



Military Despatches

Vol 55 January 2022

War, what is it good for

Military inventions now in everyday use

The measure of Evil

Some of the most brutal dictators in modern history

Head-to-head

Who had the best infantry in World War II

The Angel of Death

His experiments on live subjects at Auschwitz earned Dr Josef Mengele the title Todesengle

For the military enthusiast



Military Despatches YouTube Channel



Click on any video below to view



Paratrooper Wings Quiz

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

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

Army Speak 101

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

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



New videos each week

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

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



Military Firearms Quiz

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



Elite Military Units Quiz

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

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



Who said that?

Throughout history military leaders and politicians have had some interesting things to say about war.

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

CONTENTS

January 2022



Page 10



Special Forces Selection - KSK

Features

6

Ten military inventions

Technology invented by or for the military that has become part of everyday life.

14

Military Myths & Urban Legends

When it comes to history, and especially military history, it is surprising how 'facts' are nothing more than myths.

22

The tank killers

Protected by thick armour, a tank should be a pretty safe place to be on the battlefield. Yet modern-day anti-tank missiles can cut through armour like a hot knife through butter.



28

The measure of evil

While Adolf Hitler is regarded as the 'most brutal dictator in history', the 20th Century has seen more than its fair share of brutal dictators. We examine a few of them.

34

World War II - a few facts

On 1 September 1939, nearly 21 years after World War I, Germany invaded Poland. This led to the start of World War II. Here are a few facts about World War II that you may, or may not, have known.

Quiz

39

Armed Forces

This month we're taking a closer look at some of the logos, including army, navy and air force, of armed forces around the world.



Please remember to subscribe to our channel.

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



Editor's Sitrep

I'm still trying to get to grips with the fact that it's 2022. It feels as if we only celebrated the new millennium a few years ago.

They say that as you get older, time seems to go by quicker. There may well be something in that.

I trust that you all had a good festive season. Mine, I must admit, was a bit strange. We have a tradition where we have our Christmas lunch on the evening of Christmas Eve.

This means that on Christmas Day, no-one has to get up early and start preparing a huge meal. It means that on Christmas Day we can relax and eat left-overs for the next few days.

Normally we have about 10 people around, with a good few of them being fellow military veterans.

Last year there we six of us. This year there was my better half and yours truly. And this was thanks to Omnicon, the new strain of COVID.

The good news is that those that get the new virus normally have very mild symptoms - especially those that have been vaccinated. The bad news is that it is highly

contagious. Far more so than any of the previous strains.

It has, unfortunately, led to people becoming rather stupid. Of the six people invited to our Christmas 'lunch', five of them had contracted the virus.

One of them called me and said, "It's okay though. I've just got a bit of a sore throat and a cough. So I can still make it for the Christmas bash."

It's not him I was worried about. It was me. He would have given me the virus and my symptoms may not have been as mild as his. People have still ended up in hospital, and some have died.

So until this new strain has passed or at least calmed down, I will be staying at home as much as possible. I've got lots of reading to catch up on and I plan on watching the odd movie or two.

I trust that this will be a good year for all of you. I wish you health and happiness. May this year be a good one for you and your loved ones.

Until next time.

Matt

Hipe! media

PUBLISHER

Hipe Media

EDITOR

Matt Tennyson

PHOTO EDITOR

Regine Lord

CONTRIBUTORS

Janine Cassidy, Raymond Fletcher, Ryan Murphy, Matt O'Brien, Matt Tennyson.

Military Despatches is published on-line every month. The articles used in **Military Despatches** are copyrighted and may not be used without prior permission from the editor.

The views stated in this magazine do not necessary reflect the views of **Military Despatches**, the editor, the staff, or Hipe Media.

email

editor@hipe.co.za

YouTube Channel

Click [here](#) to visit our channel

Back Issues

To view any back issues of Military Despatches, go to www.militarydespatches.co.za or click [here](#).

CONTENTS

Page 68



January in military history

Head-to-Head

40

World War II Infantry

We compare the infantry of Russia, Britain, Japan, the United States and Germany

Famous Figures

48

Josef Mengele

A physician with doctorates in anthropology and medicine, an officer in the SS he earned the well deserved title of *Todesengel* (Angel of Death). This was Dr Josef Mengele.



Forged in Battle

54

Stuka

With its wailing sirens and pinpoint accuracy, it was the terror of the skies.

Battlefield

60

Fall Weiss

On 1 September 1939 three 'Stuka' dive bombers carried out one of the first attacks of the War.

Gaming

64

Syrian Warfare

A realistic RTS game set in modern-day Syria.

Movie Review

66

Downfall

An excellent film about the last days of Adolf Hitler. And you can watch it for free.

Book Review

67

CIA & British Mercenaries in Angola 1975 - 1976

A great read about the Angolan Civil War. A must read for those interested in African history.

Front Cover

A tank is hit by a Copperhead missile. Modern, man-portable anti-tank missiles have become a major threat to tanks on the battlefield.



Ten inventions from the military

A number of the world's most useful inventions have come from the military. Some appeared by accident, others as solutions to particular problems that seem much more urgent when the enemy is knocking at your door.

Back in 1969 Norman Whitfield and Barrett Strong wrote a song for the Motown label. The song was titled 'War', an obvious anti-Vietnam War statement, with The Temptations as the original vocalists.

In 1970 Whitfield re-recorded the song with Edwin Starr as the vocalist, with the label deciding to withhold the Temptations' version from single release so as not to alienate their more conservative fans.

The song became a Number One hit for Starr and one of the most popular protest songs ever recorded.

The opening verse of the song, which is also the chorus, goes "War, huh, yeah, what is it good for? Absolutely nothing."

While it may be very catchy, it's not actually true. When it comes to new technology and inventions, it turns out that war is good for something. A number of the world's most useful inventions have come from the military.

And it's not just the military that benefited from these inventions. Many of them have proved very useful in the commercial sector.

In this article we will look at ten military inventions that have proved useful in a non-military way. These are listed in chronological order.



10. Canned Food (1809)

The next time you eat something that came from a can, give a nod of thanks to none other than Napoleon Bonaparte.

As Napoleon and his army romped across Europe, he needed to find a way to deliver enormous quantities of food to the front lines.

The problem was that by the time most of the food reached the front lines it had spoilt.

To try and find a possible solution the French government held a contest in 1809 with a cash prize of 12,000 francs up for grab to anyone that could find a means of keeping food edible for an extended period of time.

It was Nicolas Appert that claimed the prize. He designed a sealed glass jar in which food that had been processed could be sealed and kept air-tight.

Appert used his 12,000 francs to build a factory that could produce these glass jars en-masse. Unfortunately for him the British burned it down on their rampage through France in 1814.

Food was later processed and sealed in tin cans and this was

ideal for military use because the tin cans were far more sturdy than glass jars.

These days most consumable products are available in tin cans that provide a shelf life that typically ranges from one to five years.



9. Sanitary Napkins (1914)

During World War I a shortage of cotton supply increased the demand for other forms of cheap bandaging.

Under a government contract an American manufacturing firm, Kimberly-Clark, was able to manufacture cellucotton, an absorbent material made from wood pulp.

During the fighting in Europe, the U.S. army distributed this super-absorbent fabric for use as gauze to dress wounds.

The material caught the attention of Red Cross nurses, who began to utilize cellucotton wads during menstruation.

After the war, Kimberly-Clark re-purposed cellucotton to make sanitary napkins and Kotex pads.



8. Plastic Surgery (1917)

One of the tragic consequences of war is that many of the wounded are left disfigured. Often with terrible facial disfigurement.

During the height of World War I, a young British sailor named Walter Yeo was wounded horribly in the 1916 Battle of Jutland. His upper and lower eyelids were burned off.

Nearly a year later, he found himself in a facial injury ward started by the father of modern plastic surgery, Harold Gillies.

A native of New Zealand, Gillies had come to Europe as part of the Royal Army Medical Corps. In 1917, he performed what is known as the world's first plastic surgery, grafting a flap of skin over Yeo's disfiguring wounds.

These days plastic surgery is used mostly for cosmetic purposes.



7. Aviator Sunglasses (1930s)

Today they're an iconic fashion item, with their characteristic shape and dark lenses.

Yet they were once necessary protection for test pilots subject

to the dangerously bright sunlight of the upper atmosphere.

In the 1930s, optics manufacturer Bausch & Lomb developed aviator goggles under the direction of the U.S. Army Air Corps. Bausch & Lomb re-branded the sunglasses in 1937 as Ray-Ban – as they banish the sun's rays – and sold them to the civilian population.

By World War II, aviators were a standard accessory for U.S. soldiers. The glasses were further popularized by Hollywood stars in the 1950s, and the cultural vanguard continued to wear them throughout the decades.



6. Aerosol bug spray (1941)

During the South African Border War, troops stationed in Ovamboland would often have a problem with flies and mosquitos.

They used to joke that "the mosquitos carry you away at night, but the flies will bring you back first thing in the morning."

In World War II, soldiers stationed in the South Pacific needed an easy way to kill mosquitos, which could potentially carry malaria.

In a partnership with the Department of Defence, two scientists with the U.S. Department

of Agriculture, Lyle Goodhue and William Sullivan, took on the task of developing a way to deliver insecticide as a fine mist.

The first aerosol can was patented in 1941 and nicknamed "bug bomb" by soldiers.

The partnership between the USDA and the DOD has yielded other life-saving innovations, including the use of DDT in controlling typhus.

In 1949, engineer and veteran Robert Abplanalp patented a cheaper plastic aerosol valve meant for commercial mass production.

He started the Precision Valve Corp. to market the invention and turned a profit almost immediately.

The aerosol can has since been refined and is now less harmful to the environment.



5. Super Glue (1942)

I'm pretty sure that at some stage most of our readers owned a Kodak Instamatic camera.

They were made by a company called Eastman Kodak, a company that was one of many that contributed to the war effort during World War II.

In 1942, while testing a variety of compounds for use in a plastic rifle sight, Dr. Harry Coover a company chemist, inadvertently created cyanoac-

ylate, a compound later marketed as Super Glue.

The material was incredibly durable but was dismissed for being too sticky. When a colleague was testing cyanoacrylate nine years later, Dr. Coover had another encounter with the material.

As the colleague complained the compound ruined his equipment, Coover realized its commercial potential.

Super Glue was first sold as a commercial product in 1958.

The product was eventually adopted by military surgeons during the Vietnam War, who would spray it over wounds to stop bleeding instantly.



4. Microwave Oven (1946)

Microwave technology played a vital role in World War II and helped win the Battle of Britain. This was because microwave technology was originally used by radar to help detect enemy aircraft.

The ability of microwaves to cook food was discovered by accident.

While conducting research on microwave radar technology, an engineer at defence contractor Raytheon Co. noticed that a bar of chocolate in his pocket had melted. This led to the realization

that microwave equipment could be re-purposed to heat and cook foods.

Later that year, Raytheon filed the first patent for a microwave oven. The first commercial microwave was manufactured in 1954 and was about the size of a refrigerator.

Today, more than nine out of ten households in the United States own a microwave oven.

The technology is one of many military inventions that have shaped kitchens worldwide.



3. Internet (1969)

These days it is almost impossible to imagine living without the Internet. In fact you're only reading this magazine thanks to the Internet.

There are in fact many things that you would be unable to do without the military sinking years of work and billions of dollars into ARPANET – the forerunner for the internet.

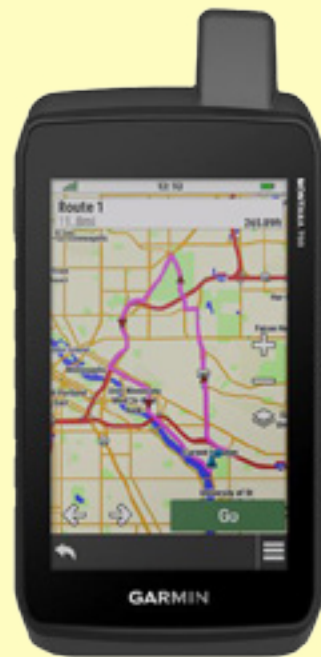
The Advanced Research Projects Agency Network began during the Cold War as a way for the U.S. military to develop an information-sharing system without the need for a command center.

The military was concerned any central location would be a Soviet target. By the late 1960s, colleges were able to access the

very limited trial run of ARPANET.

At the time, the network users could only log onto a remote computer, print remotely, and transfer files.

Decades of innovation honed the ARPANET into the World Wide Web we enjoy today.



2. GPS (1973)

Remember what fun it was trying to work out your location using a map and a compass. Especially if you were in an area that was flat with not one outstanding feature to use to take a bearing.

It was a problem faced by military forces around the world. In 1973 the US Department of Defence (DOD) decided to do something about it.

The idea was to use satellites to determine a user's position on Earth by measuring his or her distance from three peripheral satellites in a process known as trilateration.

Originally limited to use by

the United States military, civilian use was allowed from the 1980s following an executive order from President Ronald Reagan after the Korean Air Lines Flight 007 incident.

In 1983 the Korean 747 was on a scheduled flight from New York City to Seoul via Anchorage, Alaska. Due to a navigational mistake made by the KAL crew the airliner deviated from its original planned route and flew through Soviet prohibited airspace around the time of a U.S. aerial reconnaissance mission.

The Soviet Air Forces treated the unidentified aircraft as an intruding U.S. spy plane, and after firing warning shots which were likely not seen by the KAL pilots, destroyed it with air-to-air missiles fired from a Su-15 interceptor.

The public received a comprehensive preview of the technology during the Gulf War, when soldiers used GPS to navigate across deserts and target enemies with an accuracy that was previously impossible.

Today, GPS technology is used in consumer products such as cars and phones, as well as applications like earthquake research and geocaching.

Advances in technology and new demands on the existing system have now led to efforts to modernize the GPS and implement the next generation of GPS Block IIIA satellites and Next Generation Operational Control System (OCX).



1. EpiPen (1973)

A must for anyone with severe allergies, the EpiPen was initially conceived of as a military device. Inventor Sheldon Kaplan worked at military contractor Survival Technology in Bethesda, Maryland, where he developed an auto-injector called the ComboPen.

This invention was first designed to deliver treatment to soldiers who had come into contact with a nerve agent. The ComboPen would quickly deliver the antidote into the bloodstream of the affected person.

Kaplan later tweaked this device to deliver epinephrine, which can help people who go into anaphylactic shock due to an allergic reaction.

Though his name was on the patent, Kaplan received little credit for his breakthrough during his lifetime.

He died in 2009 but was inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame in 2016.

HONOURABLE MENTIONS

The following items were all considered for this list and just lost out.

However we feel that they are worth a mention.

Jeep (1940)

In World War II, the U.S. Army had a need for a light reconnaissance vehicle and asked automakers to develop prototypes and submit proposals. The government chose the design of American Bantam car company – a four-wheel drive vehicle with a top speed of 65 mph. The vehicle's namesake, General Purpose, was abbreviated to G.P. and eventually nicknamed jeep.

Duct Tape (1942)

During World War II, the U.S. military was in need of a durable adhesive tape that could maintain its bond under harsh field conditions. The military asked Johnson & Johnson Co. to develop the idea and initially called it duck tape for its waterproof nature.

Silly Putty (1943)

In the 1940s, the United States needed a new source of rubber after Japan had invaded Malaysia and cut off U.S. supply of the material.

A chemist at General Electric came up with a stretchy, bouncy material made of boric acid and silicone oil. While highly unique, the material had no military application.

The material caught on, however, after GE executives began showing it off at cocktail parties and one interested party, adman Peter Hodgson, bought the manufacturing rights and changed the name to Silly Putty. Since 1950, the company has sold more than 350 million Silly Putty eggs.

Special Force Training - KSK

In the last two years and seven months we have reviewed 31 different special forces units. For the next few months we will be doing something different - looking at the selection and training of different special forces units. This month we begin with the German Kommando Spezialkräfte (KSK).

Ask anyone to describe a special forces soldier and you will probably get a description of someone who is a cross between Sylvester Stallone in *Rambo* and Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Commando*.

Over the years the movie industry has been working extra hard to produce action films that portray special forces soldiers as muscle-bound meat-heads who walk around with large-calibre weapons slung over their shoulder, along with coils of ammunition belts and dozens of grenades. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Special forces soldiers are nothing like their screen image in terms of both physical and mental stature. Far from being loud-mouthed and arrogant, they are generally quiet and unassuming.

There is, however, a common thread that links special forces worldwide – the stringent entry criteria.

Special forces want the best and can afford to be selective about who they recruit, as these men – and, in some cases, women – may one day be required to serve their country.

Operators from many countries around the world are highly trained and extremely professional in their work.

However, apart from looking fit and healthy, there is nothing

to distinguish them as special forces personnel. Indeed, many could walk into a bar or shopping mall without anyone looking at them twice – the ultimate test for those who want to be a

grey man (a person who does not attract attention, but blends into the surroundings).

Many people often ask questions about special operations and special forces, querying what their role in modern warfare is.

According to the United States Special Operations Posture Statement 2000, the term 'special operations' describes actions which are conducted by special organised, trained and equipped military or paramilitary forces in order to achieve military, political, economic or psychological objectives by unconventional means in hostile, denied or politically sensitive areas. They may be conducted in peacetime, in periods of conflict, or during all-out war, either independently or in coor-

dination with conventional forces.

The military and political situation frequently dictates such special operations, and such operations usually differ from conventional operations in their degree of risk, the operational techniques involved, their modus operandi, independence from friendly support and dependence upon essential operational intel-

ligence, and the knowledge of indigenous assets available.

Unconventional warfare

The idea of special forces is nothing new. There have been numerous examples throughout history of men performing unconventional operations that either ended or shortened a conflict.

Examples include the Trojan Horse, used by the Greeks to insert soldiers into Troy, the city they were besieging, and the American General Roy Rogers, who formed the Rangers, an elite group of men that

waged an unconventional war with great success against the French and their allies.

In fact, some of his famous military standing orders and tactics are still used today.

Modern warfare wears many guises, ranging from large conventional forces operating on peacekeeping missions to stealth aircraft bombing targets deep behind enemy lines with-

out detection.

Throughout history, small bands of warriors have waged war by using unconventional weapons, tactics and techniques to fight and defeat larger conventional forces.

These groups were generally crude and often behaved in an unlawful way, which



is not the way modern special forces operate.

Modern warriors

Today, special forces operators have high personal goals. A second-best performance is often considered to be no performance at all. As the British SAS say, "Perfect planning prevents piss poor performance" – a statement that all professional soldiers respect and understand."

In Afghanistan the role of the special forces soldier came under intense scrutiny. Here was a war where aircraft such as the B-52 bomber was being used for close support bombing mission – an idea which would have been ridiculous just ten years ago and which was made possible only by small teams of highly trained and well-equipped men operating amongst enemy forces, directing air attacks with deadly accuracy, without being detected.

Special forces are also a great tool for governments that want a foothold on the ground where conventional forces would be vulnerable to attack.

A good example of this dates from the 1970s when the British SAS waged a low-intensity war in Moan against overwhelming guerrilla forces and defeated them. In Britain, meantime, the war barely rated a mention, partly because only 80 British SAS soldiers were there at any given time.

Special forces operators are men – and sometimes women – who have been specially selected, trained and specially equipped to carry out special missions.

Their use in a crisis is always considered because they give politicians a chance to resolve a problem quietly and discreetly. You simply need to compare this to the media spotlight in which a conventional battle group deploys.

What's more, in the events of things going wrong, the sensitive issue of casualties is minimised because a small force cannot, by definition, produce large-scale losses, and the media never knows exactly how many were deployed in the first place. In fact often the media has no idea that a special forces team or teams have even been deployed.

The role of the special forces is growing all the time, as their ability to carry out seemingly impossible missions is increasingly recognised. During the 1991 Gulf War, British SAS and US Delta Force operators located and destroyed Iraqi mobile Scud missile launchers, which had been causing severe problems for the Allied coalition.

After the war ended, there was a great impetus to create more special forces operators, but they cannot be mass-produced, as their type is a very rare breed. Indeed, many receive the calling, but only a few are chosen.

"It is not the critic who counts, not that man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by the dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and come short

again and again; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions and spends himself in a worthy course; who, at the best, knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who, at worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly; so that his place shall never be those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

Theodore Roosevelt



Kommando Spezialkräfte (KSK)

The training programme for the Kommando Spezialkräfte (KSK) is the longest of any special forces training regime, lasting up to three years. The length of the course permits every KSK operator to receive instruction in advance military specialisations.

Unlike many special forces units, the KSK is remarkably open about its selection criteria, as most of its training courses were developed in consultation with the United Kingdom, France and the United States.

To become a KSK operator takes about three years and includes HALO, HAHO and scuba training. The initial selection process and basic training phase lasts for three months and is broadly based on the British



STRIKE FROM THE DEEP: All members of KSK receive amphibious training, including the use of Scuba and re-breathers.

SAS and US Delta Force system. Einzelkaempferlehrgang 1 is an advanced training course which all combat officers and senior NCOs must complete successfully.

The selection process takes place at the KSK's Blackwood training centre, which is located at Calw, and it involves the following:

1. A one-day psychological test with a computer-assisted assessment.
2. A one-week selection phase.
3. Two days physical fitness testing, including a minute of maximum sit-ups, a minute of maximum press-ups, three 10 metre sprints, stand jumping, and a 12 minute run.
4. A 500 metre swim in under 15 minutes.
5. Standard Germany military assault course, to be completed in less than 100 minutes.
6. Seven kilometre field run with 20 kg Bergan, to be completed in under 52 minutes.

7. Three days of additional psychological tests.

KSK criteria

Before a potential recruit can undergo KSK training, he must meet the following criteria:

1. Be airborne-qualified.
2. Be already serving in the Army.
3. Volunteer for at least six years of service with the KSK.
4. Officers must be under 30 years of age, and NCOs under 32.



KSK Unit Badge

Basic Commando training

One week of SERE training under extreme and demanding conditions, which require the candidate to complete a 100 kilometre march in four days with full combat kit. During this march, candidates will be required to carry out abseiling, river crossings, map reading by day and night, and contact drills. This is followed by further psychological screening.

Further training

Upon successful completion of the selection process, candidates may be allowed to start their 2–3-year training cycle with the KSK.

This training includes roughly twenty courses at over seventeen schools worldwide: in Norway for Arctic terrain, Austria for mountainous terrain; El Paso, Texas, or Israel for desert and/or bush training; San Diego for amphibious operations; and Belize for jungle experience.

Next month we will look at the selection and training of the British Special Air Service.

Military myths and urban legends

When it comes to history, and especially military history, it is surprising how many things we take as a given fact. Yet often these 'facts' are nothing more than military myths and urban legends.

Did you know that Hitler's real surname was Schicklgruber? Or that Roosevelt knew that Pearl Harbour was going to happen? And of course you must know that carrots help you see in the dark.

And if you did know any of the above, sorry to disillusion you, but none of it is true.

It's not surprising that myths will spring up about wars, the events that took place during wars, and the people that fought in them. While some of them are true, most of them are nothing more than myths and urban legends.

In this article we will examine a few of them and see whether they are true, or nothing more than a myth.

MYTH 1 THE SURRENDER OF FRANCE

France meekly surrendered to Germany in 1940 because the French were cowards.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

While it is true that the French did surrender quickly - the Germans achieved this in six weeks, something they had been unable to do in four years during World War I - the reasons are oversimplified.

The French were relying heavily on the Maginot Line to stop the German advance. Instead of attacking it the Ger-

mans went around it.

French troops fought hard during the Battle of France, inflicting over 150,000 casualties on the Germans and destroying over 800 tanks. The French army was let down by poor leadership, dumb tactics, bad logistics and commanders trying to fight a defensive war.

MYTH 2 PEARL HARBOUR

US President Franklin D. Roosevelt knew that the attack on Pearl Harbour was going to take place. He allowed it to happen as a pretext for war.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

While there were fears that the Japanese were going to launch an attack, the Americans had no idea of where and when it would happen.

Pearl Harbour was a combination of bad luck, poor training, and bitter rivalry between branches of the US military.

The US Navy believed that the Japanese did not have the ability to attack Pearl Harbour because of its shallow depth, making it almost impossible to launch torpedoes from planes.

The incoming Japanese planes were detected by radar but no warning was passed on. Radar was brand new and being operated by men who barely knew how to use it at the time.

MYTH 3 SNIPER JOHN DENVER

US country singer John Denver was a sniper during the Vietnam War. He had the second highest amount of sniper kills during the war. His hit song "Sunshine On My Shoulder" was actually about his exploits as a sniper.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

Not only was Denver not a sniper in Vietnam, he never served in the US Military at any stage.

MYTH 4 SUNK BY A TOILET

A German U-boat, the U-1206, sank when the experimental toilet it used overflowed, causing a flood that could not be stopped.

The verdict

True (kind of...)

The Reality

This story is true. Well almost true. The U-1206 was a new German submarine carrying a newly developed form of high-pressure toilet that could be used at lower depths than the older systems.

While on patrol the captain had to use the heads and when he went to flush the toilet he accidentally opened a valve to the



THE FUHRER QUICK STEP: Adolf Hitler danced a jig on learning the news that France had surrendered. Or did he?

outside.

This caused water to flood in which contacted the subs batteries, causing deadly chlorine gas to form.

In order to vent the gas the captain ordered the sub to surface, which it did, right in front of the Scottish coastline. The sub came under attack and was badly damaged. The captain ordered it to be scuttled.

MYTH 5 HITLER DANCED A JIG

When France surrendered after only six weeks Hitler was so overcome with joy that he danced a jig that was captured on camera.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

On learning the news that France had surrendered after only six weeks, Hitler took a

slight step back in shock. The event was indeed captured on film.

The British then edited the film to make it look as if Hitler was dancing a silly jig. It was a clever bit of propaganda by the British and it certainly worked. It stirred up outrage and mockery of Hitler.

MYTH 6 HOLLYWOOD HEROS

Hollywood actors Jimmy Stewart and Charles Bronson were decorated World War II veterans.

The verdict

True.

The Reality

Both Stewart and Bronson served in the US Army Air Corps during World War II.

Stewart served with a B-24 squadron and flew more than 20 combat missions over Europe.

He was decorated with two Distinguished Flying Crosses, the French Croix de Guerre, and multiple Air Medals.

Bronson, who was born Charles Dennis Buchinsky, came from a family that was so poor that he had to wear his sister's dress to school.

He worked in a coal mine until he was drafted into the US Army Air Corps. Trained as an aerial gunner, he served on B-29 Superfortress bombers during the Pacific Campaign. He flew 25 missions and was awarded the Purple Heart for injuries sustained during a raid on Japan.

MYTH 7 GERMAN TANK DISABLED BY AN UMBRELLA

During World War II a British officer disabled a German tank with an umbrella.

The verdict

True.

The Reality

Major Digby Tatham-Warter was a British paratrooper dropped at Arnhem during Operation Market Garden.

He said that he carried an umbrella with him because he always had trouble remembering the passwords after a drop.

Few men could mistake the man carrying an umbrella in the middle of a war to be anything but British.

During the failed attempt to hold the bridge at Arnhem he actually did disable a German tank by thrusting the umbrella through the observation slit of the tank and wounding the driver.

Another account was when the battalion chaplain was pinned down by mortar fire, Tatham-Warter walked over, opened the umbrella as if to give him cover from the fire, and calmly escorted the chaplain to safety.

Wounded and captured, he escaped from the hospital with another British officer.

MYTH 8 THE CHANNEL ON FIRE

If the Germans did invade England, the Royal Navy had developed a way of setting the English Channel on fire.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

While it was a fact that the British Petroleum Warfare Department were working on a way to cover the English Channel with oil that could be set alight, their attempts had not been successful.

British Intelligence, however, played up the rumour and took it so far that many people actually believe that the Germans had already tried to invade England, with disastrous results brought about by the burning water.

No invasion ever did take place and the German invasion plans were scrapped after the Battle of Britain.

MYTH 9 GLENN MILLER

Famous American big band leader Glenn Miller was killed by the Gestapo, or accidentally blown up by British bombers dumping their bombs.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

Miller served as a Major in the US Army Air Force during World War II.

On 15 December 1944 he was flying from England to Paris to give a concert for the troops stationed there.

The plane disappeared in bad weather and poor visibility. Miller was declared “missing in action”.

Miller’s plane crashed because it had a faulty carburetor. The plane’s engine had a type of carburetor that was known to be defective in cold weather and had a history of causing crashes in other aircraft by icing up.

MYTH 10 CREAM OF ARYAN MANHOOD

The German SS in World War II were the cream of Aryan manhood.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

For a while, at the start of the war, they were. But by the end of the war the SS would take anyone they would take anyone they could get their hands on.

As early as 1940, the SS began using foreign soldiers to bulk out its ranks. First, the special “Wiking Division” was authorized, made up of anti-Communist fanatics from Scandinavia, the Low Countries and Estonia.

Then 1942 saw the creation of separate SS divisions made of

Croats, Ukrainians, Estonians, and Latvians. There were also Spanish, French, East Indian, Romanian and Russian units in the SS – with an attempt even made at a British Free Corps division of English volunteers, which was a miserable failure.

Ultimately, 60% of soldiers wearing the SS runes weren’t German. And French SS soldiers were among the last defenders of Berlin, fighting to the death to avoid capture by the Russians.

MYTH 11 KOREAN NAZIS

During D-Day several Koreans fighting for the Germans were captured by the Americans.

The verdict

True.

The Reality

This story is absolutely true, and their story is bizarre. They were first captured by the Japanese and conscripted into the Japanese army.

They had then been taken prisoner by the Soviets during the Battle of Khalkhin Gol in Siberia in 1939.

They had then by drafted out of a labour camp and conscripted into the Soviet army to defend the city of Kharkov in 1943.

At Kharkov they were captured by the Germans. At that stage Germany was desperate for manpower and, because these Koreans had little love for the Soviets, were conscripted into the German army.

They had been conscripted



THE CREAM OF GERMAN MANHOOD: Not only were the SS not the cream of Aryan manhood, 60% of them were not even German.

into three different armies by three countries, thousands of kilometres away from each other.

MYTH 12 THE JAPANESE SURRENDER

Japan was about to surrender before the atom bombs were dropped.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

It is clear from the records of meetings in the Japanese cabinet and from diplomatic cables that Japan was not on the verge of surrender, at least not of the unconditional surrender demanded by the Allies.

Instead, the Emperor and his cadre of military and civilian leaders were preparing to fight a decisive battle in the Home Islands against the forthcoming American invasion, which was scheduled for November.

Japan’s leaders believed that they would inflict such horrific casualties on the invasion that American morale would break,

leading to a negotiated peace. Hundreds of thousands of Americans and potentially millions of Japanese would die in this conflict – which both sides were still preparing for when the bombs were dropped.

It wasn’t until August 15th, after two atomic bombings, the invasion of Manchuria by the Soviet Union, a massive bombing raid on Tokyo, and a coup attempt by junior officers, that the Emperor made his famed announcement of surrender.

And still he was opposed by senior officers who believed victory could be achieved through heroic resistance.

Additionally, while the Soviet invasion played a role in the Japanese surrender, it was not the only reason – as Soviet amphibious forces were too weak to pose any threat to the Japanese mainland.

MYTH 13 ARMED ONLY WITH FISTS AND A KNIFE

During the Battle of Heartbreak Ridge in Korea, an Amer-

ican soldier attacked the North Koreans with only a trench knife and his fists and killed 40 of them.

The verdict

True.

The Reality

Herbert K. Pililaau was the last American left standing on Hill 931 of Heartbreak Ridge.

While the rest of his squad retreated, he covered them. He fired his Browning Automatic Rifle until he ran out of ammunition. Then he threw grenades until they ran out.

He took cover behind some rocks and began throwing rocks at the enemy until there were none within reach.

It was at this point that he pulled out his trench knife and led a one-man charge at the advancing North Koreans. This was how the members of his squad last reported seeing him.

When the American retook the position the following day they found Pililaau where he had fallen. His body was surrounded by 40 dead North Korean soldiers.

For his exceptional bravery that day, Herbert K. Pililaau was awarded the Medal of Honor and the admiration of every soldier he saved on Heartbreak Ridge.

MYTH 14 FRAGGING

During the Vietnam War American soldiers attempted to kill off officers they deemed incompetent or unpopular. The most common method was with a fragmentation grenade and it

gave rise to the term ‘fragging’.

The verdict

True.

The Reality

Not only was this true, it was more common than people realise.

Fragmentation grenades were used because they were harder to trace than bullets fired from a gun.

Fragging incidents became so commonplace during the Vietnam War that it led one expert to state that the American military was “at war with itself.”

While the exact number of deaths remains unknown to this day, estimates indicate 600 documented fragging deaths from 1969 to 1973. Another 1,400 deaths due to “unknown causes” may be blamed on fragging by those who insist the phenomenon was even more pervasive than it really was.

**MYTH 15
THE ANGEL OF MONS**

During World War I, British soldiers were saved from being annihilated in Mons when angels, in the form of English archers, blocked the Germans path and fired arrows at them, forcing them to retreat.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

This story appeared in an article written by British author Arthur Machen.

While he stated that the story was all fiction, it gradually became accepted as fact by both

the British military and public.

For them it was irrevocable proof that God was on their side.

Anyone who disbelieved in the angel’s existence were quickly branded as traitors or defeatists.

**MYTH 16
ONLY THE SS COMMITTED WAR
CRIMES**

German war crimes during World War II were committed only by the SS.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

German regular army soldiers participated in countless massacres, illegal prisoner killings, mass rapes, reprisal shootings, plunders – and many had intimate knowledge of the Holocaust.

Civilians were shot in every country the Germans went to war with, mostly by the SS, but also by the Wehrmacht, often as retaliation for partisan activity.

American, Greek, French, British and Canadian POW’s and civilians were all shot at various points in the war. There was also the notable massacre of 7,000 disarmed Italians of the 33rd Infantry Division, shot by regular German troops. And 5,000 regular army troops participated in the liquidation of Warsaw, killing 200,000 Poles.

**MYTH 17
PHILADELPHIA EXPERIMENT**

The US Navy developed technology to make ships invisible, in the “Philadelphia Ex-

periment”.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

The myth of the Philadelphia Experiment holds that a US destroyer escort, the USS Eldridge, was equipped with advanced technology that allowed it to vanish and teleport. This cloaking technology was tested in October 1943, causing the small ship to disappear in front of hundreds of witnesses, only to materialize back again with the crew having been driven insane – and some of the men had been melded into the ship’s bulkheads or were simply gone.

The Experiment has its proponents among UFO researchers and conspiracy theorists, but the whereabouts of the Eldridge are easily falsified: in October 1943 it wasn’t in Philadelphia, but in the Bahamas on a shake-down cruise. The ship’s logs report no unusual activity or men fused into its walls, and the ship served in North Africa and the Pacific before being sold off at the end of the war.

While it’s possible that the logs were redacted and that the Navy is lying about the Experiment never having happened, it’s much more likely that the “Philadelphia Experiment” was the creation of a mentally ill loner named Carl Allen, who sent a letter to UFO researcher Morris Jessup in 1955 claiming to have been a witness to the Eldridge’s vanishing. Jessup was never able to confirm anything Allen wrote, nor has anyone else.

**MYTH 18
THE DEATH MATCH**

An entire soccer team made up of Ukrainian players was executed after beating a Nazi team. It became known as the ‘Death Match’.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

The thing is that the so-called ‘Death Match’ actually did take place.

It was an ad-hoc game between a Ukrainian team, Start FC, and a German occupier team, Flakelf.

However, the players were not executed en-masse afterwards and there is no proof that any German officials told the Ukrainians to lose or die, as many historical accounts of the time claim.

What’s probable is that several of the players, all of whom were on a work detail, were shot as a reprisal for a resistance act.

Those players are immortalized in a statue outside the stadium of Dynamo Kiev, the most popular soccer team in Ukraine.

**MYTH 19
HITLER ESCAPED**

Adolf Hitler escaped Berlin and lived out the remainder of his life in Argentina.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

Many articles, books and documentaries have been produced, all detailing how Hitler

escaped Berlin and made it to South America. Yet there is little compelling evidence to support these claims.

The best time line we have of his death is that his partially burned body was recovered by the Russians right after the German surrender, autopsied, buried, unearthed, buried again and finally burned and the ashes scattered in a river.

A few fringe scholars believe he somehow got out of Berlin, made his way to South America, crossed the Andes Mountains, and settled in a remote hacienda, where he lived until the 1960’s. This is extremely unlikely for a host of reasons, not the least of which is that escape from Berlin was virtually impossible, and that Hitler’s health was already failing at the time the War ended.

**MYTH 20
LOS ANGELES UNDER ATTACK**

In 1942, Los Angeles was attacked by the Japanese - or aliens.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

The “Battle of Los Angeles” was a real event that took place in February, 1942.

The ‘battle’, however, had nothing to do with the Japanese, or alien invaders for that matter. It was more about jittery gunners and public panic.

You have to take into account that the attack on Pearl Harbour had taken place only two months before. So residents on the West Coast were justifi-

ably afraid of what was coming next. Rumours were flying that Japanese submarines, ships and paratroopers were on their way.

So when a weather balloon broke free on a dark night and was illuminated by searchlights, it’s not surprising that anti-aircraft batteries were convinced they saw Japanese aircraft. Naturally they opened fire.

By the time it was over they had fired more than eight tons of shells into the air. They old saying “what goes up, must come down” came into effect.

And the shells did come down - onto the panicked residents of Los Angeles. Five people died in car accidents or heart attacks, and thousands of buildings across the city were damaged.

It wasn’t until 1983 that the Air Force finally divulged what the exact cause of the panic had been, ensuring four decades of speculation about aliens, hoaxes, false flags and secret Japanese technology could take hold. But none of the supporting documents from either 1942 or any other time confirm anything other than a panic taking place in the fog of war.

**MYTH 21
FLUORIDE IN THE WATER**

The Nazis used fluoride in water to keep concentration camp prisoners docile. This is because fluoride affects the brain and can make a person submissive.

The verdict

False on both counts.

The Reality

Although this is a theory of-

ten cited by opponents of fluoride's use in municipal water supplies, there is no supporting evidence to show this.

Fluoride hasn't yet been found to have any kind of effect on human physiology.

And not a single reference to fluoride can be found in any of the paperwork recovered from any German POW or concentration camp.

The idea of the Nazis subduing their victims with fluoride originates with a self-published pamphlet by Australian anti-fluoride partisan Ian E. Stephens. The pamphlet is titled *Fluoridation: Mind Control of the Masses?*

Stephens cites Charles Elliot Perkins, an American chemist who traveled to Germany after the war and claimed he was told by "German chemists" of:

"a scheme to control the population in any given area through mass medication of drinking water. In this scheme, sodium fluoride occupied a prominent place.

"Repeated doses of infinitesimal amounts of fluoride will in time reduce an individual's power to resist domination by slowly poisoning and narcotizing a certain area of the brain and will thus make him submissive to the will of those who wish to govern him."

Stephens never offers anything science-based to back these claims up, while Perkins was asked on numerous occasions for more evidence, but continued only repeating his initial claim.

MYTH 22

HITLER'S MISSING TESTICLE

Adolph Hitler had only one testicle.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

He almost certainly had two. A German medic who claimed to have saved Hitler's life in World War I also claimed that the future leader of Germany had one of his testicles either shot off or damaged by shrapnel at the Battle of the Somme.

While military records indicate Hitler was wounded in the left thigh at the Somme, they're silent on the matter of his reproductive organs.

A Soviet autopsy of Hitler's body that was released in the 70's also claimed that the left testicle was missing, but this was probably just a propaganda gesture.

In reality, the "Hitler has only one ball" rumor almost certainly comes from a British song of the same name written in 1939 to satirize the leader of the country England had just gone to war with. While the medic's account of Hitler's monarchism has been accepted by many media outlets, there's no compelling evidence to support it, and is mostly the stuff of tabloids.

MYTH 23

THE POLISH CAVALRY CHARGE

In a shocking display of foolish bravery, Polish horse cavalry charged German tanks with their lances, dying in the process.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

This is one of the most repeated urban legends of the war, and is completely incorrect.

The real Charge at Krojanty was a Polish cavalry charge, but against infantry caught in the open. And it worked, with Polish lancers breaking up a German attack and sending panic through their lines.

It was only after a German counterattack with armored cars that journalists were shown the bodies of fallen Polish troops and horses and told they charged tanks.

But the "charge against tanks" was German propaganda swallowed, hook, line and sinker by Allied writers.

MYTH 24

KITCHENER DIED AT SEA

Field Marshal Horatio Herbert Kitchener was killed at sea by a German mine in 1916. His body was never recovered.

The verdict

True.

The Reality

Kitchener won notoriety for his imperial campaigns, most especially his scorched earth policy against the Boers and his establishment of concentration camps during the Second Boer War.

In 1914, at the start of the First World War, Kitchener became Secretary of State for War. On 5 June, 1916, he was making his way to Russia to attend negotiations.



FROM PILOT TO PRESIDENT: Lieutenant George H. Bush was not only a fighter pilot during World War II, he was also shot down and almost captured by the Japanese.

He was travelling aboard the HMS Hampshire when it struck a German sea mine 2,4 km west of the Orkney Islands in Scotland. It was 19h40, visibility was poor, it was raining, and the seas were very rough.

On board, the crew scrambled to lower lifeboats, but their efforts were futile. The huge north sea waves smashed the lifeboats to kindling against the cruiser's side.

Of the 655 people on board, only twelve were saved, drifting to land clinging to small floats. Lord Horatio Kitchener was never seen again.

Today, the wreck lies upside down at a depth of around 40 fathoms and is designated as a war grave. We must assume that the bones of Lord Kitchener still lie there.

MYTH 25

GHOULS OF NO-MAN'S LAND

During World War I soldiers from opposing sides deserted and went into hiding together. They stayed hidden during the day and came out at night to rob the dead and dying of their

supplies. They became known as the 'Ghoul of No-Man's Land'.

The verdict

False.

The Reality

This rumour was very popular, especially during World War I itself.

Wild stories about deserters living together in abandoned caves, villages, and even trenches were rife.

It was said that they would remain hidden during the day, but at night they would come out in large, armed groups and rob the dead and dying of uniforms, supplies, weapons and ammunition.

Eventually these groups became so numerous and uncontrollable that the military authorities on both sides decided to wipe them out with gas.

No one knows exactly where this urban legend began, but there are no records of it ever happening.

MYTH 26

FUTURE PRESIDENT ALMOST EATEN

George H. Bush narrowly escaped being executed and eaten by the Japanese in World War II.

The verdict

True.

The Reality

In September 1944 the submarine USS Finback surfaced a few kilometres off the coast of Chichi Jima, an island some 1,126 km South of Tokyo. It's periscope had popped above the water and spotted the man they were there to save.

Lt. George H. W. Bush (a man who, in forty odd years, would be president of the United States), was delirious, bleeding, vomiting off the side of his small life raft, and lucky.

Of the more than 100 American pilots that were shot down during the raids over the Bonin (Ogasawara) Islands preceding the landings on places like Iwo Jima, Bush was only one of three airmen that were rescued. Scores of others perished with their aircraft or died in the cold waters.

The most unfortunate of all were those that flew in the bombing raid with Bush on 3 September, 1944. Some of the pilots were shot down and captured by the Japanese soldiers stationed on Chichi Jima. There were nine, in total, and only one survived. The others disappeared, their files sealed by the U.S. government until decades later.

The tank killers

Protected by thick armour, a tank should be a pretty safe place to be on the battlefield. Yet modern-day anti-tank missiles can cut through armour like a hot knife through butter.

When British tanks first made their appearance on the battlefield in September 1916, it came as a bit of a surprise to German troops in the trenches, as can be expected.

They were faced by these lumbering steel monsters that seemed unstoppable. Rifle and machine gun fire merely bounced off the armour of these beasts.

The only saving grace for the Germans was that the tanks were incredible slow (6 km/h at best) and they suffered from a high rate of mechanical failure. It would often be the case that 70% of the tanks would not even reach the first line of German trenches before breaking down or becoming stuck in no-man's land.

With the appearance of Allied tanks, the German Army were quick to introduce new anti-tank defence detachments within the pioneer battalions of the infantry divisions.

Because the German Army was the only force in need of anti-tank weapons, they were first to develop a viable technology to combat the armoured vehicle.

These technologies took three ammunition approaches: use of grenades by infantrymen, including the *Geballte Ladung* ("Bundled Charge") of several stick grenades bound together by pioneers; early attempts at the small-calibre anti-tank rifles like the 13 mm Mauser bolt-action; 3.7 cm TaK Räderlafette 1916 anti-tank gun on a light carriage which could destroy a tank using large-calibre armour-piercing ammunition issued in 1917 to special commands; and the existing 77 mm field guns (such as the 7.7 cm FK 16) of the infantry division's artillery regiment were also eventually issued with special armour-piercing (AP) ammunition.

By the time World War II began in September 1939 the tank had come a long way since the early prototypes of World War I. They were faster, better armed, had better armour,

were less prone to mechanical failure, and most had rotating turrets.

These improvements meant that anti-tank defences would also have to adapt. Anti-tank (AT) rifles were introduced in some armies before the Second World War to provide infantry with a stand-off weapon when confronted with a tank assault.

The intention was to preserve the morale of the infantry by providing a weapon that could actually defeat a tank. Anti-tank rifles were developed in several countries during the 1930s.

By the beginning of World War II, anti-tank rifle teams could knock out most tanks from a distance of about 500 metres, and do so with a weapon that was man-portable and easily concealed.

Notable examples include the Finnish Lahti L-39, the automatic Japanese Type 97 20 mm anti-tank rifle, the German *Panzerbüchse 39*, the Polish wz.35 and the Soviet 14.5 mm PTRD and PTRS-41.

By 1942, however, the AT rifle was easily negated by the increase in armour of medium and heavy tanks.

The development of light, man-portable, anti-tank weapons increased during the Second World War. Most were based on the Munroe effect which led to the development of the high-explosive shaped charge.

These weapons were called high-explosive anti-tank (HEAT).



British PIAT



US Bazooka



German Panzerschreck

The destructive effect was reliant entirely on the kinetic energy of the explosion rather than the ballistic speed of the round on the damage inflicted to the armour. The effect was also concentrated and could penetrate more armour for a given amount of explosives.

The first HEAT rounds were rifle grenades, but better delivery systems were soon introduced: the British PIAT was propelled in a manner similar to the spigot mortar with a black powder charge contained in the tail-fin assembly, the US Bazooka and the German *Panzerfaust* used rockets, and the German *Panzerfaust* was a small recoilless gun.

The HEAT warhead was retroactively used to give more power to smaller calibre weapons such as in the conversion of the otherwise limited German 37 mm PaK guns to fire a large shell, called *Stielgranate 41*, that fitted over the barrel rather than down in it, to a greater range than the *Panzerfaust* could manage.

The Hungarian 44M 'Buzogányvető' was a successful unguided rocket used extensively in the Siege of Budapest.

After the war, research on infantry anti-tank weapons continued, with most designers focused on two primary goals: first an anti-tank weapon that

could defeat more heavily armoured postwar tanks and fighting vehicles, and second a weapon lightweight and portable enough for infantry use.

The search for a more suitable, longer-range delivery system took up much of the immediate post-war era. The US invested in the recoilless rifle, delivering a widely used 75 mm design, and less common 90 mm and 106 mm designs (the latter was usually mounted rather than infantry-handled).

The Soviets developed the RPG-2 from the German *Panzerfaust 150*. Further development led to the ubiquitous RPG-7. The RPG-7 is one of the most widely used anti-tank weapons, favoured most by soldiers of irregular militaries. The RPG-7 could fire a range of different warheads, from thermobaric warheads to a single HEAT or tandem-charge HEAT warheads against explosive reactive armour equipped tanks.

The RPG-7 has a long combat history, and has been used in most wars from the Vietnam war all the way to present day wars.

In the 1960s, the U.S. Army adopted the M72 LAW rocket, a lightweight, collapsible rocket launcher with the ability to penetrate moderate thickness's of enemy armour. During the Vietnam War, the weapon was

used primarily against NVA and Viet Cong defensive works and emplacements, as there were few encounters against enemy armour.

Overall, the LAW was regarded as a success, though its ignition system frequently suffered from misfires in the heat and humidity of Vietnamese jungles. The LAW has since been replaced by the AT4 (M136).

The development of the wire-guided missile, or Anti-Tank Guided Weapon (ATGW) systems came into use in the late 1950s and 1960s that could defeat any known tank at ranges beyond that of the guns of the accompanying infantry.

The United Kingdom, France, and other NATO countries were among the first to develop such weapons (e.g., the Malkara missile by the UK and Australia in 1958). The Soviet Union, and now Russia, put extensive development into these weapons; the first man-portable model to enter service was the AT-3 in 1961. The United States was one of the last, coming up with the BGM-71 TOW in 1970.

For a time, it appeared that the tank was a dead end. A small team of infantry with a few missiles in a well-concealed position could take on a number of the largest and most expensive tanks.

In the 1973 Yom Kippur

War, Soviet first-generation wire-guided missiles employed by the Egyptian forces inflicted heavy casualties on Israeli tank units, causing a major crisis of confidence for tank designers.

Active protection systems, such as the Russian Arena active protection system, are starting to be more common, with similar systems such as the Israeli Iron Fist active protection system. The tank may be on a comeback because of active defence systems, which attack missiles in mid-air. This may allow the tank to be competitive on the battlefield once again.

Let's take a look at some of the anti-tank missiles currently in use.

Abbreviations

- ATGM - Anti-tank guided missile.
- ATGW - Anti-tank guided weapon.
- CLU - Command launch unit.
- HEAP - High Explosive Anti-Personnel.
- HEAT - High Explosive Anti-Tank.
- HESH - High Explosive Squash Head.
- IIR - Imagine infra-red sensor.
- LOBL - Lock-On Before Launch.
- RHA - Rolled homogeneous armour.
- TOW - Tube-Launched, Optically Tracked, Wire-Guided.



Hongjian-12 (People's Republic of China)

The Hongjian-12 (HJ-12) is a third generation, man-portable, fire-and-forget infrared homing anti-tank missile of China. It was unveiled at the Eurosatory 2014 exhibition.

The HJ-12 is a modern, third generation anti-tank missile developed by China North Industries Corporation (NORINCO). The HJ-12 is a fire-and-forget system utilizing Lock-On Before Launch (LOBL) and is capable of being fired within buildings and bunkers due to its soft launch system.

Once launched, it will home autonomously onto its target, allowing the operator to immediately take cover or reload to engage another target.

The warhead uses a tandem shaped charge design with an estimated penetration capability of up to 1,100 mm of rolled homogeneous armour (RHA) after penetrating explosive reactive armour.

The HJ-12 is China's first portable anti-tank missile, increasing the ability of the People's Liberation Army Ground Force to have more modern and

mobile infantry forces.

The missile is also available for export to armies in developing countries that would need to contend with third-generation main battle tanks, but the number of potential buyers is likely small due to its higher cost.

The HJ-12 has also been exported for use by the Nigerian Army.

Specifications

- Manufacturer: Norinco
- Produced: 2014 - present
- Weight: 22 kg; missile weight 17 kg, targeting sight 5 kg
- Length: Missile 0.98 metres, launch tube 1,2 metres
- Diameter: Missile 13.5 cm; launch tube 17 cm
- Effective range: 4,000 metres (daytime); 2,000 metres (nighttime)
- Warhead: Tandem shaped HEAT charge
- Detonation mechanism: Impact force

Missile Moyenne Portée (France)

Missile Moyenne Portée is a French man-portable anti-tank guided missile. It was developed by MBDA Missile Systems and is intended as a replacement for their MILAN.

The MMP was designed to overcome some of MILAN's limitations in the context of small-scale and counter-insurgency operations post-2000, rather than the Cold War tank war of the original MILAN requirement.

In theatres such as Iraq and Afghanistan, man-portable missile were often used against strong-points and improvised armour within populated areas. Reducing collateral damage to nearby civilians became a major political factor in such campaigns.

PARS 3 LR (Germany)

The PARS 3 LR in German service, also known as TRI-GAT-LR (Third Generation Anti-Tank, Long Range) and AC 3G in French, is a fire-and-forget missile, which can be used against air or ground targets.

It is intended for long range applications and designed to defeat tanks, helicopters and other individual targets, while minimizing the exposure of the launch vehicle to enemy fire.

It is to be the main weapon system of the Eurocopter Tiger UHT helicopter. PARS 3 LR will be able to be fired in salvos of up to four in eight seconds.

The missile can be applied in direct attack or top-attack modes.



It can penetrate up to 1,000 mm of rolled homogeneous armour

Specifications

- Manufacturer: MBDA
- Produced: 2014 - present
- Weight: 15 kg
- Length: Missile 1.3 metres

- Diameter: 140 mm
- Effective range: 4,000 to 5,000 metres
- Warhead: Tandem shaped HEAT charge
- Guidance system: infrared homing; television guidance



Specifications

- Manufacturer: Parsys GmbH
- Produced: 2012 - present
- Weight: 49 kg
- Length: 1.6 metres
- Diameter: 159 mm
- Effective range: 4,000 to 5,000 metres
- Warhead: 9 kg Tandem shaped HEAT charge

- Detonation mechanism: Impact force
- Guidance system: infrared homing; television guidance

MPATGM (India)

The MPATGM, or Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile, is an Indian third-generation fire-and-forget anti-tank guided missile derived from Nag ATGM.

The command launch unit (CLU) combines a laser designator with a digital all-weather sight.

The MPATGM is equipped with an advanced imaging infrared (IIR) sensor and integrated avionics. The missile has top attack capability. It reportedly share many similarities with systems such as FGM-148 Javelin, and Spike (ATGM).

MPATGM user trials were planned for completion by 2020 but postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Upon induction, MPATGM



will replace the second generation MILAN and 9M113 Konkurs for the infantry, parachute and special forces.

Specifications

- Manufacturer: Bharat Dynamics Limited
- Produced: 2005 - present

- Weight: 14.5 kg
- Length: 1,3 metres
- Diameter: 120 mm
- Effective range: 2,500
- Warhead: Tandem shaped HEAT charge
- Guidance system: Imaging infra-red

9M133M Kornet-M (Russia)

The 9M133M Kornet-M (also known by the export designation 9M133 Kornet-EM) Russian anti-tank guided missile (ATGM) is an improved version of the 9M133 Kornet ATGM, with increased range and an improved warhead.

It's vehicle mounted version is equipped with an automatic target tracker. Instead of manually placing the crosshairs on target throughout the missiles flight, the operator designates a target once and the computer tracks the target as the missile travels towards it.

The beam riding system also allows a vehicle equipped with twin launchers to attack two different targets at once, increasing its rate of fire, decreasing the number of vehicles needed for a mission, and can defeat



vehicles equipped with an active protection system through salvo fire at one target.

Specifications

- Manufacturer: KBP Instrument Design Bureau
- Produced: 2012 - present
- Weight: 31 kg

- Length: 1,21 metres
- Effective range: 8,000 metres (anti-tank warhead); 10,000 metres (thermobaric warhead)
- Warhead: 7-10 kg equivalent of TNT
- Detonation mechanism: Impact fuse

MBT LAW (United Kingdom)

The Main Battle Tank and Light Anti-tank Weapon (MBT LAW), also known as the NLAW, is a joint British and Swedish short-range fire-and-forget anti-tank missile system. Designed for use by infantry, the MBT LAW is shoulder fired and disposable, firing once before being disposed of.

It is a soft-launch system, allowing it to be used by infantry from within an enclosed space. In this system, the missile is first launched out of the launcher using a low powered ignition. After the missile travels several metres into flight, its main rocket ignites, propelling the missile from there on to the target.

It is currently in use with the military forces of the United



Kingdom, Finland, Luxembourg, and Sweden, among others.

Specifications

- Manufacturer: Thales Air Defence
- Produced: 2009 - present
- Weight: 12.5 kg

- Length: 1,016 mm
- Effective range: 610 metres
- Warhead: 150 mm HEAT
- Guidance: Predicted Line Of Sight (PLOS) / inertial guidance

FGM-148 Javelin (USA)

The FGM-148 Javelin is an American man-portable fire-and-forget anti-tank missile fielded to replace the M47 Dragon anti-tank missile in US service.

It uses automatic infrared guidance that allows the user to seek cover immediately after launch, as opposed to wire-guided systems, like the Dragon, which require the user to guide the weapon throughout the engagement.

The Javelin's HEAT warhead is capable of defeating modern tanks by hitting them from above where their armour is thinnest, and is also useful against fortifications in a direct attack flight.

The missile system is most often carried by a two-person team consisting of a gunner and



an ammunition bearer, although it can be fired with just one person if necessary.

Specifications

- Manufacturer: Raytheon and Lockheed Martin
- Produced: 1996 - present
- Weight: 22.3 kg
- Length: Missile: 1.1 metres;

- Launch tube: 1.2 metres
- Effective range: 4,000 metres
- Warhead: Tandem-charge HEAT
- Detonation mechanism: Impact force
- Guidance: Infrared homing

The measure of Evil

While Adolf Hitler is regarded as the 'most brutal dictator in history', the 20th Century has seen more than it's fair share of brutal dictators. In this article we examine a few of them.

Führer, or leader of Nazi Germany during World War II, Adolf Hitler is generally regarded as the most brutal dictator in history.

He is the yardstick against which evil is measured. And it's a title that Hitler did more than enough to deserve.

Dictators have been around since the dawn of recorded history, and some of them went all out to make their mark on history.

One only has to look at characters such as Qin Shi Huang (247-210 BC), Attila the Hun (434-453 AD), Genghis Khan (1206-1227 AD), Vlad III (1456-1462 AD) - known as Vlad the Impaler for a reason, and Queen Mary I (1553-1558 AD) - aka Bloody Mary, to name just a few.

Yet it is the 20th Century that is regarded as the most violent century in history. After all, we had not one, but two World Wars. It is a century that has also seen some of the most brutal dictators in history.

Even though there have been many contenders for the title of "Most brutal dictator in history", it is Hitler that stands head and shoulders above the rest.

I'm sure that there are few that need any reminder as to who exactly Adolf Hitler was.

He was the leader of Germany from January 1933 until his self-inflicted death on 30 April 1945. His invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939 led to

World War II. His mad quest for revenge, conquest, and ethnic cleansing nearly succeeded. In December 1941, nearly all of Europe was under his heel.

He was responsible for the persecution and extermination of Jews, Roma (Gypsies), communists, socialists, trade unionists, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, common criminals and others in concentration camps during World War II.

It is estimated that Hitler was directly or indirectly responsible for the death of 55 million people.

It is clear that it would take a lot to knock Hitler off his perch as most brutal dictator. Yet for some, it wasn't because of a lack of trying.

Let's look at some modern-day dictators that were responsible for at least one million deaths.

Most people would be unfamiliar with the name Ioseb Besarionis dze Jughashvili. He was born in Gori, Tiflis Governorate, part of the Russian Empire, on 18 December 1878.

He was a gifted student and excelled academically. In 1894, at the age of 16, he enrolled in the Orthodox Spiritual Seminary in Tiflis. His aim was to study to become an Orthodox priest.

As he grew older he lost interest in priestly studies, declared

himself an atheist, and walked out of the seminary.

He later changed his surname to Stalin. A name derived from the Russian word *stal* (steel) and it means 'Man of Steel'.

Now Stalin is a name that most people will be familiar with.

He rose to power in the 1920s, after the death of Lenin. A succession of Five-Year programs industrialized the country but at unimaginable human costs.

This, and forced collectivization of agriculture, led to widespread famine, which costs the lives of countless millions.

Then came the "Great Terror" involving purge after purge of the party apparatus and society. Millions were sent to forced labour camps, their death, or both, the death rate in the Gulags was horrific.

In early 1941 Stalin's senior military officers began to warn him that the Germans were prepared to invade the Soviet Union. Stalin was convinced otherwise. After all the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact was a non-aggression pact between his country and Nazi Germany.

Stalin's solution was to have a purge in which all senior Red Army officers were either executed or sent to labour camps.

As history tells us, the Germans launched Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the Soviet Union, on 22 June 1941.

The earlier purge of almost all of his senior officers ensured



Joseph Stalin

the dismal performance and the horrific Russian losses in the early stages of World War II.

During the war Stalin was as brutal as the Nazis that had invaded his 'Mother Russia'. He had little regard for the lives of his troops, or even his civilian population.

In July 1942 he issued Order No. 227, also known as the "Not one step back!" order. This basically meant that Russian forces were never allowed to retreat - no matter what.

To enforce this order when Russian troops attacked German positions, the feared *Narodnyy komissariat vnútrennikh del* or NKVD would set up machine guns at the rear of the advancing troops. The troops involved in the attack had two choices - advance and get shot down by the Germans, or retreat and get shot by your own side. Not much of a choice come to think about it.

Stalin was paranoid and had no hesitation if he even imagined anyone was plotting against him, they would be executed (often along with their entire family) or sent off to the Gulags in Siberia.

In the early 1950s, he was planning another bloody terror but thankfully he died before he could unleash it upon the harried nation.

It is estimated that Stalin was responsible for the death of 25 million people - most of them his own people.

Mao Zedong, also known as Chairman Mao, was a Chinese communist revolutionary who was the founding father of the People's Republic of China, which he ruled as the chairman of the Chinese Communist Party from the establishment of the PRC in 1949 until his death in 1976.

Ideologically a Marxist-Leninist, his theories, military strategies, and political policies are collectively known as Maoism.

Mao was a successful guerrilla fighter against the Japanese invaders and the corrupt Kuomintang government of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. In 1949, he had overcome them all and the People's Republic of China was proclaimed.

It went downhill ever after. In the purges of the early 1950s, millions of "wealthy" peasants, intellectuals, and "saboteurs" were killed. Then came the "Great Leap Forward" (1958-1962) one of the most insane experiments in social engineering ever.

Private plots were abolished and communal kitchens were introduced. It was a disaster. Production plummeted and the ensuing "Great Chinese Famine" cost the lives of up to 45 million people.

Not having had enough, a few

years later, the dictator launched the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" in 1966. Millions of people were persecuted and suffered public humiliation, arbitrary imprisonment, torture, hard labour, and execution.

When Mao died in 1976, the country's per capita income was lower than Congo's, and China had lost over 55 million lives. Not that Mao cared. Purity above everything else - his purity.

Talking about purity, it seems that Chairman Mao was not as pure as he made out. According to Dr. Li Zhisui, Mao's personal physician for nearly 22 years, Mao was a chain-smoker, had an addiction to powerful sleeping pills, and enjoyed a large number of sexual partners. According to the good doctor, Mao had a preference for young pre-teen girls.

Kim Il-Sung was the dictator of North Korea from 1949 till his death in 1994.

The official name of North Korea is the "Democratic People's Republic of Korea" - which is an oxymoron if ever you heard one. There is nothing democratic about North Korea.

The people are treated as slaves, and it is not a republic but a de facto kingdom with leadership going from father to son.

Kim invaded South Korea in 1950, and in this war some three million people perished, including 12-15% of North Korea's population.

Subsequent Stalinist economic policies and widespread repression led to poverty and

famine in which hundreds of thousands, if not millions, died.

He was responsible for the deaths of at least 3,5 million people.

When Kim Il-Sung died on 8 July 1994 you would have expected the people of North Korea to breath a sigh of relief. Not so fast.

He was replaced by his son, Kim Jong-il, a man determined to continue the policies of his late father.

North Korean citizens were still treated as slaves and the poverty and famine continued unabated. Repression was just as bad, if not worse, than under Kim Il-Sung.

Many North Koreans attempted to escape to South Korea. Few of them were successful.

It is estimated that Kim Jong-il was responsible for the deaths of three million people.

And when he died on 17 December 2011, things went from bad to worse. He was replaced by his son, Kim Jong-un.

No-one is exactly sure how many people have died under the rule of Kim Jong-un, but it is speculated that the figures may be higher than either of the two previous Kims.

In fact some say that Kim Jong-un makes both his father and grandfather look like choir boys.

The scary fact is that Kim Jong-un is still in power, he does have nuclear weapons, and he's probably crazy enough to push the button.

The final death toll under his dictatorship could be very high indeed.

Mengistu Haile Mariam is a name that may be unfamiliar to many of our readers. He was a former lieutenant-colonel in the Ethiopian Army and head of state of Ethiopia from 1977 to 1991 and General Secretary of the Workers' Party of Ethiopia from 1984 to 1991.

He was the chairman of the Derg, the socialist military junta that governed Ethiopia, from 1977 to 1987, and the President of the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (PDRE) from 1987 to 1991.

The Derg took power in the Ethiopian Revolution following the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie I in 1974, marking the end of the Solomonic dynasty which had ruled Ethiopia since the 13th century.

His bloody consolidation of power in 1977-78 is known as the Ethiopian Red Terror, a brutal crackdown on opposition groups and civilians following a failed assassination attempt by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party (EPRP) in September 1976, after it had ignored the Derg's invitation to join the union of socialist parties. The death toll is unknown but is often estimated at between 30,000 and 750,000.

The Ogaden War of 1977-78 over a disputed border region with Somalia was notable for the prominent role of Mengistu's Soviet and Cuban allies in securing an Ethiopian victory. The catastrophic famine of 1983-85 is what brought his government the most international attention.

Mengistu was charged by the Ethiopian government led by



Kim Jong-un

Meles Zenawi, in absentia, for the killing of nearly 2,000 people. The charge sheet and evidence list for his crimes were 8,000 pages long.

The evidence against him included signed execution orders, videos of torture sessions, and personal testimony. The trial began in 1994 and ended in 2006. The court found Mengistu guilty as charged on 12 December 2006, and imposed a life sentence in January 2007.

In addition to the genocide conviction, the court found him guilty of imprisonment, illegal homicide, and illegal confiscation of property. Following an appeal on 26 May 2008, Mengistu was sentenced to death in absentia by Ethiopia's High Court, overturning his previous sentence of life imprisonment.

Of course Mengistu never served any of his life sentence, nor was his death sentence carried out. Mengistu has resided in Zimbabwe, due to his friendship with Robert Mugabe, ever since 1991.

After Mengistu's conviction in December 2006, the Zimba-

bwean government said that he still enjoyed asylum and would not be extradited.

A Zimbabwean government spokesman explained this by saying that "Mengistu and his government played a key and commendable role during our struggle for independence". According to the spokesman, Mengistu assisted Zimbabwean guerrilla fighters during the Rhodesian Bush War by providing training and arms; after the war, he had provided training for Zimbabwean air force pilots.

It is estimated that under his dictatorship at least 1,5 million people died.

Saddam Hussein was an Iraqi politician who served as the fifth president of Iraq from 16 July 1979 until 9 April 2003.

A leading member of the revolutionary Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party, and later, the Baghdad-based Ba'ath Party and its regional organization, the Iraqi Ba'ath Party - which espoused Ba'athism, a mix of Arab nationalism and Arab socialism - Saddam played a key role in the 1968 coup (later referred to as the 17 July Revolution) that brought the party to power in Iraq.

The common thread is his life was his morbid thirst for power, absolute power, no matter how high the cost in human blood.

Saddam was notable for using terror against his own people, including mustard and nerve gas to subdue the Kurds.

He attacked Iran in 1980. The war ended in a stalemate and one million dead. Having learned

nothing, he invaded Kuwait in 1990, leading the First Gulf War, and another 85,000 dead. Surprisingly, Saddam was left in power after the war.

Uprisings after the war led to the death over some 150,000 civilians. The list goes on until he was toppled in 2003 by American and Allied forces, and hanged in 2006.

It is estimated the Saddam's rule led to the deaths of some 1,5 million people.

World War II saw it's fair share of dictators and the man known as "Il Duce" (the Dux) was one of them.

Benito Mussolini was an Italian politician and journalist who founded and led the National Fascist Party.

He was Prime Minister of Italy from the March on Rome in 1922 until his deposition in 1943, and "Duce" of Italian Fascism from the establishment of the Italian Fasces of Combat in 1919 until his execution in 1945 by Italian partisans.

As dictator of Italy and founder of fascism, Mussolini inspired and supported the international spread of fascist movements during the inter-war period.

Mussolini and his followers consolidated power through a series of laws that transformed Italy into a one-party dictatorship. Within five years, Mussolini had established dictatorial authority by both legal and illegal means and aspired to create a totalitarian state. In 1929, Mussolini signed the Lateran Treaty with the Holy See to establish Vatican City.

At various times after 1922, Mussolini personally took over the ministries of the interior, foreign affairs, colonies, corporations, defence, and public works. Sometimes he held as many as seven departments simultaneously, as well as the premiership.

He was also head of the all-powerful Fascist Party and the armed local fascist militia, the MVSN or "Blackshirts", who terrorized incipient resistance in the cities and provinces.

He would later form the OVRA, an institutionalized secret police that carried official state support.

In this way he succeeded in keeping power in his own hands and preventing the emergence of any rival.

In 1936, Ethiopia was conquered following the Second Italo-Ethiopian War and merged into Italian East Africa (AOI) with Eritrea and Somalia. In 1939, Italian forces annexed Albania. Between 1936 and 1939, Mussolini ordered the successful Italian military intervention in Spain in favour of Francisco Franco during the Spanish civil war.

On 10 June 1940, Mussolini decided to enter the war on the Axis side.

It is estimated that 1,2 million people died under Mussolini's rule.

Francisco Franco Bahamonde was a Spanish general who led the Nationalist forces in overthrowing the Second Spanish Republic during the Spanish Civil War and thereafter ruled over Spain from 1939 to 1975 as a dictator,

assuming the title Caudillo.

This period in Spanish history, from the Nationalist victory to Franco's death, is commonly known as Francoist Spain or the Francoist dictatorship.

Franco was briefly elevated to Chief of Army Staff before the 1936 election moved the leftist Popular Front into power, relegating him to the Canary Islands. After initial reluctance, he joined the July 1936 military coup, which, after failing to take Spain, sparked the Spanish Civil War.

Franco established a totalitarian one party state after the Spanish Civil War 1936-39, which claimed half a million lives.

Three years later the Nationalists declared victory, which extended Franco's dictatorship over Spain through a period of repression of political opponents.

His dictatorship's use of forced labour, concentration camps and executions led to between 30,000 and 50,000 deaths.

Combined with wartime killings, this brings the death toll of the White Terror to between 100,000 and 200,000.

In post-civil war Spain, Franco ruled with more power than any Spanish leader before or since. Franco developed a cult of personality around his rule by founding the *Movimiento Nacional*.

During World War II he maintained Spanish neutrality but supported the Axis - whose members Italy and Germany had supported him during the Civil War - in various ways, damaging the country's inter-

national reputation.

During the Franco dictatorship it is estimated that more than 1,2 million people were killed.

Pol Pot (born Saloth Sâr) was a Cambodian revolutionary and politician who governed Cambodia as the Prime Minister of Democratic Kampuchea between 1976 and 1979.

Ideologically a Marxist-Leninist and a Khmer nationalist, he was a leading member of Cambodia's communist movement, the Khmer Rouge, from 1963 until 1997 and served as the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Kampuchea from 1963 to 1981.

Under his administration, Cambodia was converted into a one-party communist state and went through the events of the Cambodian genocide.

He grabbed power in Cambodia in 1975 and set about to create a communist paradise on earth. Not surprisingly, it was worse than Dante's Seventh Circle of Hell.

To fulfil his vision of an agricultural society, the urban population was forcibly relocated to the country side to work in collective farms.

Money was abolished and all citizens were made to wear the same drab black clothing, which made Mao costumes look fashionable.

Intellectuals were summarily murdered - this included people who wore glasses. This experiment in social engineering costs the lives of about 25 % of the population, and was immortalized in the Hollywood movie



Idi Amin

Killing Fields.

His evil government was toppled after four years by invading Vietnamese forces.

Under Pot's watch more than 1,2 million of his own people were killed.

Haji Mohammed Suharto was an Indonesian Army officer and politician who served as the head of state and head of government of Indonesia.

He was also the second and the longest serving President of Indonesia. Widely classified as a dictator by foreign observers, Suharto was president for 31 years, from the coup d'état against Sukarno in 1967 until his own ousting in 1998.

He was responsible for the mass murder of around half a million people between 1965 and 1966 following a failed coup attempt and human rights abuses including widespread torture, massacres of alleged communists and war crimes in Aceh, East Timor, Papua and

the Moluccan islands.

The growth of the economy coincided with the rapid expansion of corruption, collusion, and nepotism. In the early 1980s, Suharto's children, particularly Siti Hardiyanti Rukmana ("Tutut"), Hutomo Mandala Putra ("Tommy"), and Bambang Trihatmodjo, had grown into greedy adults.

Their companies were given lucrative government contracts and protected from market competition by monopolies. It is claimed that Suharto himself was worth US\$ 38 billion.

From 1983 to 1985, army squads killed up to 10,000 suspected criminals in response to a spike in the crime rate.

Suharto's imposition of Pancasila as the sole ideology caused protests from conservative Islamic groups who considered Islamic law to be above all other conceptions.

The Tanjung Priok massacre saw the army kill up to 100 conservative Muslim protesters in September 1984. A retaliatory series of small bombings, including the bombing of Borobudur, led to arrests of hundreds of conservative Islamic activists.

More than 1,2 million people were killed under the dictatorship of Suharto.

In closing let us take a look at a few modern dictators that, while not quite in the league of those mentioned above, were responsible for more than 100,000 deaths.

Jean Kambanda: This was the man that brought us the Rwandan Genocide. The Rwandan

genocide occurred between 7 April and 15 July 1994 during the Rwandan Civil War.

During this period of around 100 days, members of the Tutsi minority ethnic group, as well as some moderate Hutu and Twa, were slaughtered by armed militias.

Death toll: Between 800,00 and one million.

Idi Amin: Given the nickname, the "Butcher of Uganda", Amin was renown for his brutal regime in Uganda.

His full title, which he gave to himself, was Field Marshall Doctor Idi Amin Dada, VC, Lord of All the Beasts of the Earth and Fishes of the Seas and Conqueror of the British Empire in Africa.

Responsible for between 300,000 and 500,000 deaths.

Charles Taylor: Former Liberian president and convicted war criminal known for massacres among own population and creation of a brutal rebel group.

His action led to the brutal civil war in Sierra Leone. Responsible for more than 300,000 deaths.

Slobodan Milošević: A Yugoslav and Serbian politician who served as the president of Serbia within Yugoslavia from 1989 to 1997 and president of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from 1997 to 2000.

He was charged with war crimes in connection with the Bosnian War, the Croatian War of Independence, and the Kosovo War. He became the first sitting head of state to be charged with war crimes.

His actions were responsible for more than 200,000 deaths.

Bashar al-Assad: During the ongoing civil war in Syria since 2013 Bashar al-Assad is responsible for the bombing of his own population.

He stands accused by the UN of war crime for the chemical weapons attack which killed 1,400 people in Damascus suburbs in 2013.

Responsible for the deaths of more than 130,000 people to date.

Omar al-Bashir: In 2008 Sudan dictator Omar al-Bashir was accused, by the International Criminal Court (ICC), of responsibility for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Dafur since 2003.

Death toll: More than 130,000.

Joseph Kony: Originally from Uganda, tyrant Joseph Kony founded the brutal rebel group LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) including around 66,000 child soldiers.

His rampage through Uganda and the central African States left more than 100,000 dead.

Now while some will find this an interesting article, many will question what exactly it has to do with the military.

Well all of the above dictators were either brought to power and/or kept in power by the military.

In some cases they were removed from power by the military. Often only to be replaced by yet another dictator.

World War II - a few facts

On 1 September 1939, nearly 21 years after World War I, Germany invaded Poland. This led to the start of World War II. Here are a few facts about World War II that you may, or may not, have known.

You would like to think that after having been involved in a war that lasted four years, three months and two weeks, and cost more than 14 million deaths (five million of the deaths being civilian), the world would have learnt their lesson. Sadly they did not.

It was a case of, "My lords, ladies and gentlemen, we are proud to present World War Version 2.0. A war which we guarantee you will last longer and have an even higher death toll than the first version. A war that will feature horrific crimes against the civilian population, mass genocide, and even the use of atomic weapons."

The world went all out to prove that the "Great War" wasn't that great, and that the "War to end all wars," wasn't.

Now most readers will have a fair knowledge about World War II. Most of us know when it began, which countries were involved, how long it lasted, how many were killed, when it ended, and who the victors were.

Here we present a few facts about World War II that you may, or may not have known.

When did it all start?

World War II officially began on 3 September 1939, when Britain and France declared war on Germany. This was two days after the Germans had invaded Poland. This was after an ultimatum issued by Britain and France for Germany to with-

draw from Poland had expired.

It wasn't long before other Commonwealth countries began jumping on the bandwagon, or would that be war-wagon?

On the same day that Britain and France declared war on Germany, 3 September 1939, Australia, New Zealand, India, Transjordan, Morocco and Tunisia also declared war on Germany.

As the Statute of Westminster 1931 was not yet ratified by the parliaments of Australia and New Zealand, the British declaration of war on Germany also applied to those dominions.

A bit of a strange addition to the list was Tonga. They were not a British dominion, but went ahead and declared war on Germany separately.

The Union of South Africa declared war on Germany on 6 September 1939 and Canada followed four days later.

September 1939 was a big month for invasions and declarations. On 17 September 1939 Russia invaded Poland and they were now faced with a war on two fronts. It's hardly surprising that the Poles only managed to hold out for 27 days. They surrendered to Germany on 27 September 1939.

Yet the Germans had been making aggressive moves long before September 1939. On 12 March 1938 German troops had marched into Austria and annexed the country. In the summer of 1938, Hitler threatened

war if the Sudetenland was not ceded to Germany.

Even before that, on 3 October 1935, Italy invaded Abyssinia (present day Ethiopia).

On 7 July 1937 the Empire of Japan had invaded the Republic of China. This full-scale war between the Chinese and the Empire of Japan is often regarded as the beginning of World War II in Asia.

Germany, Italy and Japan would go on to make up the Axis Powers during World War II.

Let's take a look at some trivia regarding World War II.

- The first German serviceman killed in the war was killed by the Japanese (China, 1937). The first American serviceman killed was killed by the Russians (Finland 1940). The first American serviceman killed was killed by the Russians (Finland 1940).
- Germany was not in the habit of declaring war on anyone. They would just go ahead and invade a country. In fact, Germany only ever declared war against one country - the United States of America. This was after America had declared war on Japan. Because Japan was an ally of the Germans, Hitler only thought it fair that he go ahead and declare war against the USA.
- In the 1928 elections, less than 3% of Germans voted for the Nazi party. In 1938, Hitler was Time magazine's man of the year.
- The top 117 fighter aces of

World War II were all from the German *Luftwaffe* (Air Force). 104 German pilots managed to claim more than 100 kills and 13 shot down more than 200 enemy aircraft.

- Gerhard "Gerd" Barkhorn ended the war with 301 victories. After the war he became a Major General in the German Air Force of the Federal Republic of Germany.
- Not only did Erich 'Bubi' Hartmann become the most successful fighter ace of World War II, he became the most successful fighter ace in the history of aerial warfare. His nickname 'Bubi' meant 'The Kid'. He flew 1,404 combat missions and participated in aerial combat on 825 separate occasions. He was credited with shooting down a total of 352 Allied aircraft: 345 Soviet and seven American while serving with the *Luftwaffe*. During the course of his career, Hartmann was forced to crash-land his fighter 16 times due either to mechanical failure or damage received from parts of enemy aircraft he had shot down; he was never shot down from direct enemy action. Ultimately, Hartmann earned the coveted Knight's

Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves, Swords and Diamonds on 25 August 1944. He survived the war and went on to become an *Oberst* (Colonel) in the *Bundeswehr* (German Federal Defence).

- The top non-German fighter ace of the war was Ilmari Juutilainen of the Finnish Air Force with 94 kills.
- The top British and Commonwealth ace was South African Squadron Leader Marmaduke Thomas St John Prattle with 40+ kills.
- American pilot Owen J. Baggett became legendary as the only person to shoot down a Japanese aircraft with a .45 calibre M1911 pistol. Baggett had bailed out of his aircraft and was parachuting when a Japanese aircraft headed straight at him. He fired three shots with his pistol and one of them hit the Japanese pilot in the head, killing him instantly.
- The Germans used the first jet fighters in World War II, among them the Messerschmitt ME-262. However, they were developed too late to change the course of the war.
- The Enola Gay became well known for dropping the first

atomic bomb on Hiroshima, but few people know the name of the B-29 that bombed Nagasaki. It was Bock's Car, named after the plane's usual commander, Frederick Bock.

- The American pilot who dropped the first atomic bomb died aged 92 – with no regrets. He said he never lost a single night's sleep. Pilot Paul Tibbets dropped the bomb on Hiroshima that killed 78,000 people instantly but by the end of 1945 the death total had reached 140,000.
- While on the subject of Hiroshima you have to take pity on the elderly Japanese man that managed to survive the bombing of Hiroshima. He decided that it was pointless to stay on in the ruined city and that he would go and stay with a relative in another city. He took a train and arrived in Nagasaki shortly before it was struck by the second atomic bomb. Remarkably he survived the second explosion as well.
- The first bomb dropped on Berlin by the Allies killed the only elephant in the Berlin Zoo.
- Over 100,000 Allied bomb-

HIGH ATTRITION RATE: Only one out of every four men serving on U-boats survived the war.



er crewmen were killed over Europe.

- Franz Von Werra, a German pilot and POW who was transferred to Canada to deter his multiple escapes and recaptures, escaped again in less than a month, traveling through the US, Mexico, Brazil, Spain and Italy to become the only Western held POW to return to combat. On 25 October 1941 Von Werra took off in Bf 109F-4 on a practice flight. He suffered engine failure and crashed into the sea north of Vlissingen and was killed. His body was never found.
- In World War II a woman-only Soviet bomber regiment were nicknamed the “Night Witches” by German soldiers. For a successful bombing run, the Witches would cut the engine of their archaic and noisy aircraft. Gliding in, they would release their bombs before the enemy even knew they were there.
- The Russians destroyed over 500 German aircraft by ramming them in midair (they also sometimes cleared mine fields by marching over them).
- The top U-boat commander of World War II was Otto Kretschmer. From September 1939 he sank 56 ships with a total tonnage of 313,611 tons. On 16 March 1941 he attacked a convoy and sank four ships before his boat, the U-99, was damaged by repeated depth charge attacks and he was forced to surface. He scuttled his boat before surrendering. He was taken Prisoner of War and spent the rest of the war as a POW. He was awarded the Knight’s

Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords. He died on 5 August 1998 at the age of 86.

- Only one out of every four men serving on U-boats survived the war.
- German U-boats sunk 2,000 Allied ships at a cost of 781 U-boats destroyed.
- One of the American light cruisers anchored at Pearl Harbour during the Japanese attack of December 1941 was the Phoenix. The Phoenix survived the attack virtually unscathed, however, more than 40 years later she was torpedoed and sunk by the British submarine Conqueror in the South Atlantic. The Phoenix, at the time of her demise, was of part of the Argentine Navy and known then as the General Belgrano.
- On 2 December 1941 the coded message “*Niitakayama Nobore*” arrived on Japanese Admiral Nagumo’s flagship. The Admiral then opened a set of top secret documents which confirmed that he was to attack Pearl Harbour and that Japan would be going to war with the United States, Britain, and Holland. The coded message to confirm that the attack had been a success and taken the American fleet by surprise was *Tora, Tora, Tora* (Tiger, tiger, tiger).
- At the time of Pearl Harbour, the top US Navy command was called CINCUS (pronounced “sink us”), the shoulder patch of the US Army’s 45th Infantry division was the swastika, and Hitler’s private train was named “Amerika”. All three were

soon changed for PR purposes.

- Among the first “Germans” captured at Normandy were several Koreans. They had been forced to fight for the Japanese Army until they were captured by the Russians and forced to fight for the Russian Army until they were captured by the Germans and forced to fight for the German Army until they were captured by the US Army.
- Adolf Hitler’s nephew, William Hitler, served in the US Navy during World War II.
- Although many people refer to the Allied D-Day landings in Normandy as “Operation Overlord”, the operation was actually called “Operation Neptune”. The landings were originally known as Overlord, but in September 1943 the code name was changed to Neptune, and Overlord from then on was used to refer to the general Allied strategy in northwestern Europe.
- Despite what you might see in the movies, the regular German Army (Wehrmacht) did not usually use the Nazi salute. Only after the July 1944 attempt on Hitler’s life were they forced to use the Nazi salute as standard.
- Two weeks after Adolf Hitler’s suicide, Allied and Axis forces fought together in the only record of such an event happening during the six year war. The battle took place at Castle Itter in Austria, where several high profile prisoners were being detained, such as former French presidents, prime ministers and even sports celebrities. 14 American soldiers teamed up with around 20 German Wehr-



HIGH PRICE TO PAY: Only 20% of the males born in the Soviet Union in 1923 survived the war.

macht troops to defend the castle from an onslaught by an SS squadron. They held out until help arrived in the form of the American 103rd Infantry Division.

- The youngest person to serve in the US Military during World War II was Calvin Graham. He was only 12 years old. He lied about his age and was later wounded in action and awarded the Purple Heart medal (age 14) before they discovered his real age.
- Prior to the Allied invasion of Sicily they came up with a number of deception plans to convince the Germans that the landings would take place elsewhere. One of these plans was named Operation Mincemeat. It involved releasing the body of a person dressed as a Royal Marine Major off the coast of Spain. The body contained documents revealing that the Allies were planning on invading Greece. The Spanish returned the body, and

the documents, to the British Embassy. But not before they were copied by the Germans. The Germans fell for the deception hook, line and sinker. The person that dreamt up the plan was a British Naval Intelligence officer by the name of Ian Fleming. Yes, the same man that would later bring us James Bond.

- During the Invasion of Normandy, Scottish Bagpiper, Bill Millin, contrary to British Command, in the thick of battle, marched up and down the beach playing his Pipes. When his unit captured German snipers, they asked why Millin wasn’t shot. They said they didn’t shoot him because he was clearly insane.
- The idea that eating carrots helps you see in the dark was a lie invented by the British Royal Air Force, in order to explain how British air raids were so successful in the dark without tipping the Germans off to the existence of radar.
- 25 Russian soldiers under the command of Yakov Pavlov

defended a building during the Battle of Stalingrad so well that it never fell. Vasily Chuikov, general of the Soviet forces in Stalingrad, later joked that the Germans lost more men trying to take “Pavlov’s house” than they did taking Paris.

- Joan Pujol Garcia was a Spaniard that worked for German intelligence as an agent. He was, however, a double agent and was actually working for the British. Ironically he was the only person to be awarded both the Iron Cross from the Germans and an MBE from the British.
- Japanese military leader Tojo Hideki was put on trial as a war criminal at the end of World War II. While in prison he attempted suicide. It took the Americans a great deal of time, effort and money to resuscitate him and get him back to health. After which they hanged him.
- During World War II, German prisoners of war in Canada were treated so nicely that they didn’t want to leave Canada when released after the war ended.
- The Battle of the Bulge is the largest and deadliest battle for U.S. troops to date, with more than 80,000 American casualties.
- The Siege of Stalingrad resulted in more Russian deaths (military and civilian) than the US and Britain sustained (combined) in all of World War II.
- The most decorated unit ever in U.S. history is the 442nd regimental Combat Team, whose motto was “Go for Broke.” It consisted of Japanese-American volunteers. Together they won 4,667 ma-

- jor medals, awards, and citations, including 560 Silver Stars (28 of which had oak-leaf clusters), 4,000 Bronze Stars, 52 Distinguished Service Crosses, and one Medal of Honour, plus 54 other decorations. It also held the distinction of never having a case of desertion.
- On 31 January 1945, Private Eddie Slovik was shot for desertion, the first American executed for the crime since the Civil War and the only one to suffer this punishment during World War II.
 - During an attack on an Italian position in North Africa the South African Infantry launched a bayonet charge. One of the attacking South Africans fell into a shell hole, hitting his head and rendering him unconscious. When he regained consciousness a minute or two later he found six Italians sitting in the hole with him. They had their hands in the air and were waiting to surrender to him.
 - The largest Japanese spy ring during World War II was not in the U.S. but in Mexico, where it spied on the U.S. Atlantic Fleet.
 - Several South American countries did not declare war on the Axis Powers until the closing stages, in order to become eligible to join the fledgling United Nations. Great strategy. "You say the war is ending tomorrow. Who's losing? Okay, let's declare war on them. Let's start printing victory medals for our brave troops."
 - From 1942, U.S. Marines in the Pacific used the Navajo language as their secret code. The language didn't have the vocabulary for existing technology, so existing words had to be given new meanings. For example, the word for "hummingbird" (da-he-ti-hi) became code for fighter plane. Around 400 Navajo Indians (Code Talkers) were trained to use the code, and the Japanese never cracked it.
 - The Victoria Cross was awarded 182 times to 181 recipients during World War II. 85 of them were awarded posthumously. Captain Charles Upham, a New Zealander, was the only person during World War II to be awarded the VC twice.
 - Five South Africans were awarded the VC during World War II. George Gristock was a company sergeant major with the Royal Norfolk Regiment. John Nettleton was a squadron leader with the Royal Air Force (RAF). Gerhard Norton served with the Hampshire Regiment. Quentin Smythe was a sergeant with the Royal Natal Carabineers. And Edwin Swales was a member of the South African Air Force and later of the elite RAF Pathfinder Force. Both Gristock and Swales won the award posthumously.

Springbok





The newly elected National Executive Committee are from left to right: 1st Lt. Basil Dukes (Regional Chairperson Eastern Cape), John Johnson (President), Mrs. Annette (President & Chair), Peter de Klerk (Communications & Liaison), Dean Bester (Regional Chairperson Free State), Hans van der Zyl (National Secretary), Shoun Botha (National Vice President), Mrs. Nasser (Cape Town Chairperson), Steve Leithy (Regional Chairperson KwaZulu-Natal), Brian Smith (National President), Albert Peter (Ceremonial & Conduct), Arthur Shree (Regional Chairperson Mpumalanga), Simon Kinnear (Regional Chairperson United Kingdom and Europe), Chris Munnich (Chairperson), and George Barick (National Chairperson). 10/2021, London.

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

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

Quiz



Armed Forces

This month we're taking a closer look at some of the logos, including army, navy and air force, of armed forces around the world. One of them, number 7, has been digitally modified because the name is on the logo. How many of these do you know. Answers on page 91.

1		2		3	
4		5		6	
7		8		9	
10		11		12	
13		14		15	

World War II Infantry

This month we take a look at the standard infantry units of five countries during World War II as they go Head-to-Head. They are Russia, Britain, Japan, USA and Germany.

Search throughout the history of warfare and you are sure to find one thing in common - the basic foot soldier.

Weapons, equipment and technology have advanced over the years. World War I saw the introduction of tanks and aircraft to the battlefield. By the time World War II began there had been vast improvements on the weapons used in "The war to end all wars."

Tanks had better armour, they were better armed, and they were much quicker and mobile than those of the previous war.

Fighter aircraft were better armed and could fly higher, further, and quicker than the wood and canvas planes of the first war. Bombers could fly much further and carry heavier payloads.

Artillery was far more powerful and could deliver a barrage over a far longer distance.

Yet once again, there was one thing in common - infantry.

Every military force relied heavily on infantry troops. They were the ones that had to go into battle, They were the ones that had to capture and hold enemy territory. And they were the ones that had to defend their own positions against enemy attack.

Within any unit, training,

leadership, technology, morale and numbers were crucial factors. And this was particularly true of infantry squads.

Externally, factors such as terrain, weather, and just dumb luck must all be taken into account.

All of these factors interacted with each other in some way too. An officer's orders could be misheard in the middle of a deluge. Mud could choke the mechanisms of a gun.

While training, leadership and technology were integral factors within an infantry unit, training and leadership also facilitated coordination with external, non-infantry units and their technology, primarily in the form of heavier weapons of war such as artillery, armour, and air and naval forces.

In this month's Head-to-Head we will be looking at the infantry of five countries during World War II.

These countries are Russia, Britain, Japan, United States, and Germany. At the end of the article we will give our opinion of which of these five countries had the best infantry.

And please remember, this is our opinion and you are entitled to disagree with us.

Russia

It seems clear that the Red Army command cared little about sustaining heavy casualties, adhering to the principles of quantity over quality.

Discipline was severe in the Red Army. Soviet officers would have no hesitation in shooting any troops that even thought about retreating.

Often when Russian infantry mounted an attack the feared NKVD would be behind them with machine guns.

The infantry were faced with the choice of advancing into the German fire, or retreat and be



mown down by their own people.

It was none other than Joseph Stalin that said, "It takes a brave man to be a coward in the Red Army."

One of the factors contributing to Soviet defeats in Operation Barbarossa, the German invasion of Russia on 22 June 1941, was a lack of experienced officers. Stalin had seen to this with his 'Great Purge'.

Between 1937 and 1938 Stalin's campaign of political repression in the Soviet Union had seen the large-scale repression of the peasantry; ethnic cleansing; purges of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, government officials, and, importantly, the Red Army.

Most of the senior and experienced officers had either been executed or sent off to gulags in Siberia, which was just as good as a death sentence.

With no solid leadership the Red army quickly fell apart. After Stalingrad, however, they had the resources to advance and deploy their military doctrines.

On a broad scale, Soviet Deep Battle doctrines were employed, and on a squad level, the Soviets took inspiration from the Germans.

They reduced the manpower in their squads, substituting it for firepower. A machine gunner wielding a DP-28 LMG was introduced, and he was supported by riflemen with bolt-action

rifles such as the Mosin-Nagant and semi-automatics like the SVT-40 and submachine gunners armed with SMGs such as the iconic PPSH-41.

As the war progressed Soviet officers and troops began to gain experience. Generally they could handle local conditions, such as the harsh Russian winters, far better than the Germans.

The became experts in urban combat and house-to-house fighting. A hard lesson they learnt in Stalingrad.

On a whole the average Russian infantryman was tough and was used to following orders. Independent thinking was not encouraged.

Russian small arms



Mosin-Nagant M1891/30



Tokarev SVT-40



PPSh-41



DP-28 light machine gun

Their military law compelled Soviet infantry units to hate their enemies and act against traitors to the Motherland, and while their hatred for the

Germans manifested in many unspeakable acts, they were incredibly brave despite the horrendous losses they suffered throughout the war.

Britain

Overall, the training and leadership of British Army infantry units earned them the reputation of cautious combatants, preferring to claim small advances and consolidate power rather than making aggressive and dangerous sweeps.

Due to a scarcity of manpower, the Brits did not wish to, and could not, sustain heavy casualties. British training focused on realism, with, for example, live rounds being fired in the vicinity of trainees so they could learn to tell the difference between the sound of a gun firing and a bullet striking something near.

In terms of coordination with non-infantry units, British infantry units were supported by tanks, and it's worth noting that while British tanks had their uses, they were generally inferior to those used by the Germans.

When it came to tactics, the British allowed for the adapta-

tion of mission templates on the fly, but they also discouraged major changes, so as not to confuse their own men.

When assaulting a position, British infantry would force enemy heads and guns down with suppressive fire, allowing their own troops to advance. The infantry sections were ten strong up until 1944. However, only seven of these ten men would be in combat at once, with three in reserve.

This way, they wouldn't replace the dead or otherwise incapacitated with 'green' troops unfamiliar with the unit. British infantry made good use of the Lee-Enfield rifle, which surpassed the bolt-action rifles wielded by the Germans, such as the Karabiner 98k.

The Bren light machine gun saw heavy use, and it bested the US Army's Browning Automatic Rifle or BAR, in that it held an additional ten rounds and featured a fast-change barrel which could be swapped out

Without this bravery, the outcome of the war would have been very different indeed.



when it overheated.

In closer quarters, British infantry used the American Thompson submachine gun, also known as the Tommy Gun, until that was replaced by the British Sten gun.

British small arms



Lee Enfield No. 4 Mk I



Thompson M1A1



Sten gun



Bren light machine gun

Japan

Overall, Japan favoured light infantry supported by air and naval forces over armour. What Japanese infantry had more than anything else is bravery and ruthlessness.



They endured incredible hardships, and they certainly dished it out, earning a reputation as brutal warriors, even fanatics.

They fought like hell on every front, and often to the very last man, preferring to go out in a suicidal bayonet charge than throw up a white flag.

To understand the Japanese fighting soldier, one first has to understand the culture.

Many Japanese officers fancied themselves as samurai, even though very few of them were.

Samurai lived by a strict code known as *bushido* or 'The Way of the Warrior'.

Yet almost every Japanese had a strong sense of *giri* or duty. There is an old Japanese saying that goes "*Gimu wa yama yori mo omoku, shi wa hane yori mo karui.*" This means "Duty is heavier than a mountain, while death is lighter than a feather."

Duty was first and foremost to the emperor, then to their god, and finally to their family. To die for the emperor or for Japan was considered a great honour.

While on the offensive, Japanese infantry would travel light. They would capture supplies along the way and take ammunition and sometimes even weapons from the enemy dead.

During World War II, many Japanese infantrymen were thrown into the fray after just three months training, and many of these men came from agricultural backgrounds.

While their training was short, officers enforced strict discipline, beating those who stepped out of line.

Standard Japanese rifles, namely the Type 39 and Type 99 Arisaka rifles were decent, but they fell short of the bolt-action rifles of the other fighting nations.

Japanese machine guns such as the Type 11, Type 96, and Type 99 were cumbersome, unreliable, and lacked stopping power. Their pistols were straight up trash.

Japanese infantry training prioritised bayonet attacks, relating the honour of wielding a bayonet to the honour of wielding a *katana*.

Japanese small arms



Type 100 Sub Machine Gun



Type 99 Arisaka rifle



Type 99 light machine gun

United States

Generally, infantry units of the United States were trigger happy and had the means of production to back it up.

Unlike British infantry, who regularly exercised caution, American infantry units were willing to accept casualties and go in guns blazing.

When attacking a position, they would light up that general direction with suppressive fire, allowing the rest of the unit to get into a better position or execute a flank.

While the Yanks did burn a lot of gunpowder, they didn't charge recklessly, opting instead to make good use of cover, particularly from around corners rather than over the top of an object.

When units were on the move, they could keep pressure on the enemy by hammering the trigger of their M1 Garand, the first standard issue semi-automatic rifle of the war.

These were especially effective rifles – game changing – but US small arms innovations weren't limited to the M1.

They brought the Thompson submachine gun into the war as well as the BAR, which while its barrel wasn't easy to swap out as the British Bren gun – was still a force to be reckoned with.

In terms of leadership, American NCOs got stuck into the fight with their men and were generally respected, but the US Army was lacking educated officers higher up, and its units of-



ON THE MOVE: Troops of the US 1st Infantry Division, known as 'The Big Red One', advance somewhere in Europe.

ten fell under British command.

Both the United States Army and the United States Marine Corps had infantry squads.

Most of the US Army infan-

try fought in North Africa and

Europe against the Germans.

In the South Pacific it was the US Marine Corps that bore the

brunt of the fighting.

US infantry troops were well

equipped and, in most cases,

well supplied.

US small arms



M1 Garand



Thompson M1A1



Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR)

Germany

In our humble opinion the German Wehrmacht had the best infantry of World War II. They had better training, leadership, tactics, equipment, and morale than most other infantry units for at least the first few years of the war.

Now some people will say that this is because they were all fanatical Nazis. Fair enough, many junior officers were members of the Nazi Party and were particularly zealous towards Hitler.

Yet many NCOs and troops were never members of the Nazi Party. A fair percentage of them had little time for Hitler or the party.

In the early 1980s I had the opportunity to interview a member of the Wehrmacht that had fought in the Battle of France and on the Eastern Front during

World War II. At the time he was in his late 60s.

“Our lieutenant was a member of the Party, and so was one of our sergeants. The rest of us had no interest in becoming members. As far as we were concerned we were fighting for Germany, not for Hitler.

As the war progressed, especially after we invaded Russia, we had even less time for *Gröfaz* and his bunch. When we heard what the *Einsatzgruppen* (SS Extermination Squads) were getting up to, we realised that we would have to win this war. Especially against the Russian. If we lost we would end up paying for it dearly.

Towards the end of the war we were no longer even fighting for Germany. We were fighting for each other and our survival. We would do whatever it took to stay alive.

Right at the end of the war we fought like demons to head for the west and surrender to the Americans. There was no ways that we wanted to surrender to the Russians.”

Gröfaz was the German soldier’s derogatory nickname for Adolf Hitler. It was an acronym for *Größter Feldherr aller Zeiten*. It meant “the Greatest Field Commander of all Time.”

Unlike what many stereotypes depict, the Germans were not mindless robots. While they were among the most disciplined and professional soldiers on the battlefield, they were also incredibly creative, using infantry to support tanks, rather than the other way around like the Brits, inventing mechanized infantry, inventing the squad machine gun, and capitalising

on almost every one of their opponents mistakes, even if that meant changing their plans on the fly.

They were also capable of mounting quick counter-attacks and disengaging efficiently and with minimal casualties.

As the early Blitzkrieg showed, Wehrmacht infantry understood coordinated artillery, armoured, and air support tactics firmly. The MG42 machine gun was perhaps the German infantry’s most pivotal squad-level weapon. Units were built around this very gun, tasked with feeding it ammo and watching its operator’s flanks.

German infantry made good use of the iconic MP40 too, and this weapon outclassed the American Tommy gun, the Soviet PPSH-41, and the British Sten.

Overall, German infantry units used more SMGs than rifles, making them masters of city fighting, in which their grey battledress was a fitting camouflage. German helmet designs were also a cut above the rest, and – like many other aspects of the German war machine – other belligerents basically copied its design.

The Germans fought a war on two fronts and lost, in short, because of attrition (and, still they boasted a kill ratio of up to five to one.)

As American military analyst Colonel Trevor Dupuy put it, “On a man to man basis, German ground soldiers consistently inflicted casualties at about a 50 percent higher rate than they incurred from the opposing British and American

troops under all circumstances. This was true when they were attacking and when they were defending, when they had a local numerical superiority and when, as was usually the case, they were outnumbered, when they had air superiority and when they did not, when they won or when the lost.”

The fact that Germany lost the war reinforces the reality that a war cannot be won by exceptional infantry alone and that it

does not, indeed, take place in a vacuum.

Now this article only looked at the infantry of five major countries in World War II. This is not to say that other countries did not have exceptional infantry troops.

The South Africans, for example, earned a reputation during the Italian campaign and in the Western Desert.

Finland held out against

the Russians, even though the Finns were vastly outnumbered, for far longer than they should have. Once again, this was because they had excellent infantry and tactics.

Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, the Desert Fox, was once quoted as saying, “If I invaded hell I would use Australian troops to capture it, and New Zealand troops to hold it.”

German small arms



Karabiner 98k



MP40



MG 42 light machine gun



Josef Mengele

A physician with doctorates in anthropology and medicine, an officer in the German Schutzstaffel (SS), he earned the well deserved title of Todesengel (Angel of Death). Yet it was his experiments on live humans for which he will always be remembered and reviled. This was Dr Josef Mengele.

From 1942 onwards the Nazi Germans built six special camps as part of their “Final Solution to the Jewish question”.

The purpose of these camps was to systematically murder over 2.7 million people – mostly Jews – in the Holocaust.

These camps were known as *vernichtungslager* (extermination camps), *todeslager* (death camps), or *tötungszentren* (killing centres).

The camps were all built in occupied Poland and were Chelmo, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka, Majdanek and Auschwitz-Birkenau (also known as Auschwitz II).

The victims of death camps were primarily killed by gassing, either in permanent installations constructed for this specific purpose, or by means of gas vans.

Auschwitz and Majdanek death camps also used extermination through labour in order to kill their prisoners.

The brutal and sadistic treatment of prisoners at these camps defies belief. Yet there was

one man that stood out from a long list of sadists and psychopaths.

He was the chief physician of the *Zigeunerfamilienlager* (Romani family camp) at Birkenau, a sub-camp located on the main Auschwitz complex. Not only was he a doctor, he was also a *SS-Hauptsturmführer*

(Captain) in the *Schutzstaffel* (SS). His name was Josef Mengele.

Early Life

Mengele was born in Günzburg on 16 March 1911, the eldest of three sons of Walburga (née Hupfauer) and Karl Mengele. His two younger brothers were Karl Jr. and Alois.

Their father was founder of the Karl Mengele & Sons company (later renamed as Mengele Agrartechnik, which produced farming machinery.

Mengele was successful at school and developed an interest in music, art, and skiing.

He completed high school in April 1930 and went on to study philosophy in Munich, where the headquarters of the Nazi Party were located.

In 1931 he joined the *Der Stahlhelm*, a paramilitary organization that was absorbed into the Nazi *Sturmabteilung* (‘Storm Detachment’; SA) in 1934. In 1935, Mengele earned a

PhD in anthropology from the University of Munich.

In January 1937, he joined the Institute for Hereditary Biology and Racial Hygiene in Frankfurt, where he worked for Otmar Freiherr von Verschuer, a German geneticist with a particular interest in researching twins.

As Von Verschuer’s assistant, Mengele focused on the genetic factors that result in a cleft lip and palate, or a cleft chin.

His thesis on the subject earned him a cum laude doctorate in medicine (MD) from the University of Frankfurt in 1938. (Both of his degrees were revoked by the issuing universities in the 1960s.)

In a letter of recommendation, Von Verschuer praised Mengele’s reliability and his ability to verbally present complex material in a clear manner.

The American author Robert Jay Lifton notes that Mengele’s published works were in keeping with the scientific mainstream of the time, and would probably have been viewed as valid scientific efforts even outside Nazi Germany.

On 28 July 1939, Mengele married Irene Schönbein, whom he had met while working as a medical resident in Leipzig. Their only son, Rolf, was born in 1944.

Military service

The ideology of Nazism brought together elements of anti-Semitism, racial hygiene, and eugenics, and combined them with pan-Germanism and

territorial expansionism with the goal of obtaining more *Lebensraum* (living space) for the Germanic people.

Nazi Germany attempted to obtain this new territory by attacking Poland and the Soviet Union, intending to deport or kill the Jews and Slavs living there, who were considered by the Nazis to be *untermensch*, inferior to the Aryan master race.

Mengele joined the Nazi Party in 1937 and the *Schutzstaffel* (SS; ‘Protection Squadron’) in 1938. He received basic training in 1938 with the *Gebirgsjäger* (‘light infantry mountain troop’) and was called up for service in the *Wehrmacht* (German armed forces) in June 1940, some months after the outbreak of World War II.

He soon volunteered for medical service in the *Waffen-SS*, the combat arm of the SS, where he served with the rank of *SS-Untersturmführer* (‘second lieutenant’) in a medical reserve battalion until November 1940.

He was next assigned to the *SS-Rasse- und Siedlungshauptamt* (‘SS Race and Settlement Main Office’) in Poznań, evaluating candidates for Germanization.

In June 1941 Mengele was posted to Ukraine, where he was awarded the Iron Cross 2nd Class. In January 1942, he joined the 5th SS Panzer Division Wiking as a battalion medical officer.

After rescuing two German soldiers from a burning tank, he was decorated with the Iron

Cross 1st Class, the Wound Badge in Black, and the Medal for the Care of the German People.

He was declared unfit for further active service in mid-1942, when he was seriously wounded in action near Rostov-on-Don.

Following his recovery, he was transferred to the headquarters of the SS Race and Settlement Main Office in Berlin, at which point he resumed his association with Von Verschuer, who was now director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of Anthropology, Human Heredity, and Eugenics. Mengele was promoted to the rank of *SS-Hauptsturmführer* (‘captain’) in April 1943.

Auschwitz

In 1942 Auschwitz II (Birkenau), originally intended to house slave laborers, began to be used instead as a combined labour camp and extermination camp.

Prisoners were transported there by rail from all over Nazi-controlled Europe, arriving in daily convoys.

By July 1942, SS doctors were conducting “selections” where incoming Jews were segregated, and those considered able to work were admitted into the camp while those deemed unfit for labour were immediately killed in the gas chambers.

The arrivals that were selected to die, about three-quarters of the total, included almost all children, women with small children, pregnant women, all



the elderly, and all of those who appeared (in a brief and superficial inspection by an SS doctor) to be not completely fit and healthy.

In early 1943, Von Verschuer encouraged Mengele to apply for a transfer to the concentration camp service.

Mengele's application was accepted and he was posted to Auschwitz, where he was appointed by SS-Standortarzt Eduard Wirths, chief medical officer at Auschwitz, to the position of chief physician of the *Zigeunerfamilienlager* (Romani family camp) at Birkenau, a sub-camp located on the main Auschwitz complex.

The SS doctors did not administer treatment to the Auschwitz inmates but supervised the activities of inmate doctors who had been forced to work in the camp medical service.

As part of his duties, Mengele made weekly visits to the hospital barracks and ordered any prisoners who had not recovered after two weeks in bed to be sent to the gas chambers.

Mengele's work also involved carrying out selections, a task that he chose to perform even when he was not assigned to do so, in the hope of finding subjects for his experiments, with a particular interest in locating sets of twins.

In contrast to most of the other SS doctors, who viewed selections as one of their most stressful and unpleasant duties, he undertook the task with a flamboyant air, often smiling or whistling a tune.

He was one of the SS doctors responsible for supervising the administration of Zyklon B, the

cyanide-based pesticide that was used for the mass killings in the Birkenau gas chambers. He served in this capacity at the gas chambers located in crematoria IV and V.

When an outbreak of noma - a gangrenous bacterial disease of the mouth and face - struck the Romani camp in 1943, Mengele initiated a study to determine the cause of the disease and develop a treatment.

He enlisted the assistance of prisoner Berthold Epstein, a Jewish paediatrician and professor at Prague University. The patients were isolated in separate barracks and several afflicted children were killed so that their preserved heads and organs could be sent to the SS Medical Academy in Graz and other facilities for study.

This research was still ongoing when the Romani camp was liquidated and its remaining occupants killed in 1944.

When a typhus epidemic began in the women's camp, Mengele cleared one block of six hundred Jewish women and sent them to their deaths in the gas chambers.

The building was then cleaned and disinfected and the occupants of a neighbouring block were bathed, de-loused, and given new clothing before being moved into the clean block.

This process was repeated until all of the barracks were disinfected.

Similar procedures were used for later epidemics of scarlet fever and other diseases, with infected prisoners being killed in the gas chambers.

For these actions, Mengele was awarded the War Mer-

it Cross (Second Class with swords) and was promoted in 1944 to First Physician of the Birkenau sub-camp.

Human experimentation

Mengele used Auschwitz as an opportunity to continue his anthropological studies and research into heredity, using inmates for human experimentation.

His medical procedures showed no consideration for the victims' health, safety, or physical and emotional suffering.

He was particularly interested in identical twins, people with heterochromia iridum (eyes of two different colours), dwarfs, and people with physical abnormalities.

A grant was provided by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft ('German Research Foundation'), at the request of Von Verschuer, who received regular reports and shipments of specimens from Mengele. The grant was used to build a pathology laboratory attached to Crematorium II at Auschwitz II-Birkenau.

Miklós Nyiszli, a Hungarian Jewish pathologist who arrived in Auschwitz on 29 May 1944, performed dissections and prepared specimens for shipment in this laboratory.

Mengele's research subjects were better fed and housed than the other prisoners, and temporarily spared from execution in the gas chambers.

His research subjects lived in their own barracks, where they were provided with a marginally better quality of food and somewhat improved living conditions than the other areas of



ROGUES GALLERY: Taken in 1944, this photograph shows (from left to right) Richard Baer (Commandant of Auschwitz), Dr. Josef Mengele and Rudolf Hoess (the former Auschwitz Commandant).

the camp.

When visiting his young subjects, he introduced himself as "Uncle Mengele" and offered them sweets, while at the same time being personally responsible for the deaths of an unknown number of victims whom he killed via lethal injection, shootings, beatings, and his deadly experiments.

Mengele has been described as sadistic, lacking empathy, and extremely anti-Semitic, believing the Jews should be eliminated as an inferior and dangerous race.

Even Mengele's own son, Rolf, would later go on to say that his father had shown no remorse for his wartime activities.

Twins were subjected to weekly examinations and measurements of their physical attributes by Mengele or one of his assistants.

The experiments he per-

formed on twins included unnecessary amputation of limbs, intentionally infecting one twin with typhus or some other disease, and transfusing the blood of one twin into the other.

Many of the victims died while undergoing these procedures, and those who survived the experiments were sometimes killed and their bodies dissected once Mengele had no further use for them.

Nyiszli recalled one occasion on which Mengele personally killed fourteen twins in one night by injecting their hearts with chloroform.

If one twin died from disease, he would kill the other twin to allow comparative post-mortem reports to be produced for research purposes.

Mengele's eye experiments included attempts to change the eye color by injecting chemicals into the eyes of living subjects, and he killed people with

heterochromatic eyes so that the eyes could be removed and sent to Berlin for study.

His experiments on dwarfs and people with physical abnormalities included taking physical measurements, drawing blood, extracting healthy teeth, and treatment with unnecessary drugs and X-rays.

Many of his victims were dispatched to the gas chambers after about two weeks, and their skeletons were sent to Berlin for further analysis.

Mengele sought out pregnant women, on whom he would perform experiments before sending them to the gas chambers.

Alex Dekel, a survivor, reports witnessing Mengele performing vivisection without anesthesia, removing hearts and stomachs of victims.

Mengele sewed two Romani twins together, back to back, in a crude attempt to create conjoined twins; both children died of gangrene after several days of suffering.

After Auschwitz

Along with several other Auschwitz doctors, Mengele transferred to Gross-Rosen concentration camp in Lower Silesia on 17 January 1945, taking with him two boxes of specimens and the records of his experiments at Auschwitz. Most of the camp medical records had already been destroyed by the SS by the time the Red Army liberated Auschwitz on 27 January.

Mengele fled Gross-Rosen on 18 February, a week before the Soviets arrived there, and travelled westward to Žatec in

Czechoslovakia, disguised as a Wehrmacht officer.

There he temporarily entrusted his incriminating documents to a nurse with whom he had struck up a relationship.

He and his unit then hurried west to avoid being captured by the Soviets, but were taken prisoners of war by the Americans in June 1945.

Although Mengele was initially registered under his own name, he was not identified as being on the major war criminal list due to the disorganization of the Allies regarding the distribution of wanted lists, and the fact that he did not have the usual SS blood group tattoo.

He was released at the end of July and obtained false papers under the name “Fritz Ullman”, documents he later altered to read “Fritz Hollmann”.

After several months on the run, including a trip back to the Soviet-occupied area to recover his Auschwitz records, Mengele found work near Rosenheim as a farmhand.

He eventually escaped from Germany on 17 April 1949, convinced that his capture would mean a trial and death sentence.

Assisted by a network of former SS members, he used the ratline to travel to Genoa, where he obtained a passport from the International Committee of the Red Cross under the alias “Helmut Gregor”, and sailed to Argentina in July 1949. His wife refused to accompany him, and they divorced in 1954.

South America

Mengele worked as a carpenter in Buenos Aires, Argentina,

while lodging in a boarding house in the suburb of Vicente López.

After a few weeks, he moved to the house of a Nazi sympathizer in the more affluent neighbourhood of Florida Este. He next worked as a salesman for his family’s farm equipment company, Karl Mengele & Sons, and in 1951 he began making frequent trips to Paraguay as a regional sales representative.

He moved into an apartment in central Buenos Aires in 1953, used family funds to buy a part interest in a carpentry concern, and then rented a house in the suburb of Olivos in 1954.

Files released by the Argentine government in 1992 indicate that Mengele may have practiced medicine without a license while living in Buenos Aires, including performing abortions.

After obtaining a copy of his birth certificate through the West German embassy in 1956, Mengele was issued with an Argentine foreign residence permit under his real name. He used this document to obtain a West German passport, using his real name and embarked on a trip to Europe.

Mengele’s business interests now included part ownership of Fadro Farm, a pharmaceutical company.

Along with several other doctors, he was questioned in 1958 on suspicion of practicing medicine without a license when a teenage girl died after an abortion, but he was released without charge. Aware that the publicity could lead to his Nazi background and wartime activities being discovered, he took an extended business trip to

Paraguay and was granted citizenship there in 1959 under the name “José Mengele”.

Mengele’s name was mentioned several times during the Nuremberg trials in the mid-1940s, but the Allied forces believed that he was probably already dead.

Irene Mengele and the family in Günzburg also alleged that he had died.

Working in West Germany, Nazi hunters Simon Wiesenthal and Hermann Langbein collected information from witnesses about Mengele’s wartime activities.

In a search of the public records, Langbein discovered Mengele’s divorce papers, which listed an address in Buenos Aires.

He and Wiesenthal pressured the West German authorities into starting extradition proceedings, and an arrest warrant was drawn up on 5 June 1959.

Argentina initially refused the extradition request because the fugitive was no longer living at the address given on the documents; by the time extradition was approved on 30 June, Mengele had already fled to Paraguay and was living on a farm near the Argentine border.

Hunted by Mossad

In May 1960, Isser Harel, director of the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad, personally led the successful effort to capture Adolf Eichmann in Buenos Aires. He was hoping to track down Mengele so that he too could be brought to trial in Israel.

Under interrogation, Eichmann provided the address of

a boarding house that had been used as a safe house for Nazi fugitives.

Surveillance of the house did not reveal Mengele or any members of his family and the neighbourhood postman claimed that although Mengele had recently been receiving letters there under his real name, he had since relocated without leaving a forwarding address.

Harel’s inquiries at a machine shop where Mengele had been part owner also failed to generate any leads, so he was forced to abandon the search.

Later life and death

In 1969, Mengele and his friends, the Stammers, jointly purchased a farmhouse in Caieiras, with Mengele as half owner.

When Wolfgang Gerhard returned to Germany in 1971 to seek medical treatment for his ailing wife and son, he gave his identity card to Mengele.

The Stammers’ friendship with Mengele deteriorated in late 1974, and when they bought a house in São Paulo, he was not invited to join them.

The Stammers later bought a bungalow in the Eldorado neighbourhood of Diadema, São Paulo, which they rented out to Mengele.

Rolf, who had not seen his father since 1956, visited him at the bungalow in 1977; he found an “unrepentant Nazi” who claimed he had never personally harmed anyone and only carried out his duties as an officer.

Mengele’s health had been steadily deteriorating since 1972. He suffered a stroke in 1976, experienced high blood

pressure, and developed an ear infection which affected his balance.

On 7 February 1979, while visiting his friends Wolfram and Liselotte Bossert in the coastal resort of Bertioga, Mengele suffered another stroke while swimming and drowned. He was 67 years old.

His body was buried in Embu das Artes under the name “Wolfgang Gerhard”, whose identification Mengele had been using since 1971.

Other aliases used by Mengele in his later life included “Dr. Fausto Rindón” and “S. Josi Alvers Aspiazu”.

Exhumation

Meanwhile, sightings of Mengele were being reported all over the world.

Wiesenthal claimed to have information that placed Mengele on the Greek island of Kythnos in 1960,[in Cairo in 1961, in Spain in 1971, and in Paraguay in 1978, eighteen years after he had left the country.

He insisted as late as 1985 that Mengele was still alive - six years after he had died.

German authorities alerted the police in São Paulo, who then contacted the Bosserts. Under interrogation, they revealed the location of Mengele’s grave and the remains were exhumed on 6 June 1985.

Extensive forensic examination indicated with a high degree of probability that the body was indeed that of Josef Mengele.

Rolf Mengele issued a statement on 10 June confirming that the body was his father’s and he admitted that the news of his father’s death had been concealed

in order to protect the people who had sheltered him for many years.

In 1992, DNA testing confirmed Mengele’s identity beyond doubt, but family members refused repeated requests by Brazilian officials to repatriate the remains to Germany.

The skeleton is stored at the São Paulo Institute for Forensic Medicine, where it is used as an educational aid during forensic medicine courses at the University of São Paulo’s medical school

It is an injustice that Mengele was never captured, put on trial, and made to pay for his inhumane crimes.

The Ratlines

Ratlines (*Rattenlinien*) were a system of escape routes for Nazis and other fascists fleeing Europe in the aftermath of World War II. These escape routes mainly led toward havens in Latin America, particularly Argentina though also in Paraguay, Colombia, Brazil, Uruguay, Mexico, Chile, Peru, Guatemala, Ecuador and Bolivia, as well as the United States, Spain and Switzerland.

There were two primary routes: the first went from Germany to Spain, then Argentina; the second from Germany to Rome to Genoa, then South America.

The ratlines were supported by some controversial clergy of the Catholic Church, and later used by the United States Intelligence officers.

Stuka

Junkers Ju 87

With its wailing sirens and its pin-point accuracy, the Stuka was the terror of the skies during the early part of World War II.

It was probably one of the most feared, aircraft of World War II. It was easily recognisable by its inverted gull wings and fixed spatted undercarriage.

Upon the leading edges of its faired main gear legs were mounted the *Jericho-Trompete* (Jericho trumpet), and the wailing sirens were a sound that no-one that heard them could ever forget.

It became the propaganda symbol of German air power and the blitzkrieg victories of 1939–1942.

Officially it was known as the Junkers Ju 87, but everyone called it by its nickname, Stuka.

The word came from the German word for dive bomber,

Sturzkampfflugzeug.

The

Stuka's design included several innovative features, including automatic pull-up dive brakes under both wings to ensure that the aircraft recovered from its attack dive even if the pilot blacked out from the high g-forces.

Designed by Hermann Pohlmann, it first flew in 1935. The Ju 87 made its combat debut in 1937 with the Luftwaffe's Condor Legion during the Spanish Civil War as a dive bomber and ground-attack aircraft.

It

could dive vertically and deliver a bomb with pin-point accuracy.

American idea

With 62 kills, Ernst Udet was the second highest fighter ace

of World War I. Only the famed Red Baron had more kills than Udet.

In 1931 Udet was in the United States to take part in a stunt flying display. He watched a Curtiss F8C Helldiver make a simulated dive bombing attack at an air show. Udet was really impressed.

In fact he was so impressed that he brought two US dive bombers back to Germany.

These would eventually lead

features, its fixed and "spatted" undercarriage.

The design of the Ju 87 had begun in 1933 as part of the *Sturzbomber-Programm*. The Ju 87 was to be powered by the British Rolls-Royce Kestrel engine. This was later replaced by the Daimler-Benz DB 600 engine.

Udet would go on to become a general in the Luftwaffe and a champion of the concept of using dive bombing to support ground forces.

Development

The Ju 87's principal designer, Hermann Pohlmann, held the opinion that any dive-bomber design needed to be simple and robust. This led to many technical innovations, such as the retractable undercarriage being discarded in favour of one of the Stuka's distinctive

Early prototypes of the Stuka featured stabilizing double-fin tail-plane configurations yet weren't fitted with dive brakes. In January 1936, one of Junkers' most experienced test pilots was killed when his starboard tail-fin broke away. The pilot was unable to pull out of a dive and crashed. After this, Stukas were fitted with single tail fins and brakes.

The Stuka carried a crew of two - pilot and rear gunner. It was armed with a 2× 7.92 mm

MG 17 machine gun in each wing, while the rear gunner operated a single rear-facing 1× 7.92 mm MG 15 machine gun.

One of the unique features of early models of the Stuka were the *Jericho-Trompete* (Jericho trumpet).

The two propeller-driven sirens with a diameter of 0.7 m were fitted on the B-1 model of the Ju 87, which was the first version of Stuka that went into mass production. They were either mounted on the wing's leading edge, or on the front edge of the fixed main gear fairing.

The Germans relied on the psychological effect of the noise to give them an edge against their opponents.

After a while, the devastating effect of a screaming dive bomber was lost. Rather, it became a warning sign attached directly to the aircraft. Later versions were built without the Jericho Trumpets, and instead, aerial bombs were fitted with a whistling device for the same purpose.

Operational history - Spain

Stukas made their combat debut as part of the German contingent to the Spanish Civil War — the Condor Legion. They first flew in action in 1936 when a single experimental Ju 87 was secretly deployed to fight alongside nationalist forces. More would follow in the coming months. In fact, Stukas would serve in limited numbers in support of Francisco Franco until early 1939. During that time, at least one was lost in action. Yet the Luftwaffe learned valuable lessons about the effectiveness

of the Ju 87 as a dive-bomber from the deployment.

Poland

On 1 September 1939, the Wehrmacht invaded Poland, triggering World War II. Generalquartiermeister der Luftwaffe records indicate a total force of 366 Ju 87 A and Bs were available for operations on 31 August 1939.

A Ju 87 achieved the first air victory during World War II on the morning of 1 September 1939, when Rottenführer Leutnant Frank Neubert of I./StG 2 "Immelmann" shot down a Polish PZL P.11c fighter while it was taking off from Balice airfield.

The Stukas also participated in the Battle of Bzura which resulted in the breaking of Polish resistance. During the Siege of Warsaw and the Battle of Modlin, the Ju 87 wings contributed to the defeat of well-entrenched and resolute Polish forces.

Norway

Operation Weserübung began on 9 April 1940 with the invasions of Norway and Denmark. Denmark capitulated within the day; Norway continued to resist with British and French help.

The Ju 87s were given the role of ground attack and anti-shipping missions; they proved to be the most effective weapon in the Luftwaffe's armoury carrying out the latter task.

The Stukas had numerous successes against Allied naval vessels and in particular the Royal Navy which posed a formidable threat to German naval and coastal operations.

Specifications - Ju 87 B-2

General characteristics

Crew: 2
Length: 11.00 m
Wingspan: 13.8 m
Height: 4.23 m
Wing area: 31.90 m²
Empty weight: 3,205 kg
Loaded weight: 4,320 kg
Max. takeoff weight: 5,000 kg
Powerplant: 1 × Junkers Jumo 211D liquid-cooled inverted V12 engine, 1200 PS (1,184 hp (883 kW))
Propellers: Three-blade Junkers VS 5 propeller, 1 per engine
Propeller diameter: 3.4 m

Performance

Never exceed speed: 600 km/h
Maximum speed: 390 km/h
Cruise speed: 319 km/h
Range: 500 km with 500 kg bomb load
Service ceiling: 8,200 m with 500 kg bomb load
Rate of climb: 2.3 m/s

Armament

Guns: 2× 7.92 mm MG 17 machine gun forward, 1× 7.92 mm MG 15 machine gun to rear
Bombs: Normal load = 1× 250 kg bomb beneath the fuselage and 4× 50 kg, two bombs underneath each wing.

The Ju 87 G-series was deployed in an anti-tank role and had twin *Bordkanone* 3.7 cm underwing gun pods.



AIRBORNE ARTILLERY: The Stuka could deliver a 250 kg bomb with pin-point accuracy. It was an aircraft that was both respected and feared.

France and the Low Countries

The Ju 87 units had learned lessons from the Polish and Norwegian campaigns. When Fall Gelb (Case yellow) began on 10 May 1940, the Stuka helped swiftly neutralise the fortress of Eben Emael, Belgium.

The Ju 87 proved to be a useful asset to Army Group B in the Low Countries. In pitched battles against French armoured forces at Hannut and Gembloux Ju 87s effectively neutralised artillery and armour.

The Ju 87s also assisted German forces in the Battle of the Netherlands. The Ju 87 units were also instrumental in the Battle of France. It was here that most of the Ju 87-equipped units were concentrated. They assisted in the breakthrough at Sedan, the critical and first major land battle of the war on French territory. The *Stukawaffe* flew 300 sorties against French positions, with StG 77 alone flying 201 individual missions.

Battle of Britain

As an anti-shipping weapon, the Ju 87 proved a potent weapon in the early stages of the battle. Yet the Battle of Britain proved to be a turning point for the Stuka.

It proved for the first time that the Junkers Ju 87 was vulnerable in hostile skies against well-organised and determined fighter opposition. The Ju 87, like other dive bombers, was slow and possessed inadequate defences. Furthermore, it could not be effectively protected by fighters because of its low speed, and the very low altitudes at which it ended its dive bomb attacks.

The Stuka depended on air superiority, the very thing being contested over Britain. It was withdrawn from attacks on Britain in August after prohibitive losses, leaving the Luftwaffe without precision ground-attack aircraft.

North Africa and the Mediterranean

In response to the Italian defeats in Greece and North Africa, the Oberkommando der Wehrmacht ordered the deployment of German forces to these theatres. Amongst the Luftwaffe contingent deployed was the command unit StG 3, which touched down in Sicily in December 1940. In the next few days, two groups - 80 Stukas - were deployed under X. Fliegerkorps.

The first task of the Korps was to attack British shipping passing between Sicily and Africa, in particular the convoys aimed at re-supplying Malta. North Africa and the Mediterranean.

The dive bomber wing supported Generalfeldmarschall Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps in its two-year campaign in North Africa; its other main task was attacking Allied shipping.

In 1941, Ju 87 operations in North Africa were dominated by the Siege of Tobruk, which lasted for over seven months.

It served during the Battle of Gazala and the First Battle of El Alamein, as well as the decisive Second Battle of El Alamein, which drove Rommel back to Tunisia. As the tide turned and Allied air power grew in the autumn of 1942, the Ju 87 became very vulnerable and losses were heavy.

Eastern Front Barbarossa 1941

On 22 June 1941, the Wehrmacht commenced Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the

Soviet Union. The Luftwaffe order of battle of 22 June 1941 contained four dive bomber wings.

As a result of the Luftwaffe's attention, the Soviet Air Force in the western Soviet Union was nearly destroyed. The official report claimed 1,489 Soviet aircraft destroyed.

Göring ordered this checked. After picking their way through the wreckage across the front, Luftwaffe officers found that the tally exceeded 2,000. In the next two days, the Soviets reported the loss of another 1,922 aircraft.

Soviet aerial resistance continued but ceased to be effective and the Luftwaffe maintained air superiority until the end of the year.

Fall Blau to Stalingrad 1942

In early 1942, the Ju 87s gave the German Army yet more valuable support. On 29 December 1941, the Soviet 44th Army landed on the Kerch Peninsula. The Luftwaffe was only able to dispatch meager reinforcements of four bomber groups (Kampfgruppen) and two dive bomber groups belonging to StG 77. With air superiority, the Ju 87s operated with impunity. In the first 10 days of the Battle of the Kerch Peninsula, half the landing force was destroyed, while sea lanes were blocked by the Stukas inflicting heavy losses on Soviet shipping.

For the German summer offensive, Fall Blau (Case Blue), the Luftwaffe had concentrated 1,800 aircraft into Luftflotte 4 making it the largest and most powerful air command in the world. The Stukawaffe strength stood at 151.

During the Battle of Stalingrad, Stukas flew thousands of sorties against Soviet positions in the city. StG 1, 2 and 77 flew 320 sorties on 14 October 1942.

As the German Sixth Army pushed the Soviets into a 1,000 metre enclave on the west bank of the Volga River, 1,208 Stuka sorties were flown against this small strip of land.

The intense air attack, though causing horrific losses on Soviet units, failed to destroy them.

The Luftwaffe's Stuka force made a maximum effort during this phase of the war. They flew an average of 500 sorties per day and caused heavy losses among Soviet forces, losing an average of only one Stuka per day.

The Battle of Stalingrad marked the high point in the fortunes of the Junkers Ju 87 Stuka. As the strength of the Soviet Air Forces grew, they gradually wrested control of the skies from the Luftwaffe. From this point onward, Stuka losses increased.

Kursk 1943

The Stuka was also heavily involved in Operation Citadel, the Battle of Kursk. The Luftwaffe committed I, II, III./StG 1 and III./StG 3 under the command of Luftflotte 6. I., II, III. of StGs 2 and 3 were committed under the command of Hans Seidemann's *Fliegerkorps VIII*.

Hauptmann Rudel's cannon-equipped Ju 87 Gs had a devastating effect on Soviet armour at Orel and Belgorod.

The Ju 87s participated in a huge aerial counter-offensive lasting from 16–31 July against a Soviet offensive at Khotynets and saved two German armies from encirclement, reducing the

attacking Soviet 11th Guards Army to 33 tanks by 20 July.

The Soviet offensive had been completely halted from the air although losses were considerable

The Battle of Kiev also included substantial use of the Ju 87 units, although again, unsuccessful in stemming the advances. Stuka units were with the loss of air superiority, becoming vulnerable on the ground as well. Some Stuka aces were lost this way.

In the aftermath of Kursk, Stuka strength fell to 184 aircraft in total. This was well below 50 percent of the required strength.

On 18 October 1943, StG 1, 2, 3, 5 and 77 were re-named Schlachtgeschwader (SG) wings, reflecting their ground-attack role, as these combat wings were now also using ground-attack aircraft, such as the Fw 190F-series aircraft. The Luftwaffe's dive-bomber units had ceased to exist.

Bagration to Berlin 1944-45

Towards the end of the war, as the Allies gained air supremacy, the Stuka was being replaced by ground-attack versions of the Fw 190.

By early 1944, the number of Ju 87 units and operational aircraft terminally declined. For the Soviet summer offensive, Operation Bagration, 12 Ju 87 groups and five mixed groups (including Fw 190s) were on the Luftwaffe's order of battle on 26 June 1944.

Gefechtsverband Kuhlmei, a mixed aircraft unit, which included large numbers of Stuka dive bombers, was rushed to



TANK KILLER: Hans-Ulrich Rudel's Junkers Ju 87G, with twin BK 3,7 gun pods attached to the underside of the wings, in Russia 1943.

the Finnish front in the summer of 1944 and was instrumental in halting the Soviet fourth strategic offensive.

The unit claimed 200 Soviet tanks and 150 Soviet aircraft destroyed for 41 losses. By 31 January 1945, only 104 Ju 87s remained operational with their units. The other mixed Schlacht units contained a further 70 Ju 87s and Fw 190s between them. Chronic fuel shortages kept the Stukas grounded and sorties decreased until the end of the war in May 1945.

In the final months of the war the ground attack groups were still able to impose operational constraints upon the enemy.

Most notably the aircraft participated in the defence of Berlin. On 12 January 1945 the 1st Belorussian Front initiated the Vistula–Oder Offensive. The offensive made rapid progress. The

Soviets eventually outran their air support which was unable to use forward, quagmire-filled, airfields. The Germans, who had fallen back on air bases with good facilities and concrete runways, were able to mount uninterrupted attacks against Soviet army columns. Reminiscent of the early years, the Luftwaffe was able to inflict high losses largely unopposed.

Tank Killer

The Bordkanone 3,7 (BK 3,7) ("on-board cannon 3.7") was a German 3.7 cm anti-tank/bomber auto-cannon of World War II made by Rheinmetall.

It was mounted on Luftwaffe aircraft such as the Junkers Ju 87 G-1 and G-2; Henschel Hs 129B-2/R3; Messerschmitt Bf 110G-2/R1-3; Junkers Ju 88P-2 or P-3 and others.

The cannon could be attached

under the wings or the fuselage of the aircraft as self-contained gun pods with 12-round magazines. It fired Armour Piercing Composite Rigid (APCR, Tungsten-cored) ammunition or high-explosive shells at 160 rounds per minute.

BK 3,7 equipped ground attack aircraft were developed for tank hunting on the Eastern Front in an effort to blunt the massive numerical superiority of the Soviet T-34 tank as the war turned against Germany.

In contrast to the bombs delivered by dive bombing, when the BK 3,7 was used to attack the relatively thin armour of the top of the turret and the engine compartment armour of a tank, kills could be achieved with a relatively light and cheap armour-piercing projectile that could be carried in much greater quantities than bombs.

At 04h26 on 1 September 1939, three Ju 87 B2 Stuka dive-bombers crossed the Polish border in the first mission of Case White - the invasion of Poland.

As night fell on 31 August 1939, the long flat airfield was covered with patches of fog, giving it an eerie feel.

Ghostly skeletal shapes of aircraft stood around the hangars and administration buildings.

The airbase was the scene of quiet unhurried activity. Black figures moved in and out of the beams of truck lights as maintenance crews serviced the aircraft, arming them with fragmentation bombs fitted to racks on the sloping struts, and fuelled them from tankers.

Each of the planes had a black cross on its fuselage and wings, and a rakish, fixed trouser-type undercarriage. They were ugly gull-winged Junkers Ju 87 B2 of *Luftflotte 1*, under the command of General Kesselring.

Along the border between Germany and Poland there was a tenseness in the air. Since sundown the night had been filled with clanging of tank tracks, the sound of vehicles moving into place, and distant sounds of shunting trains.

Despite rumours and intelligence reports, few in Poland believed that Germany would really attack Poland. After all, Britain and France had said they would come to Poland's aid if Germany attacked.

The were convinced that Hitler was mounting his greatest bluff ever and that he would not risk a European War. However, during 31 August, Poland belatedly began to mobilise her troops.

Preparing for War

At 03h30 on 1 September a long row of dimmed headlights headed through the fog towards the airfield.

Before long Luftwaffe staff cars and crew trucks were pulling in before a low flat building near the tarmac.

The six men that comprised the crews of three dive-bombers of *3rd Gruppe of Stukegeschwader 1* were among the first to enter the building.

Under the leadership of Hauptmann Bruno Dilley they had a cup of hot coffee and listened to last minute orders and weather reports.

More and more Stuka crews filled into the briefing room. They



huddled in tight knots around their leaders. The mood in the long narrow room was confident.

All briefings had taken place hours before and now they were checking changes to their flight plans because of the closed-in weather along the Eastern Front.

At 04h10, Dilley's group fastened on their helmets, checked their parachute harnesses and left the building. On the tarmac they split into pairs and walked to their aircraft. Ground crew members were waiting to give them a hand aboard.

The early morning stillness was shattered by a deafening roar as one by one the Jumo 211D engines burst into life. The three Ju 87 Bs stood waiting for the go signal, held in place only by their airbrakes.



INTO ACTION: Stukas take off from an airfield in Germany. Their destination is a target in Poland.

Then Dilley received the signal and his plane jerked forward and began roll across the field in the direction of the airstrip. Forty-five metres behind him came the second plane, with the other further behind.

They reached the end of the runway and swung round to face upwind. The engines roared to a crescendo and Dilley released his brakes. The Stuka began to pick up speed as it rushed down the runway. At short intervals, the second and third plane followed.

Dilley cleared the trees and the low ridge of hills into the darkness. The time was 04h26 and the first mission of *Fall Weiss* (Case White) had truly begun.

The sky above the clouds was clear. There was no moon and the whole of the eastern horizon was lit by the dull pink glow of dawn.

A cold blast of air swept into the cabin as Dilley's navigator slid open the Stuka's side screen. He looked down to get his bearings, but most of the

countryside was covered in cloud. He looked at the stars, took a compass bearing, and slid the screen shut.

The navigator opened his microphone and spoke a few words to Dilley, giving him a slight course adjustment.

Dilley acknowledged and then switched over to the open radio network and spoke to the other two pilots in the flight. They checked in a altered course with him.

Dilley pressed his stick forward and throttled back. The three Stukas sank slowly through the clouds.

Dilley turned the lighting on his instrumentation down low to minimise distraction. At 04h31 they crossed the border into Poland.

Dawn attack

The ground seemed to slowly come up at Dilley as he brought his plane down in a smooth sweep of controlled power.

The other two Stukas hung to his tail. Dilley climbed to skim over a low hill and the other two

aircraft followed like a double shadow.

Now they were hedge-hopping toward the low-lying valley of the Vistula. The navigation had been spot on.

Dilley could see the river lying diagonally in front of him. He banked sharply to get in line with it, turning north.

Their mission was the twin bridges at Dirschau. Their mission was not to destroy the bridges, but rather to save them.

The Germans knew that once the Panzers crossed the border, the Poles would demolish the Dirschau bridge and others in an effort to buy time.

An armoured train carrying units of the German shock troops was due to cross the border at 04h50, the moment when armoured groups from west Germany, Czechoslovakia and East Prussia would roll into Poland.

Dilley's mission was aimed at stopping the Poles from destroying the bridges across the Vistula before the armoured train could arrive.

The German High Command knew that the Poles would have rigged the bridges with explosives. These would have been wired to charges fixed to the bridge supports. It has been reasoned that the Stuka, armed with fragmentation bombs, would be the ideal weapon.

It was a hazardous mission and the crews had been hand-picked. They had spent several weeks training at Insterburg airfield.

Dilley and three other pilots had visited Dischau by train to make a first-hand inspection of the bridges and the surround

ing terrain, particularly the approach from the south.

The kette (chain) leader had realised at once that it was not a dive-bombing mission, something for which the Stukas had been built. Rather this had to be a low-level bombing while flying straight and level.

If the strike was to be effective the Stukas would have to fly at the lowest possible level and drop their bombs at the very last instant. It would require precision flying.

At 04h35 the three Stuka pilots saw the twin bridges rushing towards them. The Jumo engines throttled up to a wailing scream as the planes swept towards the target, a mere nine metres above the ground.

They released their bombs to straddle the shelving river banks and the row of shacks that lay at the foot of the bridges. This was where the Polish troops that had the duty of blowing the bridges were stationed.

Once they had dropped their bombs they zoomed up over the bridges and away.

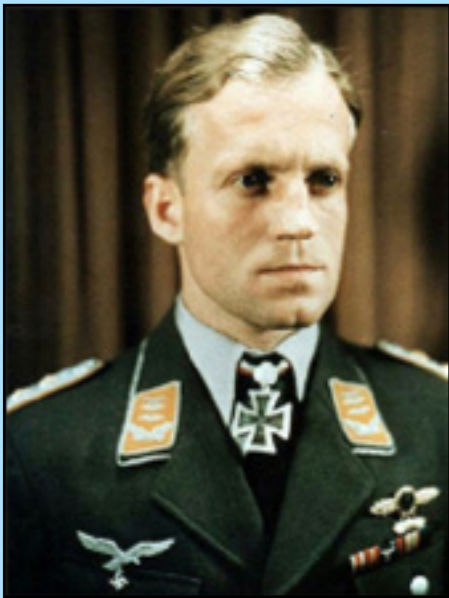
The bombs exploded in a flat crackle of blasts. Flames illuminated the darkness, exposing the gaunt under-structures of the bridges into spectral relief against the sky.

In a few seconds it was all over, leaving the surrounding countryside in silence. Then men began to cry out in alarm. Somewhere a dog began to bark. A whistle sounded. There was the crackle of flames as some buildings on the shore caught fire.

The Stukas climbed above the cloud base and turned for home. They were elated. They had just successfully completed the first mission of the war.

While the Stukas had succeeded in severing the leads to the detonators, what they didn't know was that, even now, the Poles were putting in fresh lead with which they would destroy one the bridges before the German armoured train arrived.

German engineers were forced to build a pontoon bridge across the river.



Bruno Dilley was born on 29 August 1913. He joined the Luftwaffe as a lieutenant in 1935 and on 1 June 1938 he was promoted to squadron commander.

During World War II he fought in Poland, Norway, France, the Battle of Britain, the Balkans, Africa, and the Eastern Front.

He was shot down four times, managing to escape each time. He flew nearly 700 combat missions and was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with oak leaves.

After the war he joined the Bundeswehr and finished his career as a Lt Colonel. He died on 31 August 1968.



Bush War Books has probably one of the finest collections of military titles available. Especially on the South African Border War.

Click [here](#) to visit their website.



HELD UP: One of the bridges across the Vistula was destroyed, the other damaged. German engineers had to build a pontoon bridge.



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



*Armed with his sunglasses, flip-flops and plenty of Factor 50+ sunscreen, **MATT O'BRIEN** is off to Syria. An already complicated situation is about to get even more complex.*

This is a game that has caused quite a bit of controversy. Mainly because it's a game about a war that is still going on. Some people have described the game as nothing more than Russian propaganda (as opposed to games that are American propaganda).

Controversy aside, Syrian Warfare is not a bad game at all.

This game does not claim to be a history lesson, but it shows the course of the war in all its seriousness through the major milestones, from the first days till the latest important victories over terror.

Syrian Warfare is a real time strategy game with a high degree of realism. This game is not about a base construction or units production.

The player will have to determine their forces characteristics before they go into action. And during the mission, they would be able to select reinforcements in order to support the troopers.

The troops and machinery crews move from mission to mission and gain experience, which helps them increase their effectiveness.

Trophies captured by the player on the battlefield can be used throughout the whole campaign.

Importantly enough, there are no "life bars" for vehicles in the

game.

Damages are calculated by taking into account the protection module and the power of adverse factors. Inflicted damages affect the functioning of the module.

In the battlefield, it is impossible to repair the armour, but one can repair the modules by using a limited stock of spare parts. Ammunition and fuel are also limited.

A system of high-quality physical demolition of buildings and other objects is used in the game (it does not only look spectacular, but it has a serious influence on the tactics during the missions, especially in urban areas).

The game has a wide set of tactical possibilities: The storming of buildings, usage of smokescreens, infantry lift by helicopters and APC/IFV, air strike calls, capturing of trophy weapons and equipment, usage of heat flares and active defence complexes.

And of course the story itself. It attempts to show the conflict, not from a point of view of a general, located somewhere at the 'top'.

No, it's a story of a man, who lived in the country that descended into hell. A story of struggle, loss and regained hope.

As I mentioned earlier, this game has a high degree of realism. In many RTS games I've played I found the AI (Artificial Intelligence) to be predictable and often just plain dumb. This is not the case with Syrian Warfare.

The AI will adopt their tactics to yours and if you're not careful you will find yourself cut to pieces.

The game can be played on normal, realistic or Ironman difficulty. I started the game on normal difficulty and soon discovered that it was anything but easy. A word of warning - save the game often.

You start the game as a Syrian police officer fighting against ISIS. Your commander has been killed and you are left to defend your town and the police station.

Later on in the game you get access to more specialised units and vehicles and tanks, as well as helicopters and air strikes.

The environment is destructable and this means buildings and structures can be damaged and even collapse. Not only can this completely change the shape of the battlefield, it also offers good cover to infantry.

One of the things that I like is the fact that your troops and vehicle crews gain experience as they take part in combat and



missions. This is valuable because it means that they react better, become more accurate, and have higher morale.

You will need to use the right troops for a mission. If they enemy is holed up in a building, use assault troops to clear it. They are armed with assault rifles and grenades and are better suited to the task than any other type of unit.

Troops armed with RPGs are your best bet for dealing with enemy vehicles and armour. Yet you have to be sure that they are within range. Otherwise you won't cause any damage and all you will achieve is to reveal your position to the enemy.

Most troops will be able to carry out repairs on vehicles such as cars and trucks. Yet if a tank is damaged, only the crew are able to carry out repairs.

You can commandeer supply trucks and fuel trucks. This is vital because troops will need ammunition and combat vehi-

cles, including tanks, will need both fuel and ammunition.

The game is not perfect by any means and there are a few annoying bugs. Hopefully this will be sorted out by Cats Who Play, the developers of the game.

There are also two DLCs available for Syrian Warfare. Return to Palmrya is a single-player campaign that covers the events between December 2016 and March 2017, when the ancient city of Palmrya was once again captured by the terrorists.

As the Syrian forces you will have to defend the city and then, after being surrounded, fight your way to the T4 air base and defend that position.

Finally you and your allies, including the Russian Air Force, will have to retake the city. The DLC costs R99.00.

Syrian Warfare: Battlefields comes with a few new mission, but it is mainly a game editor.

This allows you to create your own scenarios and even share them on the Steam Workshop. It only costs R27.00.

As I said earlier, this is not a bad game. It is often on special on Steam and I managed to get Syrian Warfare and both DLCs for just R82.00.



Publisher - Cats Who Play

Genre - RTS

Score - 7.5/10

Price - R99.00 (on Steam)



Movie Review

Downfall

Released: 2004
Running time: 155 minutes
Directed by: Oliver Hirschbiegel
Film is in German with English sub-titles

Downfall (*Der Untergang*) is a 2004 German-language historical war drama film directed by Oliver Hirschbiegel from a screenplay by its producer, Bernd Eichinger. It is set during the Battle of Berlin in World War II, when Nazi Germany is on the verge of defeat, and depicts the final days of Adolf Hitler (brilliantly portrayed by Bruno Ganz).

As the film is set in and around the *Führerbunker*, Hirschbiegel used eyewitness accounts, survivors' memoirs, and other historical sources during production to reconstruct the look and atmosphere of 1940s Berlin. The screenplay was based on the books *Inside Hitler's Bunker* by historian Joachim Fest and *Until the Final Hour* by Traudl Junge, one of Hitler's secretaries, among other accounts of the period.

In November 1942, at the Wolf's Lair in East Prussia, Fuhrer of Nazi Germany Adolf Hitler invites a number of young women to interview for the position of his personal secretary. Traudl Junge (Alexandra Maria Lara) is overjoyed when he chooses her. Three years later, the Red Army has pushed Germany's forces back and surrounded Berlin.

On Hitler's 56th birthday, the Red Army begins shelling Berlin's city centre. Reichsführ-

er-SS Heinrich Himmler (Ulrich Noethen) tries to persuade Hitler to leave Berlin, but Hitler refuses. Himmler leaves to negotiate terms with the Western Allies in secret.

Later, Himmler's adjutant Hermann Fegelein also attempts to persuade Hitler to flee, but Hitler insists that he will win or die in Berlin.

At a meeting in the *Führerbunker*, Hitler forbids the overwhelmed 9th Army from retreating, instead ordering SS commander Felix Steiner's units to mount a counter-attack. The generals find the orders impossible and irrational.

In his office, Hitler talks to Minister of Armaments Albert Speer about his scorched earth policy. Speer is concerned about the destruction of Germany's infrastructure, but Hitler believes the German people left behind are weak and thus deserve death.

On the battlefield, General Helmuth Weidling is informed he will be executed for allegedly ordering a retreat. Weidling comes to the *Führerbunker* to clear himself of his charges. His action impresses Hitler, who promotes him to oversee all of Berlin's defences.

At another meeting, Hitler learns Steiner did not attack because his unit lacked sufficient force. Hitler becomes enraged at what he sees as an act

of betrayal and launches into a furious tirade, shouting that everyone has failed him and denouncing his generals as cowards and traitors. He finally acknowledges that the war is lost, but that he would rather commit suicide than leave Berlin.

Hitler continues to imagine fantastic ways for Germany to turn the tide.

This is an excellent movie and one well worth watching. The good news is that you can find the entire movie for free on YouTube. Just do a search for 'Downfall' and you can either watch in on YouTube or download it.



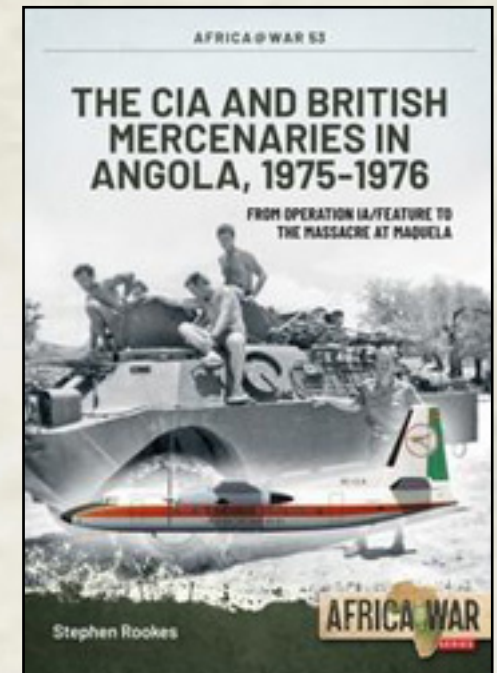
Click on the poster to watch a trailer of the film.

Book Review

The CIA and British Mercenaries in Angola, 1975 - 1976

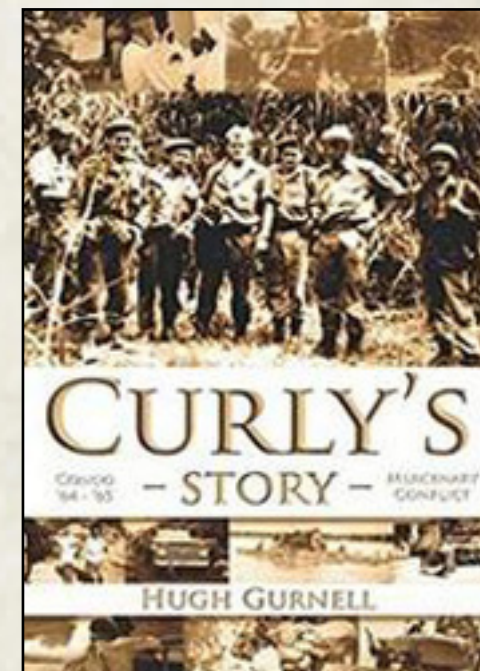
The 1974 Carnation Revolution came as a blessing for independence movements in Portugal's African colonies: Angola, Mozambique and Portuguese Guinea. As had been the case in a number of sub-Saharan countries suddenly finding themselves free of the colonial yoke, the political vacuum left behind by a previously omnipresent power gave different factions the opportunity to impose their own form of rule. Angola was no different: civil war broke out in 1975 and was to last until 2002. In some ways the Angolan civil war bore similarities to the one which had taken place in neighbouring DRC. Too much was at stake for the West not to intervene in some shape

or form and in July 1975 President Ford authorised the CIA to provide covert assistance to the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). With South Africa providing military support against a Cuban-backed Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), another south-western African nation became the battleground for a war of ideologies. In 1975-1976, no fewer than nine different armed forces were involved in the fighting. In addition, a large group of British mercenaries were recruited to train FNLA soldiers. The role of these soldiers of fortune would end in ignominy, death



and legislative changes intended to rid mercenaries from conflict forever.

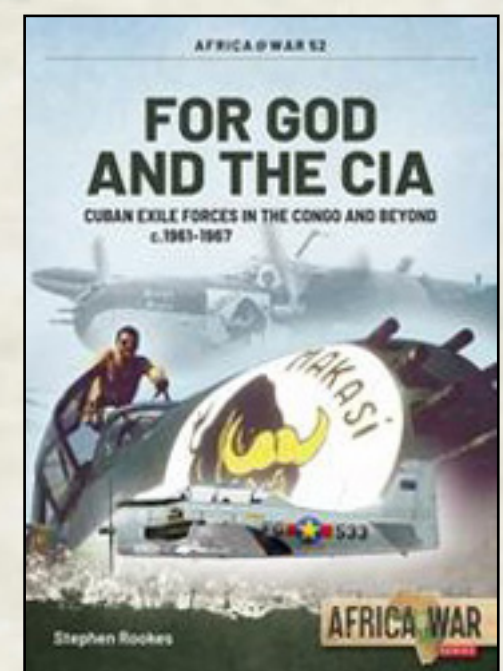
R395.00



Curly's Story
R375



Panzer Ace
R600



For God and the CIA
R395

All books are available from [Bush War Books](#)

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

1 January

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

and the rationalisation process of the Department of Defence, becomes effective.

- **1992** - Rifleman Paulus Malesela Matlakala from 116 Battalion was Killed in Action when he was shot dead by persons unknown while on guard duty at Messina. He was 24.
- **1994** - Rifleman Bernard Maditsi Lekalakala from 115 Battalion was Killed in Action when he was shot dead by persons unknown while manning a road block at Vosloorus. He was 20.
- **2008** - The last German veteran of WWI, Erich Kaestner, dies at the age of 107.

2 January

- **1776** - The four corner stones of the castle (Kasteel de Goede Hoop) at the Cape are laid by Zacharias Wagenaer, Johan van Arckel, Gabbema and Lacus.
- **1837** - Voortrekker leaders Andries Hendrik Potgieter and Gerrit (Gert) Maritz, each with his own men, leave for Western Transvaal to punish Mzilikazi for the Ndebele attack on the Voortrekkers at Vechtkop (Vegkop).
- **1883** - Battle of Boschberg during the Mapoch War takes place.
- **1896** - Sir Leander Starr Jameson and about 500 Rhodesian police surrender at Doornkop, near Krugersdorp, after the failure of the Jameson Raid.
- **1904** - Draft dodger and radical socialist Benito Mussolini reports for conscription into the Italian Army under an amnesty.
- **1905** - The Russians surrendered to the Japanese after the Battle of Port Arthur during the Russian-Japanese War.
- **1933** - US Marines withdraw from Nicaragua after a 20 year occupation.
- **1942** - During World War II in the Pacific, the Japanese captured the Philippines capital of Manila and the nearby air base at Cavite.
- **1942** - German troops in Bardia surrender.
- **1944** - New Guinea: Allies land on Saidor, isolating 12,000 Japanese troops.
- **1945** - US Navy convoys depart Leyte to invade Luzon, while beating off Kamikaze.
- **1945** - Admiral Sir Bertram Home Ramsay, mastermind of Dunkirk, dies at the age of 61.
- **1967** - Operation Bolo: In the largest air combat action of the Vietnam War, 28 F-4C Phantoms engage 9 MiG-21s; US aircraft down 7-9 MiGs with no loss.
- **1977** - Sergeant A.D.B. Bernardo from 31 Battalion SWATF was killed after being struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge from a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 32.
- **1981** - Rifleman Jose Joao

from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion during counter-insurgency operations in Southern Angola. He was 21.

- **1984** - Rifleman Petrus Daniel from 101 Battalion SWATF accidentally drowned during a river crossing in the Operational Area. He was 22.
- **1984** - Major-General Muhammadu Buhari is declared Head of State in Nigeria, following a military coup.
- **1988** - Major General Bantu Holomisa, who became head of a military state in Transkei after a coup in December 1987, lifts martial law and reinstates part of the constitution.
- **1988** - Right-wing guerrillas ambush a train near Mozambique's western border, killing at least twenty-two people and injuring seventy-one.
- **2001** - Richard Winters, who led "The Band of Brothers", Company E, 506th Parachute Infantry, dies 19 days short of his 93rd birthday.



Ian Fleming

3 January

- **1926** - Mussolini assumes the Ministries of War, Navy, & Air.
- **1931** - Joseph "Papa" Joffre, Marshal of France, dies aged 78.
- **1935** - Ethiopia asks League of Nations to guarantee peace with Italy.
- **1941** - World War 2: North Africa. Australian troops take 5,000 prisoners during a major assault on Italian forces at Bardia.
- **1946** - An Englishman known during World War II as "Lord Haw Haw" (William Joyce) was hanged for treason in London. Joyce had broadcast Nazi propaganda via radio from Germany to Britain during the war.
- **1976** - 2nd Lieutenant Daryl Quinton Brandon from 5 SAI Died of Wounds during Ops Savannah while leading a patrol in a contact against a numerically superior enemy force in Central Angola approximately 30km North of Cela. He was 19.
- **1984** - Corporal Adelino Aurelio from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 29.
- **1989** - Lance Corporal Khazamula Obed Mathebula from 907 Special Services Company stationed at Arton Villa, Messina (Soutpanberg Military Area) was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned during an armed patrol between Masisi and Mabelikwe just outside the Western border of the Kruger National Park. He was 28.
- **1990** - Manuel Noriega, the deposed leader of Panama, surrendered to American authorities on charges of drug trafficking after spending 10 days hiding in the Vatican embassy following the U.S. invasion of Panama.
- **1993** - President George Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed the Start-II (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) Treaty, eliminating about two-thirds of each country's long range nuclear weapons.

4 January

- **1943** - Japanese GHQ orders the evacuation of Guadalcanal.
- **1944** - Operation Carpetbagger begins, the Allied campaign to airdrop arms and supplies to the Resistance in Europe.
- **1945** - Luzon: 3rd Fleet hit by kamikaze, USS 'Ommaney Bay' (CVE-79) is lost.
- **1951** - Chinese and North Korean forces capture Seoul.
- **1966** - Lieutenant-Colonel Sangoulé Lamizana deposes President Maurice Yaméogo of Burkina Faso in a military coup.
- **1976** - Four members of the SADF were killed during Ops Savannah when an Aérospatiale SA 330C Puma Helicopter from 19 Squadron that was flying Staff Officers between Mussende & Carriango in Central Angola, was mistaken for a hostile enemy helicopter and shot down by friendly 20mm anti-aircraft gun fire. The casualties were: Brigadier Johan Diederik Potgieter SM (40). Captain Ferdinand Immelman (30). Captain Constant Daniel de Wit (26). Sergeant George William Kellet (26).
- **1976** - Rifleman Pieter Willem Marais Snyman from 5 SAI, part of Battle Group Orange, Died of wounds received when an enemy hand grenade exploded in his position near Dondo in Central Angola during an attack by MPLA and Cuban Forces. He was evacuated by helicopter with other wounded, to Silva Porta, but succumbed to his wounds en-route. He was 18.
- **1978** - Two members from 1 and 5 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action during counter-insurgency operations in Mocambique as part of Operation Melon (SADF Name (Operation Acrobat). They were attached to "D" Squadron Rhodesian Special Air Service when their patrol walked into 30-man strong Frelimo ambush in the Gaza Province of Mozambique. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Cecil Ian Mennicke (24). Lance Corporal Christiaan Louis De Wilzem (20).
- **1984** - Six Members from

- 4 SAI were Killed in action when their Ratel 20, Call-sign 13B was knocked out near Cuvelai by a 100mm High Explosive Soviet T-55 tank projectile during Ops Askari. They were: Lance Corporal Wouter Theron Steenkamp (19). Rifleman George Alexander Lennox (19). Rifleman Brian Geen (18). Rifleman Hendrik Andre Heyns (22). Rifleman Daniel Abraham Louw (19). Rifleman Johannes Lodewicus Pretorius (18).
- **1981** - Corporal Gerald Christian Gildenhuys from the Technical Service Corps, was found gassed in his private motor vehicle in Bellville. No foul play was suspected. He was 27.
- **1984** - Two Members from 4 SAI, Ratel 12A (Platoon Two) were Killed in action during fierce close-quarter fighting while clearing enemy trenches near Cuvelai during Ops Askari.
- **1989** - Airman Johan Nel from the Test Flight Development Centre was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 18.
- **1989** - Second Gulf of Sidra Incident: two US Navy F-14s down two Libyan MiG-23s.
- **2010** - Tsutomu Yamaguchi, who survived both the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, dies at the age of 93.

5 January

- **1919** - The German Workers' Party (Deutsche Arbeiterpartei) was founded by Anton Drexler in Munich.

- **1920** - Adolf Hitler became member No. 7 and changed the name in April of 1920 to the National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei) commonly shortened to Nazi or Nazi Party.
- **1968** - Lt Clarence W. Cote becomes the first male officer in the Navy Nurse Corps.
- **1978** - Corporal Gert Jacobus Erasmus Goosen from 11 Technical Stores Depot was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident while on his way to Groote Schuur Hospital in Cape Town. He was 27.
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Pieter Swanepoel from the SWA SPES Bike Squad was Killed in Action in Northern Owamboland when his motorcycle detonated a boosted Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese Mine. He was 19.
- **1982** - Three members from 19 & 31 Squadron were Killed in Action when their Aérospatiale SA330H Puma was shot down by hostile small-arms fire not long after crossing the cut-line into Southern Angola en-route to Ongiva after dropping off troops. They were: Captain John Allen Robinson (27). Lieutenant Michael John Earp (26). Flight Sergeant Kenneth George Dalgleish

(26).

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



William Joyce

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

- **1987** - Special Sergeant Uatuapeke Kandji from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 29
- **1988** - Lance Corporal John Adam Lotriet from 10 Armoured Car Squadron was killed in Northern Owamboland after being struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle. He was 19.
- **1989** - The ANC agrees to close its military training base in Angola and in return South Africa must stop aid to the rebel Angolan UNITA movement, the Angolan president, Jose Eduardo dos Santos says in an interview.

6 January

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

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

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

wounds on the 7th and 8th January respectively.

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

7 January

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

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

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

1983. He was 28.

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

8 January

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

Bernard Montgomery



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

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

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

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

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

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

9 January

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

Piet Retief was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near Eenhana. He was 26.

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

of civil war.

10 January

- **1806** - Signing of the second and final surrender of the Cape to the British under Gen. David Baird at Papendorp (presently Woodstock) after the defeat of Gen. J.W. Janssens.
- **1879** - British troops enter Zululand and the Anglo-Zulu war starts.
- **1879** - The 22-year-old Prince Imperial of France, Eugene Louis Jean Joseph Napoleon, who studied in England at the Royal Military Academy and joined the British forces, was killed in the Anglo-Zulu War.
- **1900** - Lord Frederick S. Roberts arrives at the Cape, replacing Sir Redvers Buller as commander-in-chief of the British forces in South Africa. Herbert H. Kitchenier as his chief-of-staff accompanies him.
- **1942** - Heinz Hitler (19), nephew of Adolf Hitler, is captured on the Eastern Front while serving as an NCO in the 23rd Artillery; dies in a Soviet POW camp.
- **1943** - Guadalcanal: U.S. forces begin a general offensive to eliminate Japanese.
- **1946** - The League of Nations dissolves after twenty-six years and is replaced by the United Nations, with its first meeting in London.

- **1965** - Sirr al-Khatim al-Khalifa, the Sudanese prime minister, admits to providing aid to Congolese rebels.
- **1972** - 2nd Lieutenant Johannes Daniel Burger from 6 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard, Serial No. 7034 crashed near George during a routine cross-country and tactical navigation flight. He was 22.
- **1976** - Rifleman Andries Jacobus Rautenbach from 8 SAI was killed when struck by a bullet as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle while he was stationed at Rundu. He was 18.
- **1981** - Mozambique and Zimbabwe sign a defence and security agreement under which an attack by SA on either country will be taken as an assault on both.
- **1982** - Rifleman Abel Albertus van Wyk from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed instantly after being struck



Jonas Savimbi

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

11 January

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

Malonga (35).

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

12 January

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

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

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

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

13 January

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

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

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

14 January

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

Dan Pienaar

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

15 January

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



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

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

16 January

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

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

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

age of 91.

17 January

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

H-bomb into the Atlantic.

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

and Mosita. He was 17.

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

18 January

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



Hiroo Onoda

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

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

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

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

19 January

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

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

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

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

20 January

- **1835** - Xhosa warriors overrun the Eastern Cape frontier.
- **1879** - British troops under Lord Chelmsford pitch their camp on the slopes of Isandhlawana, where Zulu warriors attack them two days later.
- **1900** - In the Battle of Tabanyama, Natal front, a group of Indian stretcher bearers, among whom the young Durban attorney Mohandas Ghandi, becomes intermingled with fighting troops. Six of them are killed and twelve wounded in the crossfire. The battle continued two more days.
- **1942** - During the Holocaust, Reinhard Heydrich, Himmler's second in command of the SS, convened the Wannsee Conference in Berlin with 15 top Nazi bureaucrats to coordinate the Final Solution (Endlösung) in which the Nazis would attempt to exterminate the entire Jewish population of Europe, an estimated 11 million persons.
- **1944** - Burma: Allies prepare major offensive to open the "Burma Road".
- **1944** - The Royal Air Force drops 2,500 tons of bombs on Berlin.
- **1951** - Fort Klapperkop and Fort Skanskop, Pretoria, are

opened to the public.

- **1964** - Army mutiny in Tanganyika over pay is put down with British assistance.
- **1965** - It is reported in London that the British government will not issue a permit for the export of the ground-to-air missiles South Africa requires.
- **1979** - Trooper Gregory Ernst Raaff from 1 Special Service Battalion died of injuries at Oshakati Hospital after being accidentally crushed between two vehicles at Ruacana. He was 20.
- **1981** - Corporal Donald Brooks from 3 SAI Died of Wounds received in action on 03 December 1980 when his company was based at Ondangwa. He was 19.
- **1982** - Three members from 1 Special Service Battalion, two of them twin brothers, were Killed in Action in Northern Owamboland during Ops Handsak while working with elements of 32 Battalion. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Ockert Petrus Kruger (18). Lance Corporal Pieter Kruger (18). Trooper Herman Fourie (19).
- **1983** - Two members from the Soutpansberg Military Area were Killed in a military vehicle accident on the Malala Drift Road about

46km from Messina. They were: Lance Corporal Japie Louis Nel (20). Rifleman Lovemore Phakati (22).

- **1986** - Rifleman R.M. Kröhne from 102 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1987** - Rifleman P Rutjindo from 102 Battalion SWATF died in Hospital from Malaria contracted during operations in Southern Angola. He was 20.
- **1989** - Two members from Regiment Hillcrest were killed in a military vehicle accident. They were: Sergeant Anton Bela van der Merwe (23). Corporal Cornelius Johannes Stroebel (27).
- **1991** - During an Iraqi SCUD attack on Israel, US Patriot missiles are used for the first time, with mixed success.

21 January

- **1824** - American Civil War Confederate Army Gener-

Reinhard Heydrich



al "Stonewall" Jackson was born on this day.

- **1942** - Rommel begins a new offensive against the Allies in North Africa, hoping to push them back to the east.
- **1943** - Soviet forces recapture Worosjilowsk.
- **1945** - The Red Army destroys the German Tannenberg monument in East Prussia.
- **1954** - The USS Nautilus, the world's first nuclear powered submarine, was launched at Groton, Connecticut.
- **1968** - B-52 bomber with nuclear weapons crashes in Greenland.
- **1968** - Battle of Khe Sanh begins.
- **1977** - Two members from 3 SAI and one member from 13 Maintenance Unit were killed in a military vehicle accident at Tobias. They were: Lance Corporal Leon Steyn (19). Rifleman Jacobus Marais (19). Rifleman Ettienne Pieter van der Westhuizen (20).
- **1977** - Private Stephen Trevor Parvess from 1 Maintenance Unit Collapsed and died from heat exhaustion during Basic Training at Potchefstroom. He was 18.
- **1978** - Corporal Andre van den Boogaard from the SADF Equestrian Centre was killed in a military vehicle accident on the Ventersdorp Road. He was 18,
- **1983** - Lieutenant Frederick Christiaan van Zyl from 8

SAI accidentally drowned in the Orange River while trying to assist three soldiers who had got into difficulties while swimming. He was 21.

- **1986** - Rifleman Joshua Isaac Kuviri from 102 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 20.
- **1988** - According to Jane's Defence Weekly, Armscor, the South African armaments producer, is the country's largest single exporter. Armscor sales to twenty-three countries in 1987 amounted to R1,8-billion.
- **1988** - According to reports from Angola, the strategic town of Cuito Cuanavale is about to fall to an onslaught by South African and UNITA forces. The reports say South African and Cuban troops have clashed for the first time in twelve years.

22 January

- **1879** - Cetewayo's impi wipe out British troops at Isandhlwana in one of the worst disasters in British military history, stabbing 1272 soldiers to death. The impi of the Zulu king then descend on the trading post at Rorke's Drift. About 4000 Zulus attack the fortified buildings held by 130 men of the 24th regiment at about 4.30 p.m. At the end of the attack at about 4 a.m. early the next morning, more than 350 Zulus are killed,

while the defenders' casualties amount to seventeen dead and ten wounded. A record eleven Victoria Crosses were awarded to the defenders of Rorke's Drift.

- **1879** - The British (no 1) supply column moving up the North Coast towards Eshowe is attacked by about 5000 Zulus as they cross the Nyezane River. The attack is beaten off south of Eshowe, north of the Nyezane river.
- **1941** - The Australian 6th Division captures Tobruk from the Italians.
- **1943** - Axis forces pull out of Tripoli and head back towards Tunisia.
- **1943** - During World War II in the Pacific, Japanese resistance ended in New Guinea, resulting in the first land victory of the war for Allied forces.
- **1944** - Operation Shingle: Allies land at Anzio.
- **1957** - Israeli forces withdraw from the Sinai Peninsula.
- **1981** - Rifleman Marthinus Christoffel Barnard from Infantry School suffered a fatal heart attack and died at Oudtshoorn while lifting weights in the Infantry School gymnasium. He was 21.
- **1983** - Leading Marine Hendrik Jacobus Kemp from 111 Harbour Protection Unit, South African Marine Corps was Killed in Action when his Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a double boosted Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese

mine in Southern Angola near the Cut-line. He was 20.

- **1983** - Staff Sergeant Hermanus Jacobus Petrus Barkhuizen from the Technical Service Corps died in 1 Military Hospital in Pretoria after suffering a fatal heart attack at his Unit. He was 33.
- **1984** - Corporal Terence van den Dool from 3 SAI was Reported Missing while swimming with his friends at Hippo Pools, Ruacana. For administrative purposes, he was officially declared dead in 1986. He was 19.
- **1987** - Two members from 1 SWA Engineer Regiment SWATF were Killed in Action when their Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a double boosted Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese Mine on the Euppa Road in Southern Angola. They were: Corporal Jose Miguel Rodrigues Carreira (20). Lance Corporal Nicolaas Willem Barnard (20).
- **2005** - Carlo Orelli, last Italian combat veteran to have served throughout WW I, dies at the age of 110.

23 January

- **1900** - Battle of Spion Kop: Boers defeat the British; Winston Churchill & Mohandas Gandhi are both present, but do not meet.
- **1932** - El Salvador's army kills 4,000 protesting farmers
- **1935** - Abyssinian tribesmen in Somaliland massacre

French colonial troops.

- **1903** - Colonel Arthur Alfred Lynch is found guilty of high treason and sentenced to death for leading the "Irish Commando" against British forces in the South African War. The death sentence is commuted to life imprisonment on 24th January 1904.
- **1943** - In North Africa, British forces under General Bernard Montgomery captured Tripoli in Libya.
- **1943** - Casablanca Conference: FDR & Churchill agree on the "unconditional surrender" of the Axis.
- **1962** - Kim Philby, long-term spy in Britain, defects to the USSR.
- **1968** - The American ship USS Pueblo was seized by North Koreans in the Sea of Japan amid claims the Navy ship was spying. The ship was confiscated and its crew held in captivity until December, with one fatality.
- **1971** - After a compromise is reached at a Commonwealth Conference, Britain is allowed to sell weapons to South Africa, though African leaders oppose the step.
- **1981** - Rifleman Aubrey John Botha from 11 Commando Regiment died from gunshot wounds accidentally sustained while on special duty at Umtata. He was 19.
- **1981** - Rifleman Dieter Otto Haase from the South West

Africa Infantry Battalion SWATF was killed in a private motor vehicle accident. He was 20.

- **1982** - Private (Miss) Karen Mona van Rensburg from the Administrative Service Corps was killed in a private motor vehicle accident in Voortrekkerhoogte while on official duty. She was 19.
- **1984** - Corporal Johannes Hendrik Roets from 4 SAI was Killed in Action when his Buffel Troop Carrier detonated a landmine at Techamutete in Southern Angola during Ops Askari. He was 19.
- **1986** - Rifleman Deon Francis Du Toit from 3 SAI was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 19.
- **1987** - Corporal Marthinus Petrus van Loggerenberg from 4 SAI died from injuries received when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in the Kabokweni Township near Nelspruit during anti-riot patrol duties. He was 19.
- **1988** - Four members from

Kim Philby



54 Battalion were Killed in Action during a fierce engagement with a numerically superior force of FAPLA and SWAPO/PLAN troops in South Eastern Angola. The casualties were: Corporal Dawid Petersen (22). Rifleman Joseph Brian Harker (25). Rifleman Phillip Dawid Matroos (22). Rifleman Alfred Snyders (23).

- **1989** - Seaman (Marine) P. Thangavalu from the South African Marines was killed instantly as a result of a gunshot wound to the head, accidentally self-inflicted shortly after he returned to the Marine Base at Wenela after completing a Patrol. He was 19.
- **1991** - Rifleman Fanie Johan Jeneke from the South African Cape Corps was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Scottburgh. He was 18.

24 January

- **1891** - Capain. Kurt von Francois arrives as leader of a small German regiment in South West Africa to suppress the Herero rebellion.
- **1891** - Walter Model, German Field Marshal, is born on this day.
- **1900** - The British, under General Warren, surrenders to General Botha at Spioenkop. At least 1,000 British and sixty Boer soldiers die in this battle.
- **1901** - Emily Hobhouse, English nurse who visited

the Transvaal and Orange Free Sate Republics during the South African War, reports that she found 2,000 women and children in shocking circumstances in the concentration camp at Bloemfontein.

- **1915** - Battle of Dogger Bank: Royal Navy defeats the Germans in the North Sea.
- **1923** - The Italian Air Force was formed as the as the Regia Aerea.
- **1941** - British troops invade Italian East Africa.
- **1961** - A B-52 breaks up over the North Carolina coast, losing two H-bombs, one of which is still missing.
- **1964** - British troops are flown in to Uganda to suppress an army mutiny over low pay.
- **1965** - Winston Spencer Churchill, British Prime Minister during World War II, dies at the age of 88.
- **1978** - Private Cornelius Jacobus Borchardt from the Administrative Service Corps was killed in a military vehicle accident, at Otjiwarongo. He was 23.
- **1979** - Rifleman Gerald Wayne Williams from 6 SAI accidentally drowned during a training exercise at the Base. He was 22.
- **1981** - Trooper Eugene Margo Nel from 4 Vehicle Reserve Park was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Kroonstad. He was 19.
- **1984** - Corporal Dawid

Lambert van Niekerk from Regiment De Wet was killed instantly after being struck by lightning during a thunderstorm while in the field. He was 25.

- **1985** - Corporal Jacobus Petrus Hall from 1 Parachute Battalion was accidentally shot dead by a fellow soldier who was on guard duty while the patrol was in a TB for the night North of Okankolo. He was 19.
- **1985** - Rifleman Saul Frederick de Kock from the South African Cape Corps was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned during a follow-up operation against SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola. He was 26.
- **1985** - Rifleman J.H. Filipus from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents. He was 22.
- **1987** - Rifleman William Viljoen from 8 SAI was accidentally killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned after losing a front wheel 3km South of Ondangwa. He was thrown out of the vehicle which then rolled over him. He was 20.
- **1988** - Sergeant Ockert Barendse from the School of Artillery accidentally drowned in Potchefstroom. He was 28.
- **1986** - Guerrillas advance into Ugandan capital of Kampala as army opposition crumbles, pushing mil-

itary government to edge of collapse.

- **1991** - US Navy helicopters liberate Kuwaiti offshore oil rigs from the Iraqis.
- **1993** - Three Somalis are killed and at least five are wounded in clashes with troops of a US-led coalition trying to safeguard efforts to feed the country's starving.

25 January

- **1916** - Montenegro surrenders to Austria-Hungary.
- **1919** - At the end of the war, the Paris Peace Conference accepts the proposal to create the League of Nations. The League was eventually established by Part I of the Treaty of Versailles, which was signed on 28 June 1919.
- **1940** - Nazis decree the establishment of a Jewish ghetto in Lodz Poland.
- **1943** - Guadalcanal: Japanese in full retreat, closely pursued by U.S. forces.
- **1945** - Audie Murphy earns the Medal of Honour.
- **1951** - UN begins counter offensive in Korea.
- **1961** - Military coup in El Salvador.
- **1971** - General Idi Amin Dada takes power in Uganda by military coup while the existing president, Milton Obote, is at a Commonwealth meeting in Singapore.
- **1980** - Three MK operatives entered the Volkskas Bank in Silverton (Silverton Bank Siege) and took 25 members

of Staff and customers hostage. In the ensuing gun battle with Security Police, two civilians were killed, 5 civilians were wounded and all three MK Operatives were shot dead.

- **1981** - Rifleman Stephen Stuart Whittaker from 3 SAI was Reported Missing while hitch hiking back to his Unit in Potchefstroom. He was picked up by a motorist, Mr Pieter Du Plessis and they stopped at the Laingsburg bridge for a travel break. Unfortunately, it was that time when the river came down in flood and they were both washed away. Their bodies were never located and they remain unaccounted for. For administrative, both men were officially declared dead by Judge C.F.W. van Zyl on 03 June 1981. He was 18.
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Patrick Louis Walsh from the Air Force Gymnasium was killed instantly when he was struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle during musketry training at Haakdoringlaagte. He was 20.
- **1983** - Two members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during a Contact with SWAPO/

PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Special Constable T. Matais (33). Special Constable K. Tjimbua (31).

- **1987** - Four members from 101 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action during a fierce engagement with SWAPO/PLAN and FAPLA forces in Southern Angola. During the attack on Mongua, friendly mortar fire fell short of the target and landed on their position. They were: Sergeant Johan Martin (35) Corporal H Alugodhi (24). Rifleman W Shitongeni (26). Rifleman G Shilulu (23).
- **1987** - Sapper T. Seibib from 1 South West Africa Engineer Regiment was Killed in Action in a Landmine explosion in the Kaokoveld. He was 24.
- **1988** - Airman John Hendri Flemming from the Air Force Gymnasium collapsed and died after experiencing respiratory and heart fail-



Winston Churchill

ure during physical training exercises at the Air Force Gymnasium. He was 18.

26 January

- **1880** - General Douglas MacArthur was born on this day.
- **1885** - The Mahdist forces take Khartoum in Sudan after a nine-month siege and slaughter most inhabitants and the British garrison, including General Gordon.
- **1901** - General Christiaan de Wet, accompanied by President M.T. Steyn, starts his journey at Doornberg, near Winburg, to invade the Cape Colony for the second time.
- **1902** - General Ben Viljoen and seven men are ambushed and captured by the British. His pocket book saves his life by warding off a bullet and preventing it to strike his chest.
- **1934** - Nazi Germany and Poland sign ten year non-aggression pact.
- **1939** - Franco's Spanish Nationalists capture Barcelona.
- **1943** - Nazis began using Hitler Youths to operate anti-aircraft batteries in Germany following heavy Allied bombing of Berlin and other cities.
- **1950** - India becomes a republic within the British Commonwealth, converts the Victoria Cross to the Param Vir Chakra, 14 of the 21 awarded have been posthumous.
- **1952** - Egypt is placed under martial law in response to wide-spread riots against the British.
- **1977** - Rifleman Sabino Luciano from 32 Battalion was killed in a shooting incident in the residential camp at Buffalo. He was 25.
- **1977** - Rifleman Isak Nel Myburgh from 6 SAI Died of Wounds received in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1978** - Rifleman Petrus Wilhelmus Prinsloo from Middelburg Commando accidentally drowned in the Assegai River at Amsterdam. He was 20.
- **1980** - 2nd Lieutenant Johannes Lodewicus Buys from 6 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment was killed in a Military Vehicle accident near Grootfontein. He was 22.
- **1980** - Rifleman Hendrik Christoffel Janse van Rensburg from SWA SPES was accidentally shot dead during the night at their TB by a guard who mistook him for a SWAPO/PLAN insurgent. He was 18.
- **1981** - Lance Corporal Jacobus Adriaan Smuts Louw from 1 SAI was killed instantly when he detonated a booby-trapped Yugoslavian TMA-3 Cheese Mine while returning from a patrol on the Cut-line. He was 19.
- **1983** - At a special press conference it is announced that a senior South African

naval officer, commanding Simon's Town dockyard, Commodore Dieter Gerhardt and his wife, have been detained for questioning in connection with alleged espionage.

- **1986** - Two Members from 5 SAI were killed when their Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in wet weather near Nkurenkuru. The casualties were: Corporal Jan Daniel Schmidt (23). Rifleman Johannes Gerhardus Janse van Rensburg (18).
- **1986** - The National Resistance Army takes over the Ugandan capital of Kampala.
- **1991** - Rebels overrun the Somali capital of Mogadishu.
- **1992** - Russia announces it will no longer target US cities with nuclear weapons.
- **1994** - Romania became the first former Cold War foe to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) following the collapse of the Soviet Union.

27 January

- **1859** - German Kaiser Wilhelm II was born on this day.
- **1915** - US Marines begin occupation of Haiti.
- **1943** - SA prime minister, General Jan Smuts, asks parliament's approval to send troops to Europe, contrary to his promise in 1939 that SA troops would only fight in Africa.
- **1943** - The U.S. 8th Air

Force conducted the first all-American bombing raid on Germany as 55 bombers targeted Wilhelmshaven, losing three planes while claiming to have shot down 22 German fighters. The success of this first mission encouraged U.S. military planners to begin regular daylight bombing raids, which eventually resulted in high casualty rates for the American crewmen involved.

- **1944** - Russian Army General Govorov announced the lifting of the Nazi blockade of Leningrad. During the 900-day siege, an estimated one million Russian civilians inside the city died of disease, starvation and relentless German shelling.
- **1944** - U.S. issues a report on "The Bataan Death March".
- **1945** - The Russian Army liberated Auschwitz death camp near Krakow in Poland, where the Nazis had systematically murdered an estimated 2,000,000 persons, including 1,500,000 Jews.
- **1967** - Treaty signed banning military use of nuclear weapons in space.
- **1973** - U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War ended as North Vietnamese and American representatives signed an agreement in Paris.
- **1984** - Corporal Johannes Adam De Beer from 8 SAI was Killed in Action after

stepping on an enemy Anti-Personnel Mine while on Patrol in Southern Angola. He was 19.

- **1984** - Special Constable Paulino Kangombe from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 32.
- **1991** - President Mohamed Siad Barre of Somalia flees the capital, Mogadishu, as a coalition of rebels seize power. The country plunges into virtual anarchy.
- **1996** - Niger's first democratically elected president, Mahamane Ousmane, is ousted in a coup and army Colonel Barre Mainassara Ibrahim takes over as head of state.
- **2002** - Munitions at an army base in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital, explode, sending fireballs and shrapnel into the air and forcing hundreds of area residents to flee. As many as 600 people drown in a canal that blocked their way to safety.

28 January

- **1871** - The Franco-Prussian War ended as Paris surrendered to the Germans after a four month siege.

• **1871** - The British forces are defeated and 83 British soldiers under Sir George Colley are killed and 111 wounded in the battle of Laings Nek in the Anglo-Transvaal War, caused by the refusal of the Transvaal Boers to submit to British authority as proclaimed by Shepstone in 1877.

- **1885** - British relief force reaches Khartoum, and the Sudan is evacuated.
- **1916** - German colony of Cameroon surrenders to Britain & France.
- **1932** - Japanese capture Shanghai.
- **1942** - Five power stations are blown up by pro-Axis saboteurs in an attempt to destabilise the Rand gold mines.
- **1942** - German troops capture Benghazi, Libya.
- **1944** - RAF puts 683 bombers over Berlin.
- **1970** - Cairo suburbs are attacked by Israeli jet fighters.
- **1976** - Rifleman Chris Kruger Moorcroft from 1 Parachute Battalion died from

Jan Smuts



bronchial pneumonia and renal failure in 3 Military Hospital, Bloemfontein. He was 20.

- **1977** - Sergeant Abraham Jacobus Smith from 32 Battalion died from injuries received when a private Piper PA28 Cherokee aircraft in which he was travelling as a passenger, crashed at Grootfontein. He was 34.
- **1978** - Rifleman Domingos Augusto from 32 Battalion was killed instantly from a gunshot wound accidentally self-inflicted during operations in Southern Angola. He was 35.
- **1978** - Corporal Manuel Antonio Infante Ganhão from 1 Reconnaissance Regiment was Killed in Action during an engagement with FRELIMO Troops at a railway siding south of Mapai in Gaza Province, Moçambique during Operation Melon (SADF Name Operation Acrobat). He was 28.
- **1982** - Rifleman Jacobus Frederick De Beer from 61 Base Workshops was critically injured on 25 January 1982 when he accidentally fell off the back of a moving military vehicle. He was evacuated to 1 Military Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries on 28 January 1982. He was 18.
- **1982** - Two members from 5 SAI were Killed in Action near Elundu when their patrol was ambushed by numerically superior force of SWAPO/PLAN insurgents.

The casualties were: Rifleman William Robert Dawson (20). Rifleman Alexander Forbes (19).

- **1983** - Private Peter Alan Beard from the South African Medical Corps Headquarters was killed in a Military Vehicle accident at Mooi River. He was 19.
- **1985** - Sergeant Willem Johan Gouws from Air Force Base Hoedspruit was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Pilgrims Rest. He was 40.
- **1993** - Troops in Zaire run riot, killing the French Ambassador.

29 January

- **1915** - Erwin Rommel is awarded the Iron Cross, First Class, for action in the Argonne.
- **1916** - During World War I, the first aerial bombings of Paris by German Zeppelins took place.
- **1943** - HMNZS 'Kiwi' rams & sinks Japanese sub 'I-1' off Guadalcanal.
- **1944** - Heavy Luftwaffe raid on London.
- **1979** - Rifleman Gary James Rautenbach from 6 SAI Died of Wounds after being critically injured in a landmine explosion at Endobe on the 20 Jan 1979. He succumbed to his wounds in 1 Military Hospital on 29 January 1979. He was 20.
- **1982** - Rifleman George Edmond Jacobson from the Kimberley Regiment

was killed at Katima Mulilo when he was run over by a private civilian vehicle while manning a control check point. He was 22.

- **1987** - Private Charel Andries Fourie from 5 Maintenance Unit was killed in a military vehicle accident at Ogongo. He was 22.
- **1987** - Three members of the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) were killed in a military vehicle accident in Northern Owamboland. They were: Special Sergeant Tulengepo Lungameni (36). Special Sergeant Petrus Pius (35). Constable Willem Christiaan Scheepers (24).
- **1991** - Battle of Khafji, Saudi Arabia: Iraqis capture the town.
- **1993** - French marines land in Kinshasa, Zaire, to free French nationals confined to the embassy.
- **1996** - Two serving members of the army and a third man are arrested in connection with the attack on St James's Church in Cape Town in July 1993.

30 January

- **1882** - Franklin Delano Roosevelt was born on this day.
- **1902** - Anglo-Japanese alliance formed.
- **1911** - The Royal Canadian Navy was founded on this day.
- **1915** - German submarine attack on Le Havre.

- **1930** - Magnus André De Merindol Malan, former Chief of the SADF and SA Minister of Defence, is born in Pretoria on this day.
- **1933** - Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany by President Paul von Hindenburg.
- **1939** - Hitler calls for the extermination of the Jews.
- **1943** - Hitler promotes Friedrich Paulus, commanding the Sixth Army, surrounded at Stalingrad, to field marshal, with a hint that he should commit suicide.
- **1945** - Danzig: Soviet sub sinks German ship 'Wilhelm Gustloff'. More than 7,700 die, making it the worst loss of life in a single sinking in history.
- **1952** - Martial law is imposed in Egypt as King Farouk dismisses the premier Nahas Pasha and his Wafdist government.
- **1964** - Two members from 5 SAI accidentally drowned in a boating accident at Ladysmith. They were: Rifleman Johannes Frederick Kies (19). Rifleman Cornelius Marthinus Du Plooy (19).
- **1964** - Military coup by Gen Nguyen Khanh in South-Vietnam.
- **1968** - Beginning of the Tet Offensive in Vietnam as North Vietnamese troops attacked 36 provincial capitals and 5 major cities in South Vietnam, including an attack on the U.S. Embassy in Saigon and the presidential

palace.

- **1972** - In Londonderry, Northern Ireland, 13 Roman Catholics were killed by British troops during a banned civil rights march. The event became known as Bloody Sunday.
- **1981** - Twenty-four people are killed in Operation Beanbag, an attack by the South African army on the ANC and PAC in Matola, a suburb of Maputo, Mozambique. A Portuguese engineer, Jose Ramos, is "mistakenly identified" as Joe Slovo, one of the raid's main targets, by the South African forces and is shot at a roadblock. Numbers killed vary. Some sources state that twelve were killed and three abducted.
- **1981** - Two members of 6 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action and one Reported Missing during a Special Forces Raid on the African National Congress Headquarters in Maputo, Moçambique during Operation Bean Bag. They were: Sergeant Robert Louis Hutchinson (24). Sergeant Ian Suttill (22). Lance Corporal James King Park (21). The body of Sergeant Robert Louis Hutchinson was never recovered. He has known grave and remains unaccounted for.

- **1983** - Rifleman R.R. Kufuna from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 23.

- **1992** - Argentina allowed access to numerous files of Nazis who had fled to South America from Germany after World War II, thus aiding the hunt for Nazi war criminals.

31 January

- **1901** - Generals Smuts and Liebenberg captures Modderfontein, Transvaal.
- **1915** - Battle of Bolimów: The Germans stage the first major poison gas attack, but the Russians hold.
- **1917** - Germany notifies the US that it will resume unrestricted submarine warfare.
- **1943** - German troops surrendered at Stalingrad, marking the first big defeat of Hitler's armies in World War II. During the Battle of Stalingrad, 160,000 Ger-



Adolf Hitler

mans were killed and 90,000 taken prisoner, including the commander, Friedrich von Paulus, the first German field marshal ever to surrender. The captured Germans were forced to march to Siberia, with few ever returning to Germany.

- **1945** - Eddie Slovik, a 24 year-old U.S. Army private, was executed by a firing squad after being sentenced to death for desertion, the first such occurrence in the U.S. Army since the Civil War.
- **1972** - Military coup ousts civilian government of Ghana.
- **1982** - Sergeant (Mrs) Elizabeth Mostert from the Orange Free State Command Headquarters was killed while on duty in Voortrekkerhoogte, Pretoria when she was accidentally run over by a police vehicle. She was 50.

- **1985** - Sergeant Willem van As from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 27.
- **1985** - Rifleman K.E. Mbambo from 202 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 22.

- **1986** - Commandant Marshall Aubrey Joseph Facer from the Highveld Air Space Control Sector at Devon was killed in a private motor vehicle accident at Delmas. He was 39.
- **1987** - Corporal Charles John Oram from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was killed in a private motor vehicle Accident between Phalaborwa and Hoedspruit. He was 26.
- **1994** - In Mogadishu, US Marines in a convoy carrying American diplomats open fire near a crowded food distribution centre. At least five Somalis are killed and many wounded.



The execution of Private Eddie Slovik.



Hipe Media and Military Despatches would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the South African Signals Association on their 21st Birthday in December 2021.

It has been both an honour and a privilege to be association with you. May you go from strength to strength and we look forward to working with you in the future.



SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

SAAFA is an all-ranks Association formed to perpetuate a tradition of comradeship, knowing no distinction of rank, race, language, gender or creed, which has developed over the years among members of the South African Air Force.

Click on the logo above to visit the SAAFA website



Armed Forces

1. Israeli Army
2. French Navy
3. Indian Air Force
4. South African Defence Force
5. Egyptian Air Force
6. Russian Armed Forces
7. Australian Army
8. Rhodesian Air Force
9. SA Army (SADF)
10. British Armed Forces
11. Italian Army
12. People's Liberation Army (China)
13. South African National Defence Force
14. Armed Forces of the Republic of Argentina
15. Nigerian Army



Useful links

Every month we will be featuring a few useful links to military websites, newsletters and on-line magazines. Stuff that we think our readers will appreciate.

Here are two of our favourites. The first one is Nongqai, the unofficial police newsletter for veterans of the former South African Police Force and for those interested in Police History. The second is Jimmy's Own, the official newsletter of the South African Signals Association. Click on the magazine covers to go to the respective websites.



Springbok



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

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

Memorable Order of Tin Hats

Click on the photograph below to take a virtual tour of Warrior's Gate and find out more about the Memorable Order of Tin Hats.



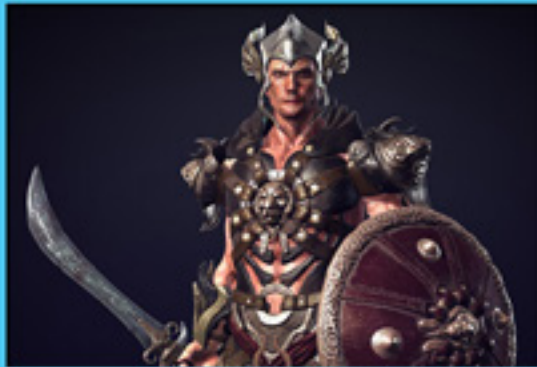
Hipe! media

E-mail
editor@hipe.co.za



Online Magazines

Flip book magazines with pages that can be turned.



E-books

Produced in any electronic format required.



2D & 3D Animation

Produced in any video format.



Video Production

Scripting, storyboard, filming and editing done to any video format required. We also do aerial and underwater video and stills.



Still Photography

If you're thinking digital media then think Hipe Media.