooled and was ready for the Alert when it approached. Porter maneuvered the Essex to turn abruptly as the Alert made ready a volley, thus its volley landed feebly at sea, and the Essex made ready a broadside. Within eight minutes the Alert struck its colors and became the first British ship to be captured by the Americans in the war. On September 7th Porter and the Essex put in at Delaware Bay in the course of its voyage the Essex had captured eight merchant vessels, one warship and had captured 400 prisoners.

- **Aug 13 1864 – Civil War: Deep Bottom Run (Strawberry Plains) Campaign Begins** » Sensing a weakness in the Confederate defenses around Richmond and Petersburg, Virginia, Union General Ulysses S. Grant seeks to break the siege of Petersburg by concentrating his force against one section of the Rebel trenches. However, Grant miscalculated, and the week-long operation at Deep Bottom Run that began on 13 AUG failed to penetrate the Confederate defenses.

Grant was operating on the information that General Robert E. Lee, commander of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, was sending part of his force to the Shenandoah Valley to support General Jubal Early, who had spent the summer fending off Union forces and threatening Washington, D.C. Without realizing that this information was false, Grant believed that a section of the Confederate trenches around Deep Bottom Run, between Richmond and Petersburg, was now lightly defended.

Grant shipped parts of three corps north across the James River on 13 AUG. Led by General Winfield Scott Hancock, the plan called for a series of attacks along the Confederate fortifications. Beginning on 14 AUG, the Yankees tried for six days to find a weakness. Although a Union force broke through at Fussell's Mill, a lack of reinforcements left the Federals vulnerable to a Confederate attack, and the Rebels quickly restored the broken line.

The campaign cost 3,000 Union casualties and about 1,500 for the Confederates. The Southern defensive network, stretching over 20 miles, remained intact, but the failed operation prevented Lee from shipping troops to Early in the Shenandoah; Early would soon face defeat at the hands of a larger Union force commanded by General Philip Sheridan.

- **Aug 13 1898 – Spanish-American War: Battle of Manila** » A land engagement which took place in Manila this day at the end of the Spanish–American War, four months after the decisive victory by Commodore Dewey's Asiatic Squadron at the Battle of Manila Bay. The belligerents were Spanish forces led by Governor-General of the Philippines Fermín Jáudenes, and American forces led by United States Army Brigadier General Wesley Merritt and United

States Navy Commodore George Dewey. American forces were supported by units of the Philippine Revolutionary Army, led by Emilio Aguinaldo.

The battle is sometimes referred to as the "Mock Battle of Manila" because the local Spanish and American generals, who were legally still at war, secretly and jointly planned the battle to transfer control of the city center from the Spanish to the Americans while keeping the Philippine Revolutionary Army, led by Emilio Aguinaldo, out of the city center. The battle left American forces in control of Intramuros, the center of Manila, surrounded by Philippine revolutionary forces, creating the conditions for the Battle of Manila of 1899 and the start of the Philippine–American War.

- **Aug 13 1906 – U.S. Army: *Brownsville Affair*** » An incident of racial injustice that occurred in 1906 in the southwestern United States due to resentment by European-American residents of Brownsville, Texas, of the Buffalo Soldiers, black soldiers in a segregated unit stationed at nearby Fort Brown. When a European-American bartender was killed and a European-American police officer wounded by gunshots one night, townspeople accused the members of the African-American 25th Infantry Regiment. Although their commanders said the soldiers had been in the barracks all night, evidence was planted against the men.



As a result of a United States Army Inspector General's investigation, President Theodore Roosevelt ordered the discharge without honor of 167 soldiers of the 25th Infantry Regiment, costing them pensions and preventing them from ever serving in federal civil service jobs. The case aroused national outrage in both black and white communities. After more investigation, several of the men were allowed to re-enlist.

Following publication of a history of the affair in the early 1970s, a renewed military investigation exonerated the discharged black troops. The government pardoned the men in 1972 and restored their records to show honorable discharges, but it did not provide retroactive compensation to them or their descendants. Only one man had survived to that time; Congress passed an act to provide him with a tax-free pension. The other soldiers who had been expelled all received posthumous honorable discharges.



- **Aug 13 1918 – U.S. Marine Corps:** Women enlist in the United States Marine Corps for the first time. Opha Mae Johnson was the first of over 300 to enlist in the Marine Corps Reserve during WWI.



**Opha Mae Johnson**

Her early duties included clerking at Headquarters Marine Corps, managing the records of other female reservists who joined after her. She was promoted to sergeant in September 1918, and was the highest-ranking woman in the Corps during her time of service. She was a charter member of the American Legion’s first post of woman’s Marine Corps reservists. After the war all military services began steadily disenrolling woman from active service, and Johnson became a clerk in the War Department, still working for the Marine Corps as a civil servant until retiring in 1943.

- **Aug 13 1918 – WWI:** *German Crown Council Meets to Assess War Effort* » Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany summoned his principal political and military leaders to a crown council at Spa, Belgium to assess the status of the German war effort during World War I five days after the Allied attack at Amiens, France.



**Erich Ludendorff      Kaiser Wilhelm II      Paul von Hindenburg**  
**Reinhardt Scheer      Paul von Hintze**

On 11 AUG, after the Allied victory at Amiens kicked off a new Allied offensive on the Western Front, German commander Erich Ludendorff and Paul von Hindenburg, chief of the German army’s general staff, told the new naval chief, Admiral Reinhardt Scheer, that Germany’s only hope to win the war was through submarine warfare. “There is no more hope for the offensive,” the downtrodden Ludendorff told a staff member on 12 AUG. “The generals

have lost their foothold.” Ludendorff declared their defeat on 8 AUG as “the black day of the German army”.

At the crown council assembled on August 13-14 by the Kaiser at Spa, where the German High Command had its headquarters, Ludendorff recommended that Germany initiate immediate peace negotiations. Ludendorff failed, however, to present the true extent of the military’s disadvantage on the battlefield; instead, he blamed revolt and anti-war sentiment on the home front for the military’s inability to continue the war effort indefinitely. Meanwhile, the chief military adviser to Austrian Emperor Karl I informed Wilhelm that Austria-Hungary could only continue its participation in the war until that December. Though the Kaiser thought it advisable to seek an intermediary to begin peace negotiations, his newly appointed foreign minister, Paul von Hintze, refused to take such an approach until another German victory on the battlefield had been achieved. Hintze, working on suppressing discontent and rebellion within the German government, told party leaders the following week that “there was no reason to doubt ultimate victory. We shall be vanquished only when we doubt that we shall win.”

Meanwhile, on the battlefield in Flanders, Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, one of the German army’s most senior commanders, wrote of his own doubt to Prince Max of Baden (the kaiser’s second cousin, who would become chancellor of Germany the following October): “Our military situation has deteriorated so rapidly that I no longer believe we can hold out over the winter; it is even possible that a catastrophe will come earlier....The Americans are multiplying in a way we never dreamed of....At the present time there are already thirty-one American divisions in France.” The Allied commanders, for their part, pushed their troops forward on the Western Front and made aggressive preparations for future offensives in 1919, unaware that victory would come before the year was out.

- **Aug 13 1937 – Second Sino-Japanese War: *Battle of Shanghai (13Aug – 9 Nov)*** » During the war the Imperial General Headquarters (GHQ) in Tokyo, content with the gains acquired in northern China following the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, initially showed reluctance to escalate the conflict into full-scale war. The KMT (Kuomintang - i.e. Chinese Nationalist Party) however, determined that the "breaking point" of Japanese aggression had been reached. Chiang Kai-shek quickly mobilized the central government's army and air force, placed them under his direct command, and laid siege to the Japanese area of Shanghai International Settlement, where 30,000 Japanese civilians lived with 30,000 troops on August 12, 1937.

On 13 AUG Kuomintang soldiers and warplanes attacked Japanese Marine positions in Shanghai, leading to the Battle of Shanghai. On 14 AUG, Kuomintang planes accidentally bombed the Shanghai International Settlement, which led to more than 3,000 civilian deaths. In the three days from August 14 through 16 the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) sent many sorties of the then-advanced long-ranged G3M medium-heavy land-based bombers and

assorted carrier-based aircraft with the expectation of destroying the Chinese Air Force. However, the Imperial Japanese Navy encountered unexpected resistance from the defending Chinese Hawk III and P-26/281 Peashooter fighter squadrons; suffering heavy (50%) losses from the defending Chinese pilots.

The skies of China had become a testing zone for advanced biplane and new-generation monoplane combat-aircraft designs. The introduction of the advanced A5M "Claude" fighters into the Shanghai-Nanjing theater of operations, beginning on 18 SEP helped the Japanese achieve a certain level of air superiority. However the few experienced Chinese veteran pilots, even in their older and slower biplanes, proved more than able to hold their own against the sleek A5Ms in dogfights, and it also proved to be a battle of attrition against the Chinese Air Force.

At the start of the battle, the local strength of the NRA was around five divisions, or about 70,000 troops, while local Japanese forces comprised about 6,300 marines. On 23 AUG, Japanese Army reinforcements succeeded in landing in northern Shanghai. The Imperial Japanese Army (IJA) ultimately committed over 200,000 troops, along with numerous naval vessels and aircraft, to capture the city. After more than three months of intense fighting, their casualties far exceeded initial expectations. On 26 OCT, the Japanese Army captured Dachang, an important strong-point within Shanghai, and on 5 NOV, additional reinforcements of Japan landed from Hangzhou Bay. Finally, on 9 NOV, the NRA began a general retreat.

- **Aug 13 1940 – WW2 Era: *The Battle of Britain Escalates*** » German aircraft begin the bombing of southern England, and the Battle of Britain, which will last until 31 OCT, escalates.



The Germans called it “the Day of the Eagle,” the first day of the Luftwaffe’s campaign to destroy the RAF, the British Royal Air Force, and knock out British radar stations, in preparation for Operation Sea Lion, the amphibious invasion of Britain. Almost 1,500 German aircraft took off the first day of the air raid, and 45 were shot down. Britain lost 13 fighters in the air and another 47 on the ground. But most important for the future, the Luftwaffe managed to take out only one radar station, on the Isle of Wight, and damage five others. This was considered more trouble than it was worth by Herman Goering, commander of the Luftwaffe, who decided to forgo further targeting of British radar stations because “not one of those attacked so far has been put out of operation.”

Historians agree that this was a monumental mistake on the part of the Germans. Had Goering and the Luftwaffe persisted in attacking British radar, the RAF would not have been able to get the information necessary to successfully intercept incoming German bombers. “Here, early in the battle, we get a glimpse of fuddled thinking at the highest level in the German camp,” comments historian Peter Fleming. Even the Blitz, the intensive and successive bombing of London that would begin in the last days of the Battle of Britain, could not compensate for such thinking. There would be no Operation Sea Lion. There would be no invasion of Britain. The RAF would not be defeated.

- **Aug 13 1942 – WW2: *The 'Manhattan Project' Commences*** » Major General Eugene Reybold of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers authorizes the construction of facilities that would house the "Development of Substitute Materials" project, better known as the Manhattan Project. This was the codename for the American effort to develop and test nuclear weapons during World War II. Run by General Leslie Groves, the construction of the actual bomb was overseen by Robert Oppenheimer, who was head of the Los Alamos Laboratory where it was developed.



**Oak Ridge K-25 plant, Hanford B Reactor, and S-50 Plant**

In 1939 a letter written by Leo Szilard and signed by Albert Einstein was delivered to US President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The letter urged the United States to develop uranium stockpiles and commence research efforts, especially as Nazi Germany might do the same. Two bomb types were developed: Little Boy, a uranium bomb, and Fat Man, a plutonium bomb. The work was carried out with extreme secrecy; many of those working on the project had no idea what they were working towards. Despite the security, Soviet spies managed to penetrate the project, and were aware that the US had developed the bomb.

On July 16, 1945, the Trinity test became the first detonation of a nuclear weapon. Less than a month later, President Harry Truman authorized the use of nuclear weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to date the only use of nuclear weapons in history. The bombs brought about the quick end of WWII without the need for a catastrophic invasion of Japan, but with an exceptionally high loss of civilian life in the two destroyed cities.

- **Aug 13 1944 – WW2:** USS Flier (SS-250) sunk by a Japanese mine south of Palawan in Balabac Strait. 78 killed, 8 survived and were rescued.

- **Aug 13 1948 – Cold War: *Berlin Airlift Record Day*** » Responding to increasing Soviet pressure on western Berlin, U.S. and British planes airlift a record amount of supplies into sections of the city under American and British control. The massive resupply effort, carried out in weather so bad that some pilots referred to it as “Black Friday,” signaled that the British and Americans would not give in to the Soviet blockade of western Berlin.

Berlin, like all of Germany, was divided into zones of occupation following World War II. The Russians, Americans, and British all received a zone, with the thought being that the occupation would be only temporary and that Germany would eventually be reunited. By 1948, however, Cold War animosities between the Soviets and the Americans and British had increased to such a degree that it became obvious that German reunification was unlikely. In an effort to push the British and Americans out of their zones of occupation in western Berlin, the Soviets began to interfere with road and rail traffic into those parts of the city in April 1948. (Though divided into zones of occupation, the city of Berlin was geographically located entirely within the Russian occupation area in Germany.)

In June 1948, the Russians halted all ground and water travel into western Berlin. The Americans and British responded with a massive airlift to supply the people in their Berlin zones of occupation with food, medicine, and other necessities. It was a daunting logistical effort, and meant nearly round-the-clock flights in and out of western Berlin. August 13, 1948, was a particularly nasty day, with terrible weather compounding the crowded airspace and exhaustion of the pilots and crews. Nevertheless, over 700 British and American planes landed in western Berlin, bringing in nearly 5,000 tons of supplies.

The joint British-American effort on what came to be known as “Black Friday” was an important victory for two reasons. First and foremost, it reassured the people of western Berlin that the two nations were not backing down from their promise to defend the city from the Soviets. Second, it was another signal that the Soviet blockade was not only unsuccessful but was also backfiring into a propaganda nightmare. While the Soviets looked like bullies and heartless despots for their efforts to starve western Berlin into submission, the British and Americans—flaunting their technological superiority—were portrayed as heroes by the worldwide audience.

- **Aug 13 1961 – Cold War: *Berlin is Divided*** » Shortly after midnight on this day, East German soldiers began laying down barbed wire and bricks as a barrier between Soviet-controlled East Berlin and the democratic western section of the city.

After World War II, defeated Germany was divided into Soviet, American, British and French zones of occupation. The city of Berlin, though technically part of the Soviet zone, was

also split, with the Soviets taking the eastern part of the city. After a massive Allied airlift in June 1948 foiled a Soviet attempt to blockade West Berlin, the eastern section was drawn even more tightly into the Soviet fold. Over the next 12 years, cut off from its western counterpart and basically reduced to a Soviet satellite, East Germany saw between 2.5 million and 3 million of its citizens head to West Germany in search of better opportunities. By 1961, some 1,000 East Germans—including many skilled laborers, professionals and intellectuals—were leaving every day.



In August, Walter Ulbricht, the Communist leader of East Germany, got the go-ahead from Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev to begin the sealing off of all access between East and West Berlin. Soldiers began the work over the night of August 12-13, laying more than 100 miles of barbed wire slightly inside the East Berlin border. The wire was soon replaced by a six-foot-high, 96-mile-long wall of concrete blocks, complete with guard towers, machine gun posts and searchlights. East German officers known as Volkspolizei (“Volpos”) patrolled the Berlin Wall day and night.

Many Berlin residents on that first morning found themselves suddenly cut off from friends or family members in the other half of the city. Led by their mayor, Willi Brandt, West Berliners demonstrated against the wall, as Brandt criticized Western democracies, particularly the United States, for failing to take a stand against it. President John F. Kennedy had earlier said publicly that the United States could only really help West Berliners and West Germans, and that any kind of action on behalf of East Germans would only result in failure.

The Berlin Wall was one of the most powerful and iconic symbols of the Cold War. In June 1963, Kennedy gave his famous “Ich bin ein Berliner” (“I am a Berliner”) speech in front of the Wall, celebrating the city as a symbol of freedom and democracy in its resistance to tyranny and oppression. The height of the Wall was raised to 10 feet in 1970 in an effort to stop escape attempts, which at that time came almost daily. From 1961 to 1989, a total of 5,000 East Germans escaped; many more tried and failed. High profile shootings of some would-be defectors only intensified the Western world’s hatred of the Wall.

Finally, in the late 1980s, East Germany, fueled by the decline of the Soviet Union, began to implement a number of liberal reforms. On November 9, 1989, masses of East and West

Germans alike gathered at the Berlin Wall and began to climb over and dismantle it. As this symbol of Cold War repression was destroyed, East and West Germany became one nation again, signing a formal treaty of unification on October 3, 1990.

- **Aug 13 1966 – Vietnam War:** *Cambodia Ruler Criticizes the U.S.* » The Ruler of neutral Cambodia, criticizes the United States about the attack on Thlock Track, a Cambodian village close to the South Vietnamese border. Prince Norodom Sihanouk routinely challenged the United States and its South Vietnamese allies for border violations, but tacitly permitted communist forces to use his territory for transit, supply dumps and base areas. In the United States, General William C. Westmoreland, Commander of Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) met with President Johnson at his ranch in Texas to provide the general's personal assessment of allied progress in the war, reporting that advances were being made against the communist insurgents.
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- **Aug 13 1972 – Vietnam War:** *Sappers Raid Long Binh Ammo Dump* » Communist sappers (demolitions specialists) attack the ammo dump at Long Binh, destroying thousands of tons of ammunition. Some observers said that the Communists might have been reverting to guerrilla tactics due to the overall failure of the Nguyen Hue Offensive that had been launched in March.
- **Aug 13 1972– Vietnam War:** Ex-U.S. Army Captain J. E. Engstrom says that a military report he helped prepare in 1971, estimating that 25 percent of the lower-ranking enlisted men in Vietnam were addicted to heroin, was suppressed and replaced by a "watered-down" version considered more acceptable to the U.S. command.
- **Aug 13 1978 – Palestinian Insurgency:** *Beirut Lebanon Bombing* » A bomb destroys an office building in West Beirut housing the headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Front, killing more than 175 people and injuring another 80. The bombing was allegedly carried out by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command.

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- **Aug 14 1842 – Seminole Wars:** *Second Seminole War* » The war, also known as the Florida War, was a conflict from 1835 to 1842 in Florida between various groups of Native Americans collectively known as Seminoles and the United States, part of a series of conflicts called the Seminole Wars. The Second Seminole War, often referred to as the Seminole War, is regarded as "the longest and most costly of the Indian conflicts of the United States. Casualties and



losses: US 1,600 military, civilians UNK – Seminoles UNK. Unsubstantiated estimates of US\$30,000,000 to \$40,000,000 have been given. After they has been defeated by Col. William Jenkins Worth, commander of Army forces in Florida, he recommended that the remaining Seminoles be left in peace if they would stay in southern Florida. Worth eventually received authorization to leave the remaining Seminoles on an informal reservation in southwestern Florida, and to declare an end to the war on a date of his choosing which was 14 APR. However, subsequently all but around 300 were removed from Florida to Oklahoma.

- **Aug 14 1846 – Mexican\*American War: *Capture of Santa Fe (8-14 Aug)*** » The capture, also known as the Battle of Santa Fe or the Battle of Cañoncito, took place near Santa Fe, New Mexico, the capital of the Mexican Province of New Mexico. United States Army General Stephen W. Kearny had moved southwest from Fort Leavenworth, Kansas with about 1,700 men in his Army of the West. Kearny's orders where to secure the New Mexico territory and Alta California.

On 9 AUG in Santa Fe, Governor Manuel Armijo wanted to avoid battle, but Catholic priests, Diego Archuleta (the young regular-army commander), and the young militia officers Manuel Chaves and Miguel Pino forced him to muster a defense. Armijo set up a position in Apache Canyon, a narrow pass about 10 miles southeast of the city. However, on 14 AUG, before the American army was even in view, he decided not to fight. An American named James Magoffin claimed he had convinced Armijo and Archuleta to follow this course; an unverified story says he bribed Armijo. When Pino, Chaves, and some of the militiamen insisted on fighting, Armijo ordered the cannon pointed at them. The New Mexican army retreated to Santa Fe, and Armijo fled to Chihuahua.

Kearny and his troops encountered no Mexican forces when they arrived on 15 AUG. Kearny and his force entered Santa Fe and claimed the New Mexico Territory for the United States without a shot being fired. From Santa Fe, Kearny sent Colonel Alexander Doniphan further south into Mexico. Kearny declared himself the military governor of the New Mexico Territory on 18 Aug and established a civilian government. He then took the remainder of his army west to Alta California.

- **Aug 14 1862 – Civil War: *Confederate Invasion Of Kentucky Begins*** » Confederate General Edmund Kirby Smith begins an invasion of Kentucky as part of a Confederate plan to draw the Yankee army of General Don Carlos Buell away from Chattanooga, Tennessee, and to raise support for the Southern cause in Kentucky.





**Generals Edmund Kirby Smith, Don Carlos Buell, and Braxton Bragg**

Smith led 10,000 troops out of Knoxville, Tennessee, on 14 AUG and moved toward the Cumberland Gap—the first step in the Confederate invasion of Kentucky. After a Federal force evacuated the pass in the face of the invasion, Smith continued north. On 30 AUG, he encountered a more significant force at Richmond, Kentucky. In a decisive battle, the Confederates routed the Yankees and captured most of the 6,000-man army. The Confederates occupied Lexington a few days later.

General Braxton Bragg, who moved into Kentucky from Chattanooga, routed a small Union force and sat on Buell's supply line. He later linked to Smith's force. In September, Buell followed the Confederates northward. The major encounter in the campaign would come on October 8, when Buell would defeat Bragg's army at Perryville, Kentucky. After Perryville, Bragg and Smith retreated back to Tennessee. They succeeded in drawing Buell away from Chattanooga, but they lost the contest for Kentucky.

- **Aug 14 1864 – Civil War:** *Second Battle of Dalton (14-15 Aug)* » Confederate cavalry, commanded by Maj. Gen. Joseph Wheeler raided northern Georgia to disrupt William T. Sherman's supply lines and destroy the railroad track, hoping to force Sherman to retreat from the state. On 14 AUG, Wheeler demanded the surrender of the Union garrison of 800 troops at Dalton, Georgia, commanded by Colonel Bernard Laiboldt. Laiboldt refused and held out inside his fortifications, though sporadic fighting continued until midnight.

The next morning, Wheeler's cavalry force of 5,000 ended his attack and prepared to retreat. Union reinforcements arrived from Chattanooga, commanded by Maj. Gen. James B. Steedman, and engaged Wheeler's cavalry. Skirmishing continued for four hours, before the Confederates finally left the field. The amount of damage inflicted by Wheeler on the railroad is debatable. However, Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas in Nashville reported that the track south of Dalton was quickly repaired and trains were running again within two days. Casualties and losses: Union 40 killed and 55 wounded – CSA 150.

- **Aug 14 1900 – Boxer Rebellion:** *Peking Relieved By Multinational Force* » During the Boxer Rebellion, an international force featuring British, Russian, American, Japanese, French, and German troops relieves the Chinese capital of Peking after fighting its way 80

miles from the port of Tientsin. The Chinese nationalists besieging Peking's diplomatic quarter were crushed, and the Boxer Rebellion effectively came to an end.

By the end of the 19th century, the Western powers and Japan had forced China's ruling Ch'ing dynasty to accept wide foreign control over the country's economic affairs. In the Opium Wars, popular rebellions, and the Sino-Japanese War, China had fought to resist the foreigners, but it lacked a modernized military and millions died.

In 1898, Tz'u Hsi, the dowager empress, gained control of the Chinese government in a conservative coup against the Emperor Kuang-hsu, her adoptive son and an advocate of reforms. Tz'u Hsi had previously served as ruler of China in various regencies and was deeply anti-foreign in her ideology. In 1899, her court began to secretly support the anti-foreign rebels known as the I Ho Ch'uan, or the "Righteous and Harmonious Fists."

The I Ho Ch'uan was a secret society formed with the original goal of expelling the foreigners and overthrowing the Ch'ing dynasty. The group practiced a ritualistic form of martial arts that they believed gave them supernatural powers and made them impervious to bullets. After witnessing these fighting displays, Westerners named members of the society "Boxers." Most Boxers came from northern China, where natural calamities and foreign aggression in the late 1890s had ruined the economy. The ranks of the I Ho Ch'uan swelled with embittered peasants who directed their anger against Christian converts and foreign missionaries, whom they saw as a threat to their traditional ways and blamed for their misery.

After the dowager empress returned to power, the Boxers pushed for an alliance with the imperial court against the foreigners. Tz'u Hsi gave her tacit support to their growing violence against the Westerners and their institutions, and some officials incorporated the Boxers into local militias. Open attacks on missionaries and Chinese Christians began in late 1899, and by May 1900 bands of Boxers had begun gathering in the countryside around Peking. In spite of threats by the foreign powers, the empress dowager began openly supporting the Boxers.

In early June, an international relief force of 2,000 soldiers was dispatched by Western and Japanese authorities from the port of Tientsin to Peking. The empress dowager ordered Imperial forces to block the advance of the foreigners, and the relief force was turned back. Meanwhile, the Peking-Tientsin railway line and other railroads were destroyed by the Chinese. On 13 JUN, the Boxers, now some 140,000 strong, moved into Peking and began burning churches and foreign residences. On 17 JUN, the foreign powers seized forts between Tientsin and Peking, and the next day Tz'u Hsi called on all Chinese to attack foreigners. On 20 JUN, the German ambassador Baron von Ketteler was killed and the Boxers began besieging the foreign legations in the diplomatic quarter of the Chinese capital.

As the foreign powers organized a multinational force to crush the rebellion, the siege of the Peking legations stretched into weeks, and the diplomats, their families, and guards suffered through hunger and degrading conditions as they fought desperately to keep the Boxers at bay. Eventually, an expedition of 19,000 multinational troops pushed their way to Peking after fighting two major battles against the Boxers. On 14 AUG, the eight-nation allied relief force captured Peking and liberated the legations. The foreign troops looted the city and routed the Boxers, while the empress and her court fled to the north. The victorious powers began work on a peace settlement.

Due to mutual jealousies between the nations, it was agreed that China would not be partitioned further, and in September 1901 the Peking Protocol was signed, formally ending the Boxer Rebellion. By the terms of agreement, the foreign nations received extremely favorable commercial treaties with China, foreign troops were permanently stationed in Peking, and China was forced to pay \$333 million as penalty for its rebellion. China was effectively a subject nation. The Boxers had failed to expel the foreigners, but their rebellion set the stage for the successful Chinese revolutions of the 20th century.

- **Aug 14 1912 – U.S.\*Nicaragua:** United States Marines invade Nicaragua to support the U.S. backed government installed there after the country's President (José Santos Zelaya) resignation three years earlier.
- **Aug 14 1917 – WWI Era:** *China Declares War on Germany* » As World War I enters its fourth year, China abandons its neutrality and declares war on Germany.

From its inception, the Great War was by no means confined to the European continent; in the Far East, two rival nations, Japan and China, sought to find their own role in the great conflict. The ambitious Japan, an ally of Britain since 1902, wasted no time in entering the fray, declaring war on Germany on August 23, 1914 and immediately plotting to capture Tsingtao, the biggest German overseas naval base, located on the Shantung Peninsula in China, by amphibious assault. Some 60,000 Japanese troops, assisted by two British battalions, subsequently violated Chinese neutrality with an overland approach from the sea towards Tsingtao, capturing the naval base on 7 NOV when the German garrison surrendered. That January, Japan presented China with the so-called 21 Demands, which included the extension of direct Japanese control over most of Shantung, southern Manchuria and eastern Inner Mongolia and the seizure of more territory, including islands in the South Pacific controlled by Germany.

When China declared war on Germany on August 14, 1917, its major aim was to earn itself a place at the post-war bargaining table. Above all, China sought to regain control over the vital Shantung Peninsula and to reassert its strength before Japan, its most important adversary

and rival for control in the region. At the Versailles Peace Conference following the armistice, Japan and China struggled bitterly to convince the Allied Supreme Council—dominated by the United States, France and Britain—of their respective claims on the Shantung Peninsula. A bargain was eventually struck in favor of Japan, who backed down from their demand for a racial-equality clause in the treaty in return for control over Germany's considerable economic possessions in Shantung, including railways, mines and the port at Tsingtao.

Though Japan promised to return control of Shantung to China eventually—it did so in February 1922—the Chinese were deeply outraged by the Allied decision to favor Japan at Versailles. A huge demonstration was held in Tiananmen Square on May 4, 1919, protesting the peace treaty, which Chinese delegates in Versailles refused to sign. “When the news of the Paris Peace Conference finally reached us we were greatly shocked,” one Chinese student recalled. “We at once awoke to the fact that foreign nations were still selfish and militaristic and that they were all great liars.” A year after the peace conference closed, radical Chinese nationalists formed the Chinese Communist Party, which under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai, as well as many other former leaders of the anti-Versailles Treaty demonstrations, would go on to win power in China in 1949.

- **Aug 14 1941 – WW2 Era: *Atlantic Charter*** » US President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill discussed what would become the Atlantic Charter in 1941 during the Atlantic Conference 9-12 AUG in Placentia Bay, Newfoundland. They issued a joint statement on 14 AUG that set out American and British goals for the world after the end of World War II. The joint statement, later dubbed the Atlantic Charter, outlined the aims of United States and the United Kingdom for the postwar world as follows: no territorial aggrandizement, no territorial changes made against the wishes of the people (self-determination), restoration of self-government to those deprived of it, reduction of trade restrictions, global cooperation to secure better economic and social conditions for all, freedom from fear and want, freedom of the seas, and abandonment of the use of force, and disarmament of aggressor nations. The adherents to the Atlantic Charter signed the Declaration by United Nations on 1 January 1942, which was the basis for the modern United Nations.

The Atlantic Charter inspired several other international agreements and events that followed the end of the war. The dismantling of the British Empire, the formation of NATO, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) all derived from the Atlantic Charter.

- **Aug 14 1944 – WW2: *Battle of Normandy Operation Tractable (14-25 AUG)*** » In conjunction with American movements northward to Chambois, Canadian forces launched Operation Tractable; the Allied intention was to trap and destroy the German 7th Army and 5th Panzer Army near the French town of Falaise. Five days later, the two arms of the encirclement were almost complete; the advancing U.S. 90th Infantry Division had made

contact with the Polish 1st Armored Division and the first Allied units crossed the Seine at Mantes Gassicourt, while German units were fleeing eastward by any means they could find.

By 22 AUG, the Falaise Pocket—which the Germans had been fighting desperately to keep open to allow their trapped forces to escape—was finally sealed, ending the Battle of Normandy with a major Allied victory. All German forces west of the Allied lines were now dead or in captivity and although perhaps 100,000 German troops escaped they left behind 40,000–50,000 prisoners and more than 10,000 dead in the Battle of Normandy. A total of 344 tanks and self-propelled guns, 2,447 soft-skinned vehicles and 252 artillery pieces were found abandoned or destroyed in the northern sector of the pocket. The Allies were able to advance freely through undefended territory and by 25 AUG all four Allied armies (First Canadian, Second British, First U.S., and Third U.S.) involved in the Normandy campaign were on the river Seine.

- **Aug 14 1945 – WW2: *Japan's Surrender Made Public*** » B-29's fly over Japan, dropping leaflets explaining the Potsdam terms and the Japanese response. Some of those leaflets fell into the grounds of the Presidential Palace. The emperor and his cabinet give in. The order to accept the Potsdam Declaration is sent to the Japanese embassy in Switzerland.

In the afternoon Japanese radio announced that an Imperial Proclamation was soon to be made, accepting the terms of unconditional surrender drawn up at the Potsdam Conference. That proclamation had already been recorded by the emperor. The news did not go over well, as more than 1,000 Japanese soldiers stormed the Imperial Palace in an attempt to find the proclamation and prevent its being transmitted to the Allies. Soldiers still loyal to Emperor Hirohito repulsed the attackers. That evening, General Anami, the member of the War Council most adamant against surrender, committed suicide. His reason: to atone for the Japanese army's defeat, and to be spared having to hear his emperor speak the words of surrender.



**Emperor Hirohito & Gen. Korechika Anami**

Even though Japan's War Council, urged by Emperor Hirohito, had already submitted a formal declaration of surrender to the Allies, via ambassadors, on 10 AUG, fighting continued between the Japanese and the Soviets in Manchuria and between the Japanese and the United States in the South Pacific. In fact, two days after the Council agreed to surrender, a Japanese

submarine sank the Oak Hill, an American landing ship, and the Thomas F. Nickel, an American destroyer, both east of Okinawa.

- **Aug 14 1947 – Pakistan:** *Pakistan Gains Independence from Great Britain* » On this day Pakistan achieved independence and was declared a sovereign state following the end of the British Raj in 1947. Pakistan came into existence as a result of the Pakistan Movement, which aimed for the creation of an independent Muslim state in the north-western regions of British India via partition. The movement was led by the All-India Muslim League under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The event was brought forth by the Indian Independence Act 1947 under which the British Raj gave independence to the Dominion of Pakistan which comprised West Pakistan (present-day Pakistan) and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).
- **Aug 14 1964 – Vietnam War:** *Hanoi's Air Raid Concerns* » Hanoi was reported to be holding air-raid drills for fear of more U.S. attacks in the wake of the Pierce Arrow retaliatory raids that had been flown in response to the Gulf of Tonkin incident. The North Vietnamese government urged all civilians with nonessential posts to leave the city.
- **Aug 14 1965 – Vietnam War:** *U.S. Seventh Marines Land At Chu Lai* » The advance units of the Seventh Marines land at Chu Lai, bringing the USMC's strength in South Vietnam to four regiments and four air groups. The Marines were given the responsibility of conducting operations in southern I Corps and northern II Corps, just south of the Demilitarized Zone. Hanoi Radio broadcasted an appeal to American troops, particularly African Americans, to "get out." This was purportedly a message from an American defector from the Korean War living in Peking. In South Korea, the National Assembly approved sending troops to fight in South Vietnam; in exchange for sending one combat division to Vietnam, the United States agreed to equip five South Korean divisions. Also on this date:
  - Hanoi Radio broadcasted an appeal to American troops, particularly African Americans, to "get out." This was purportedly a message from an American defector from the Korean War living in Peking.
  - In South Korea, the National Assembly approved sending troops to fight in South Vietnam; in exchange for sending one combat division to Vietnam, the United States agreed to equip five South Korean divisions.
- **Aug 14 1972 – Vietnam War:** Former Attorney General Ramsey Clark reports after his tour of North Vietnam with the International Commission of Inquiry into U.S. War Crimes in Indochina, that if Democratic candidate George McGovern were elected president in November, all U.S. POWs would be freed by North Vietnam within three months. He further reported that the POWs he interviewed during his trip were "unquestionably... well treated"

and that he saw damage to North Vietnam's dikes in at least six places, and other extensive destruction in nonmilitary areas.

- **Aug 14 1973 – Vietnam War:** *U.S. Bombing of Cambodia Ceases* » The United States four yearlong carpet-bombing campaign of Cambodia ends. After several days of intense bombing in support of Lon Nol's forces fighting the communist Khmer Rouge in the area around Phnom Penh, Operations Arc Light and Freedom Deal end as the United States ceases bombing Cambodia at midnight. This was in accordance with June Congressional legislation passed in June and ended 12 years of combat activity in Indochina. President Nixon denounced Congress for cutting off the funding for further bombing operations, saying that it had undermined the "prospects for world peace." The United States continued unarmed reconnaissance flights and military aid to Cambodia, but ultimately the Khmer Rouge prevailed in 1975.

The U.S. dropped upwards of 2.7 million tons of bombs on Cambodia, exceeding the amount it had dropped on Japan during WWII (including Hiroshima and Nagasaki) by almost a million tons. During this time, about 30 per cent of the country's population was internally displaced. Estimates vary widely on the number of civilian casualties inflicted by the campaign; however, as many as 500,000 people died as a direct result of the bombings while perhaps hundreds of thousands more died from the effects of displacement, disease or starvation during this period.

- **Aug 14 1980 – Cold War:** Workers in Gdansk, Poland, seize the Lenin Shipyard and demand pay raises and the right to form a union free from communist control. The massive strike also saw the rise to prominence of labor leader Lech Walesa, who would be a key figure in bringing an end to communist rule in Poland.
- **Aug 14 2013 – WW2:** National Navajo Code Talkers Day.
- **Aug 14 2015– U.S.\*Cuba:** *U.S. Embassy Reopens* » After 54 years, the U.S. Embassy in Havana, Cuba was re-opened amid a thawing in relations. From 1961 until 1977, the embassy was protected by the Swiss but remained unused, collecting dust as monument to a tortured relationship between Cuba and the United States. Then the embassy reopened as an Interests Section, staffed with 51 U.S. diplomats but officially part of the Swiss mission to Havana. As they prepared to transition from an Interests Section to embassy, U.S. diplomats needed to order everything from new uniforms to employee badges to license plates and a sign to go over the front door of the embassy.

**-o-o-O-o-o-**

- **Aug 15 1780 – American Revolution:** *“Swamp Fox” Routs Loyalists* » American Lieutenant Colonel Francis Marion, the “Swamp Fox,” and his irregular cavalry force of 250 rout a party of Loyalists commanded by Major Micajah Gainey at Port’s Ferry, South Carolina. Meanwhile, General Horatio Gates’ men consumed half-baked bread, which sickened them overnight and contributed to their disastrous performance at the Battle of Camden, also in South Carolina, the following day.

Marion, a mere five feet tall, won fame and the “Swamp Fox” moniker for his ability to strike and then quickly retreat without a trace into the South Carolina swamps. Famed as the only senior Continental officer to escape the British following the fall of Charleston on May 12, 1780, his military strategy is considered an 18th-century example of guerilla warfare and served as partial inspiration for Mel Gibson’s character in the film *The Patriot* (2000).



**Col. Francis Marion**

**Horatio Gates**

**Thomas Sumter**

**Nathaniel Greene**

Marion took over the South Carolina militia force first assembled by Thomas Sumter in 1780. Sumter, the other inspiration for Mel Gibson’s character in the film, returned Carolina Loyalists’ terror tactics in kind after Loyalists burned his plantation. When Sumter withdrew from active fighting to care for a wound, Marion replaced him and joined forces with Major General Nathaniel Greene, who arrived in the Carolinas to lead the Continental forces in October 1780.

Greene was given the Southern command after Gates’ poor decision to fight the British with his ailing troops at Camden. After suffering over the night of 15 AUG with diarrhea, Gates engaged the British on the morning of 16 AUG. Although the Continentals outnumbered the British two to one, the encounter was a disaster for the Patriots, leaving 900 men dead and 1,000 as British captives.

- **Aug 15 1812 – War of 1812:** *Battle of Fort Dearborn* » This was an engagement between United States troops and Potawatomi Native Americans near Fort Dearborn in what is now Chicago, Illinois. It immediately followed the evacuation of the fort as ordered by the commander of the United States Army of the Northwest, William Hull. The battle lasted about 15 minutes and resulted in a complete victory for the Native Americans. Afterwards, Fort



Dearborn was burned down. Some of the soldiers and settlers who had been taken captive were later ransomed. Following the battle, the federal government became convinced that all Indians had to be removed from the territory and the vicinity of any settlements, as settlers continued to migrate to the area. The fort was rebuilt in 1816. Casualties and losses: Indians 15 - US 93.

- **Aug 15 1861 – Civil War:** Union Officer Robert Anderson » He was the Union commander in the first battle of the American Civil War at Fort Sumter in April 1861 when the Confederates bombarded the fort and forced its surrender to start the war. Released by Confederates nearly six weeks after the surrender of Fort Sumter, Anderson was promoted to brigadier general. He was celebrated as a hero in the North and promoted to brigadier general and given command of Union forces in Kentucky. As Department of Kentucky Commander he carefully maintained the balance of neutrality in the state. But poor health forced him to resign his command two months later, and William T. Sherman reassigned him to Rhode Island, before retiring from military service in 1863. Anderson returned to active duty briefly in 1865 to hoist the American flag over Fort Sumter after the Confederate surrender.
- **Aug 15 1914 – WWI Era:** Japan Gives Ultimatum To Germany » The government of Japan sends an ultimatum to Germany, demanding the removal of all German ships from Japanese and Chinese waters and the surrender of control of Tsingtao—the location of Germany’s largest overseas naval bases, located on China’s Shantung Peninsula—to Japan by noon on 23 AUG.

The previous 6 AUG, the day after Britain entered World War I against Germany, the British foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey, had requested limited naval assistance from the Japanese navy in hunting down armed German merchant ships. Japan gladly agreed, seeing the war as a great opportunity to pursue its own interests in the Far East. As one Japanese statesman, Inoue Karou, put it, the war was “divine aid...for the development of the destiny of Japan.” Thus the Japanese hurried to honor their 1902 alliance agreement with Britain, serving Germany with its ultimatum on August 15.



**Japanese WWI battleship** **Siege**  
**of Tsingtao**

“We consider it highly important and necessary in the present situation to take measures to remove the causes of all disturbance of peace in the Far East,” the ultimatum began, “and to safeguard general interest as contemplated in the Agreement of Alliance between Japan and Great Britain.” When Germany did not respond, Japan declared war on 23 AUG; its navy immediately began preparing an assault against Tsingtao. With Britain contributing two battalions to Japan’s force of 60,000, the Japanese approached the naval base across China, breaching that country’s neutrality. On 7 NOV, the German garrison at Tsingtao surrendered, and Japanese troops were home by the end of the year.

The most important initial result of Japan’s entry into World War I on the side of the Allies was to free a great number of Russian forces from having to defend against Germany from the east. For his part, Japan’s foreign minister, Kato Tatakai, would skillfully use World War I to redefine his country’s relationship with its most important rival, China, and to assert its supremacy in the Far East. Forcing an internally divided China to submit to the majority of the humiliating 21 Demands in early 1915, Kato extended Japan’s control over the Shantung Peninsula and indirectly over the rest of China. The Japanese economy began to boom during wartime, largely on the strength of the exploitation of Chinese raw materials and labor. As part of the post-war settlement at Versailles, Japan was given control of the Pacific Islands formerly under German rule, and allowed to maintain its hold on Shantung, at least until Chinese sovereignty was restored in 1922.

Japan’s aggressive actions against China and quick economic expansion during World War I—while the great powers of Europe were occupied elsewhere—would have far-reaching effects over the course of the 20th century. Over the coming years, ambitious militarist leaders would assert their hold ever more strongly on the Japanese government and its powerful economy, clashing brutally with China and other rivals in the Far East while readying themselves for another great struggle many of them had long anticipated: between Japan and the United States.

- **Aug 15 1914 – WWI Era:** *USS Ancon (ID-1467)* » The American steamer SS Ancon was the first ship to officially go through the locks of the Panama Canal, transiting the canal as part of the ceremony opening the canal on this date. On 16 November 1918, five days after the end of World War I, Ancon was acquired at New Orleans by the United States Navy from the Department of War (Army) and commissioned on 28 March 1919 under the command of Lt. Comdr. Milan L. Pittman, USNRF as the troop transport USS Ancon (ID-1467). The ship was assigned to the Atlantic Fleet's Cruiser and Transport Force making two round-trip voyages from the United States to France returning troops home.

On completion of the second voyage Ancon was decommissioned at New York City on 25 July 1919 and returned to the War Department. The Panama Railroad Company replaced SS

Ancon in 1938 with a larger steam turbine cargo liner named Ancon which later saw considerable action as the Navy command and communications ship USS Ancon (AGC-4) in World War II. The old Ancon remained in Panama Canal service as Ex Ancon until sold privately.

- **Aug 15 1942 – WW2:** *Josef Jakobs Executed for Espionage* » The last person to be executed at the Tower of London was German spy Josef Jakobs. He was captured shortly after parachuting into the United Kingdom during the Second World War. Convicted of espionage under the Treachery Act 1940, Jakobs was shot by a military firing squad. He was not hanged because he was captured as an enemy combatant.



Jakobs, who was a German citizen, was born in Luxembourg in 1898. During WWI he served in the German infantry, rising to the rank of Lieutenant, in the 4th Foot Guards. In June 1940, ten months after the outbreak of the Second World War, Jakobs was drafted into the Wehrmacht as an Oberleutnant. However, when it was discovered that he had been imprisoned in Switzerland from 1934–37 for selling counterfeit gold, he was forced to resign his commission in the Wehrmacht. Jakobs was demoted to a Feldwebel (NCO) and placed in the Meteorologischen Dienst (meteorological service) of the German Army. Shortly afterwards, he also began working for the Abwehr, the intelligence department of the German Army.

On 31 January 1941, Jakobs was flown from Schiphol Airport in the Netherlands to Ramsey in Huntingdonshire. He parachuted from the aircraft and landed in a field[a] near Dove House Farm, but broke his ankle during the process. The following morning, Jakobs attracted the attention of two farmers by firing his pistol into the air. They notified members of the local Home Guard, who quickly apprehended Jakobs. He was caught still wearing his flying suit and carrying £500 in British currency, forged identity papers, a radio transmitter and a German sausage.

On his person was also found a photo purportedly of his lover, a German cabaret singer and actress named Clara Bauerle, who became a spy because she had spent a few years performing in the West Midlands and could speak English with a Birmingham accent. Jakobs said Bauerle was meant to join him after he had made "radio contact", but then doubted she would now be sent since he was arrested before he could communicate with his team. Bauerle's whereabouts remained unknown for several decades, and it was conjectured that she may have died under

suspicious circumstances in England. In 2016, it was discovered that Bauerle had died in a Berlin hospital on 16 December 1942.

Jakobs was taken to Ramsey Police Station before being transferred to Cannon Row Police Station in London, where he gave a voluntary statement to Major T.A. Robertson of MI5. Due to the poor condition of his ankle, Jakobs was transferred to Brixton Prison Infirmary for the night. The following day he was briefly interrogated again before being transferred to Dulwich Hospital where he remained for the next two months. His court martial took place in front of a military tribunal at the Duke of York's Headquarters in Chelsea, London SW3, on 4–5 August 1941. The trial was held in camera because the German agent had been apprehended in a highly classified intelligence operation known as the Double Cross System. The British were aware that Jakobs was coming because his arrival information had been passed on to MI5 by the Welsh nationalist and Abwehr double agent Arthur Owens. After a two-day trial which involved hearing the testimony of eight witnesses, Jakobs was found guilty of spying and sentenced to death.

His execution took place at the miniature rifle range in the grounds of the Tower of London on 15 August 1941. He was tied and blindfolded in a brown Windsor chair. Eight soldiers from the Holding battalion of the Scots Guards, armed with .303 Lee–Enfields, took aim at a white cotton target, about matchbook size, pinned over Jakobs' heart. The squad fired in unison at 7:12 a.m. after being given a silent signal from the Deputy Provost Marshal for London District. He died instantly. A postmortem examination found that one bullet had hit him in the heart and the other four had been on or around the marked target area. As three members of the eight-man firing squad had been issued with blanks, only five live rounds were used. He was the last person to be executed at the Tower of London. Following the execution, his body was buried in an unmarked grave at St Mary's Catholic Cemetery, Kensal Green, London.

- **Aug 15 1942 – WW2:** *Operation Pedestal (3-15 Aug)* » A British operation to carry supplies to the island of Malta in August 1942. Malta was a base from which British ships, submarines and aircraft attacked Axis convoys to Libya, during the North African Campaign (1940–1943). From 1940 to 1942, the Axis conducted the Siege of Malta, with air and naval forces. Despite many losses, enough supplies were delivered by the British for the population and military forces on Malta to resist, although it ceased to be an offensive base for much of 1942. The most crucial supply item in Operation Pedestal was fuel, carried by SS Ohio, an American tanker with a British crew. The convoy sailed from Britain on 3 AUG and passed through the Strait of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean on the night of 9/10 August.

The Axis attempt to prevent the fifty ships of the convoy reaching Malta using bombers, German E-boats, Italian MAS and MS boats, minefields and submarine ambushes, was the last sizeable Axis success in the Mediterranean. More than 500 Merchant and Royal Navy sailors

and airmen were killed and only five of the 14 merchant ships reached Grand Harbour. While costly for the Allies, it was a strategic victory; the arrival of Ohio justified the decision to hazard so many warships; its cargo of aviation fuel revitalized the Maltese air offensive against Axis shipping. Submarines returned to Malta and Supermarine Spitfires flown from the aircraft carrier HMS Furious enabled a maximum effort to be made against Axis ships.

Italian convoys had to detour further away from the island, lengthening the journey and increasing the time during which air and naval attacks could be mounted. The Siege of Malta was broken by the Allied re-conquest of Egypt and Libya after the Second Battle of El Alamein (23 October – 11 November) and by Operation Torch (8–16 November) in the western Mediterranean, which enabled land-based aircraft to escort merchant ships to the island.

- **Aug 15 1942 – WW2:** *Japan West Coast Bombing Mission Begins* » Japanese submarine I-25 departs Japan with a floatplane in its hold which will be assembled upon arriving off the U.S. West Coast and used to bomb U.S. forests. It would be the first time the continental United States was bombed from the air. The intent was to start serious fires in the deep wood that could subsequently destroy towns. On 9 SEP a day and night bombing was conducted with little effect. Fortunately, a strict U.S. ban on the broadcast of weather information along the Pacific coast may have averted a more serious fire as it denied information about the wet conditions of the forest that day.
- **Aug 15 1943 – WW2:** *Battle of Kiska: Operation Cottage* » Having learned bitter lessons at Attu, American commanders made certain that their soldiers had better equipment and proper clothing for the assault on Kiska where they expected to encounter several times as many Japanese troops as they'd faced on Attu. However, when U.S. ships arrived at Kiska this day the weather was strangely clear and the seas quiet, and the invasion force of 34,426 Canadian and American troops landed unopposed. Then, after several days of scouring the island, they discovered that the Japanese had evacuated the entire garrison on 28 JUL under cover of fog. On 24 AUG when U.S. troops declared Kiska Island secure, the Battle of the Aleutian Islands ended. Allied casualties nevertheless numbered 313 as the result of friendly fire, booby traps, disease, or frostbite. As with Attu, Kiska offered an extremely hostile environment.

Following its defeat in the Aleutians, the Japanese navy reassigned some of its Pacific forces to defend Japan's northern flank against a possible American invasion from the Alaskan Peninsula. This decision removed a significant number of Japanese troops and resources that might otherwise have been committed to resisting U.S. forces in the South Pacific that were then island-hopping toward Japan. To fuel Japan's perception that it was threatened from the U.S. Northwest, American planes in the Aleutians conducted occasional bombing raids against Japan's Kuril Islands, which lie between Japan and Alaska. Two years after the Battle of the

Aleutian Islands, Japan formally surrendered to the Allies on September 2, 1945, effectively ending World War II.

- **Aug 15 1943 – WW2:** *Battle of Vella Lavella Island Begins (15 Aug thru 6 Oct)* » This battle was fought between Japan and the Allied forces from New Zealand and the United States. Vella Lavella, an island located in the Solomon Islands, had been occupied by Japanese forces early during the war in the Pacific.

Japanese forces, after losing the battle for the airfield in the fighting around Munda Point, abandoned New Georgia entirely and redeployed to defend nearby Kolombangara Island. The Allies recaptured Vella Lavella in late 1943, following their decision to bypass the large concentration of Japanese troops on the island of Kolombangara. US troops landed at Barakoma on 15 AUG and advanced along the coasts, pushing the Japanese north. In September, New Zealand troops took over from the Americans and they continued to advance across the island, hemming the small Japanese garrison along the north coast. On 6 OCT, the Japanese began an evacuation operation to withdraw the remaining troops, during which the Naval Battle of Vella Lavella was fought. Following the capture of the island, the Allies developed it into an important airbase which was used in the reduction of main Japanese base at Rabaul.

- **Aug 15 1944 – WW2:** *Battle of Port Cros* » The joint American-Canadian First Special Service Force (FSSF), alternatively known as the 'Black Devils', was landed on the island of Port Cros to secure it from the Germans in advance of the main landings of Operation Dragoon. The island held five fortifications which housed guns heavy enough to bombard the invasion beaches, and the Devil's Brigade seized them all in a day's fighting, three of the forts by assaulting them. The other two surrendered without resistance. The action by the Devil's Brigade was conducted simultaneously with attacks on other islands of the Hyeres, and were instrumental to the success of the landings on the beaches.

Earlier that same day USS Somers was patrolling the waters of the Hyeres off of Port Cros when it encountered two enemy warships. One was a former corvette of the Italian Navy, built as primarily an anti-submarine platform, though equipped with guns for a surface action against smaller ships. It was being operated by the German Kriegsmarine. The other was a French aviso, also operated by the Kriegsmarine, and armed for a surface engagement. Somers, an American destroyer, was part of the support fleet for Operation Dragoon, which was scheduled to begin with the commando actions about four hours following contact.

USS Somers attacked the former Italian ship with a spread of torpedoes, one of which struck the enemy vessel. The Germans were unfamiliar with much of the damage control procedures

of the Italian built ship, and the vessel began to founder quickly. The formerly French vessel attempted to come to its rescue when it was taken under fire by Somers' deck guns. The Germans returned fire, but their vessel was hit several times, and it too began to sink. Somers patrolled the area for a few more hours against the possibility of German e-boat intervention against the Devil's Brigade action, before returning to the main body of the invasion fleet.

The action between USS Somers and the two German patrol vessels was one of the very few surface actions fought by the US Navy in the European Theater during the Second World War. After the action Somers provided gunfire support for the troops landing on the beaches during the initial assault of Operation Dragoon. The action prompted the US Army to occupy the nearby Isle of Levant, as a coast watching station for further potential German naval activity. Two days later USS Endicott and a flotilla of motor torpedo boats sink two additional German patrol boats during a ruse operation to draw German forces away from the landing beaches.

- **Aug 15 1944 – WW2:** *Operation Dragoon* » 1,300 Allied land-based bombers from Italy, Corsica, and Sardinia with escorting fighters strike targets in southern France while Allied forces land. The invasion by 60,000 troops between Cannes and Toulon was initiated via a parachute drop by the 1st Airborne Task Force, followed by an amphibious assault by elements of the United States Seventh Army, followed a day later by a force made up primarily of the French First Army. It was Allies first use of “baby aircraft carriers,” LSTs (landing ship, tank) with flight decks added for liaison aircraft. The only effective German air raid of the entire operation takes place that evening when a Junkers Ju 88 sinks the fully loaded tank landing ship USS LST-282 with a glide bomb off Cap Dramont.

Operation Dragoon is often forgotten, but it was vital to the war effort. The D-Day landings in Normandy had been successful, but the vast motorized Allied armies needed mountains of supplies, which required good ports. When the US Seventh Army landed along the poorly defended French Riviera, Gen. Alexander Patch's masterful leadership led to swift victory. By the end of August the crucial ports of Marseille and Toulon were in Allied hands, and within one short month of the landings, the Dragoon forces had linked with the Overlord forces. The landing caused the German Army Group G to abandon southern France and to retreat under constant Allied attacks to the Vosges Mountains.

- **Aug 15 1945 – WW2:** The Japanese occupied Philippines was ordered to surrender by Tokyo after the dropping of the atomic bombs on mainland Japan and the Soviet invasion of Manchuria.
- **Aug 15 1945 – WW2:** *Emperor Hirohito Announces Japan's Surrender* » Emperor Hirohito broadcasts the news of Japan's surrender to the Japanese people. Although Tokyo had

already communicated to the Allies its acceptance of the surrender terms of the Potsdam Conference several days earlier, and a Japanese news service announcement had been made to that effect, the Japanese people were still waiting to hear an authoritative voice speak the unspeakable: that Japan had been defeated.

That voice was the emperor's. In Japan's Shinto religious tradition, the emperor was also divine; his voice was the voice of a god. And on this day, that voice—heard over the radio airwaves for the very first time—confessed that Japan's enemy “has begun to employ a most cruel bomb, the power of which to do damage is indeed incalculable, taking the toll of many innocent lives.” This was the reason given for Japan's surrender. Hirohito's oral memoirs, published and translated after the war, evidence the emperor's fear at the time that “the Japanese race will be destroyed if the war continues.”

A sticking point in the Japanese surrender terms had been Hirohito's status as emperor. Tokyo wanted the emperor's status protected; the Allies wanted no preconditions. There was a compromise. The emperor retained his title; Gen. Douglas MacArthur believed his at least ceremonial presence would be a stabilizing influence in postwar Japan. But Hirohito was forced to disclaim his divine status. Japan lost more than a war—it lost a god.

- **Aug 15 1947 – Britain\*India/Pakistan:** *End of 200 years of British rule* » The Indian Independence Bill, which carves the independent nations of India and Pakistan out of the former Mogul Empire, comes into force at the stroke of midnight on August 15, 1947. The long-awaited agreement ended 200 years of British rule and was hailed by Indian independence leader Mohandas Gandhi as the “noblest act of the British nation.” However, religious strife between Hindus and Muslims, which had delayed Britain's granting of Indian independence after World War II, soon marred Gandhi's exhilaration. In the northern province of Punjab, which was sharply divided between Hindu-dominated India and Muslim-dominated Pakistan, hundreds of people were killed in the first few days after independence.

The Indian independence movement first gained momentum at the beginning of the 20th century, and after World War I Gandhi organized the first of his many effective passive-resistance campaigns in protest of Britain's oppressive rule in India. In the 1930s, the British government made some concessions to the Indian nationalists, but during World War II discontent with British rule had grown to such a degree that Britain feared losing India to the Axis.

Gandhi and other nationalist leaders rejected as empty the British promises of Indian self-government after the war and organized the nonviolent “Quit India” campaign to hasten the British departure. British colonial authorities responded by jailing Gandhi and hundreds of others. Anti-British demonstrations accelerated after the war, and in 1947 the Indian National Congress reluctantly accepted the creation of Pakistan to appease the Muslim League and conclude the independence negotiations. On August 15, 1947, the Indian Independence Bill



took effect, inaugurating a period of religious turmoil in India and Pakistan that would result in the deaths of hundreds of thousands, including Gandhi, who was assassinated by a Hindu fanatic in January 1948 during a prayer vigil to an area of Muslim-Hindu violence.

- **Aug 15 1950 – Korean War:** Two U.S. divisions are badly mauled by the North Korean Army in the five day Battle of the Bowling Alley in South Korea. The U.S. 23rd Infantry suffered 37 casualties, while the Wolfhounds (23rd Infantry Division) lost 17 KIA, 88 WIA and four missing. The 8th Field Artillery lost four men killed, 32 wounded and two missing. General Paik wrote that his 1st Division lost 56 officers and 2,244 enlisted men. He estimated the NKPA dead at 5,690.
- **Aug 15 1961 – Cold War:** *Building of Berlin Wall Begins* » Two days after sealing off free passage between East and West Berlin with barbed wire, East German authorities begin building a wall—the Berlin Wall—to permanently close off access to the West. For the next 28 years, the heavily fortified Berlin Wall stood as the most tangible symbol of the Cold War—a literal “iron curtain” dividing Europe.



The end of World War II in 1945 saw Germany divided into four Allied occupation zones. Berlin, the German capital, was likewise divided into occupation sectors, even though it was located deep within the Soviet zone. The future of Germany and Berlin was a major sticking point in postwar treaty talks, and tensions grew when the United States, Britain, and France moved in 1948 to unite their occupation zones into a single autonomous entity—the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany). In response, the USSR launched a land blockade of West Berlin in an effort to force the West to abandon the city. However, a massive airlift by Britain and the United States kept West Berlin supplied with food and fuel, and in May 1949 the Soviets ended the defeated blockade.

By 1961, Cold War tensions over Berlin were running high again. For East Germans dissatisfied with life under the communist system, West Berlin was a gateway to the democratic West. Between 1949 and 1961, some 2.5 million East Germans fled from East to West Germany, most via West Berlin. By August 1961, an average of 2,000 East Germans were crossing into the West every day. Many of the refugees were skilled laborers, professionals, and intellectuals, and their loss was having a devastating effect on the East

German economy. To halt the exodus to the West, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev recommended to East Germany that it close off access between East and West Berlin.

On the night of August 12-13, 1961, East German soldiers laid down more than 30 miles of barbed wire barrier through the heart of Berlin. East Berlin citizens were forbidden to pass into West Berlin, and the number of checkpoints in which Westerners could cross the border was drastically reduced. The West, taken by surprise, threatened a trade embargo against East Germany as a retaliatory measure. The Soviets responded that such an embargo be answered with a new land blockade of West Berlin. When it became evident that the West was not going to take any major action to protest the closing, East German authorities became emboldened, closing off more and more checkpoints between East and West Berlin. On August 15, they began replacing barbed wire with concrete. The wall, East German authorities declared, would protect their citizens from the pernicious influence of decadent capitalist culture.

The first concrete pilings went up on the Bernauer Strasse and at the Potsdamer Platz. Sullen East German workers, a few in tears, constructed the first segments of the Berlin Wall as East German troops stood guarding them with machine guns. With the border closing permanently, escape attempts by East Germans intensified on 15 AUG. Conrad Schumann, a 19-year-old East German soldier, provided the subject for a famous image when he was photographed leaping over the barbed-wire barrier to freedom.

During the rest of 1961, the grim and unsightly Berlin Wall continued to grow in size and scope, eventually consisting of a series of concrete walls up to 15 feet high. These walls were topped with barbed wire and guarded with watchtowers, machine gun emplacements, and mines. By the 1980s, this system of walls and electrified fences extended 28 miles through Berlin and 75 miles around West Berlin, separating it from the rest of East Germany. The East Germans also erected an extensive barrier along most of the 850-mile border between East and West Germany.

In the West, the Berlin Wall was regarded as a major symbol of communist oppression. About 5,000 East Germans managed to escape across the Berlin Wall to the West, but the frequency of successful escapes dwindled as the wall was increasingly fortified. Thousands of East Germans were captured during attempted crossings and 191 were killed.

In 1989, East Germany's communist regime was overwhelmed by the democratization sweeping across Eastern Europe. On the evening of November 9, 1989, East Germany announced an easing of travel restrictions to the West, and thousands demanded passage through the Berlin Wall. Faced with growing demonstrations, East German border guards opened the borders. Jubilant Berliners climbed on top of the Berlin Wall, painted graffiti on it,

and removed fragments as souvenirs. The next day, East German troops began dismantling the wall. In 1990, East and West Germany were formally reunited.

- **Aug 15 1964 – Cold War:** Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev declares that he is ready to begin disarmament talks with the West. Though the Russian leader declined to discuss specific plans for disarmament, his statement was interpreted as an indication that he sought to limit the possibility of nuclear conflict between the Soviet Union and the Western powers. Nothing came of Khrushchev's offer.
- **Aug 15 1968 – Vietnam War:** *Heavy Fighting Erupts in and around the DMZ* » South Vietnamese and U.S. troops engage a North Vietnamese battalion. In a seven and a half hour battle, 165 enemy troops were killed. At the same time, U.S. Marines attacked three strategic positions just south of the DMZ, killing 56 North Vietnamese soldiers.
- **Aug 15 1970 – Vietnam War:** *Regional Forces Victorious* » South Vietnamese officials report that regional forces killed 308 Communist troops in four days of heavy fighting along a coastal strip south of the DMZ. This was one of the biggest victories of the war for the regional forces in the war and was extremely significant since one of the prime objectives of Nixon's Vietnamization policy was the strengthening of the regional/popular forces so that they could help secure the countryside.
- **Aug 15 1971 – Vietnam War:** *North Vietnamese Capture Vietnamese Marine Base* » In South Vietnam, North Vietnamese troops increase operations along the DMZ. This activity had begun on August 12 and continued until the 15th. The North Vietnamese captured the South Vietnamese marine base at Ba Ho, two miles south of the DMZ; most of the defenders were killed or wounded, but the Communists suffered 200 dead in taking the base.

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To subscribe contact Lt. James “EMO” Tichacek, USN (Ret) Email: [raoemo@sbcglobal.net](mailto:raoemo@sbcglobal.net) or [raoemo77@gmail.com](mailto:raoemo77@gmail.com) Tel: (858) 842-1111. [Source: RAO Bulletin Attachment | August 2022 ++]