



Military History Anniversaries 15 thru 29 FEB

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

- Feb 15 1898 – A massive explosion of unknown origin sinks the battleship USS *Maine* in Cuba's Havana harbor, killing 260 of the fewer than 400 American crew members aboard.



- Feb 15 1915 – WWI: Singapore. Indian soldiers launch the first large-scale mutiny of WWI. Some 800 soldiers in the Indian army's 5th Light Infantry Brigade broke out of their barracks and killed several British officers before moving on to other areas of the city. By the time the revolt was quashed, several days later, by British, French and Russian troops, the mutineers had killed 39 Europeans—both soldiers and civilians. British soldiers executed 37 of the mutiny's ringleaders by gunfire.
- Feb 15 1917 – WWI: The so-called Zimmermann Telegram, a message from the German foreign secretary, Arthur Zimmermann, to the German ambassador to Mexico proposing a Mexican-German alliance in the case of war between the United States and Germany, is published on the front pages of newspapers across America.
- Feb 15 1941 – WW2: Believing Hitler's boasts that he had already won the war, Bulgaria's King Boris chose to pitch his country's tent on the Axis side of the war by signing the Tripartite Pact.
- Feb 15 1942 – WW2: Fall of Singapore. In one of the greatest defeats in British military history, Britain's supposedly impregnable Singapore fortress surrenders to Japanese forces after a weeklong siege. More than 60,000 British, Australian, and Indian soldiers were taken prisoner, joining 70,000 other Allied soldiers captured during Britain's disastrous defense of the Malay Peninsula.
- Feb 15 1943 – WW2: The Germans break the American Army's lines at the Fanid-Sened Sector in Tunisia, North Africa. Four days of successive defeats cost the American II Corps 12,546 missing, 103 tanks, 280 vehicles, 18 field guns, 3 antitank guns, and one antiaircraft battery.
- Feb 15 1944 – WW2: The Narva 13 day Offensive begins with Soviet Leningrad Front and German army detachment "Narwa" for the strategically important Narva Isthmus
- Feb 15 1944 – WW2: The assault on Monte Cassino, Italy, begins.

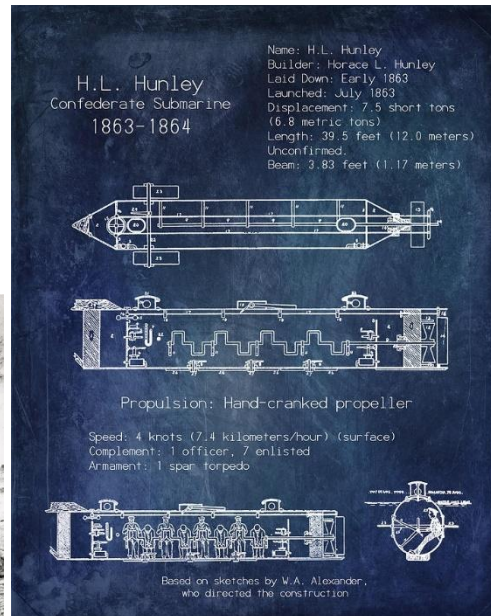
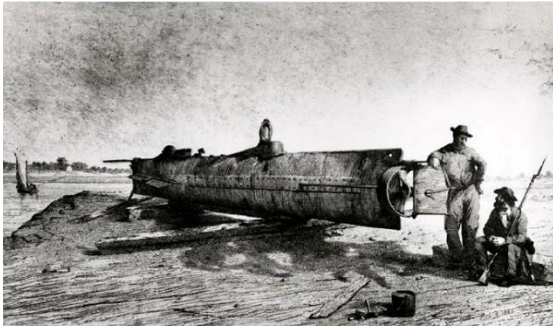


Monte Cassino in ruins

- Feb 15 1945 – WW2: Third day of bombing in Dresden.
- Feb 15 1950 – Cold War: The Soviet Union and the People’s Republic of China, the two largest communist nations in the world, announce the signing of a mutual defense and assistance treaty.
- Feb 15 1954 – Canada and the United States agree to construct the Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line, a system of radar stations in the far northern Arctic regions of Canada and Alaska.
- Feb 15 1965 – Vietnam: Ambassador Maxwell Taylor informs South Vietnamese Premier Phan Huy Quat that the United States is preparing to send 3,500 U.S. Marines to Vietnam to protect the U.S. airbase at Da Nang. Three days later, a formal request was submitted by the U.S. Embassy, asking the South Vietnamese government to “invite” the United States to send the Marines.
- Feb 15 1966 – Vietnam: In response to a letter from Ho Chi Minh asking that French President Charles De Gaulle use his influence to “prevent perfidious new maneuvers” by the United States in Southeast Asia, De Gaulle states that France is willing to do all that it could to end the war.
- Feb 15 1967 – Vietnam: Thirteen U.S. helicopters are shot down in one day in Vietnam.
- Feb 15 1971 – Vietnam: A bomb explodes in the Capitol building in Washington, D.C., causing an estimated \$300,000 in damage but hurting no one. A group calling itself the “Weather Underground” claimed credit for the bombing, which was done in protest of the ongoing U.S.-supported Laos invasion.
- Feb 15 1989 – Afghanistan: The Soviet Union officially announces that all of its troops have left Afghanistan.
- Feb 15 2003 – Iraq War: Protests against the Iraq war take place in over 600 cities worldwide. It is estimated that between 8 million to 30 million people participate, making this the largest peace demonstration in history.
- Feb 16 1776 – American Revolution: Siege of Boston - In advance of the Continental Army’s occupation of Dorchester Heights, Massachusetts, General George Washington orders American artillery forces to begin bombarding Boston from their positions at Lechmere Point, northwest of the city center.
- Feb 16 1778 – American Revolution: Two future presidents of the United States, John Adams and his son, 10-year-old John Quincy Adams, sit in Marblehead Harbor, off the coast of Massachusetts, on board the frigate, Boston, which is to take them to France, where John Adams will replace Silas Deane in Congress’ commission to negotiate a treaty of alliance.
- Feb 16 1804 – United States Navy Lieutenant Stephen Decatur led a successful raid to destroy the captured USS Philadelphia in Tripoli, denying her use to the Barbary States in the First Barbary War.
- Feb 16 1862 – Civil War: The Battle of Fort Donelson ends with the Confederate surrender of Ft. Donelson TN. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's victory earned him the nickname 'Unconditional Surrender Grant'. Casualties and losses: US 2691 - CSA 13,846



- Feb 16 1864 – Civil War: The H.L. Hunley becomes the first submarine to engage and sink a warship, the USS Housatonic.
- Feb 16 1865 – Civil War: Columbia, South Carolina is burned as Confederate forces flee from advancing Union forces.
- Feb 16 1865 – WW2: Norwegian commandos trained by the British Special Operations Executive destroy a factory to prevent the German nuclear energy project from acquiring heavy water.
- Feb 16 1916 – WW1: After five days of intense fighting, the Russian army defeats the Third Turkish Army to capture Erzerum, a largely Armenian city in the Ottoman province of Anatolia.
- Feb 16 1944 – WW2: Operation Hailstone begins. U.S. naval air, surface, and submarine attack against Truk (Chuuk), Japan's main base in the central Pacific, in support of the Eniwetok invasion.
- Feb 16 1945 – WW2: Bataan Recaptured. The Bataan Peninsula in the Philippines is occupied by American troops, almost three years after the devastating and infamous Bataan Death March.
- Feb 16 1951 – Cold War: In a statement focusing on the situation in Korea, Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin charges that the United Nations has become “a weapon of aggressive war.” He also suggested that although a world war was not inevitable “at the present time,” “warmongers” in the West might trigger such a conflict.
- Feb 16 1960 – The U.S. Navy submarine USS Triton begins Operation Sandblast, setting sail from New London, Connecticut, to begin the first submerged circumnavigation of the globe.
- Feb 16 1968 – Vietnam: U.S. officials report that, in addition to the 800,000 people listed as refugees prior to January 30, the fighting during the Tet Offensive has created 350,000 new refugees.
- Feb 16 2006 – The last Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) is decommissioned by the United States Army.
- Feb 17 1782 – American Revolution: The worldwide implications of the American War for Independence are made clear on this day as the American-allied French navy begins a 14-month-long series of five battles with the British navy in the Indian Ocean.
- Feb 17 1864 – Civil War: The Confederate H.L. Hunley in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina becomes the first submarine to engage and sink a warship, the USS Housatonic.



H.L. Hunley, the Civil War's Lost Submarine - Civil War Soldiers

- Feb 17 1865 – Civil War: Columbia, South Carolina, is burned as Confederate forces flee from advancing Union forces.
- Feb 17 1915 – WWI: After encountering a severe snowstorm, the German zeppelin L-4 crash-lands in the North Sea near the Danish coastal town of Varde.
- Feb 17 1944 – WW2: Battle of Eniwetok - Operation Catchpole is launched as American troops devastate the Japanese defenders and take control of the atoll in the northwestern part of the Marshall Islands.
- The battle ends in an U.S. victory on 22 February. Casualties and losses: US 1,096 - JP 2,693.
- Feb 17 1947 – Cold War: With the words, “Hello! This is New York calling,” the U.S. Voice of America (VOA) begins its first radio broadcasts to the Soviet Union. The VOA effort was an important part of America’s propaganda campaign against the Soviet Union during the Cold War.
- Feb 17 1966 – Vietnam: Operation Rolling Thunder - In testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Gen. Maxwell Taylor states that a major U.S. objective in Vietnam is to demonstrate that “wars of liberation” are “costly, dangerous and doomed to failure.” Discussing the American air campaign against North Vietnam, Taylor declared that its primary purpose was “to change the will of the enemy leadership.”
- Feb 17 1968 – Vietnam: American officials in Saigon report an all-time high weekly rate of U.S. casualties—543 killed in action and 2,547 wounded in the previous seven days. These losses were a result of the heavy fighting during the communist Tet Offensive.
- Feb 17 1974 – Robert K. Preston, a disgruntled U.S. Army private, buzzes the White House in a stolen helicopter.



- Feb 17, 1979 – Vietnam: China Invasion - Tensions between Vietnam and China increased dramatically after the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. Attempting to expand its influence, Vietnam established a military presence in Laos; strengthened its ties with China's rival, the Soviet Union; and toppled the Cambodian regime of Pol Pot in 1979. Just over a month later, Chinese forces invaded, but were repulsed in nine days of bloody and bitter fighting.
- Feb 18 1865 – Civil War: Union forces under Major General William T. Sherman set the South Carolina State House on fire during the burning of Columbia.
- Feb 18 1865 – Civil War: Union troops force the Confederates to abandon Fort Anderson, N.C.
- Feb 18 1942 – WW2: The Imperial Japanese Army begins the systematic extermination of perceived hostile elements among the Chinese in Singapore.
- Feb 18 1943 – WW2: Hans Scholl and his sister Sophie, the leaders of the German youth group Weisse Rose (White Rose), are arrested by the Gestapo for opposing the Nazi regime. The White Rose was composed of university (mostly medical) students who spoke out against Adolf Hitler and his regime. The founder, Hans Scholl, was a former member of Hitler Youth who grew disenchanted with Nazi ideology once its real aims became evident.
- Feb 18 1955 – Cold War: Operation Teapot test shot "Wasp" is successfully detonated at the Nevada Test Site with a yield of 1.2 kilotons. Wasp is the first of fourteen shots of the Teapot series.



Teapot MET (Military Effects Test)

- Feb 18 1964 – Cold War: The United States cuts off military assistance to Britain, France, and Yugoslavia in retaliation for their continuing trade with the communist nation of Cuba. The action was chiefly symbolic, but represented the continued U.S. effort to destabilize the Cuban regime of Fidel Castro.
- Feb 18 1965 – Vietnam: The State Department sends secret cables to U.S. ambassadors in nine friendly nations advising of forthcoming bombing operations over North Vietnam, and instructs them to inform their host governments “in strictest confidence” and to report reactions. President Lyndon Johnson wanted these governments to be aware of what he was planning to do in the upcoming bombing campaign.

- Feb 19 1915 - WWI: British and French battleships launch a massive attack on Turkish positions at Cape Helles and Kum Kaleh at the entrance to the Dardanelles, the narrow strait separating Europe from Asia in northwestern Turkey and the only waterway linking the Mediterranean Sea to the Black Sea. The first naval attack on the Dardanelles begins when a strong Anglo-French task force bombards Ottoman artillery along the coast of Gallipoli.
- Feb 19 1942 – WW2: Bombing of Darwin: In the largest attacks mounted by a foreign power against Australia, more than 240 bombers and fighters of the Imperial Japanese Navy bombed Darwin killing 243 people. Most of the cargo shipping available to support efforts in Java and the Philippines with Java was lost effectively halting further surface shipments from Australia.



The explosion of an oil storage tank and clouds of smoke from other oil tanks, hit during the first Japanese air raid on Australia's mainland at Darwin

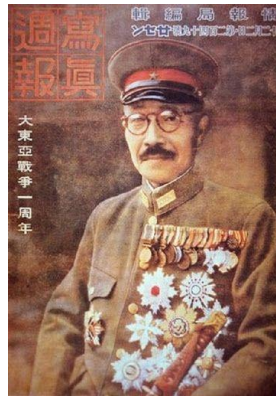
- Feb 19 1942 – WW2: Ten weeks after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs Executive Order 9066, authorizing the removal of any or all people from military areas “as deemed necessary or desirable.” The military in turn defined the entire West Coast, home to the majority of Americans of Japanese ancestry or citizenship, as a military area. By June, more than 110,000 Japanese Americans were relocated to remote internment camps built by the U.S. military in scattered locations around the country. For the next two and a half years, many of these Japanese Americans endured extremely difficult living conditions and poor treatment by their military guards.
- Feb 19 1943 – WW2: Battle of the Kasserine Pass - First large-scale meeting of American and German forces in World War II. Field Marshal Erwin Rommel initiates a series of attacks on the allied forces that ultimately are thrown back. Casualties and losses US/UK/FR 10,000 & 183 tanks – GER/IT 2,000 & 34 tanks.



Kasserine Pass

- Feb 19 1943 – WW2: German troops of the Afrika Korps break through the Kasserine Pass, defeating U.S. forces. U.S. troops retake the pass 5 days later. Casualties and losses: US 6,500 Axis 2,000.
- Feb 19 1943 – WW2: USS Grampus (SS-207) sunk either by Japanese naval aircraft (958th Kokutai) southeast of New Britain on 19 February or by destroyer Minegumo in Blackett Strait on the night of 5–6 March. 71 killed.
- Feb 19 1944 – WW2: The U.S. Eighth Air Force and Royal Air Force begin "Big Week," a series of heavy bomber attacks against German aircraft production facilities.
- Feb 19 1945 – WW2: Battle of Iwo Jima (Operation Detachment) – About 30,000 United States Marines land on Iwo Jima commencing a battle that lasts 35 days. Iwo Jima was a barren Pacific island guarded by Japanese artillery, but to American military minds, it was prime real estate on which to build airfields to launch bombing raids against Japan, only 660 miles away. Casualties and losses: US 26,038 - JP 22,060.
- Feb 19 1965 – Vietnam: Dissident officers in an attempted coup move several battalions of troops into Saigon with the intention of ousting Gen. Nguyen Khanh from leadership.
- Feb 19 1976 – Executive Order 9066, which led to the relocation of Japanese Americans to internment camps, is formally rescinded by President Gerald R. Ford's Proclamation 4417.
- Feb 19 1981 – Cold War: The U.S. government releases a report detailing how the “insurgency in El Salvador has been progressively transformed into a textbook case of indirect armed aggression by communist powers.” The report was another step indicating that the new administration of Ronald Reagan was prepared to take strong measures against what it perceived to be the communist threat to Central America.
- Feb 19 1999 – President Bill Clinton issues a posthumous pardon for first African American graduate of West Point, U.S. Army Lt. Henry Ossian Flipper. In 1881 he was court martialed and dismissed from the US Army on rumors alleging improprieties.
- Feb 20 1864 – Civil War: Battle of Olustee - Confederate troops defeat a Union army sent to bring Florida into the union. Casualties and losses: US 1,861 - CSA 946.
- Feb 20 1942 – WW2: Lt. Edward O’Hare downs five out of nine Japanese bombers that are attacking the carrier *Lexington* and becomes America's first World War II flying ace.
- Feb 20 1944 – WW2: The ‘Big Week’ began with American bomber raids on German aircraft manufacturing centers. In 3500 sorties 10,000 tons of bombs were dropped seriously disrupting German fighter production.

- Feb 20 1964 – Cold War: After operating for 22 years, the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization concludes its final military exercise and quietly shuts down. SEATO had been one of the bulwarks of America’s Cold War policies in Asia, but the Vietnam War did much to destroy its cohesiveness and question its effectiveness.
- Feb 20 1968 – Vietnam: The U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee begins hearings to investigate American policy in Vietnam. This was a direct result of the Tet Offensive, in which Viet Cong forces, supported by large numbers of North Vietnamese troops, launched the largest and best-coordinated offensive of the war. During the attack, the Viet Cong drove into the center of South Vietnam’s seven largest cities and attacked 30 provincial capitals ranging from the Delta to the DMZ.
- Feb 21 1862 – Civil War: Battle of Val Verde – The Texas Rangers win a Confederate victory in New Mexico. Casualties and losses: US 975 - CSA 150 to 230.
- Feb 21 1916 – WWI: Battle of Verdun – In France, a shot from a German Krupp 38-centimeter long-barreled gun—one of over 1,200 such weapons set to bombard French forces along a 20-kilometer front stretching across the Meuse River—strikes a cathedral in Verdun, France, beginning the Battle which would stretch on for 10 months and become the longest conflict of World War I.
- Feb 21 1918 – WWI: A Combined Allied forces of British troops and the Australian mounted cavalry capture the city of Jericho in Palestine after a three-day battle with Turkish troops.
- Feb 21 1944 – WW2: Hideki Tojo, prime minister of Japan, grabs even more power as he takes over as army chief of staff, a position that gives him direct control of the Japanese military.



- Feb 21 1945 – WW2: Japanese Kamikaze planes sink the escort carrier Bismarck Sea and damage the Saratoga.
- Feb 21 1951 – Korea: The U. S. Eighth Army launches Operation Killer, a counterattack to push Chinese forces north of the Han River in Korea.
- Feb 21 1970 – Vietnam: National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger begins secret peace talks with North Vietnamese representative Le Duc Tho, the fifth-ranking member of the Hanoi Politburo, at a villa outside Paris.
- Feb 21 1972 – Cold War: In an amazing turn of events, President Richard Nixon takes a dramatic first step toward normalizing relations with the communist People’s Republic of China (PRC) by traveling to Beijing for a week of talks. Nixon’s historic visit began the slow process of the re-establishing diplomatic relations between the United States and communist China.

- Feb 22 1847 – Mexican–American War: The Battle of Buena Vista – 5,000 American troops defeat 15,000 Mexican troops.
- Feb 22 1864 – Civil War: Battle of West Point Mississippi - Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest routs a Union force three times the size of his army helping to end Union General William T. Sherman’s expedition into Alabama.
- Feb 22 1899 – Philippine American War: Filipino forces led by General Antonio Luna counterattacks for the first time against the American forces but fail to regain Manila from the Americans.
- Feb 22 1909 – The sixteen battleships of the Great White Fleet, led by the USS Connecticut (BB–18), return to the United States after a voyage around the world



- Feb 22 1915 – WWI: Germany institutes unrestricted submarine warfare.
- Feb 22 1917 – WWI: Sergeant Benito Mussolini is wounded by the accidental explosion of a mortar bomb on the Isonzo section of the Italian Front.
- Feb 22 1942 – WW2: Franklin Roosevelt orders Gen. Douglas MacArthur to leave the Philippines as the Japanese victory becomes inevitable.
- Feb 22 1944 - WW2: American aircraft mistakenly bomb the Dutch towns of Nijmegen, Arnhem, Enschede and Deventer, resulting in 800 dead in Nijmegen alone.
- Feb 22 1946 – Cold War: George Kennan, the American charge d’affaires in Moscow, sends an 8,000-word telegram to the Department of State detailing his views on the Soviet Union, and U.S. policy toward the communist state. Kennan’s analysis provided one of the most influential underpinnings for America’s Cold War policy of containment.
- Feb 22 1965 – Vietnam: General William Westmoreland, commander of Military Assistance Command Vietnam, cables Washington, D.C., to request that two battalions of U.S. Marines be sent to protect the U.S. airbase at Da Nang.
- Feb 22 1967 – Vietnam: Operation Junction City is launched to ease pressure on Saigon. It was an effort to smash the Viet Cong’s stronghold in Tay Ninh Province and surrounding areas along the Cambodian border northwest of Saigon.
- Feb 22 1968 – Vietnam: The American war effort was hit hard by the North Vietnamese Tet Offensive, which ended on this day. Claims by President Lyndon Johnson that the offensive was a complete failure were misleading. Though the North Vietnamese death

toll was 20 times that of its enemies, strongholds previously thought impenetrable had been shaken. The prospect of increasing American forces added substantial strength to the anti-war movement and led to Johnson's announcement that he would not seek re-election.

- Feb 22 1973 – Cold War: Following President Richard Nixon's visit to the People's Republic of China, the two countries agree to establish liaison offices.
- Feb 22 1984 – Britain and the U.S. send warships to the Persian Gulf following an Iranian offensive against Iraq.
- Feb 23 1836 – Mexican General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna began his 13 day siege of the Alamo Spanish mission in San Antonio, Texas.



The Alamo, as drawn in 1854

- Feb 23 1836 – Mexican General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna began his 13 day siege of the Alamo Spanish mission in San Antonio, Texas.
- Feb 23 1847 – Mexican–American War: Battle of Buena Vista – In Mexico, American troops under General Zachary Taylor defeat Mexican General Antonio López de Santa Anna.
- Feb 23 1903 – Cuba leases Guantánamo Bay to the United States ‘in perpetuity’.
- Feb 23 1917 – WWI: German troops begin a well-planned withdrawal—ordered several weeks previously by Kaiser Wilhelm—to strong positions on the Hindenburg Line, solidifying their defense and digging in for a continued struggle on the Western Front.
- Feb 23 1942 – WW2: A Japanese submarine surfaced off the coast of California, shelling the coastline near the town of Ellwood. The first Axis explosives to hit American soil.
- Feb 23 1945 – WW2: During the Battle of Iwo Jima, a group of Marines and a commonly forgotten U.S. Navy Corpsman, reach the top of Mt. Suribachi and are photographed raising the American flag. The photo would later win a Pulitzer Prize and become the model for the national USMC War Memorial.



- Feb 23 1945 – WW2: The 11th Airborne Division, with Filipino guerrillas, free the captives of the Los Baños internment camp.
- Feb 23 1945 – WW2: The capital of the Philippines, Manila, is liberated by American forces.

- Feb 23 1955 – Cold War: In the first council meeting of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles declares the United States is committed to defending the region from communist aggression. The meeting, and American participation in SEATO, set the stage for the U.S. to take a more active role in Vietnam.
- Feb 23 1966 – Vietnam: According to the U.S. military headquarters in Saigon, 90,000 South Vietnamese deserted in 1965. This number was almost 14% of total South Vietnamese army strength and was twice the number of those that deserted in 1964. By contrast, the best estimates showed that fewer than 20,000 Viet Cong defected during the previous year.
- Feb 23 1967 – Vietnam: U.S. troops begin the largest offensive of the war, near the Cambodian border.
- Feb 23 1991 – Gulf War: Ground troops cross the Saudi Arabian border and enter Iraq, thus starting the ground phase of the war.
- Feb 23 2008 - A United States Air Force B-2 Spirit bomber crashes on Guam. It is the first operational loss of a B-2.
- Feb 24 1813 – War of 1812: The American ship USS Hornet sank the British sloop HMS Peacock in an action off the coast of Guiana (north coast of South America).
- Feb 24 1836 - Alamo: Colonel William Travis issues a call for help on behalf of the Texan troops defending the Alamo, an old Spanish mission and fortress under attack by the Mexican army.



- Feb 24 1864 – Civil War: Battle of Dalton GA - Union General George Thomas attacks Joseph Johnston's Confederates near Dalton, Georgia, as the Yankees probe Johnston's defenses in search of a weakness. Thomas found the position too strong and ceased the offensive the next day, but the Yankees learned a lesson they would apply during the Atlanta campaign that summer.
- Feb 24 1917 – WW I: The U.S. ambassador to the United Kingdom is given the Zimmermann Telegram, in which Germany pledges to ensure the return of New Mexico, Texas, and Arizona to Mexico if Mexico declares war on the United States.
- Feb 24 1917 – WWI: The Allied war against Turkish forces gains momentum (and ground) in Mesopotamia as British and Indian troops move along the Tigris River recapturing the city of Kut-al-Amara and taking 1,730 Turkish prisoners on February 24.
- Feb 24 1942 – Battle of Los Angeles: A UFO flying over wartime Los Angeles causes a blackout order at 2:25 a.m. and attracts a barrage of anti-aircraft fire, ultimately killing 3 civilians.

- Feb 24 1944 – WW2: Maj. Gen. Frank Merrill’s guerrilla force, nicknamed “Merrill’s Marauders,” a specially trained group of American soldiers, begin their 1,000 mile journey in a ground campaign against Japan into Burma.
- Feb 24 1968 – Vietnam: The Imperial Palace in Hue is recaptured by South Vietnamese troops. Although the Battle of Hue was not officially declared over for another week, it was the last major engagement of the Tet Offensive.



- Feb 24 1982 – Cold War: Caribbean Basin Initiative - President Ronald Reagan announces a new program of economic and military assistance to nations of the Caribbean designed to “prevent the overthrow of the governments in the region” by the “brutal and totalitarian” forces of communism. The Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) was part of the Reagan administration’s effort to curb what it perceived to be the dangerous rise in communist activity in Central America and the Caribbean.
- Feb 24 1983 – A special commission of the U.S. Congress releases a report that condemns the practice of Japanese internment during World War II.
- Feb 24 1991 – Gulf War: After six weeks of intensive bombing against Iraq and its armed forces, U.S.-led coalition forces launch a ground invasion of Kuwait and Iraq.
- Feb 25 1779 - American Revolution: Fort Sackville is surrendered, marking the beginning of the end of British domination in America’s western frontier.
- Feb 25 1862 – Civil War: The U.S. Congress passes the Legal Tender Act, authorizing the use of paper notes to pay the government’s bills. This ended the long-standing policy of using only gold or silver in transactions, and it allowed the government to finance the enormously costly Civil War long after its gold and silver reserves were depleted.
- Feb 25 1916 - WWI: German troops seize Fort Douaumont, the most formidable of the forts guarding the walled city of Verdun, France, four days after launching their initial attack. The Battle of Verdun will become the longest and bloodiest conflict of World War I, lasting 10 months and resulting in over 700,000 total casualties.
- Feb 25 1933 – USS Ranger, the first U.S. Navy ship to be built solely as an aircraft carrier, is launched.
- Feb 25 1945 – WW2: First firebombing raid against Tokyo Japan destroyed around 643 acres of the snow-covered city.



- Feb 25 1948 – Cold War: Under pressure from the Czechoslovakian Communist Party, President Eduard Benes allows a communist-dominated government to be organized. Although the Soviet Union did not physically intervene (as it would in 1968), Western observers decried the virtually bloodless communist coup as an example of Soviet expansion into Eastern Europe.
- Feb 25 1968 - Vietnam War: 135 unarmed citizens of Hà My village in South Vietnam's Qu'ng Nam Province are killed and buried en masse by South Korean troops in what would come to be known as the Hà My massacre.
- Feb 25 1971 – Vietnam: In both houses of Congress, legislation is initiated to forbid U.S. military support of any South Vietnamese invasion of North Vietnam without congressional approval. This legislation was a result of the controversy that arose after the invasion of Laos by South Vietnamese forces in Operation Lam Son 719. On February 8, South Vietnamese forces had launched a major cross-border operation into Laos to interdict the Ho Chi Minh Trail and destroy the North Vietnamese supply dumps in the area.
- Feb 25 1972 – Vietnam: U.S. troops clash with North Vietnamese forces in a major battle 42 miles east of Saigon, the biggest single U.S. engagement with an enemy force in nearly a year. The five-hour action around a communist bunker line resulted in four dead and 47 wounded, almost half the U.S. weekly casualties.
- Feb 25 1991 – Gulf War: An Iraqi scud missile hits an American military barracks in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia killing 28 U.S. Army Reservists from Pennsylvania.
- Feb 26 1917 – WWI: In a crucial step toward U.S. entry into World War I, President Woodrow Wilson learns of the so-called Zimmermann Telegram, a message from German Foreign Secretary Arthur Zimmermann to the German ambassador to Mexico proposing a Mexican-German alliance in the event of a war between the U.S. and Germany.
- Feb 26 1935 – Nazi leader Adolf Hitler signs a secret decree authorizing the founding of the Reich Luftwaffe as a third German military service to join the Reich army and navy. In the same decree, Hitler appointed Hermann Goering, a German air hero from World War I and high-ranking Nazi, as commander in chief of the new German air force.
- Feb 26 1943 – U.S. Flying Fortresses and Liberators pound German docks and U-boat lairs at Wilhelmshaven.
- Feb 26 1945 – WW2: Corregidor Last gasp – An ammunition dump on the Philippine island is blown up by a remnant of the Japanese garrison, causing 52 American casualties on the eve of U.S. victory there.
- Feb 26 1965 – Vietnam: The first contingent of South Korean troops arrives in Saigon. Although assigned to non-combat duties, they came under fire on April 3. The South Korean contingent

was part of the Free World Military Forces, an effort by President Lyndon B. Johnson to enlist allies for the United States and South Vietnam. By securing support from other nations, Johnson hoped to build an international consensus behind his policies in Vietnam. The effort was also known as the “many flags” program. By the close of 1969, there were over 47,800 Korean soldiers actively involved in combat operations in South Vietnam. Seoul began to withdraw its troops in February 1972.

- Feb 26 1966 – Vietnam: The ROK Capital Division of the South Korean Army massacres 380 unarmed civilians in South Vietnam.
- Feb 26 1968 – Vietnam: Allied troops who had recaptured the imperial capital of Hue from the North Vietnamese during the Tet Offensive discover the first mass graves in Hue. It was determined that communist troops who had held the city for 25 days had massacred about 2,800 civilians whom they had identified as sympathizers with the government in Saigon. One authority estimated that communists might have killed as many as 5,700 people in Hue.



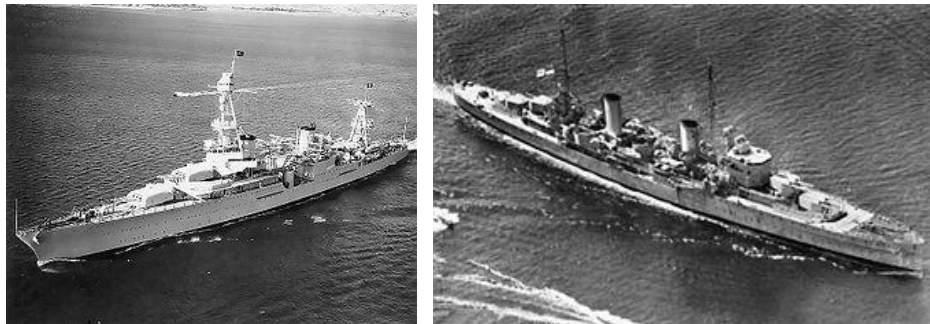
- Feb 26 1984 - The last U.S. Marines sent to Lebanon as part of a multinational peacekeeping force leave Beirut, the war-torn Lebanese capital where some 250 of the original 800 Marines lost their lives during the problem-plagued 18-month mission.
- Feb 26 1990 – Cold War: A year after agreeing to free elections, Nicaragua’s leftist Sandinista government loses at the polls. The elections brought an end to more than a decade of U.S. efforts to unseat the Sandinista government.
- Feb 26 1991 – Gulf War: On Baghdad Radio Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein announces the withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait.
- Feb 26 1991 – Gulf War: United States Army forces capture the town of Al Busayyah, Iraq.
- Feb 26 1993 – World Trade Center Bombing: At 12:18 p.m., a terrorist bomb explodes in a parking garage of the World Trade Center in New York City, leaving a crater 60 feet wide and causing the collapse of several steel-reinforced concrete floors in the vicinity of the blast. Although the terrorist bomb failed to critically damage the main structure of the skyscrapers, six people were killed and more than 1,000 were injured. The World Trade Center itself suffered more than \$500 million in damage. After the attack, authorities evacuated 50,000 people from the buildings, hundreds of whom were suffering from smoke inhalation. The evacuation lasted the whole afternoon.
- Feb 27 1776 – American Revolution: Commander Richard Caswell leads 1,000 Patriot troops in the successful Battle of Moores Creek in North Carolina over 1,600 British Loyalists militia. It would go down in history as the first American victory in the first organized campaign of the Revolutionary War. Casualties and losses: Patriots 2 – Loyalists 3- to 50 KIA or wounded, 850 captured.



Reconstructed earthworks of Patriot militia

- Feb 27 1782 – American Revolution: The House of Commons of Great Britain votes against further war in America.
- Feb 27 1864 – Civil War: The first Union inmates begin arriving at Andersonville prison, which was still under construction in southern Georgia. Andersonville became synonymous with death as nearly a quarter of its inmates died in captivity. Henry Wirz, who ran Andersonville, was executed after the war for the brutality and mistreatment committed under his command.
- Feb 27 1917 – WWI: After completing their conquest of Serbia and Montenegro, the Austro-Hungarian army turns its attentions toward Albania, occupying the coastal city of Durazzo on the Adriatic Sea.
- Feb 27 1942 – WW2: During the Battle of the Java Sea, an allied strike force is defeated by a Japanese task force in the Java Sea in the Dutch East Indies
- Feb 27 1942 – WW2: The U.S. Navy's first aircraft carrier, the Langley, is sunk by Japanese warplanes (with a little help from U.S. destroyers), and all of its 32 aircraft are lost.
- Feb 27 1944 – WW2: USS Grayback (SS-208) missing. Most likely succumbed to damage inflicted by land-based Japanese naval aircraft suffered the day before in the East China Sea. 80 killed.
- Feb 27 1962 – Vietnam: South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem survives another coup attempt when Republic of Vietnam Air Force pilots Lieutenants Pham Phu Quoc and Nguyen Van Cu try to kill him and his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu by bombing and strafing the presidential palace.
- Feb 27 1965 – Vietnam: The U.S. State Department releases a 14,000-word report entitled "Aggression from the North—The Record of North Vietnam's Campaign to Conquer South Vietnam." Citing "massive evidence," including testimony of North Vietnamese soldiers who had defected or been captured in South Vietnam, the document claimed that nearly 20,000 Viet Cong military and technical personnel had entered South Vietnam through the "infiltration pipeline" from the North. The report maintained that the infiltrators remained under military command from Hanoi.
- Feb 27 1969 – Vietnam: Communist forces shell 30 military installations and nine towns in South Vietnam, in what becomes known as the "Post-Tet Offensive." U.S. sources in Saigon put American losses in this latest offensive at between 250 and 300, compared with enemy casualties totaling 5,300. South Vietnamese officials report 200 civilians killed and 12,700 made homeless.
- Feb 27 1972 – Cold War: Shanghai Communique – As the concluding act of President Richard Nixon's historic visit to communist China, the president and Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai issue a joint statement summarizing their agreements (and disagreements) of the past week. The "Shanghai Communique" set into motion the slow process of the normalization of relations between the two former Cold War enemies.

- Feb 27 1991 – Gulf War: U.S. President George H. W. Bush announces that "Kuwait is liberated".
- Feb 28 1844 – A gun on USS Princeton explodes while the boat is on a Potomac River cruise, killing eight people, including two United States Cabinet members.
- Feb 28 1863 – Civil War: The Confederate ship Nashville was destroyed by the Union ironclad vessel USS Montauk on the Ogeechee River in Georgia.
- Feb 28 1864 – Civil War: Kilpatrick-Dahlgren Raid – A major Union cavalry raid begins when General Hugh Judson Kilpatrick leads 3,500 troopers south from Stevensburg, Virginia. Aimed at Richmond, the raid sought to free Federal prisoners and spread word of President Abraham Lincoln’s Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction in hopes of convincing Confederates to lay down their arms.
- Feb 28 1893 – The USS Indiana, the lead ship of her class and the first battleship in the United States Navy comparable to foreign battleships of the time, is launched.
- Feb 28 1916 – WW I: Beginning of the battle of Verdun, in France, which lasted ten months.
- Feb 28 1916 – WWI: Allied forces complete their conquest of the Cameroons, a German protectorate on the coast of western Africa.
- Feb 28 1942 – The heavy cruiser USS Houston (CA-30) is sunk in the Battle of Sunda Strait with 693 crew members killed, along with HMAS Perth (D29) which lost 375 men.



USS *Houston* off San Diego, California, October 1935 & HMAS *Perth* in 1940

- Feb 28 1944 – WW2: Hannah Reitsch, the first female test pilot in the world, suggests the creation of the Nazi equivalent of a kamikaze squad of suicide bombers while visiting Adolf Hitler in Berchtesgaden. Hitler was less than enthusiastic about the idea.
- Feb 28 1945 – WW2: U.S. tanks break the natural defense line west of the Rhine and cross the Erft River.
- Feb 28 1968 – Vietnam: Gen. Earle Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, returns from his recent round of talks with Gen. William Westmoreland in Saigon and immediately delivers a written report to President Lyndon B. Johnson. Wheeler stated that despite the heavy casualties incurred during the Tet Offensive, North Vietnam and Viet Cong forces had the initiative and were “operating with relative freedom in the countryside.” Gen. William Westmoreland needed more troops.
- Feb 28 1991 – The first Gulf War ends.
- Feb 28 1994 – U.S. warplanes shoot down four Serb aircraft over Bosnia in the first NATO use of force in the troubled area.

- Feb 28 1987 – Cold War: In a surprising announcement, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev indicates that his nation is ready to sign “without delay” a treaty designed to eliminate U.S. and Soviet medium-range nuclear missiles from Europe. Gorbachev’s offer led to a breakthrough in negotiations and, eventually, to the signing of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty in December 1987.
- Feb 28 1994 – In the first military action in the 45-year history of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), U.S. fighter planes shoot down four Serbian warplanes engaged in a bombing mission in violation of Bosnia’s no-fly zone.
- Feb 28 1998 – Kosovo War: Serbian police begin the offensive against the Kosovo Liberation Army in Kosovo.
- Feb 29 1864 – American Civil War: Kilpatrick–Dahlgren Raid – Union General Hugh Judson Kilpatrick’s cavalry raiders split into two wings on their way south to Richmond. Colonel Ulrich Dahlgren and 500 troopers swung out further west as Kilpatrick and 3,000 men rode on to the outskirts of Richmond. The raid stalled there, and Dahlgren was killed in an ambush. Plans to free 15,000 Union soldiers being held near Richmond, Virginia are thwarted.
- Feb 29 1916 –WWI: The British armed merchant ship Alcantara and the German raider Grief sink after engaging each other in a close-range battle on the North Sea. The German raider Grief was in disguise, flying under the Norwegian flag and with Norwegian colors displayed on its sides, when it attempted to run a British blockade.
- Feb 29 1944 – WW2: The Admiralty Islands are invaded in Operation Brewer led by American General Douglas MacArthur.
- Feb 29 1944 – WW2: USS Trout (SS-202) missing. Most likely sunk by Japanese destroyer Asashimo in Philippine Sea. 81 killed.



- Feb 29 1972 – Vietnam War: Vietnamization – South Korea pulls 11,000 troops out of Vietnam as part of its program to withdraw all of its 48,000 troops from the country.

[Source: <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history> | This Day In History | Feb 2017 ++]