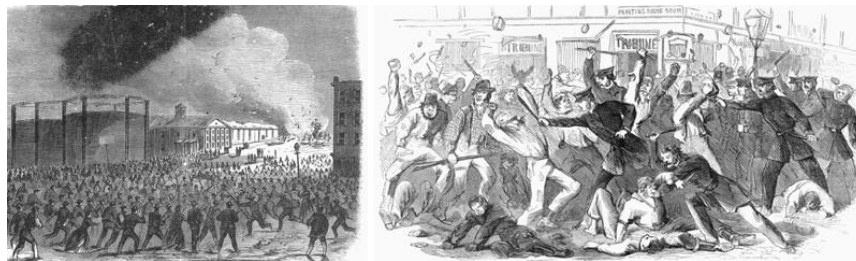




Military History Anniversaries 16 thru 31 July

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

- **Jul 16 1779 – American Revolution:** Light infantry of the Continental Army seize a fortified British Army position in a midnight bayonet attack at the Battle of Stony Point. Casualties and losses: US 98 – Great Britain 624.
- **Jul 16 1861 – Civil War:** At the order of President Abraham Lincoln, Union troops begin a 25 mile march into Virginia for what will become The First Battle of Bull Run, the first major land battle of the war.
- **Jul 16 1863 – Civil War:** *Draft riots continue to rock New York City* » The draft riots enter their fourth day in New York City in response to the Enrollment Act, which was enacted on March 3, 1863. Although avoiding military service became much more difficult, wealthier citizens could still pay a commutation fee of \$300 to stay at home. Irritation with the draft dovetailed with opposition to the Emancipation Proclamation of September 1862, which made abolition of slavery the central goal of the war for the Union. Particularly vocal in their opposition were the Democratic Irish, who felt the war was being forced upon them by Protestant Republicans and feared that emancipation of slaves would jeopardize their jobs. Their fears were confirmed when black laborers replaced striking Irish dock workers the month before the riots.



Rioters destroying the Westhewen ferry terminal (left) and charge of the police on the rioters at the Tribune Office (right)

Discontent simmered until the draft began among the Irish New Yorkers on 11 JUL. Two days later, a mob burned the draft office, triggering nearly five days of violence. At first, the targets included local newspapers, wealthy homes, well-dressed men, and police officers, but the crowd's attention soon turned to African Americans. Several blacks were lynched, and businesses employing blacks were burned. A black orphanage was also burned, but the children escaped.

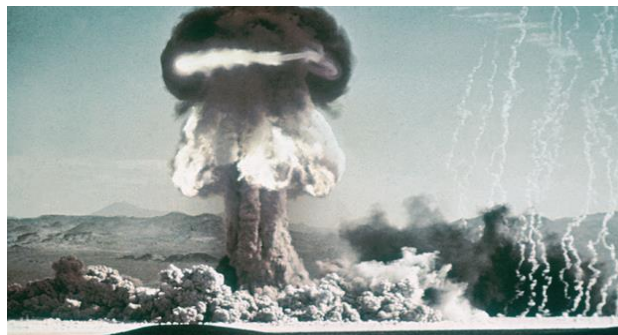
Not until 17 JUL was the violence contained by the arrival of Union troops, some fresh from the battlefield at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. More than 1,000 people died and property damage topped \$2 million. The draft was temporarily suspended, and a revised conscription began in August. As a result of the riots and the delicate political balance in the city, relatively few New Yorkers were forced to serve in the Union army.

- **Jul 16 1915 – U.S. Navy:** The first combatant Navy ships passed through the locks in July 1915 when battleships USS Missouri (BB 11), Ohio (BB 12) and Wisconsin (BB 9) transited the canal.



- **Jul 16 1927 – U.S.*Nicaragua:** Augusto César Sandino leads a raid on U.S. Marines and Nicaraguan Guardia Nacional that had been sent to apprehend him in the village of Ocotal, but is repulsed by one of the first dive-bombing attacks in history.
- **Jul 16 1945 – WW2:** *The first atomic bomb test is successfully exploded* » The Manhattan Project comes to an explosive end as the first atom bomb is successfully tested in Alamogordo, New Mexico.

Plans for the creation of a uranium bomb by the Allies were established as early as 1939, when Italian emigre physicist Enrico Fermi met with U.S. Navy department officials at Columbia University to discuss the use of fissionable materials for military purposes. That same year, Albert Einstein wrote to President Franklin Roosevelt supporting the theory that an uncontrolled nuclear chain reaction had great potential as a basis for a weapon of mass destruction. In February 1940, the federal government granted a total of \$6,000 for research. But in early 1942, with the United States now at war with the Axis powers, and fear mounting that Germany was working on its own uranium bomb, the War Department took a more active interest, and limits on resources for the project were removed.



Brigadier-General Leslie R. Groves, himself an engineer, was now in complete charge of a project to assemble the greatest minds in science and discover how to harness the power of the atom as a

means of bringing the war to a decisive end. The Manhattan Project (so-called because of where the research began) would wind its way through many locations during the early period of theoretical exploration, most importantly, the University of Chicago, where Enrico Fermi successfully set off the first fission chain reaction. But the Project took final form in the desert of New Mexico, where, in 1943, Robert J. Oppenheimer began directing Project Y at a laboratory at Los Alamos, along with such minds as Hans Bethe, Edward Teller, and Fermi. Here theory and practice came together, as the problems of achieving critical mass—a nuclear explosion—and the construction of a deliverable bomb were worked out.

Finally, on the morning of 16 JUL, in the New Mexico desert 120 miles south of Santa Fe, the first atomic bomb was detonated. The scientists and a few dignitaries had removed themselves 10,000 yards away to observe as the first mushroom cloud of searing light stretched 40,000 feet into the air and generated the destructive power of 15,000 to 20,000 tons of TNT. The tower on which the bomb sat when detonated was vaporized.

The question now became—on whom was the bomb to be dropped? Germany was the original target, but the Germans had already surrendered. The only belligerent remaining was Japan.

A footnote: The original \$6,000 budget for the Manhattan Project finally ballooned to a total cost of \$2 billion.

- **Jul 16 1945 – WW2:** The Heavy Cruiser USS Indianapolis (CA-35) leaves San Francisco with parts for the atomic bomb "Little Boy" bound for Tinian Island. This would be the last time the Indianapolis would be seen by the Mainland as she would be torpedoed by the Japanese Submarine I-58 on July 30 and sink with 880 out of 1,196 crewmen.



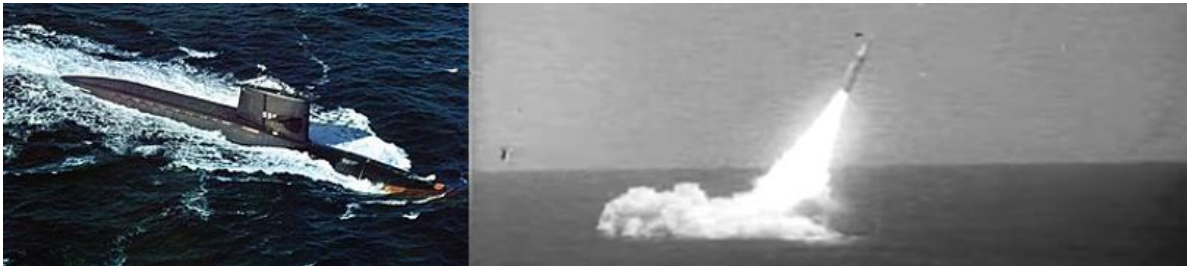
- **Jul 16 1950 – Korean War:** *Chaplain–Medic massacre* » Operating at the Kum River during the Battle of Taejon, troops of the US 19th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, were cut off from resupply by a roadblock established by North Korean KPA troops of the 3rd Division. The roadblock proved difficult to break, and forced US troops to move through nearby mountains to evacuate their wounded.



Herman G. Felhoelter, the U.S. Army chaplain who was killed in the massacre

Thirty critically wounded US troops were stranded at the top of a mountain. Attended to by only two non-combatants, a chaplain and a medic, the wounded were discovered by a KPA patrol. Though the medic was able to escape, the KPA executed the unarmed chaplain as he prayed over the wounded, then killed the rest of them. The massacre was one of several incidents that led US commanders to establish a commission in July to look into war crimes during the war. The same month, the KPA commanders, concerned about the way their soldiers were treating prisoners of war, laid out stricter guidelines for handling enemy captives. Other than this change, the historiography of the incident in North Korean sources is largely unknown; as a result, sources detailing the incident are almost exclusively from the United States and other United Nations allies.

- **Jul 16 1960 – U.S. Navy:** USS George Washington a modified Skipjack class submarine successfully test fires the first ballistic missile while submerged.



- **Jul 16 1965 – U.S. Navy:** McNamara visits South Vietnam » Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara conducts a fact-finding mission in South Vietnam, and Henry Cabot Lodge arrives in Saigon to resume his post as ambassador. Lodge had previously held the ambassadorship, but resigned in 1964 to seek the Republican presidential nomination, which was eventually won by Barry Goldwater of Arizona. Lodge returned to Saigon again as ambassador from 1965 to 1967.

While visiting Saigon, McNamara was informed by secret cable that President Lyndon B. Johnson had decided to give Gen. William Westmoreland the troops he had requested. The American commander had been asking for additional U.S. troops so that he could stabilize the military situation and “carry the war to the communists.” McNamara, believing that the United States should commit itself to preventing the fall of South Vietnam to communism, supported Westmoreland’s request. McNamara said at a press conference upon leaving Saigon: “There has been deterioration since I was last here, 15 months ago.”

- **Jul 16 1973 – U.S. Navy:** *Senate begins investigations into secret bombing of Cambodia* » The Senate Armed Services Committee begins a probe into allegations that the U.S. Air Force made thousands of secret B-52 raids into Cambodia in 1969 and 1970 at a time when the United States recognized the neutrality of the Prince Norodom Sihanouk regime in Cambodia. The Pentagon acknowledged that President Richard Nixon and Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird had authorized the raids against Cambodia, but Sihanouk denied the State Department claim that he had requested or authorized the bombing. Though it was established that the bombing records had been falsified, Laird and Henry Kissinger, Nixon’s National Security Advisor, denied any knowledge of the falsification. The Senate hearings eventually exposed the extent of the secrecy involved in the bombing campaign and seriously damaged the credibility of the Nixon administration.
- **Jul 16 2002 – Cold War:** *Bush unveils strategy for homeland security* » President George W. Bush announces his plan for strengthening homeland security in the wake of the shocking September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D.C., in which nearly 3,000 people had been killed. In the immediate aftermath of the disaster, in an attempt to prevent further bloodshed on American soil, Bush launched a massive overhaul of the nation’s security, intelligence and emergency-response systems through the creation of the White House Office of Homeland Security. Later in the month, the Department of Homeland Security was established as a federal agency. It was part of a two-pronged effort, which included pre-emptive military action against terrorists in other countries, to fight the war on terror.



During a White House press conference that day, Bush gave the American public a preview of the changes to come, including, but not limited to, a color-coded warning system that identified different levels of threat, assessing which industries and regions were vulnerable to attack. He also proposed changes in laws that would give the president increased executive powers, particularly with regard to anti-terrorism policy.

On the day of his announcement, it appeared that Bush and Congress formed a fairly united front in favor of the new policy. However, as soon as the Department of Homeland Security was established, critics who feared the potential abuse of presidential powers and the abandonment of civil liberties in the name of national security raised their voices. Bush tried to reassure them that the changes were constitutional and open to Congressional oversight. However, over the next few years, his administration faced accusations of flagrantly violating the Constitution and creating a political culture of secrecy and cronyism.

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- **Jul 17 1898 – Spanish*American War:** U.S. troops take Santiago de Cuba.

- **Jul 17 1944 – WW1: *Fighting in the streets of Petrograd, Russia*** » On this day in 1917, a three-day stretch of fighting in the streets peaks in Petrograd after the provisional government falls temporarily amid anger and frustration within and outside the army due to the continuing hardships caused by Russia's participation in World War I.



Despite devastating losses on the Eastern Front in 1916, the provisional Russian government—which succeeded to power after the abdication of Czar Nicholas II in March—had rejected all calls for peace. Alexander Kerensky, appointed minister of war in the spring of 1917, was determined to reinvigorate the Russian war effort, installing the victorious General Alexei Brusilov as commander in chief of the Russian forces and making plans to go back on the offensive within months. The disintegration and despair within the army continued, however, as some 30,000 deserters were reported from the front every day. At Kerensky's command, Brusilov launched another major offensive on July 1, the same day a massive peace demonstration was held in Petrograd.

Though the new offensive resulted in heavy losses for the Russians, it was at home where the provisional government received its greatest threat. On July 15, 1917, an uprising in Petrograd encouraged by Leon Trotsky, an official of the Bolshevik Party—the radical socialist movement led by Vladimir Lenin, recently returned from exile due to German help—succeeded in briefly toppling the provisional government. The Bolsheviks saw their opportunity and attempted to seize power in Petrograd, as fighting broke out in the streets. The violence peaked on 17 JUL. The following day, officers loyal to the provisional government destroyed the offices of the Bolshevik newspaper, Pravda. Lenin, sensing the time was not yet ripe for revolution, went into hiding—albeit temporarily—and Kerensky took charge, restoring order and continuing his efforts to salvage the Russian war effort.

Months later, however, Lenin emerged again, as the Bolsheviks succeeded in wresting power in Russia from the army in November amid massive strikes and rebellions in the streets; almost immediately after taking power, the Bolsheviks moved towards an armistice with the Central Powers, ending Russia's involvement in World War I.

- **Jul 17 1944 – WW2: *Port Chicago disaster*** » An ammunition ship explodes while being loaded in Port Chicago, California, killing 332 people on this day in 1944. The United States' World War II military campaign in the Pacific was in full swing at the time. Poor procedures and lack of training led to the disaster.

Port Chicago, about 30 miles north of San Francisco, was developed into a munitions facility when the Naval Ammunition Depot at Mare Island, California, could not fully supply the war effort. By the

summer of 1944, expansion of the Port Chicago facility allowed for loading two ships at once around the clock. The Navy units assigned to the dangerous loading operations were generally segregated African-American units. For the most part, these men had not been trained in handling munitions. Additionally, safety standards were forgotten in the rush to keep up frenetic loading schedules.

On the evening of 17 JUL, the SS Quinault Victory and SS E.A. Bryan, two merchant ships, were being loaded. The holds were being packed with 4,600 tons of explosives—bombs, depth charges and ammunition. Another 400 tons of explosives were nearby on rail cars. Approximately 320 workers were on or near the pier when, at 10:18 p.m., a series of massive explosions over several seconds destroyed everything and everyone in the vicinity. The blasts were felt as far away as Nevada and the resulting damage extended as far as San Francisco. Every building in Port Chicago was damaged and people were literally knocked off their feet. Smoke and fire extended nearly two miles into the air. The pilot of a plane flying at 9,000 feet in the area claimed that metal chunks from the explosion flew past him.



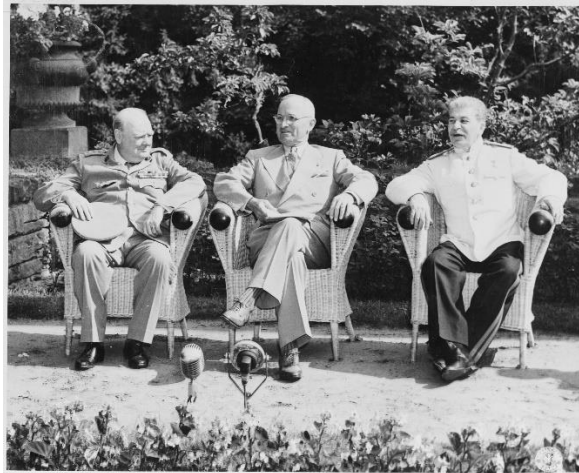
Photo # NH 96823 Damage at Port Chicago, Ca. View looking north toward pier.
Cleaning up the damage at the remains of the pier.

Nearly two-thirds of the people killed at Port Chicago were African-American enlisted men in the Navy—15 percent of all African-Americans killed during World War II. The surviving men in these units, who helped put out the fires and saw the horrors firsthand, were quickly reassigned to Mare Island. Less than a month later, when ordered to load more munitions, but still having received no training, 258 African-American sailors refused to carry out the orders. Two hundred and eight of them were then sentenced to bad conduct discharges and pay forfeiture. The remaining 50 men were put on trial for general court martial. They were sentenced to between eight and 15 years of hard labor, though two years later all were given clemency. A 1994 review of the trials revealed race played a large factor in the harsh sentences. In December 1999, President Clinton pardoned Freddie Meeks, one of only three of the 50 convicted sailors known to be alive at the time.

The Port Chicago disaster eventually led to the implementation of far safer procedures for loading ammunition. In addition, greater emphasis was put on proper training in explosives handling and the munitions themselves were altered for greater safety. There is now a national memorial to the victims at the site.

- **Jul 17 1944 – WW2:** Napalm incendiary bombs are dropped for the first time by U.S. P-38 pilots on a fuel depot at Coutances, near Saint-Lô, France.

- **Jul 17 1945 – WW2: Potsdam Conference** » The leaders of the three Allied nations, Harry S. Truman, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin meet in the German city of Potsdam to negotiate the terms of the end of World War II. Germany had surrendered about two months earlier, and the leaders needed to agree on postwar reparations from the country. When Truman met Stalin that day he had been president of the United States for only three months. And before that, he'd been vice president for only 82 days. His relationship with his predecessor, Franklin D. Roosevelt, was nearly nonexistent, and he had been kept in the dark about end-of-war negotiations that he was now taking part in.



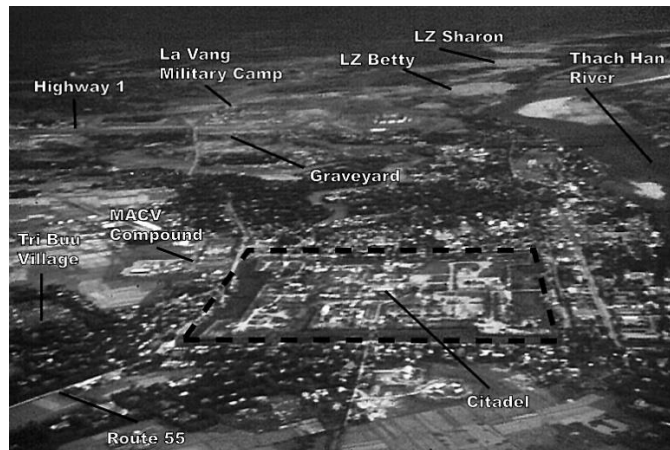
Just hours after Roosevelt died on April 12, 1945, Truman took the oath of office and asked a gaggle of White House reporters to pray for him. “Truman approached that meeting with a great deal of anxiety and insecurity. . . . He was very poorly informed about the complexities of the agreements that President Franklin Roosevelt had worked out during the war with Stalin,” said Melvyn Leffler, a University of Virginia historian and author of “A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration and the Cold War.”

Truman also had just recently learned the full details of the country’s secret atomic-bomb program, the Manhattan Project, which the president had hoped would lead to Japan’s surrender and, ultimately, the end of the war. Leffler said there was a “tremendous uncertainty and ambiguity” about whether the bomb was viable. By the time Truman arrived in Germany, he knew the bomb worked.

- **Jul 17 1966 – Vietnam War:** Ho Chi Minh orders a partial mobilization of North Vietnam to defend against American airstrikes.
- **Jul 17 1969 – Vietnam War: Wheeler visits South Vietnam** » Gen. Earle Wheeler, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, conducts four days of conferences and inspections with U.S. commanders in South Vietnam. This was an effort to assess the progress of the South Vietnamese armed forces and to discuss future strategy. Upon his return to Washington, Wheeler reported to President Richard Nixon that the situation in South Vietnam was “good” and that the program to improve the South Vietnamese armed forces was on schedule.

- **Jul 17 1972 – Vietnam War:** *South Vietnamese paratroopers fight for Citadel* » South Vietnamese paratroopers fight their way to within 200 yards of the Citadel in Quang Tri City, which was described by reporters who accompanied the troops as a city of rubble and ash. Citizens emerging from neighborhoods retaken by the paratroopers joined the refugees, who had been streaming south toward Hue on Route 1 to get out of the way of continued fighting in Quang Tri.

North Vietnamese troops had captured Quang Tri City on May 1 as part of their Nguyen Hue Offensive (later called the “Easter Offensive”), a massive invasion by North Vietnamese forces that had been launched on March 31. The attacking force included 14 infantry divisions and 26 separate regiments, with more than 120,000 troops and approximately 1,200 tanks and other armored vehicles. The main North Vietnamese objectives, in addition to Quang Tri in the north, were Kontum in the Central Highlands, and An Loc farther to the south.



Initially, the South Vietnamese defenders were almost overwhelmed, particularly in the northernmost provinces, where they abandoned their positions in Quang Tri. At Kontum and An Loc, the South Vietnamese were more successful in defending against the attacks, but only after weeks of bitter fighting. Although the defenders suffered heavy casualties, they managed to hold their own with the aid of American advisors and airpower. Fighting continued all over South Vietnam into the summer months.

After months of heavy fighting, the South Vietnamese forces finally retook Quang Tri province entirely in September. With the communist invasion blunted, President Nixon declared that the South Vietnamese victory proved the viability of “Vietnamization,” a program that he had instituted in 1969 to increase the combat capability of the South Vietnamese armed forces so U.S. troops could be withdrawn.

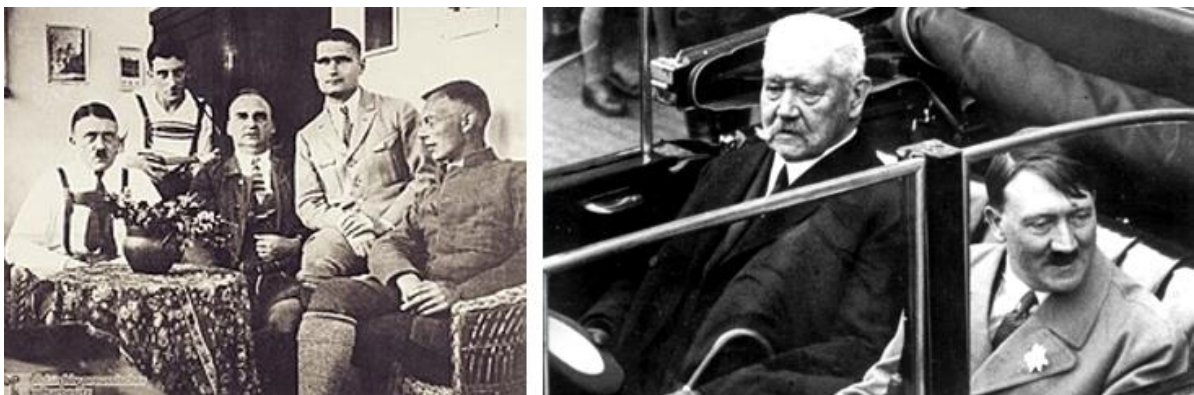
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- **Jul 18 1863 – Civil War:** *Battle of Fort Wagner/Morris Island* » The first formal African American military unit, the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, fails in their assault on Confederate-held Battery Wagner. Casualties and losses: US 1,515 - CSA 174.



- **Jul 18 1914 – U.S. Army:** The U.S. Congress forms the Aviation Section, U.S. Signal Corps, giving definite status to aircraft within the U.S. Army for the first time.
- **Jul 18 1925 – Germany:** *Hitler publishes Mein Kampf* » Seven months after being released from Landsberg jail, Nazi leader Adolf Hitler publishes the first volume of his personal manifesto, *Mein Kampf*. Dictated by Hitler during his nine-month stay in prison, *Mein Kampf*, or “My Struggle,” was a bitter and turgid narrative filled with anti-Semitic outpourings, disdain for morality, worship of power, and the blueprints for his plan of Nazi world domination. The autobiographical work soon became the bible of Germany’s Nazi Party.

In the early 1920s, the ranks of Hitler’s Nazi Party swelled with resentful Germans who sympathized with the party’s bitter hatred of Germany’s democratic government, leftist politics, and Jews. In November 1923, after the German government resumed the payment of war reparations to Britain and France, the Nazis launched the “Beer Hall Putsch”—their first attempt at seizing the German government by force. Hitler hoped that his nationalist revolution in Bavaria would spread to the dissatisfied German army, which in turn would bring down the government in Berlin. However, the uprising was immediately suppressed, and Hitler was arrested and sentenced to five years in prison for high treason.



Adolf Hitler, Emil Maurice, Hermann Kriebel, Rudolf Hess, and Friedrich Weber at Landsberg Prison (left) and President Paul von Hindenburg and Chancellor Adolph Hitler (right)

Sent to Landsberg jail, he spent his time dictating his autobiography, *Mein Kampf*, and working on his oratorical skills. After nine months in prison, political pressure from supporters of the Nazi

Party forced his release. During the next few years, Hitler and the other leading Nazis reorganized their party as a fanatical mass movement that was able to gain a majority in the German parliament—the Reichstag—by legal means in 1932. In the same year, President Paul von Hindenburg defeated a presidential bid by Hitler, but in January 1933 he appointed Hitler chancellor, hoping that the powerful Nazi leader could be brought to heel as a member of the president’s cabinet.

However, Hindenburg underestimated Hitler’s political audacity, and one of the new chancellor’s first acts was to use the burning of the Reichstag building as a pretext for calling general elections. The police under Nazi Hermann Goering suppressed much of the party’s opposition before the election, and the Nazis won a bare majority. Shortly after, Hitler took on absolute power through the Enabling Acts. In 1934, Hindenburg died, and the last remnants of Germany’s democratic government were dismantled, leaving Hitler the sole master of a nation intent on war and genocide.

- **Jul 18 1936 – Spanish Civil War: *Civil War breaks out*** » The Civil War begins as a revolt by right-wing Spanish military officers in Spanish Morocco and spreads to mainland Spain. From the Canary Islands, General Francisco Franco broadcasts a message calling for all army officers to join the uprising and overthrow Spain’s leftist Republican government. Within three days, the rebels captured Morocco, much of northern Spain, and several key cities in the south. The Republicans succeeded in putting down the uprising in other areas, including Madrid, Spain’s capital. The Republicans and the Nationalists, as the rebels were called, then proceeded to secure their respective territories by executing thousands of suspected political opponents. Meanwhile, Franco flew to Morocco and prepared to bring the Army of Africa over to the mainland.

In 1931, Spanish King Alfonso XIII authorized elections to decide the government of Spain, and voters overwhelmingly chose to abolish the monarchy in favor of a liberal republic. Alfonso went into exile, and the Second Republic, initially dominated by middle-class liberals and moderate socialists, was proclaimed. During the first two years of the Republic, organized labor and leftist radicals forced widespread liberal reforms, and the independence-minded region of Catalonia and the Basque provinces achieved virtual autonomy.



King Alfonso XIII



Francisco Franco

The landed aristocracy, the church, and a large military clique opposed the Republic, and in November 1933 conservative forces regained control of the government in elections. In response, socialists launched a revolution in the mining districts of Asturias, and Catalan nationalists rebelled in Barcelona. General Franco crushed the so-called October Revolution on behalf of the conservative government, and in 1935 he was appointed army chief of staff. In February 1936, new elections brought the Popular Front, a leftist coalition, to power, and Franco, a strict monarchist, was sent to an obscure command in the Canary Islands off Africa.

Fearing that the liberal government would give way to Marxist revolution, army officers conspired to seize power. After a period of hesitation, Franco agreed to join the military conspiracy, which was scheduled to begin in Morocco at 5 a.m. on 18 JUL and then in Spain 24 hours later. The difference in time was to allow the Army of Africa time to secure Morocco before being transported to Spain's Andalusian coast by the navy.

On the afternoon of 17 JUL, the plan for the next morning was discovered in the Moroccan town of Melilla, and the rebels were forced into premature action. Melilla, Ceuta, and Tetuan were soon in the hands of the Nationalists, who were aided by conservative Moroccan troops that also opposed the leftist government in Madrid. The Republican government learned of the revolt soon after it broke out but took few actions to prevent its spread to the mainland.

On 18 JUL, Spanish garrisons rose up in revolt all across Spain. Workers and peasants fought the uprising, but in many cities the Republican government denied them weapons, and the Nationalists soon gained control. In conservative regions, such as Old Castile and Navarre, the Nationalists seized control with little bloodshed, but in other regions, such as the fiercely independent city of Bilbao, they didn't dare leave their garrisons. The Nationalist revolt in the Spanish navy largely failed, and warships run by committees of sailors were instrumental in securing a number of coastal cities for the Republic. Nevertheless, Franco managed to ferry his Army of Africa over from Morocco, and during the next few months Nationalist forces rapidly overran much of the Republican-controlled areas in central and northern Spain. Madrid was put under siege in November.

During 1937, Franco unified the Nationalist forces under the command of the Falange, Spain's fascist party, while the Republicans fell under the sway of the communists. Germany and Italy aided Franco with an abundance of planes, tanks, and arms, while the Soviet Union aided the Republican side. In addition, thousands of communists and other radicals from France, the USSR, America, and elsewhere formed the International Brigades to aid the Republican cause. The most significant contribution of these foreign units was the successful defense of Madrid until the end of the war.

In June 1938, the Nationalists drove to the Mediterranean Sea and cut Republican territory in two. Later in the year, Franco mounted a major offensive against Catalonia. In January 1939, its capital, Barcelona, was captured, and soon after, the rest of Catalonia fell. With the Republican cause all but lost, its leaders attempted to negotiate a peace, but Franco refused. On March 28, 1939, the Republicans finally surrendered Madrid, bringing the Spanish Civil War to an end. Up to a million lives were lost in the conflict, the most devastating in Spanish history. Franco subsequently served as dictator of Spain until his death in 1975.

- **Jul 18 1942 – WW2:** German Me-262, the first jet-propelled aircraft to fly in combat, makes its first flight.



- **Jul 18 1968 – Vietnam War:** Johnson meets Thieu in Honolulu » President Lyndon B. Johnson meets South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu in Honolulu to discuss relations between Washington and Saigon. Johnson reaffirmed his administration’s commitment “to defend South Vietnam.” Thieu stated that he had “no apprehensions at all” concerning the U.S. commitment. In a joint communique, Thieu further asserted that his government was determined “to continue to assume all the responsibility that the scale of forces of South Vietnam and their equipment will permit,” thus tacitly accepting current U.S. efforts to “Vietnamize” the war. The two presidents also agreed that South Vietnam “should be a full participant playing a leading role in discussions concerning the substance of a final settlement” to the conflict. Johnson’s successor, Richard Nixon, made “Vietnamization” one of the pillars of his Vietnam policy. Under the plan, he directed that the combat capability of the South Vietnamese armed forces be improved so that they could ultimately assume full responsibility for the war and U.S. forces could be withdrawn.
- **Jul 18 1972 – Vietnam War:** Soviet Union agrees to grant Hanoi economic aid » Following a visit from Ho Chi Minh and his ministers, the Soviet Union announces that it will grant Hanoi 400 million rubles (about \$100 million) in economic aid. On July 7, China had announced that Beijing would extend Hanoi economic aid of 800 million yuan (about \$200 million). The July grants from China and the Soviet Union enabled Hanoi to initiate an ambitious industrialization program. In less than 10 years, the North was producing items not yet made in the South. Continued aid from Hanoi’s fellow communist nations would sustain North Vietnam in its war against the South Vietnamese and their American allies until 1975, when they defeated the South Vietnamese forces and reunified the country.
- **Jul 18 1971 – Vietnam War:** New Zealand and Australia announce they will pull their troops out of Vietnam.

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- **Jul 19 1779 – American Revolution:** Massachusetts begins ill-fated Penobscot expedition » Massachusetts, without consulting either Continental political or military authorities, launches a 4,000-man naval expedition commanded by Commodore Dudley Saltonstall, Adjutant General Peleg Wadsworth, Brigadier General Solomon Lovell and Lieutenant Colonel Paul Revere. The expedition consisted of 19 warships, 24 transport ships and more than 1,000 militiamen. Their objective was to capture a 750-man British garrison at Castine on the Penobscot Peninsula, in what would later become Maine.



The expedition arrived on 25 JUL and proceeded to launch a series of inconclusive land attacks, leaving Patriot naval forces underutilized and allowing the British plenty of time to send for reinforcements. The land commander, Brig. Gen. Lovell, began to retreat at the arrival of Sir George Collier's seven British warships, expecting Saltonstall to engage in a naval battle. Saltonstall, however, did not fight for long: the naval engagement concluded in total disaster on 14 AUG, when Saltonstall surprised both Patriot and British commanders by fleeing upriver and burning his own ships. The Patriots lost in excess of 470 men, as well as numerous Continental Navy and Massachusetts ships that were burned during the retreat. The British achieved their victory at a cost of only 13 men.

Saltonstall and Paul Revere later faced court martial because of the fiasco. Saltonstall lost his commission, but Revere won acquittal. By contrast, Peleg Wadsworth, who served as Revere's second-in-command, won acclaim for his performance in the engagement. He had organized the retreat, which was the only well-executed aspect of the mission. Wadsworth's family continued to play a celebrated role in American history: his grandson was the famed poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The failed Penobscot expedition was considered the worst naval disaster in American history until the surprise Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, more than 160 years later.

- **Jul 19 1863 – Civil War:** *Morgan's raiders defeated at Buffington Island* » Confederate General John Hunt Morgan's raid into Union-held territory is dealt a serious blow when a large part of his force is captured as they try to escape across the Ohio River at Buffington Island, Ohio. Cut off from the south, Morgan fled north with the remnants of his command and was captured a week later at Salineville, Ohio.



This was the last and most daring of Morgan's four raids into Union-held territory. The main purpose of the raid was to take pressure off of Chattanooga, Tennessee, by drawing Union troops away from the army of General William Rosecrans. It began on July 2 at Burkesville, Kentucky, and continued into Indiana. Morgan departed with more than 2,400 troopers, but he split his force on two occasions, and suffered many casualties in skirmishes with Federal detachments.

Morgan and his forces rode east into Ohio and feigned an advance toward a panicked Cincinnati, but bypassed the city and continued eastward to Pomeroy, Ohio. His men were worn down by the long days in the saddle, and the Yankee pursuit finally caught up at Buffington Island, just outside of Pomeroy. While Morgan made plans to cross the swollen Ohio River, Federal gunboats guarded the fords and Union cavalry attacked the Confederates. In a short time, Morgan lost 800 men, nearly all of who were captured.

Morgan escaped with 400 of his men, and fled north in search of a more suitable place to cross the river—which they never found. Morgan surrendered on 26 JUL.

- **Jul 19 1919 – Post WWI:** *Cenotaph is unveiled in London* » The Cenotaph, a monument to those killed or wounded during the First World War, is unveiled in Whitehall, London, during the first Peace Day celebration.



Designed and built by Edwin Lutyens, at the request of Prime Minister David Lloyd George, the Cenotaph (literally “empty tomb” in Greek) was initially a wood and plaster construction created in less than two weeks. Inspired by the example of the French, who were planning their own similar celebration for July 14, 1919, Lloyd George envisioned the monument as one small part of a whole day of events commemorating the Allied victory in World War I, which had ended in an armistice the previous November. In early July, the prime minister formally commissioned Lutyens, who was forced to design and construct a monument to mark the endpoint of London's victory parade in less than two weeks.

Within an hour of the Cenotaph's unveiling on the morning of July 19, 1919, onlookers had piled wreaths of flowers high around its base. The parade that day included Allied military leaders such as Douglas Haig, the British commander in chief; Ferdinand Foch, the Allied supreme commander during the last year of the war; and John J. Pershing, head of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) that served in World War I; along with some 15,000 Allied soldiers. In the florid words of the Morning Post newspaper: “Near the memorial there were moments of silence when the dead seemed very near, when one almost heard the passage of countless wings—were not the fallen gathering in their hosts to receive their comrades' salute and take their share in the triumph they had died to win?”

Immediately, discussions began in the press and within Parliament over the possibility of making the Cenotaph a permanent memorial to the fallen. Some believed the monument—located in the middle of highly-trafficked streets near Whitehall—should be moved, though Luytens himself greatly objected to this proposition, believing that now that the monument had been “qualified by the salute of Foch and the Allied armies and by our men and their great leaders? No other site would give this pertinence.” On 30 JUL, the British Cabinet decided that that Cenotaph should be erected again, this time permanently, at the same location.

The current monument, cast in Portland Stone, was unveiled in 1920, with a simple inscription commemorating “The Glorious Dead.” Each year, on the Sunday closest to November 11—Armistice, or Remembrance Day—a service is held at the Cenotaph in honor of British and Commonwealth servicemen and women who died during the two World Wars as well as later conflicts. Attended by the British royal family and political and religious leaders, as well as representatives from the armed forces, the service has not changed greatly since its introduction: it features the singing of hymns, an offering of prayers and the observation of two-minutes of silence, ending with a march of war veterans in a show of respect for their fallen countrymen.

- **Jul 19 1942 – WW2:** Battle of the Atlantic - German Grand Admiral Karl Dönitz orders the last U-boats to withdraw from their United States Atlantic coast as a result of American anti-submarine countermeasures.
- **Jul 19 1942 – WW2:** *America bombs Rome* » The United States bombs railway yards in Rome in an attempt to break the will of the Italian people to resist—as Hitler lectures their leader, Benito Mussolini, on how to prosecute the war further. Bombing of Rome was controversial, and General Henry H. Arnold described Vatican City as a "hot potato" because of the importance of Catholics in the U.S. Armed Forces. British public opinion, however, was more aligned towards the bombing of the city, due to the participation of Italian planes in The Blitz over London. H.G. Wells was a particularly vocal proponent of doing so. In the 110,000 sorties that comprised the Allied Rome air campaign, 600 aircraft were lost and 3,600 air crew members died; 60,000 tons of bombs were dropped in the 78 days before Rome was captured by the Allies on June 4, 1944



Inscription on the wall of a bombed building, translated as “Work of the Liberators”

On 16 JUL, President Franklin Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill appealed to the Italian civilian population to reject Mussolini and Hitler and “live for Italy and civilization.” As an “incentive,” American bombers raided the city, destroying its railways. Panic broke out among the Romans. Convinced by Mussolini that the Allies would never bomb the holy city, civilians poured

into the Italian capital for safety. The bombing did more than shake their security in the city—it shook their confidence in their leader.

The denizens of Rome were not alone in such disillusion. In a meeting in northern Italy, Hitler attempted to revive the flagging spirits of Il Duce, as well as point out his deficiencies as a leader. Afraid that Mussolini, having suffered successive military setbacks, would sue for a separate peace, leaving the Germans alone to battle it out with Allied forces along the Italian peninsula, Hitler decided to meet with his onetime role model to lecture him on the manly art of war. Mussolini remained uncharacteristically silent during the harangue, partly due to his own poor German (he would request a translated synopsis of the meeting later), partly due to his fear of Hitler's response should he tell the truth—that Italy was beaten and could not continue to fight.

Mussolini kept up the charade for his German allies: Italy would press on. But no one believed the brave front anymore. Just a day later, Hitler secretly ordered Field Marshal Erwin Rommel to take command of the occupied Greek Islands, better to “pounce on Italy” if and when Mussolini capitulated to the United States.

- **Jul 19 1956 – Cold War:** *United States withdraws offer of aid for Aswan Dam* » Secretary of State John Foster Dulles announces that the United States is withdrawing its offer of financial aid to Egypt to help with the construction of the Aswan Dam on the Nile River. The action drove Egypt further toward an alliance with the Soviet Union and was a contributing factor to the Suez Crisis later in 1956.



In December 1955, Secretary Dulles announced that the United States, together with Great Britain, was providing nearly \$70 million in aid to Egypt to help in the construction of the Aswan Dam on the Nile River. Dulles had agreed to this assistance only reluctantly. He was deeply suspicious of Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser, who he believed to be a reckless and dangerous nationalist. However, others in the Eisenhower administration convinced Dulles that the American aid might pull Nasser back from his relationship with the Soviet Union and prevent the growth of Soviet power in the Middle East. Just seven months after the announcement, however, Dulles declared that the American offer was being revoked. He cited difficulties in arranging the financial details of the U.S. grant with the Egyptian government, but his real motivation was Nasser's unceasing attacks on Western colonialism and imperialism and Egypt's continued dalliance with the Soviet Union.

Dulles might have believed that without the American aid, the dam project would fold. On this point, he was wrong. The Soviets rushed to Egypt's aid, and the Aswan Dam was officially opened in 1964. Nasser, of course, was furious with the U.S. action. So, too, were the British, who believed that America's withdrawal of aid had provided the opening for Soviet penetration of Egypt. In October

1956, British, French, and Israeli forces attacked Egypt, claiming that they were protecting the Suez Canal. The incident nearly provoked a U.S.-Soviet confrontation, but President Dwight D. Eisenhower coupled stern warnings against any Soviet military action with a refusal to support the British, French, and Israeli invasion. The invading forces withdrew from Egypt in early 1957. Nevertheless, the damage to U.S. relations with the Middle East was done and the area would remain a Cold War hotspot throughout the next 35 years.

- **Jul 19 1964 – Vietnam War:** *President Khanh calls for expanding the war* » On what the South Vietnamese call the “Day of Shame”—the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Geneva Accords that partitioned Vietnam—South Vietnamese Premier Nguyen Khanh, at a rally in Saigon, calls for an expansion of the war to North Vietnam. Ambassador Maxwell Taylor and other U.S. officials present declined comment on Khanh’s position, but it was known that the United States regarded this as breaking an agreement to consult with Washington before issuing such a call.
- **Jul 19 1972– Vietnam War:** *Peace talks resume* » Washington and Hanoi announce that the private Paris peace talks have resumed. Henry Kissinger and North Vietnamese negotiator Le Duc Tho conferred for over six hours and, by mutual agreement, neither side revealed details of the meetings. The talks had been suspended when the North Vietnamese had launched their Nguyen Hue Offensive earlier in the year.

Though the peace talks resumed, heavy fighting continued in South Vietnam. A force of 8,000 to 10,000 South Vietnamese troops moved north toward the district capital at Hoi An in the communist-controlled Binh Dinh province. The troop movement marked the beginning of a counteroffensive in the coastal province to retake territory lost to the communists in the early days of the Nguyen Hue Offensive. Saigon’s forces succeeded in taking Hoi An two days later, but lost the western half of the city one week after that.

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- **Jul 20 1864 – Civil War:** *Confederates attack at the Battle of Peachtree Creek* » General John Bell Hood’s Confederate forces attack William T. Sherman’s troops outside of Atlanta, Georgia at the Battle of Peachtree Creek, but are repulsed with heavy losses.



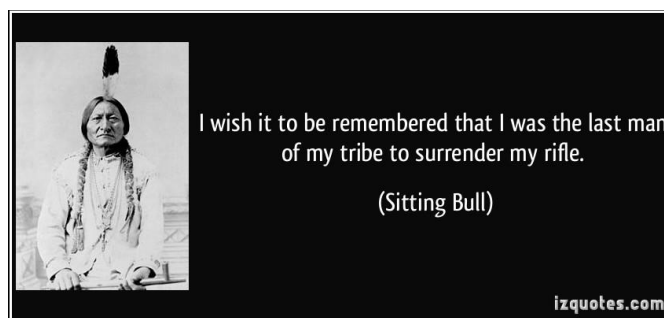
This was Hood's first battle as head of the Army of Tennessee. He had assumed the command from Joseph Johnston just two days before when Confederate President Jefferson Davis replaced Johnston after Sherman backed the Confederate general's troops into Atlanta. For nearly three months, Sherman had pushed Johnston southward from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to Atlanta. Johnston had blocked each of Sherman's flanking maneuvers, but in doing so he lost territory. Davis finally lost patience with Johnston, and selected the more offensive-minded Hood to defeat Sherman.

Hood wasted little time. He planned to strike the Army of the Cumberland, commanded by General George Thomas, as it crossed Peachtree Creek. The waterway was deep, and the Confederates destroyed all bridges on their retreat into the outskirts of Atlanta. Hood suspected that the Yankees were most vulnerable when only part of their force was across the creek so he planned a two-pronged assault to hold part of Thomas' army at bay while the rest could be pinned against Peachtree Creek.

It was a sound plan, but poor execution doomed the operation. Scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on 20 JUL, the attack was delayed for three hours while Hood's troops shifted into position. The overall assault lacked a general coordination, so units charged the Union positions piecemeal. Twenty thousand Rebels assaulted the same number of Yankees, but the delay proved costly. The Confederates achieved some success, but could not drive the Union troops back into Peachtree Creek. After three hours, Hood ordered a halt to the advance. Casualties and losses: US 1,900 - CSA 2,500.

Hood was not deterred. Two days later, he attacked Sherman's forces again at the Battle of Atlanta. Union troops under General William T. Sherman.

- **Jul 20 1888 – Native Americans: Sitting Bull surrenders** » Five years after General George A. Custer's infamous defeat at the Battle of Little Bighorn, Hunkpapa Teton Sioux leader Sitting Bull surrenders to the U.S. Army, which promises amnesty for him and his followers. Sitting Bull had been a major leader in the 1876 Sioux uprising that resulted in the death of Custer and 264 of his men at Little Bighorn. Pursued by the U.S. Army after the Indian victory, he escaped to Canada with his followers.



Born in the Grand River Valley in what is now South Dakota, Sitting Bull gained early recognition in his Sioux tribe as a capable warrior and a man of vision. In 1864, he fought against the U.S. Army under General Alfred Sully at Killdeer Mountain and thereafter dedicated himself to leading Sioux resistance against white encroachment. He soon gained a following in not only his own tribe but in the Cheyenne and Arapaho Native American groups as well. In 1867, he was made principal chief of the entire Sioux nation.

In 1873, in what would serve as a preview of the Battle of Little Bighorn three years later, an Indian military coalition featuring the leadership of Sitting Bull skirmished briefly with Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer. In 1876, Sitting Bull was not a strategic leader in the U.S. defeat at Little Bighorn, but his spiritual influence inspired Crazy Horse and the other victorious Indian military leaders. He subsequently fled to Canada, but in 1881, with his people starving, he returned to the United States and surrendered.

He was held as a prisoner of war at Fort Randall in South Dakota territory for two years and then was permitted to live on Standing Rock Reservation straddling North and South Dakota territory. In 1885, he traveled for a season with Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West show and then returned to Standing Rock. In 1889, the spiritual proclamations of Sitting Bull influenced the rise of the "Ghost Dance," an Indian religious movement that proclaimed that the whites would disappear and the dead Indians and buffalo would return.

His support of the Ghost Dance movement had brought him into disfavor with government officials, and on December 15, 1890, Indian police burst into Sitting Bull's house in the Grand River area of South Dakota and attempted to arrest him. There is confusion as to what happened next. By some accounts, Sitting Bull's warriors shot the leader of the police, who immediately turned and gunned down Sitting Bull. In another account, the police were instructed by Major James McLaughlin, director of the Standing Rock Sioux Agency, to kill the chief at any sign of resistance. Whatever the case, Sitting Bull was fatally shot and died within hours. The Indian police hastily buried his body at Fort Yates within the Standing Rock Reservation. In 1953, his remains were moved into Mobridge, South Dakota, where a granite shaft marks his resting place.

- **Jul 20 1917 – WWI: Draft lottery held** » Selective conscription was put into effect with a national lottery to fix the order of military liability for the 10,000,000 young Americans registered for service. To accomplish the result, 10,500 numbers were planned to be drawn one at a time, a task which began at 10 a.m. The lottery was held in the public hearing room of the Senate office building, with War Department officials in charge of the actual drawing, and with members of the Senate and House military committees as witnesses.



The Secretary of War, Mr. Baker drew the first number and announced it to be number "258". The lottery selected the initial 1,374,000 men for examination to provide 687,000 of first increment troops. When the 10,004th capsule was drawn at 1:30 a. m. it was found to be a blank, the first to be found in the drawing. Gen. Crowder ordered a space to be left blank and the next number to be drawn. As the 10,500 numbers were more than enough to cover the men needed or listed, the effect of

this blank was negligible. The last number was drawn at 2:18 a.m. was No. 2. a.m. It was the 10,312th to be drawn.

- **Jul 20 1944 – WW2: Adolf Hitler assassination attempt** » Claus von Stauffenberg and other conspirators attempted to assassinate Adolf Hitler, Führer of Nazi Germany, inside his Wolf's Lair field headquarters near Rastenburg, East Prussia. The name Operation Valkyrie—originally referring to part of the conspiracy—has become associated with the entire event.

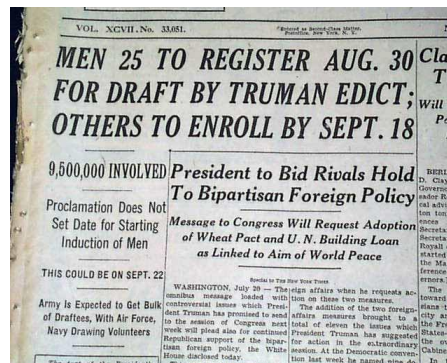


Martin Bormann, Hermann Göring, and Bruno Loerzer surveying the damaged conference room caused by Claus von Stauffenberg's (right) failed attempt

The apparent aim of the assassination attempt was to wrest political control of Germany and its armed forces from the Nazi Party (including the SS) and to make peace with the Western Allies as soon as possible. The details of the conspirators' peace initiatives remain unknown, but they would have included unrealistic demands for the confirmation of Germany's extensive annexations of European territory.

The plot was the culmination of efforts by several groups in the German resistance to overthrow the Nazi German government. The failure of the assassination attempt and the intended military coup d'état that was to follow led the Gestapo to arrest more than 7,000 people, of whom they executed 4,980.

- **Jul 20 1950 – Cold War: Truman issues peacetime draft** » President Harry S. Truman institutes a military draft with a proclamation calling for nearly 10 million men to register for military service within the next two months. Truman's action came during increasing Cold War tensions with the Soviet Union.



Following World War II, the United States moved quickly to demobilize the vast military it had constructed during the conflict. During the war, more than 16 million men and women served in the

U.S. military; when the war ended in August 1945, the American people demanded rapid demobilization. By 1948, less than 550,000 men remained in the U.S. Army. This rapid decline in the size of America's military concerned U.S. government officials, who believed that a confrontation with the Soviet Union was imminent. During the years following World War II, relations between the Russians and Americans deteriorated rapidly. In 1947, the president issued the Truman Doctrine, which provided aid to Greece and Turkey to oppose communist subversion. In that same year, Secretary of State George C. Marshall warned that Western Europe was on the brink of political and economic chaos that would leave it defenseless against communist aggression; the following year, Congress approved billions of dollars in financial assistance to the beleaguered nations.

In June 1948, the Soviets cut all land traffic into the U.S.-British-French zones of occupation in West Berlin. The United States responded with the Berlin Airlift, in which tons of food and supplies were flown in to sustain the population of the besieged city. In light of these events, many Americans believed that actual combat with the Soviet Union was not far away. In response to this threat, President Truman announced on July 20, 1948, that the United States was re-instituting the draft and issued a proclamation requiring nearly 10 million men to register for military service in the next two months.

Truman's decision underlined the urgency of his administration's concern about a possible military confrontation with the Soviet Union. It also brought home to the American people in concrete terms the possibility that the Cold War could, at any moment, become an actual war. In 1950, possibility turned to reality when the United States entered the Korean War, and the size of America's armed forces once again increased dramatically.

- **Jul 20 1950 – Cold War:** *Harry Gold pleads guilty to spying* » Gold, the son of poor Russian Jewish immigrants who came to the United States in 1914, became involved in the Communist movement early on. In 1935, Thomas Black asked Gold to aid the Soviets with formulas from the Pennsylvania Sugar Company, where Gold happened to be working as a chemist. Gold began stealing industrial formulas. In 1940, Soviet Case Officer Semyon Semenov formally recruited Gold to become a Soviet agent. Gold was assigned the codename GUS and later, GOOSE. Eventually, he would work with atomic scientist Klaus Fuchs on stealing American atomic secrets and sending them to the Soviets.



Harry Gold, center, being led into Federal Court, May 1950.

In 1950, he was implicated as a courier for the Soviets by Fuchs. Under interrogation, Gold admitted that he had been involved in espionage since 1934 and had helped Fuchs pass information about the Manhattan Project to the Soviet Union. Gold's confession would eventually lead to the

arrest of David Greenglass, another Manhattan Project employee who worked in the machine shop at Los Alamos and stole secrets about the atomic bomb. In 1951, Gold was sentenced to thirty years in prison for his espionage activities. He was paroled in May 1965, after serving just under half of his sentence.

- **Jul 20 1964 – Vietnam War:** *Viet Cong troops overrun town* » Viet Cong forces overrun Cai Be, the capital of Dinh Tuong Province, killing 11 South Vietnamese militiamen, 10 women, and 30 children. On 31 JUL, South Vietnam charged that the enemy troops involved in the attack were North Vietnamese Army regulars and that Chinese communist advisors led the attack. This claim was never verified, but it is likely that North Vietnamese regulars participated in the action. This incident and numerous intelligence reports indicated that North Vietnamese regular troops were moving down the Ho Chi Minh Trail in great numbers to join the fighting in South Vietnam. This marked a major change in the tempo and scope of the war in South Vietnam and resulted in President Lyndon B. Johnson committing U.S. combat troops. North Vietnamese forces and U.S. troops clashed for the first time in November 1965, when units from the newly arrived 1st Cavalry Division engaged several North Vietnamese regiments in the Battle of the Ia Drang Valley in the Central Highlands.
- **Jul 20 1969 – Vietnam War:** *Duck Hook plan completed* » A top-secret study, commissioned by presidential assistant Henry Kissinger, is completed by the office of the Chief of Naval Operations. Code-named Duck Hook, the study proposed measures for military escalation against North Vietnam. The military options included a massive bombing of Hanoi, Haiphong, and other key areas of North Vietnam; a ground invasion of North Vietnam; the mining of harbors and rivers; and a bombing campaign designed to sever the main railroad links to China. A total of 29 major targets in North Vietnam were pinpointed for destruction in a series of air attacks planned to last four days and to be renewed until Hanoi capitulated. This plan represented a drastic escalation of the war and was never ordered by President Richard Nixon. However, Nixon did order certain elements of the proposal, such as the intensified bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong and the mining of North Vietnamese harbors, in response to the 1972 North Vietnamese Easter Offensive.
- **Jul 20 1988 – Iran*Iraq War:** *War of 1980-88 ends* » On land, the years 1985 to 1987 saw Iran and Iraq trading offensives and counter-offensives, without either side gaining much territory. The fighting was incredibly bloody, often with tens of thousands killed on each side in a matter of days. In February of 1988, Saddam unleashed the fifth and deadliest missile attack on Iran's cities. Simultaneously, Iraq began to prepare a major offensive to push the Iranians out of Iraqi territory.

Worn down by eight years of fighting and the incredibly high toll in lives, Iran's revolutionary government began to consider accepting a peace deal. On July 20, 1988, the Iranian government announced that it would accept a UN-brokered ceasefire, although Ayatollah Khomeini likened it to drinking from a "poisoned chalice." Saddam Hussein demanded that the Ayatollah revoke his call for Saddam's removal before he would sign the deal. However, the Gulf States leaned on Saddam, who finally accepted the ceasefire as it stood.

In the end, Iran accepted the same peace terms the Ayatollah had rejected in 1982. After eight years of fighting, Iran and Iraq returned to the antebellum status quo - nothing had changed, geopolitically. What had changed was that an estimated 500,000 to 1,000,000 Iranians were dead,

along with more than 300,000 Iraqis. Also, Iraq had seen the devastating effects of chemical weapons, which it later deployed against its own Kurdish population as well as the Marsh Arabs. The Iran-Iraq War of 1980-88 was one of the longest in modern times, and it ended in a draw. Perhaps the most important point to be drawn from it is the danger of allowing religious fanaticism on one side to clash with a leader's megalomania on the other.

- **Jul 20 1997 – U.S. Navy:** The fully restored USS Constitution (aka Old Ironsides) celebrates her 200th birthday by setting sail for the first time in 116 years.

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- **Jul 21 1861 – Civil War:** *The First Battle of Bull Run* » In the first major land battle of the Civil War, a large Union force under General Irvin McDowell is routed by a Confederate army under General Pierre G.T. Beauregard.



General Irvin McDowell & General Pierre G.T. Beauregard

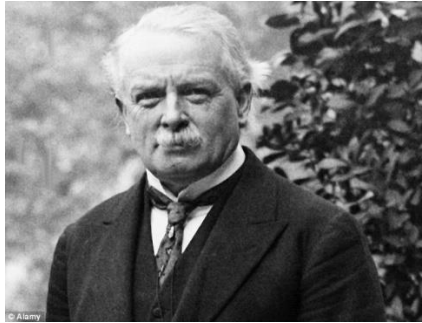
Three months after the Civil War erupted at Fort Sumter, Union military command still believed that the Confederacy could be crushed quickly and with little loss of life. In July, this overconfidence led to a premature offensive into northern Virginia by General McDowell. Searching out the Confederate forces, McDowell led 34,000 troops—mostly inexperienced and poorly trained militiamen—toward the railroad junction of Manassas, located just 30 miles from Washington, D.C. Alerted to the Union advance, General Beauregard massed some 20,000 troops there and was soon joined by General Joseph Johnston, who brought some 9,000 more troops by railroad.

On the morning of 21 JUL, hearing of the proximity of the two opposing forces, hundreds of civilians—men, women, and children—turned out to watch the first major battle of the Civil War. The fighting commenced with three Union divisions crossing the Bull Run stream, and the Confederate flank was driven back to Henry House Hill. However, at this strategic location, Beauregard had fashioned a strong defensive line anchored by a brigade of Virginia infantry under General Thomas J. Jackson. Firing from a concealed slope, Jackson's men repulsed a series of Federal charges, winning Jackson his famous nickname "Stonewall."

Meanwhile, Confederate cavalry under J.E.B. Stuart captured the Union artillery, and Beauregard ordered a counterattack on the exposed Union right flank. The rebels came charging down the hill, yelling furiously, and McDowell's line was broken, forcing his troops in a hasty retreat across Bull Run. The retreat soon became an unorganized flight, and supplies littered the road back to Washington. Union forces endured a loss of 3,000 men killed, wounded, or missing in action while the Confederates suffered 2,000 casualties. The scale of this bloodshed horrified not only the

frightened spectators at Bull Run but also the U.S. government in Washington, which was faced with an uncertain military strategy in quelling the “Southern insurrection.”

- **Jul 21 1911 – Pre WWI:** *David Lloyd George delivers Mansion House speech* » At the Mansion House in London, David Lloyd George delivers the customary annual address of the British chancellor of the exchequer.



Lloyd George, a radical member of the Liberal government of Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, had made a name for himself as a leftist, anti-imperialist influence in the party, promoting pension plans for the elderly and national insurance and opposing Britain’s policies in the South African (or Boer) War in 1899-1902. His speech at the Mansion House, however, came in the wake of the Second Moroccan Crisis, a clash between the great European powers that began on May 21, 1911, when French troops occupied the city of Fez in Morocco, at the appeal of the sultan, to restore order after rebel tribes threatened the city. On July 1, 1911, Germany sent its gunboat Panther to the port of Agadir as a forceful protest against French influence in Morocco and the Congo. Though Germany assumed Britain would stay out of the conflict and that once isolated, France would give way, that was not the case. Rather than use his annual speech as an opportunity to advocate for pacifism and disengagement from the conflict between France–Britain’s ally, along with Russia, in the so-called Triple Entente–and an aggressive Germany, Lloyd George made clear that Britain would not stand down.

Indeed, in a rousing speech on 21 JUL, the Chancellor of the Exchequer–and future prime minister–implied that war might be the price of continued threats to the security of his country and its allies: “I would make great sacrifices to preserve peace. I conceive that nothing would justify a disturbance of international good will except questions of the greatest national moment. But if a situation were to be forced upon us in which peace could only be preserved by the surrender of the great and beneficent position Britain has won by centuries of heroism and achievement, by allowing Britain to be treated where her interests were vitally affected as if she were of no account in the Cabinet of nations, then I say emphatically that peace at that price would be a humiliation intolerable for a great country like ours to endure.”

The Mansion House speech made it clear to Germany that France was not isolated. Kaiser Wilhelm, reluctant from the beginning to make such an aggressive move, directed his foreign office to back down. In an agreement concluded in November 1911, France received German recognition of its protectorate over Morocco, which it added to its North African holdings of Algeria and Tunisia. Germany, in return, was awarded some compensation in other areas of Africa, which it considered inadequate. From that point forward, the battle lines of the future war–World War I–became

increasingly clear: Britain, and Russia, would stand with France in any future conflict that threatened its security. Meanwhile, an isolated Germany began to shore up its own alliances—namely with the Austro-Hungarian Empire—and build up its own strength in order to be prepared for the next move.

- **Jul 21 1944 – WW2:** U.S. Army and Marine forces land on Guam in the Marianas.
- **Jul 21 1944 – WW2:** *Hitler to Germany: “I’m still alive.”* » Adolf Hitler takes to the airwaves to announce that the attempt on his life has failed and that “accounts will be settled.”



Hitler had survived the bomb blast that was meant to take his life. He had suffered punctured eardrums, some burns and minor wounds, but nothing that would keep him from regaining control of the government and finding the rebels. In fact, the coup d’etat that was to accompany the assassination of Hitler was put down in a mere 11 1/2 hours. In Berlin, Army Major Otto Remer, believed to be apolitical by the conspirators and willing to carry out any orders given him, was told that the Fuhrer was dead and that he, Remer, was to arrest Joseph Goebbels, Minister of Propaganda. But Goebbels had other news for Remer—Hitler was alive. And he proved it, by getting the leader on the phone (the rebels had forgotten to cut the phone lines). Hitler then gave Remer direct orders to put down any army rebellion and to follow only his orders or those of Goebbels or Himmler. Remer let Goebbels go. The SS then snapped into action, arriving in Berlin, now in chaos, just in time to convince many high German officers to remain loyal to Hitler.

Arrests, torture sessions, executions, and suicides followed. Count Claus von Stauffenberg, the man who actually planted the explosive in the room with Hitler and who had insisted to his co-conspirators that “the explosion was as if a 15-millimeter shell had hit. No one in that room can still be alive.” But it was Stauffenberg who would not be alive for much longer; he was shot dead the very day of the attempt by a pro-Hitler officer. The plot was completely undone.

Now Hitler had to restore calm and confidence to the German civilian population. At 1 a.m., July 21, Hitler’s voice broke through the radio airwaves: “I am unhurt and well.... A very small clique of ambitious, irresponsible...and stupid officers had concocted a plot to eliminate me... It is a gang of criminal elements which will be destroyed without mercy. I therefore give orders now that no military authority...is to obey orders from this crew of usurpers... This time we shall settle account with them in the manner to which we National Socialists are accustomed.”

- **Jul 21 1954 – Vietnam War:** The French sign an armistice with the Viet Minh that ends the war but divides Vietnam into two countries.

- **Jul 21 1955 – Cold War:** *Eisenhower presents his “Open Skies” plan* » President Dwight D. Eisenhower presents his “Open Skies” plan at the 1955 Geneva summit meeting with representatives of France, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union. The plan, though never accepted, laid the foundation for President Ronald Reagan’s later policy of “trust, but verify” in relation to arms agreements with the Soviet Union.



Eisenhower met with Prime Minister Anthony Eden of Great Britain, Premier Edgar Faure of France, and Premier Nikolai Bulganin of the Soviet Union (acting for Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev) in Geneva in July 1955. The agenda for the summit included discussions on the future of Germany and arms control. As it became clear that no consensus could be reached on the issue of possible German reunification or the precise configuration of an arms control agreement, Eisenhower dramatically unveiled what came to be known as his “Open Skies” proposal. It called for the United States and the Soviet Union to exchange maps indicating the exact location of every military installation in their respective nations. With these maps in hand, each nation would then be allowed to conduct aerial surveillance of the installations in order to assure that the other nations were in compliance with any arms control agreements that might be reached. While the French and British expressed interest in the idea, the Soviets rejected any plan that would leave their nation subject to surveillance by a Western power. Khrushchev declared that Eisenhower’s “Open Skies” was nothing more than an “espionage plot.”

Indeed, “Open Skies” was much less than an “espionage plot.” Eisenhower himself was later quoted as saying that he knew the Soviets would never accept the plan, but thought that their rejection of the idea would make the Russians look like they were the major impediment to an arms control agreement. For the Soviets, the idea of U.S. planes conducting surveillance of their military bases was unthinkable. They did not want it known that the Soviet Union was far behind the United States in terms of its military capabilities. The United States soon found that out anyway—just a few months after the Soviet rejection of “Open Skies,” the Eisenhower administration approved the use of high-altitude spy planes (the famous U-2s) for spying on the Soviet Union. Thirty years later, President Reagan would use much the same rhetoric in his arms control dealings with the Soviet Union. Arms control, he declared, could only be effective if compliance with such agreements could be verified. “Trust, but verify,” became Reagan’s standard phrase.

- **Jul 21 1965 – Vietnam War:** *Johnson considers the options* » With Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara back from a visit to Vietnam, President Lyndon B. Johnson begins a weeklong series of conferences with his civilian and military advisers on Vietnam. He also met with private citizens that he trusted during this period. Johnson appeared to be considering all the options with

an open mind, but it was clear that he was leaning toward providing more combat troops to bolster the faltering South Vietnamese government.

Johnson was faced with a rapidly deteriorating situation in Vietnam. The Viet Cong had increased the level of combat and there were indications that Hanoi was sending troops to fight in South Vietnam. It was apparent that the South Vietnamese were in danger of being overwhelmed. Johnson had sent Marines and paratroopers to protect American installations, but he was becoming convinced that more had to be done to stop the communists or they would soon overwhelm South Vietnam. While some advisers, such as Undersecretary of State George Ball, recommended a negotiated settlement, McNamara urged the president to “expand promptly and substantially” the U.S. military presence in South Vietnam. Johnson, not wanting to “lose” Vietnam to the communists, ultimately accepted McNamara’s recommendation. On 22 JUL, he authorized a total of 44 U.S. battalions for commitment in South Vietnam, a decision that led to a massive escalation of the war. There were less than ten U.S. Army and Marine battalions in South Vietnam at this time. Eventually there would be more than 540,000 U.S. troops in South Vietnam.

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- **Jul 22 1775 – American Revolution:** George Washington took command of the Continental Army.
- **Jul 22 1814 – War of 1812:** Five Indian tribes in Ohio make peace with the United States and declare war on Britain.
- **Jul 22 1864 – Civil War:** *Battle of Atlanta continues* » Confederate General John Bell Hood continues to try to drive General William T. Sherman from the outskirts of Atlanta when he attacks the Yankees on Bald Hill. The attack failed, and Sherman tightened his hold on Atlanta.

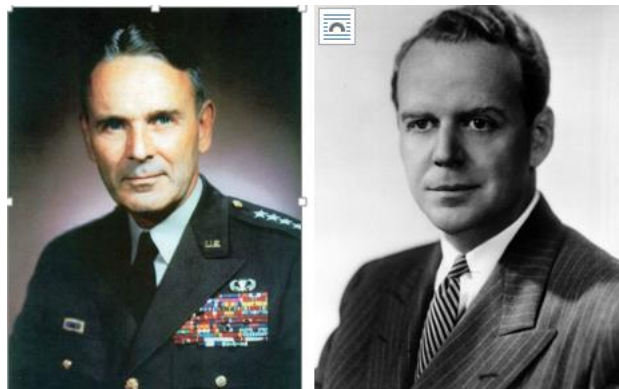


Confederate President Jefferson Davis had appointed Hood commander of the Army of Tennessee just four days before the engagement at Atlanta. Davis had been frustrated with the defensive campaign of the previous commander, Joseph Johnston, so he appointed Hood to drive Sherman back North. Hood attacked Peachtree Creek on 20 JUL, but he could not break the Federals.

Two days later, Hood tried again at Bald Hill. The Union force under Sherman consisted of three armies: James McPherson's Army of the Tennessee, John Schofield's Army of the Ohio, and George Thomas' Army of the Cumberland. Thomas' force pressed on Atlanta from the north, at Peachtree Creek, while McPherson swung to Atlanta's eastern fringe to cut the Georgia Railroad, which ran to Decatur. Hood struck at McPherson on 22 JUL, but several problems blunted the Confederate attack. The broken, rugged terrain made coordination difficult, and the attack, which had been planned for dawn, did not begin until after noon. Most important, and unbeknownst to Hood, McPherson extended his line east. The Confederates had assembled along a line—which they thought was behind the Union flank—but was now directly in front of fortified Federal soldiers. Hood's men briefly breached the Union line, but could not hold the position. The day ended without a significant change in the position of the two armies.

For the second time in three days, Hood failed to break the Union hold on Atlanta. His already-outnumbered army fared poorly. He lost more than 5,000 men, while the Union suffered 3,700 casualties. Among them was General McPherson, who had been killed while scouting the lines during the battle. He was one of the most respected and promising commanders in the Union army.

- **Jul 22 1942 – WW2:** The United States government begins compulsory civilian gasoline rationing due to the wartime demands.
- **Jul 22 1943 – WW2:** Allied forces capture the Italian city of Palermo.
- **Jul 22 1966 – Vietnam War:** B-52 bombers hit the DMZ between North and South Vietnam for the first time.
- **Jul 22 1967 – Vietnam War:** *Taylor and Clifford begin tour of the Pacific region* » Gen. Maxwell Taylor, former U.S. ambassador to South Vietnam and now a consultant to President Lyndon B. Johnson, and presidential adviser Clark Clifford tour South Vietnam, Thailand, Australia, New Zealand, and South Korea to sound out opinion on the possibility of another summit conference on the situation in Vietnam. Reportedly, they were also seeking additional troops for the war.



On their return to Washington, Taylor and Clifford reported no major disagreements on any aspect of the war among the national leaders with whom they had spoken during the trip. Thailand,

Australia, New Zealand, and Korea eventually sent combat troops to South Vietnam to fight alongside the Americans and South Vietnamese.

- **Jul 22 1968 – Vietnam War:** *North Vietnamese condemn Honolulu Conference* » Nguyen Thanh Le, North Vietnamese spokesman at the Paris peace talks, tells reporters that the Honolulu conference reveals that “the position of the United States remains infinitely obstinate.” According to the North Vietnamese, the war would continue as long as the United States remained determined to support the “puppet government” in Saigon.



President Lyndon B. Johnson had met with South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu in Honolulu from July 18 to 20 JUL. At the conference, Johnson reaffirmed his administration’s commitment “to defend South Vietnam.” Thieu stated that he had “no apprehensions at all” concerning the U.S. commitment. In a joint communique, Thieu further asserted that his government was determined “to continue to assume all the responsibility that the scale of forces of South Vietnam and their equipment will permit,” thus tacitly accepting current U.S. efforts to “Vietnamize the war.” The two presidents also agreed that South Vietnam “should be a full participant playing a leading role in discussions concerning the substance of a final settlement” to the conflict. Johnson’s successor, Richard Nixon, made “Vietnamization” one of the pillars of his Vietnam policy, directing that the combat capability of the South Vietnamese armed forces be improved so that they could ultimately assume full responsibility for the war and U.S. forces could be withdrawn.

- **Jul 22 1976 – Post WW2:** Japan completes its last reparation to the Philippines for war crimes committed during the imperial Japan's conquest of the country in the Second World War.
- **Jul 22 1987 – Gulf War:** U.S. began escorting re-flagged Kuwaiti tankers in Persian Gulf.
- **Jul 22 1987 – Cold War:** *Gorbachev accepts ban on intermediate-range nuclear missiles* » In a dramatic turnaround, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev indicates that he is willing to negotiate a ban on intermediate-range nuclear missiles without conditions. Gorbachev’s decision paved the way for the groundbreaking Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty with the United States.

Since coming to power in 1985, Gorbachev had made it clear that he sought a less contentious relationship with the United States. His American counterpart, President Ronald Reagan, was a staunch anticommunist and initially harbored deep suspicions about Gorbachev’s sincerity. After

meeting with Gorbachev in November 1985, however, Reagan came to believe that progress might be made on a number of issues, including arms control. In subsequent summit meetings, the two leaders focused on the so-called intermediate-range nuclear missiles that both nations had massed in Europe and around the world. In late 1986, it appeared that the two nations were close to an agreement that would eliminate the weapons from Europe. Negotiations stumbled, however, when Gorbachev demanded that the elimination of the missiles be accompanied by U.S. abandonment of its development of the strategic defense initiative (the “Star Wars” plan). The talks broke down while Reagan and Gorbachev traded accusations of bad faith. On July 22, 1987, Gorbachev dramatically announced that he was ready to discuss the elimination of intermediate-range missiles on a worldwide basis, with no conditions. By dropping his objection to the strategic defense initiative (which was one of Reagan’s pet projects), Gorbachev cleared the way for negotiations, and he and Reagan agreed to meet again.

Gorbachev’s change of mind was the result of a number of factors. His own nation was suffering from serious economic problems and Gorbachev desperately wanted to cut Russia’s military spending. In addition, the growing “no-nukes” movement in Europe was interfering with his ability to conduct diplomatic relations with France, Great Britain, and other western European nations. Finally, Gorbachev seemed to have a sincere personal trust in and friendship with Ronald Reagan, and this feeling was apparently reciprocal. In December 1987, during a summit in Washington, the two men signed off on the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which eliminated an entire class of nuclear weapons.

- **Jul 22 2003 – U.S.*Iraq: *Qusay and Uday Hussein killed*** » Former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein’s sons, Qusay and Uday Hussein, are killed after a three-hour firefight with U.S. forces in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul. It is widely believed that the two men were even more cruel and ruthless than their notorious father, and their death was celebrated among many Iraqis. Uday and Qusay were 39 and 37 years old, respectively, when they died. Both are said to have amassed considerable fortunes through their participation in illegal oil smuggling.



Uday (left) and Qusay (right) Saddam

Uday Hussein, as Saddam’s first-born son, was the natural choice to succeed the feared despot. But even the seemingly amoral Saddam took issue with Uday’s extravagant lifestyle—he is said to have personally owned hundreds of cars—and lack of personal discipline. After Uday bludgeoned and stabbed one of Saddam’s favorite attendants to death at a 1988 party, Saddam briefly had him imprisoned and beaten.

While Saddam began to favor his second son Qusay, Uday continued to make a name for himself among the Iraqi people for his sadism and cruelty. Prone to beating and torturing his servants and anyone else who displeased him, he was known to spend time studying new torture devices and methods to improve his technique. He even treated his so-called friends poorly—in one report, he forced some to drink dangerous amounts of alcohol purely for his amusement. Uday was also a man of unrestrained sexual appetites, sleeping with several women per night up to five nights a week. He was known for raping young women—some as young as 12—whom he found attractive, threatening their and their families' lives if they complained or spoke out against the crime. He would sometimes torture and kill his victims after sex.

Uday held several jobs during his father's regime, most notably publishing the most widely read newspaper in the country and heading Iraq's Olympic Committee. In that position, he is known to have beaten athletes whom he felt did not perform up to expectations. He was also the head of the Fedayeen Saddam, one of his father's security groups. In 1996, Uday was shot while driving in his car. Though never proven, it has been speculated that his brother Qusay may have been behind the assassination attempt. The incident caused him to suffer a stroke and, despite surgery, left a bullet lodged in his spine. Although he recovered most function, it is said that Uday lived with considerable pain for the rest of his life, which may have exacerbated his sadistic tendencies. The weakness he experienced after the shooting may also have contributed to his father's growing doubts about his suitability as a successor.

At the same time, Qusay was earning Saddam's trust. Married with four children, Qusay was said to be less sadistic than his brother, but was still a cold and ruthless killer who was much feared throughout the country. While Uday often bragged about his excesses and violent exploits, Qusay was known to intentionally keep a much lower profile. He worshipped his father and worked hard to impress him. After he proved himself by brutally repressing the Shi'ite uprisings that occurred after the 1991 Gulf War—even doing some of the killing himself—Saddam rewarded Qusay with a series of more responsible posts, including command of Iraq's elite fighting force, the Republican Guard, and the Special Security Organization, Iraq's secret police. By that time, it had become clear that Qusay had replaced his brother as Saddam's likely heir.

Despite Qusay's superior reputation, observers noted with interest that Uday's Fedayeen Saddam actually outperformed the Qusay-led Republican Guard during the United States' 2003 invasion of Iraq. Qusay proved to be an ineffective leader, showing fear and often second-guessing his own decisions. After the invasion, both brothers went into hiding and the U.S. government posted a \$15 million reward for information leading to the discovery of either man's location. Though it was widely speculated that they would not be found together because of their mutual enmity, an informant's tip led U.S. Special Forces to a house in which they were both staying on July 22, 2003.

After drawing fire, the soldiers withdrew, until receiving backup in the form of 100 troops from the 101st Airborne division and armed OH-58D Kiowa Warrior helicopters. A battle ensued, after which Americans entered the house and found the bodies of the two brothers, as well as that of Qusay's 14-year-old son. They were buried in a cemetery near the city of Tikrit, their father's birthplace.

In the wake of their deaths, the American government drew criticism for releasing pictures of Uday's and Qusay's lifeless bodies, but insisted the move was necessary to convince the skeptical

Iraqi people that the long-feared brothers were truly dead. About five months later, on December 13, 2003, their father, who also went into hiding after the U.S. invasion, was found and captured alive by American forces. His trial by special tribunal for multiple crimes committed during his reign began in October 2005. On November 5, 2006, he was found guilty of crimes against humanity and sentenced to death by hanging. After an unsuccessful appeal, Hussein was executed on December 30, 2006.

- **Jul 22 2003 – U.S. Army:** *Jessica Lynch gets hero's welcome* » U.S. Army Private Jessica Lynch, a prisoner-of-war who was rescued from an Iraqi hospital, receives a hero's welcome when she returns to her hometown of Palestine, West Virginia. The story of the 19-year-old supply clerk, who was captured by Iraqi forces in March 2003, gripped America; however, it was later revealed that some details of Lynch's dramatic capture and rescue might have been exaggerated.



Lynch, who was born April 26, 1983, was part of the 507th Ordnance Maintenance Company from Fort Bliss, Texas. On March 23, 2003, just days after the U.S. invaded Iraq, Lynch was riding in a supply convoy when her unit took a wrong turn and was ambushed by Iraqi forces near Nasiriya. Eleven American soldiers died and four others besides Lynch were captured.

Lynch, who sustained multiple broken bones and other injuries when her vehicle crashed during the ambush, was taken to an Iraqi hospital. On 1 APR, she was rescued by U.S. Special Forces who raided the hospital where she was being held. They also recovered the bodies of eight of Lynch's fellow soldiers. Lynch was taken to a military hospital in Germany for treatment and then returned to the United States.

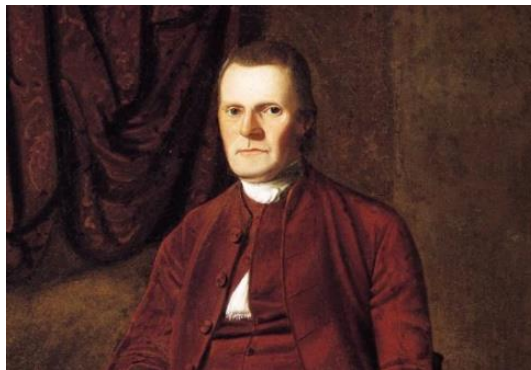
Lynch's story garnered massive media attention and she became an overnight celebrity. Various reports emerged about Lynch's experience, with some news accounts indicating that even after Lynch was wounded during the ambush she fought back against her captors. However, Lynch later stated that she had been knocked unconscious after her vehicle crashed and couldn't remember the details of what had happened to her. She also said she had not been mistreated by the staff at the Iraqi hospital and they put up no resistance to her rescue. Critics—and Lynch herself—charged the U.S. government with embellishing her story to boost patriotism and help promote the Iraq war.

In August 2003, Lynch received a medical honorable discharge. She collaborated on a book about her experience, *I Am a Soldier, Too: The Jessica Lynch Story*, which was released later that year. In April 2007, Lynch testified before Congress that she had falsely been portrayed as a "little girl Rambo" and the U.S. military had hyped her story for propaganda reasons. According to Lynch: "I am still confused as to why they chose to lie and tried to make me a legend when the real heroics of

my fellow soldiers that day were, in fact, legendary.” She added: “The truth of war is not always easy to hear but is always more heroic than the hype.”

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- **Jul 23 1793 – Civil War:** *Connecticut Patriot Roger Sherman dies* » Roger Sherman, a Connecticut Patriot and member of the Committee of Five selected to draft the Declaration of Independence, dies of typhoid in New Haven, Connecticut, at age 72. Sherman alone among the Patriots of the American Revolution signed all four documents gradually assigning sovereignty to the new United States: the Continental Association of 1774, the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation and the United States Constitution. Thomas Jefferson credited Sherman with having never said a foolish thing in his life.

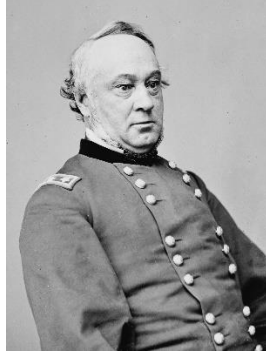


Although Sherman was a self-educated shoemaker, raised on the western frontier of Massachusetts, he would eventually distinguish himself as a surveyor and astronomer; join the Bar of Litchfield, Connecticut; and serve as both a professor of religion and treasurer of Yale College in New Haven, Connecticut. He served in numerous elective and judicial offices, including in the Second Continental Congress, in the Connecticut General Assembly, and as justice of the peace, justice of the Superior Court of Connecticut and a representative in the first United States Congress. Sherman was the mayor of New Haven and a member of the United States Senate at the time of his death. Sherman was as prolific in his personal life as he was in his political career. He had seven children with his first wife, Elizabeth Hartwell, and eight more with his second wife, Rebecca Minot Prescott.

Sherman was buried near the Yale campus. He is remembered with a statue at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia and a street named in his honor in Madison, Wisconsin.

- **Jul 23 1862 – Civil War:** *Halleck takes command of the Union army* » General Henry W. Halleck assumes the role of general-in-chief of all Union forces in an effort to better coordinate the overall Union war effort, which is floundering.

A native of New York, Halleck graduated from West Point in 1839. He showed such promise that he was allowed the rare privilege of teaching while still a student at the academy. He served during the Mexican-American War, became involved in California politics, and was a railroad president before the outbreak of the Civil War.



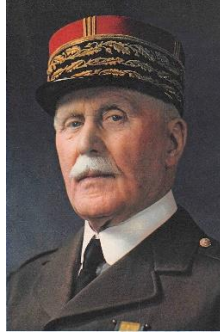
In 1861, Halleck was appointed major general. Placed in charge of the Department of the Missouri, his work brought quick results. He quickly organized the forces in Missouri into effective units and kept Missouri in the Union. Halleck's duties were soon expanded, and the department was renamed the Department of the Mississippi. He showed great strategic vision in planning campaigns from his St. Louis headquarters, but was less successful when he took to the field—as he did during the Corinth, Mississippi campaign, in which the Confederates escaped his much larger Yankee force.

President Abraham Lincoln recognized Halleck's abilities and brought him to Washington, D.C., as general-in-chief. Under his direction, Union successes continued in the west, but Halleck was unable to orchestrate any progress in Virginia or to enact an overall strategic vision to defeat the Confederates. He bickered with various commanders of the Army of the Potomac, such as George B. McClellan, Ambrose Burnside, Joseph Hooker, and George Meade. His abrasive personality did not endear him to the press or his subordinates.

In 1864, President Lincoln moved Halleck to a higher position as chief of staff for the army while appointing General Ulysses S. Grant general-in-chief, but this was really in recognition of the fact that Halleck failed to effectively direct the armies. Freed from the burden of strategic planning, Halleck's new role allowed him to utilize his bureaucratic talents. Nicknamed "Old Brains" for his organizational efficiency, Halleck effectively supplied Grant's campaign against Robert E. Lee in 1864.

Halleck remained in the army until his death in 1872. Despite his shortcomings as a strategic planner, his organizational skills contributed significantly to the Union victory.

- **Jul 23 1942 – WW2:** The German offensives Operation Edelweiss and Operation Braunschweig begin.
- **Jul 23 1944 – WW2:** US forces invade Japanese-held Tinian.
- **Jul 23 1952 – Post WW2:** *Pétain, leader of the Vichy government, dies* » General Henri-Philippe Pétain, French national hero of World War I, who was convicted of collaboration with the German occupiers of his country during World War II and sentenced to life in prison, dies. He is 95.



A graduate of Saint-Cyr Military Academy, Pétain served as a second lieutenant in the Alpine regiment, where he developed a reputation for camaraderie with the average foot soldier. He then went on to a controversial teaching career at the War College, where he propounded theories that were in direct conflict with commonly held ideas, especially his contention that a strong defense was the key to victory, not the “always be on the attack” strategy common to the French military at the time.

During World War I, General Pétain distinguished himself at the Battle of Verdun, during which he successfully repulsed German attacks on the fortress city. He was an inspiration to his troops and successfully squelched near mutinies within the army after disastrous offensives led by General Robert-Georges Nivelle. Pétain regained the confidence—and loyalty—of those soldiers when he was named Nivelle’s successor, improving their living conditions and initiating open communication between command and troops.

After the outbreak of World War II, Pétain was named vice premier by Premier Paul Reynaud. As Germany began to overrun more French territory, the French Cabinet became desperate. Reynaud continued to hold out hope, refusing to ask for an armistice, especially now that France had received assurance from Britain that the two would fight as one, and that Britain would continue to fight the Germans even if France were completely overtaken. But others in the government were despondent and wanted to sue for peace. Reynaud resigned in protest. Pétain then formed a new government and asked the Germans for an armistice—in effect, surrendering. The man who had become a legendary war hero for successfully fighting off a German attack on French soil was now surrendering to Hitler.

In the city of Vichy, the French Senate and Chamber of Deputies conferred on the 84-year-old general the title of “Chief of State,” making him a virtual dictator—although one controlled by Berlin. Pétain believed that he could negotiate a better deal for his country—for example, obtaining the release of prisoners of war—by cooperating, or, as some would say, appeasing, the Germans.

When Paris was finally liberated by General Charles de Gaulle in 1944, Pétain fled to Germany. He was brought back after the war to stand trial for his double-dealing ways. He was sentenced to death, which was then commuted to life in solitary confinement. He died at 95 in a prison fortress. Ironically, the man responsible for saving his life was De Gaulle. He and Pétain had fought in the same unit in World War I. Pétain’s bravery during that world war had not been forgotten.

- **Jul 23 1962 – U.S.*Laos:** *An accord on Laos is reached* » Avoiding a Cold War showdown, the United States and the Soviet Union sign an agreement guaranteeing a free and neutral Laos. While the

agreement ended the “official” roles of both nations in the Laotian civil war, covert assistance from both Russia and the United States continued to exacerbate the conflict in Laos for the next decade.

Laos had been a French colony since 1893. During the 1930s and World War II, an independence movement began to grow in the small nation, as did a communist movement known as the Pathet Lao. After France granted Laos conditional independence in 1949, the Pathet Lao began a civil war against the pro-French Laotian government. In 1954, after the devastating defeat of French troops at the hands of Vietnamese independence forces at the battle of Dien Bien Phu, an international conference attempted to deal with the situations in Southeast Asia. The 1954 Laos decision stated that the Pathet Lao would be confined to two remote provinces of Laos, and that national elections would be held in two years to settle all political questions. In fact, the conference did nothing to stop the civil war in Laos. The Pathet Lao, largely funded and armed with Russian money and weapons funneled through communist North Vietnam, continued its attacks. In response, the U.S. became heavily involved in providing covert assistance to the Laotian government.

Despite the U.S. assistance, the communist Pathet Lao appeared on its way to victory by 1961. President John F. Kennedy issued a thinly veiled threat of direct U.S. intervention in Laos if the Soviet Union did not cease its assistance to the communist revolutionaries. Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, perhaps realizing that the stakes were becoming much too high in a nation of only peripheral interest to Russia, agreed to a cease-fire in April 1961. At a conference in Geneva in July 1962, the United States and Russia agreed to mutually guarantee a free and neutral Laos.

The 1962 agreement also accomplished very little. American intelligence sources indicated that North Vietnam continued to funnel large amounts of Soviet aid into Laos. In response, the United States began a “secret war,” using the CIA to arm and train an anticommunist force in Laos. In a matter of months, more than 30,000 Laotians, mostly from remote hill tribes, were being used to carry out guerrilla operations against the Pathet Lao. The U.S. operation was unsuccessful, however. In 1975, shortly after victory of communist North Vietnam over South Vietnam, the Pathet Lao took control in Laos, where a communist government continues to be in power to this day.

- **Jul 23 1964 – Vietnam War:** *Taylor and Khanh have “heated” discussions in Saigon* » Ambassador Maxwell Taylor meets twice with South Vietnamese Premier General Nguyen Khanh to register U.S. disapproval of the recent calls by Khanh and Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky to extend the war into North Vietnam.

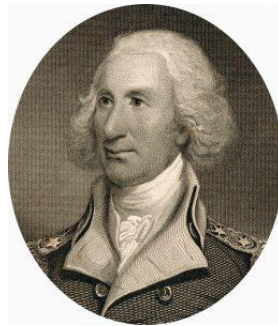
Both meetings were reportedly “heated.” It was also said that Khanh stood firmly against Taylor’s reprimands, arguing that the war had changed because of the presence of North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam. Khanh offered to resign at the second meeting, but Taylor, who had become convinced that Khanh was partly right about taking the war to the North Vietnamese, not only dissuaded him but also ended up cabling Washington that the United States should undertake covert planning with the South Vietnamese for bombing the North. In a news conference in Washington on 24 JUL, President Lyndon B. Johnson insisted that relations were good between the U.S. and South Vietnam.

- **Jul 23 1965 – Vietnam War:** *Johnson urged to declare a state of national emergency* » President Lyndon B. Johnson, in the course of discussions about what to do concerning the deteriorating

situation in Vietnam, is told by some that he should give the American public all the facts, ask for an increase in taxes, mobilize the reserves, and declare a state of national emergency in the United States. Johnson rejected this approach, and informed his staff that he wanted any decisions implemented in a “low-key manner” in order to avoid an abrupt challenge to the communists, and to avoid undue concern and excitement in Congress and in domestic public opinion. During these discussions, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara urged the president to “expand promptly and substantially” the U.S. military presence in South Vietnam. Johnson, not wanting to “lose” Vietnam to the communists, ultimately accepted McNamara’s recommendation and authorized a total of 44 U.S. battalions in South Vietnam, which led to a massive escalation of the Vietnam War.

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- **Jul 24 1864 – American Revolution:** *Hancock scolds Schuyler* » In a letter to Major General Phillip Schuyler Congressional President John Hancock accuses the officer of tolerating discord among soldiers from different states under his command. Disappointed, Hancock told Schuyler that Congress was "concerned to find there should be a necessity of recommending harmony to the officers and troops of different States under your command" can show greater weakness or wickedness than to throw provincial reflections on one another, which must have direct tendency to impede public service, and weaken the union of the American States. Schuyler was likely ill-prepared to deal with the diversity of enlisted men under his command, coming mainly from the lower ranks of society.



They were brought together only by their common desire to defeat the British. He himself had a much different background as the product of the moneyed, inbred society of the New York elite. His mother, Cornelia Van Cortlandt, and his wife, Catherine Van Rensselaer, were both from high-society New York Dutch families. Schuyler served briefly in the Continental Congress before receiving his commission as a major general in the Continental Army and taking command of the Northern Department. In this capacity, he orchestrated the disastrous, pre-emptive invasion of Canada in 1775, although another brigadier general and fellow New Yorker, Richard Montgomery, had to take command when Schuyler’s health began to fail. Montgomery went on to lose his life in the failed attack on Quebec City on December 31, 1775.

Schuyler was relieved of his post and replaced by General Horatio Gates after the loss of Fort Ticonderoga in April 1777. Schuyler demanded a court martial in order to defend his reputation. Vindicated by the proceedings, he resigned from the army and returned to service in the Continental Congress. Following the War for Independence, he supported the federal Constitution and served two

stints in the United States Senate before his health forced him into retirement. His family, however, retained power and influence. His daughter, Elizabeth, married Alexander Hamilton in 1780.

- **Jul 24 1814 – War of 1812:** General Phineas Riall advances toward the Niagara River to halt Jacob Brown's American invaders.
- **Jul 24 1864 – Civil War:** *Battle of Kernstown, Virginia* » Confederate General Jubal Early defeats Union troops under General George Crook to keep the Shenandoah Valley clear of Yankees.



Generals Jubal Early and George Crook

On June 13, 1864, General Robert E. Lee sent Early north from Petersburg to clear the Shenandoah of Union troops and relieve pressure on his own beleaguered force. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia had been pinned in Petersburg after a bloody six-week campaign with General Ulysses S. Grant's Army of the Potomac. The campaign mimicked that of General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's in 1862, when the Confederates successfully relieved pressure on Richmond and held off several Union armies in the Valley.

Early moved into Maryland in July and even threatened Washington before moving back up the Potomac and into the valley with Yankee troops in pursuit. On 23 JUL, Early's troops engaged the Union force under Crook near Kernstown, with no clear victory for either side. The next day, Early struck Crook with his entire force and found the Federals in a vulnerable position. The Yankees were routed and fled back down the valley.

Early's victory led to significant changes in the Union approach to the Shenandoah Valley. President Abraham Lincoln urged Grant to secure the area once and for all. Grant sent General Philip Sheridan to command the district in early August, and in the fall Sheridan dealt a series of defeats to Early and pacified the valley. Casualties and losses: US 590 - CSA 718.

- **Jul 24 1943 – WW2:** *Operation Gomorrah is launched* » British bombers raid Hamburg, Germany, by night in Operation Gomorrah, while Americans bomb it by day in its own "Blitz Week."

Britain had suffered the deaths of 167 civilians as a result of German bombing raids in July. Now the tables were going to turn. The evening of 24 JUL saw British aircraft drop 2,300 tons of incendiary bombs on Hamburg in just a few hours. The explosive power was the equivalent of what German bombers had dropped on London in their five most destructive raids. More than 1,500 German civilians were killed in that first British raid.



Typical bomb damage in the Eibek district of Hamburg, 1944 or 1945

Britain lost only 12 aircraft in this raid (791 flew), thanks to a new radar-jamming device called “Window,” which consisted of strips of aluminum foil dropped by the bombers en route to their target. These Window strips confused German radar, which mistook the strips for dozens and dozens of aircraft, diverting them from the trajectory of the actual bombers. To make matters worse for Germany, the U.S. Eighth Air Force began a more comprehensive bombing run of northern Germany, which included two raids on Hamburg during daylight hours.

British attacks on Hamburg continued until November of that year. Although the percentage of British bombers lost increased with each raid as the Germans became more adept at distinguishing between Window diversions and actual bombers, Operation Gomorrah proved devastating to Hamburg—not to mention German morale. When it was over, 17,000 bomber sorties dropped more than 9,000 tons of explosives, killing more than 30,000 people and destroying 280,000 buildings, including industrial and munitions plants. The effect on Hitler, too, was significant. He refused to visit the burned-out cities, as the ruins bespoke nothing but the end of the war for him. Diary entries of high German officials from this period describe a similar despair, as they sought to come to terms with defeat.

- **Jul 24 1959 – Cold War:** *Nixon and Khrushchev have a “kitchen debate”* » During the grand opening ceremony of the American National Exhibition in Moscow, Vice President Richard Nixon and Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev engage in a heated debate about capitalism and communism in the middle of a model kitchen set up for the fair. The so-called “kitchen debate” became one of the most famous episodes of the Cold War.

In late 1958, the Soviet Union and the United States agreed to set up national exhibitions in each other’s nation as part of their new emphasis on cultural exchanges. The Soviet exhibition opened in New York City in June 1959; the U.S. exhibition opened in Sokolniki Park in Moscow in July. On 24 JUL, before the Moscow exhibition was officially opened to the public, Vice President Nixon served as a host for a visit by Soviet leader Khrushchev. As Nixon led Khrushchev through the American exhibition, the Soviet leader’s famous temper began to flare. When Nixon demonstrated some new American color television sets, Khrushchev launched into an attack on the so-called “Captive Nations Resolution” passed by the U.S. Congress just days before. The resolution condemned the Soviet control of the “captive” peoples of Eastern Europe and asked all Americans to pray for their deliverance.

After denouncing the resolution, Khrushchev then sneered at the U.S. technology on display, proclaiming that the Soviet Union would have the same sort of gadgets and appliances within a few years. Nixon, never one to shy away from a debate, goaded Khrushchev by stating that the Russian leader should “not be afraid of ideas. After all, you don’t know everything.” The Soviet leader snapped at Nixon, “You don’t know anything about communism—except fear of it.”



With a small army of reporters and photographers following them, Nixon and Khrushchev continued their argument in the kitchen of a model home built in the exhibition. With their voices rising and fingers pointing, the two men went at each other. Nixon suggested that Khrushchev’s constant threats of using nuclear missiles could lead to war, and he chided the Soviet for constantly interrupting him while he was speaking. Taking these words as a threat, Khrushchev warned of “very bad consequences.” Perhaps feeling that the exchange had gone too far, the Soviet leader then noted that he simply wanted “peace with all other nations, especially America.” Nixon rather sheepishly stated that he had not “been a very good host.”

The “kitchen debate” was front-page news in the United States the next day. For a few moments, in the confines of a “modern” kitchen, the diplomatic gloves had come off and America and the Soviet Union had verbally jostled over which system was superior—communism or capitalism. As with so many Cold War battles, however, there was no clear winner—except perhaps for the U.S. media, which had a field day with the dramatic encounter.

- **Jul 24 1965 – Vietnam War:** *North Vietnam increases air defense capabilities* » In the air war, four F-4C Phantom jets escorting a formation of U.S. bombers on a raid over munitions manufacturing facilities at Kang Chi, 55 miles northwest of Hanoi, are fired at from an unknown launching site. It was the first time the enemy had launched antiaircraft missiles at U.S. aircraft.

One plane was destroyed and the other three damaged. The presence of ground-to-air antiaircraft missiles represented a rapidly improving air defense capability for the North Vietnamese. As the war progressed, North Vietnam, supplied by China and the Soviet Union, would fashion a very effective and integrated air defense system that proved to be a formidable challenge to American flyers conducting missions over North Vietnam.

- **Jul 24 1990 – Gulf War:** U.S. warships in Persian Gulf placed on alert after Iraq masses nearly 30,000 troops near its border with Kuwait.

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- **Jul 25 1783 – American Revolution:** The war's last action, the Siege of Cuddalore, is ended by preliminary peace agreement. Casualties and losses: GB 1,000 - FR 1,000.
- **Jul 25 1814 – War of 1812:** Battle of Lundy's Lane – reinforcements arrive near Niagara Falls for General Riall's British and Canadian forces and a bloody, all-night battle with Jacob Brown's Americans commences at 1800; the Americans retreat to Fort Erie. Casualties and losses: UK/BC 878 - US 858.
- **Jul 25 1861 – Civil War:** The United States Congress passes the Crittenden–Johnson Resolution, stating that the war is being fought to preserve the Union and not to end slavery.
- **Jul 25 1898 – U.S.*Puerto Rico:** *Puerto Rico invaded* » During the Spanish-American War, U.S. forces launch their invasion of Puerto Rico, the 108-mile-long, 40-mile-wide island that was one of Spain's two principal possessions in the Caribbean. After over two months of sea-based bombardment with little resistance and only seven deaths, U.S. troops under General Nelson A. Miles landing at the harbor of Guánica, were able to secure the island by mid-August. After the signing of an armistice with Spain, American troops raised the U.S. flag over the island, formalizing U.S. authority over its one million inhabitants. In December, the Treaty of Paris was signed, ending the Spanish-American War and officially approving the cession of Puerto Rico to the United States.



In the first three decades of its rule, the U.S. government made efforts to Americanize its new possession, including granting full U.S. citizenship to Puerto Ricans in 1917 and considering a measure that would make English the island's official language. However, during the 1930s, a nationalist movement led by the Popular Democratic Party won wide support across the island, and further U.S. assimilation was successfully opposed. Beginning in 1948, Puerto Ricans could elect their own governor, and in 1952 the U.S. Congress approved a new Puerto Rican constitution that made the island an autonomous U.S. commonwealth, with its citizens retaining American citizenship. The constitution was formally adopted by Puerto Rico on July 25, 1952, the 54th anniversary of the U.S. invasion.

Movements for Puerto Rican statehood, along with lesser movements for Puerto Rican independence, have won supporters on the island, but popular referendums in 1967 and 1993 demonstrated that the majority of Puerto Ricans still supported their special status as a U.S. commonwealth.

- **Jul 25 1917 – WWI: *Mata Hari sentenced to die*** » In Paris, France, on July 25, 1917, the exotic dancer Mata Hari is sentenced to death by a French court for spying on Germany's behalf during World War I.



Since 1903, Margueretha Gertruida Zelle, born in a small town in northern Holland and formerly married to a captain in the Dutch army, had performed in Paris as a dancer. She adopted the stage persona of Mata Hari, claiming she was born in a sacred Indian temple and taught ancient Indian dances by a priestess who gave her the name, which meant “eye of the dawn.” Her exotic dances soon earned her fans all over Europe, where she packed dance halls from Moscow to Berlin to Madrid, largely because of her willingness to dance almost entirely naked in public.

Mata Hari also became a celebrated courtesan, and by the outbreak of World War I, her catalog of lovers included high-ranking military officers and political figures from both France and Germany. The circumstances of her alleged spying activities during the war were and remain unclear: it was said that, while in the Netherlands in 1916, she was offered cash by a German consul to report back information obtained on her next visit to France. It appears that British intelligence discovered details of this arrangement and passed them on to their counterparts in France. In any case, Mata Hari was arrested in Paris in February 1917.

Under interrogation by French military intelligence, Mata Hari herself admitted that she had passed outdated information to a German intelligence officer, yet she claimed that she had also been paid to act as a French spy in Belgium (then occupied by the Germans), though she had not informed the French of her prior dealings with the German consul. She was apparently acting as a double agent, though the Germans had apparently written her off as an ineffective agent whose activities had produced little intelligence of value.

Mata Hari was tried in a military court and sentenced, on July 25, 1917, to execution by firing squad. As the Times of London reported on October 15, 1917, the day of her execution, “She was in the habit of meeting notorious German spy-masters outside French territory, and she was proved to have communicated important information to them, in return for which she had received several large sums of money since May 1916.” Her trial was riddled with bias and circumstantial evidence, however, and many believed the French authorities, as well as the press, trumped her up as “the greatest woman spy of the century” as a distraction for the huge losses the French army was suffering on the Western Front. Viewed by many as a victim due to her career as a dancer and courtesan and the French need to find a scapegoat, Mata Hari remains one of the most glamorous figures to come out of the shadowy world of espionage, and the archetype of the female spy.

- **Jul 25 1943 – WW2: *Mussolini falls from power*** » Benito Mussolini, fascist dictator of Italy, is voted out of power by his own Grand Council and arrested upon leaving a meeting with King Vittorio

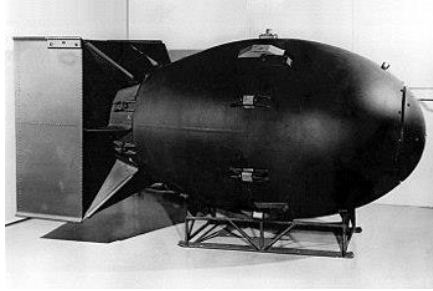
Emanuele, who tells Il Duce that the war is lost. Mussolini responded to it all with an uncharacteristic meekness.



During the evening of 14 JUL and the early hours of the 25th, the Grand Council of the fascist government met to discuss the immediate future of Italy. While all in attendance were jittery about countermanding their leader, Mussolini was sick, tired, and overwhelmed by the military reverses suffered by the Italian military. He seemed to be looking for a way out of power. One of the more reasonable within the Council, Dino Grandi, argued that the dictatorship had brought Italy to the brink of military disaster, elevated incompetents to levels of power, and alienated large portions of the population. He proposed a vote to transfer some of the leader's power to the king. The motion was passed, with Mussolini barely reacting. While some extremists balked, and would later try to convince Mussolini to have those who voted with Grandi arrested, Il Duce was simply paralyzed, unable to choose any course of action.

Shortly after the Grand Council vote, Mussolini, groggy and unshaven, kept his routine 20-minute meeting with the king, during which he normally updated Victor Emanuele on the current state of affairs. This morning, the king informed Mussolini that General Pietro Badoglio would assume the powers of prime minister and that the war was all but lost for the Italians. Mussolini offered no objection. Upon leaving the meeting, he was arrested by the police, who had been secretly planning a pretext to remove the leader for quite some time. They now had the Council vote of "no confidence" as their formal rationale. Assured of his personal safety, Mussolini acquiesced to this too, as he had to everything else leading up to this pitiful denouement. When news of Mussolini's arrest was made public, relief seemed to be the prevailing mood. There was no attempt by fellow fascists to rescue him from the penal settlement on the island of Ponza to which he was committed. The only remaining question was whether Italy would continue to fight alongside its German allies or surrender to the Allies.

- **Jul 25 1944 – WW2:** Allied forces begin the breakthrough of German lines in Normandy.
- **Jul 25 1945 – WW2:** *Truman drops hint to Stalin about a terrible new weapon* » President Harry S. Truman nonchalantly hints to Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin that the United States has successfully developed a new weapon. In his diary, Truman privately referred to the new weapon, the atomic bomb, as the most terrible bomb in the history of the world.



The United States had successfully tested the world's first atomic weapon near Alamogordo, New Mexico, on July 16, 1945. Truman received the news while in Potsdam, Germany, conferring with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet leader Joseph Stalin on post-World War II policy in Europe. On July 17, Truman told Churchill of the test's success and the two agreed to put off telling Stalin about what Truman called the dynamite news until later—Truman first wanted to get Stalin to agree to enter the Pacific war on the Allies' side with no strings on it.

On 25 JUL, after receiving Stalin's pledge to join the U.S. in the war against Japan in the Pacific, Truman casually informed the Soviet leader that the United States had a new weapon of unusual destructive force. Although Stalin did not appear to be impressed by the news, Truman hoped the information would increase the pressure on Stalin to concede to the Allies' demands regarding the post-war division of Europe. In his diary entry for 25 JUL, Truman wrote that the new weapon would be used against military targets in Japan before 10 AUG. He specifically mentioned avoiding women and children and mused it is certainly a good thing for the world that Hitler's crowd or Stalin's did not discover this atomic bomb.

It turned out that Truman would not need the Soviets' help in the Pacific after all. On August 6, 1945, one week before the Soviets were due to join combat operations, Truman ordered the first atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan. Two days later, he authorized a second atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki. Although the total number of victims has been disputed, Japanese and U.S. government statisticians estimate that at least 140,000 men, women and children died immediately in the two blasts and an additional 74,000 died from the effects of bomb-related radiation by 1950.

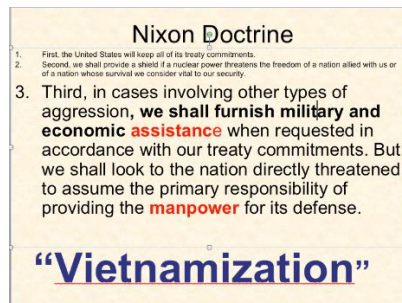
- **Jul 25 1946 – Cold War:** Operation Crossroads: an atomic bomb is detonated underwater in the lagoon of Bikini atoll.



- **Jul 25 1964 – Vietnam War:** *Joint Chiefs propose air strikes* » Following a meeting of the National Security Council to discuss the deteriorating situation in Saigon, the Joint Chiefs of Staff draw up a memo proposing air strikes against North Vietnam.

These missions were to be conducted in unmarked planes flown by South Vietnamese and Thai crews. There was no action taken on this recommendation. However, the situation changed in August 1964 when North Vietnamese torpedo boats attacked U.S. destroyers off the coast of North Vietnam. What became known as the Tonkin Gulf incident led to the passage of the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, which passed 416 to 0 in the House and 88 to 2 in the Senate. The resolution gave the president approval to “take all necessary measures to repel an armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression.” Using the resolution, Johnson ordered the bombing of North Vietnam by U.S. aircraft in retaliation for the Tonkin Gulf incident. In 1965, as the situation continued to deteriorate in South Vietnam, Johnson initiated a major commitment of U.S. troops to South Vietnam, which ultimately totaled more than 540,000 by 1968.

- **Jul 25 1969 – Cold War:** *Nixon announces new doctrine* » President Richard Nixon, at a briefing in Guam for the news media accompanying him on his trip to Asia, discusses at length the future role the United States should play in Asia and the Pacific region after the conclusion of the Vietnam War. Nixon said that while the United States would continue to have primary responsibility for the defense of its allies against nuclear attack, the noncommunist Asian nations would have to bear the burden of their own defense against conventional attack and assume responsibility for internal security. The president’s remarks were nicknamed the “Nixon Doctrine.”



- **Jul 25 1990 – Gulf War:** U.S. Ambassador tells Iraq, US won't take sides in Iraq–Kuwait dispute.
- **Jul 25 2010 – Afghanistan War:** WikiLeaks published 75,000 classified documents about the War in Afghanistan, one of the largest leaks in U.S. military history.

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- **Jul 26 1861 – Civil War:** George B. McClellan assumes command of the Army of the Potomac following a disastrous Union defeat at the First Battle of Bull Run.
- **Jul 26 1863 – Civil War:** *Confederate John Hunt Morgan is captured* – Confederate cavalry leader John Hunt Morgan and 360 of his men are captured at Salineville, Ohio, during a spectacular raid on the North. Starting in July 1862, Morgan made four major raids on Northern or Northern-held

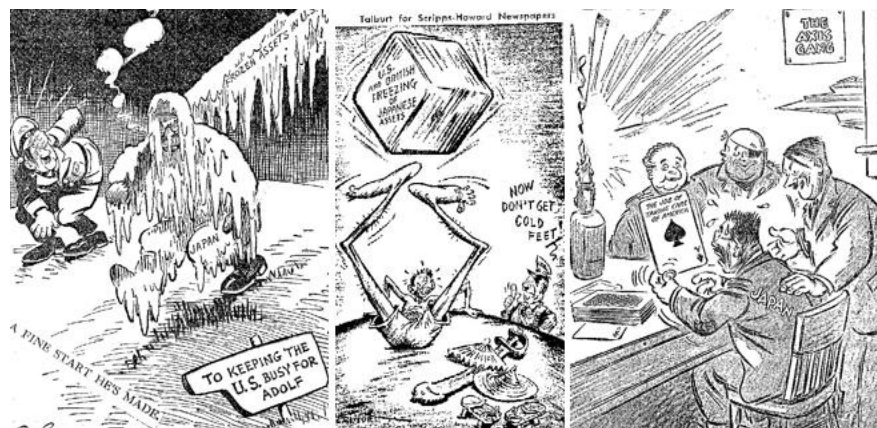
territory over the course of a year. Although they were of limited strategic significance, the raids served as a boost to Southern morale and captured much-needed supplies.



Morgan's fourth raid began on July 2, 1863, when he and 2,400 troopers left Tennessee and headed for the Ohio River. He hoped to divert the attention of Union commander William Rosecrans, who was driving for Chattanooga, Tennessee. Morgan reached the river on 8 JUL, using stolen steamboats to ferry his force across to Indiana. For the next two and a half weeks, Morgan rampaged through Indiana and Ohio, feigning toward Cincinnati, then riding across southern Ohio. His force met little resistance, and scattered local militias who faced them. With Union cavalry in hot pursuit, Morgan headed for Pennsylvania. For more than a week, Morgan and his troops spent 21 hours per day in the saddle. At Pomeroy, Ohio, Morgan lost over 800 men when the Yankees caught up with him and captured a large part of his force. He and the remaining members of his command were forced further north, and on 26 JUL, the exhausted men surrendered.

In the end, only 400 of Morgan's troopers made it safely back to the South. Those captured were scattered around Northern prison camps. Morgan and his officers were sent to the newly opened Ohio State Penitentiary. He and his men tunneled out on November 27, 1863; however, Morgan was killed in battle a year later.

- **Jul 26 1941 – WW2:** United States freezes Japanese assets » President Franklin Roosevelt seizes all Japanese assets in the United States in retaliation for the Japanese occupation of French Indo-China.



On 24 JUL, Tokyo decided to strengthen its position in terms of its invasion of China by moving through Southeast Asia. Given that France had long occupied parts of the region, and Germany, a Japanese ally, now controlled most of France through Petain's puppet government, France "agreed" to the occupation of its Indo-China colonies. Japan followed up by occupying Cam Ranh naval base, 800 miles from the Philippines, where Americans had troops, and the British base at Singapore.

President Roosevelt swung into action by freezing all Japanese assets in America. Britain and the Dutch East Indies followed suit. The result: Japan lost access to three-fourths of its overseas trade and 88 percent of its imported oil. Japan's oil reserves were only sufficient to last three years, and only half that time if it went to war and consumed fuel at a more frenzied pace. Japan's immediate response was to occupy Saigon, again with Vichy France's acquiescence. If Japan could gain control of Southeast Asia, including Malaya, it could also control the region's rubber and tin production—a serious blow to the West, which imported such materials from the East. Japan was now faced with a dilemma: back off of its occupation of Southeast Asia and hope the oil embargo would be eased—or seize the oil and further antagonize the West, even into war.

- **Jul 26 1944 – WW2:** USS Robalo (SS-273) sunk by a mine off western Palawan, Philippines. 74 killed, 4 POWs later died.
- **Jul 26 1945 – WW2:** The US Navy cruiser USS Indianapolis arrives at Tinian with parts of the warhead for the Hiroshima atomic bomb.
- **Jul 26 1945 – WW2:** *Winston Churchill resigns* » In the 11th hour of World War II, Winston Churchill is forced to resign as British prime minister following his party's electoral defeat by the Labour Party. It was the first general election held in Britain in more than a decade. The same day, Clement Attlee, the Labour leader, was sworn in as the new British leader.



Born at Blenheim Palace in 1874, Churchill joined the British Fourth Hussars upon his father's death in 1895. During the next five years, he enjoyed an illustrious military career, serving in India, the Sudan, and South Africa, and distinguishing himself several times in battle. In 1899, he resigned his commission to concentrate on his literary and political career and in 1900 was elected to Parliament as a Conservative MP from Oldham. In 1904, he joined the Liberals, serving in a number of important posts before being appointed Britain's First Lord of the Admiralty in 1911, where he worked to bring the British navy to a readiness for the war he foresaw.

In 1915, in the second year of World War I, Churchill was held responsible for the disastrous Dardanelles and Gallipoli campaigns, and he was excluded from the war coalition government. He resigned and volunteered to command an infantry battalion in France. However, in 1917, he returned

to politics as a cabinet member in the Liberal government of Lloyd George. From 1919 to 1921, he was secretary of state for war and in 1924 returned to the Conservative Party, where two years later he played a leading role in the defeat of the General Strike of 1926. Out of office from 1929 to 1939, Churchill issued unheeded warnings of the threat of Nazi and Japanese aggression.

After the outbreak of World War II in Europe, Churchill was called back to his post as First Lord of the Admiralty and eight months later replaced the ineffectual Neville Chamberlain as prime minister of a new coalition government. In the first year of his administration, Britain stood alone against Nazi Germany, but Churchill promised his country and the world that the British people would “never surrender.” He rallied the British people to a resolute resistance and expertly orchestrated Franklin D. Roosevelt and Joseph Stalin into an alliance that eventually crushed the Axis.

In July 1945, a few weeks before the defeat of Japan in World War II, his Conservative government suffered an electoral loss against Clement Attlee’s Labour Party, and Churchill resigned as prime minister. He became leader of the opposition and in 1951 was again elected prime minister. Two years later, he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II and awarded the Nobel Prize in literature for his six-volume historical study of World War II and for his political speeches. In 1955, he retired as prime minister but remained in Parliament until 1964, the year before his death.

- **Jul 26 1947 – Cold War:** *Truman signs the National Security Act* » President Harry S. Truman signs the National Security Act, which becomes one of the most important pieces of Cold War legislation. The act established much of the bureaucratic framework for foreign policymaking for the next 40-plus years of the Cold War.

By July 1947, the Cold War was in full swing. The United States and the Soviet Union, once allies during World War II, now faced off as ideological enemies. In the preceding months, the administration of President Truman had argued for, and secured, military and economic aid to Greece and Turkey to assist in their struggles against communist insurgents. In addition, the Marshall Plan, which called for billions of dollars in U.S. aid to help rebuild war-torn Western Europe and strengthen it against possible communist aggression, had also taken shape. As the magnitude of the Cold War increased, however, so too did the need for a more efficient and manageable foreign policymaking bureaucracy in the United States. The National Security Act was the solution.



The National Security Act had three main parts. First, it streamlined and unified the nation’s military establishment by bringing together the Navy Department and War Department under a new

Department of Defense. This department would facilitate control and utilization of the nation's growing military. Second, the act established the National Security Council (NSC). Based in the White House, the NSC was supposed to serve as a coordinating agency, sifting through the increasing flow of diplomatic and intelligence information in order to provide the president with brief but detailed reports. Finally, the act set up the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The CIA replaced the Central Intelligence Group, which had been established in 1946 to coordinate the intelligence-gathering activities of the various military branches and the Department of State. The CIA, however, was to be much more—it was a separate agency, designed not only to gather intelligence but also to carry out covert operations in foreign nations.

The National Security Act formally took effect in September 1947. Since that time, the Department of Defense, NSC, and CIA have grown steadily in terms of size, budgets, and power. The Department of Defense, housed in the Pentagon, controls a budget that many Third World nations would envy. The NSC rapidly became not simply an information organizing agency, but one that was active in the formation of foreign policy. The CIA also grew in power over the course of the Cold War, becoming involved in numerous covert operations. Most notable of these was the failed Bay of Pigs operation of 1961, in which Cuban refugees, trained and armed by the CIA, were unleashed against the communist regime of Fidel Castro. The mission was a disaster, with most of the attackers either killed or captured in a short time. Though it had both successes and failures, the National Security Act indicated just how seriously the U.S. government took the Cold War threat.

- **Jul 26 1968 – Vietnam War:** *South Vietnamese opposition leader tried and sentenced* » Truong Dinh Dzu, a candidate who ran on a peace platform in the September 1967 presidential elections in South Vietnam, is sentenced to five years of hard labor for urging the formation of a coalition government as a step toward ending the war. This was the first time that a major political figure was tried and convicted under a 1965 decree that ordered the prosecution of persons “who interfere with the government’s struggle against communism.”
- **Jul 26 1972 – Vietnam War:** *South Vietnamese troops raise flag over Quang Tri* » Although South Vietnamese paratroopers hoist their flag over Quang Tri Citadel, they prove unable to hold the Citadel for long or to secure Quang Tri City. Fighting outside the city remained intense. Farther to the south, South Vietnamese troops under heavy shelling were forced to abandon Fire Base Bastogne, which protected the southwest approach to Hue.



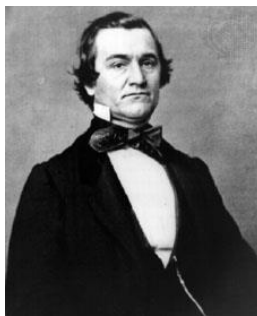
North Vietnamese troops had captured Quang Tri City on 1 MAY as part of their Nguyen Hue Offensive (later called the “Easter Offensive”), a massive invasion by North Vietnamese forces that had been launched on 31 MAR. The attacking force included 14 infantry divisions and 26 separate regiments, with more than 120,000 troops and approximately 1,200 tanks and other armored vehicles. The main North Vietnamese objectives, in addition to Quang Tri in the north, were Kontum in the Central Highlands, and An Loc farther to the south.

Initially, the South Vietnamese defenders were almost overwhelmed, particularly in the northernmost provinces, where they abandoned their positions in Quang Tri. At Kontum and An Loc, the South Vietnamese were more successful in defending against the attacks, but only after weeks of bitter fighting. Although the defenders suffered heavy casualties, they managed to hold their own with the aid of U.S. advisors and American airpower. Fighting continued all over South Vietnam into the summer months.

The heavy fighting would continue in the area of Quang Tri and Hue until September, when the South Vietnamese forces finally succeeded in recapturing Quang Tri. With the communist invasion blunted, President Nixon declared that the South Vietnamese victory proved the viability of his “Vietnamization” program, which he had instituted in 1969 to increase the combat capability of the South Vietnamese armed forces so U.S. troops could be withdrawn.

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- **Jul 27 1778 – American Revolution:** First Battle of Ushant – British and French fleets fight to a standoff. Casualties and losses: GB 1,196 - FR 539.
- **Jul 27 1861 – Civil War:** Confederate troops occupy Fort Fillmore, New Mexico.
- **Jul 27 1863 – Civil War:** *Ardent secessionist William Lowndes Yancey dies* » Confederate William Lowndes Yancey dies of kidney disease in Montgomery, Alabama. Yancey, whose militant stand on the expansion of slavery contributed dramatically to the growing sectional tensions of the era, epitomized the rise of Southern nationalism in the years before the war. The term “fire-eater” was applied to radical secessionists like Yancey, and their rise significantly altered the debate over slavery.



Yancey’s road to secession was an unusual one. Born on a Georgia plantation in 1814, his father died when he was young. His mother married a Presbyterian minister from New York, who moved

the family there when Yancey was nine. Educated in the North, he moved back to the South and became a staunch Unionist. He lived in South Carolina during the nullification crisis of the 1830s, a political dispute in which South Carolina, led by Vice President John C. Calhoun, asserted states' rights by ignoring a federal tariff. It was the beginning of a debate that eventually led to the war.

Within a few years, the circumstances of Yancey's life dramatically changed his political views. He married a slaveholder and moved to Alabama. In 1838, he killed his wife's uncle in a street fight and served a few months in jail for manslaughter. Yancey suffered financially during the Panic of 1837, and most of his slaves died when a neighbor tried to kill his overseer by poisoning a well on Yancey's plantation. These events—coupled with the rise of his stepfather, whom he hated, to a prominent position as an abolitionist—helped form Yancey's political opinions.

In 1841, Yancey began a political career that led him to Congress by 1844. Known as a fiery orator, his words sparked at least one duel, albeit a bloodless one. Yancey, a Democrat, often lashed out against Whigs and even moderate members of his own party, such as Illinois Senator Stephen Douglas. He vehemently opposed the Compromise of 1850 and became an avowed secessionist. He served only two terms in Congress but was an important figure in the growing crisis of the 1850s. When the war broke out, Yancey headed a diplomatic mission to Great Britain and France to secure recognition of the Confederate States of America. These efforts were unsuccessful.

Later, as a senator from Alabama in the Confederate Congress, Yancey openly clashed with President Jefferson Davis and was often critical of the new Confederate government's encroachment on the power of the states. His sudden death in 1863 silenced one of the strongest voices of states' rights.

- **Jul 27 1929 – Geneva Convention:** The Geneva Convention agreement was ratified and signed by 53 nations at Geneva, Switzerland on July 27, 1929. Its official name is the Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, Geneva July 27, 1929. It entered into force 19 June 1931. It is this version (the first of 4) of the Geneva Conventions covered the treatment of prisoners of war during World War II. Not all countries that later were involved in World War II signed, e.g., the USSR. Japan did sign the Convention, but did not ratify it. They were a "state signatory." The other eight who were only state signatories are were Cuba, Dominican Republic, Finland, Ireland, Islamic Republic of Iran, Luxembourg, Nicaragua, and Uruguay.



1929 Convention

The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their additional Protocols contain the most important rules limiting the barbarity of war. They protect people who do not take part in the fighting (civilians,

medics, aid workers) and those who can no longer fight (wounded, sick and shipwrecked troops, prisoners of war). At http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/geneva02.asp is a copy contain all the articles of the 1929 Convention.

- **Jul 27 1942 – WW2:** Allied forces successfully halt the final Axis advance into Egypt.
- **Jul 27 1944 – WW2:** U.S. troops complete the liberation of Guam.
- **JUL 27 1944 – WW2:** *Operations Wallace & Hardy* » These were the codenames for two British Special Air Service operations that took place from 27 July to 19 September 1944. Initially two sets of operations by 2nd Special Air Service, they were eventually amalgamated into one. Their objective was to disrupt German lines of communication, coordinate the activities of the French Resistance and prevent German reinforcements moving to the Normandy beachheads. They operated from the Loire valleys, then mostly in the Forêt de Châtillon area in Burgundy and finally through to the forests of Darney to Belfort. The operation which lasted six weeks in all ended as they linked up with the US Seventh Army. As both turned out these were the most successful post D-Day Special Air Service (SAS) operations. This push east was just another nail in the coffin of German supremacy in France.
- **Jul 27 1953 – Korean War:** *Armistice ends the Korean War* » After three years of a bloody and frustrating war, the United States, the People’s Republic of China, North Korea, and South Korea agree to an armistice, bringing the Korean War to an end. The armistice ended America’s first experiment with the Cold War concept of “limited war.”



UN delegate Lieut. Gen. William K. Harrison, Jr. (seated left), and Korean People's Army and Chinese People's Volunteers delegate Gen. Nam Il (seated right) signing the Korean War armistice agreement at P'anmunjŏm, Korea, July 27, 1953.

The Korean War began on June 25, 1950, when communist North Korea invaded South Korea. Almost immediately, the United States secured a resolution from the United Nations calling for the military defense of South Korea against the North Korean aggression. In a matter of days, U.S. land, air, and sea forces had joined the battle. The U.S. intervention turned the tide of the war, and soon the U.S. and South Korean forces were pushing into North Korea and toward that nation’s border with China. In November and December 1951, hundreds of thousands of troops from the People’s Republic of China began heavy assaults against the American and South Korea forces. The war eventually bogged down into a battle of attrition. In the U.S. presidential election of 1952, Republican candidate Dwight D. Eisenhower strongly criticized President Harry S. Truman’s handling of the war. After his victory, Eisenhower adhered to his promise to “go to Korea.” His trip convinced him that something new was needed to break the diplomatic logjam at the peace talks that had begun in July

1951. Eisenhower began to publicly hint that the United States might make use of its nuclear arsenal to break the military stalemate in Korea. He allowed the Nationalist Chinese government on Taiwan to begin harassing air raids on mainland China. The president also put pressure on his South Korean ally to drop some of its demands in order to speed the peace process.

Whether or not Eisenhower's threats of nuclear attacks helped, by July 1953 all sides involved in the conflict were ready to sign an agreement ending the bloodshed. The armistice, signed on July 27, established a committee of representatives from neutral countries to decide the fate of the thousands of prisoners of war on both sides. It was eventually decided that the POWs could choose their own fate—stay where they were or return to their homelands. A new border between North and South Korea was drawn, which gave South Korea some additional territory and demilitarized the zone between the two nations. The war cost the lives of millions of Koreans and Chinese, as well as over 50,000 Americans. It had been a frustrating war for Americans, who were used to forcing the unconditional surrender of their enemies. Many also could not understand why the United States had not expanded the war into China or used its nuclear arsenal. As government officials were well aware, however, such actions would likely have prompted World War III.

- **Jul 27 1964 – Vietnam War:** *Pentagon announces 5,000 more troops to Vietnam* » It is announced that the United States will send an additional 5,000 U.S. troops to Vietnam, bringing the total number of U.S. forces in Vietnam to 21,000. Military spokesmen and Washington officials insisted that this did not represent any change in policy, and that new troops would only intensify existing U.S. efforts. However, the situation changed in August 1964 when North Vietnamese torpedo boats attacked U.S. destroyers off the coast of North Vietnam. What became known as the Tonkin Gulf incident led to the passage of the Tonkin Gulf Resolution, which passed unanimously in the House and 88 to 2 in the Senate. The resolution gave the president approval to “take all necessary measures to repel an armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression.” Using the resolution, Johnson ordered the bombing of North Vietnam in retaliation for the Tonkin Gulf incident.

In 1965, Johnson was faced with a rapidly deteriorating situation in Vietnam. The Viet Cong had increased the level of combat and there were indications that Hanoi was sending troops to fight in the south. It was apparent that the South Vietnamese were in danger of being overwhelmed. Johnson had sent Marines and paratroopers to protect American installations, but he had become convinced that more had to be done to stop the communists or they would soon overwhelm South Vietnam. While some advisers, such as Undersecretary of State George Ball, recommended a negotiated settlement, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara urged the president to “expand promptly and substantially” the U.S. military presence in South Vietnam. Johnson, not wanting to “lose” Vietnam to the communists, ultimately accepted McNamara's recommendation. This decision led to a massive escalation of the war.

- **Jul 27 1965 – Vietnam War:** *U.S. jets attack new North Vietnamese air defense sites* » Forty-six U.S. F-105 fighter-bombers attack the missile installation that had fired at U.S. planes on 24 JUL. They also attacked another missile installation 40 miles northwest of Hanoi. One missile launcher was destroyed and another was damaged, but five U.S. planes were shot down in the effort.

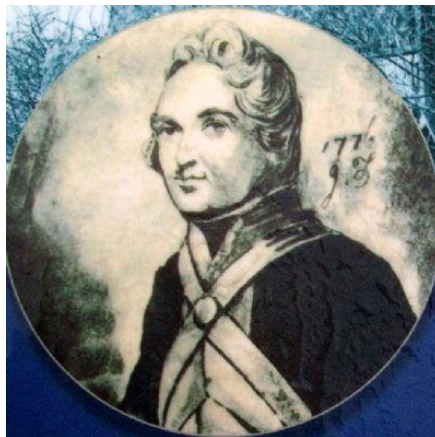
On 24 JUL, U.S. bombers on a raid over munitions manufacturing facilities at Kang Chi, 55 miles northwest of Hanoi, were fired at from an unknown launching site. It was the first time the enemy had launched antiaircraft missiles at U.S. aircraft. The presence of ground-to-air antiaircraft missiles represented a rapidly improving air defense capability for the North Vietnamese. As the war progressed, North Vietnam, supplied by China and the Soviet Union, would fashion a very effective and integrated air defense system, which became a formidable challenge to American flyers conducting missions over North Vietnam.

- **Jul 27 1995 – Post Korean War:** The Korean War Veterans Memorial is dedicated in Washington, D.C.



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- **Jul 28 1776 – American Revolution:** *Sargent and Hutchinson arrive at Horn's Hook* » Colonel Paul Dudley Sargent with the 16th Continental Regiment and Colonel Israel Hutchinson with his 27th Continental Regiment, both from Massachusetts, as well as several British ships, arrive at Horn's Hook, New York, on this day in 1776.



Colonel Paul Dudley Sargent

Horn's Hook was first intended to house nine guns as a Patriot battery to defend Manhattan in February 1776. The battery, or fort, stood near the modern-day intersection of 89th Street and East End Avenue, opposite Ward's Island and Hell's Gate. After gathering at Horn's Hook, the Massachusetts regiments went on to Long Island, where they suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of brothers Admiral Richard and General William Howe. The campaign culminated in their retreat from Brooklyn Heights on Long Island back to Horn's Hook in Manhattan on 27 AUG, one month after their initial arrival. The Massachusetts regiments exchanged continual fire with a British fort a short distance across the water from Horn's Hook in Queens for the 10 days between the Patriots' retreat from Brooklyn Heights and the complete British takeover of Manhattan Island.

After the British took Manhattan and fire ravaged the city in September 1776, the Redcoats restored Horn's Hook, adding batteries, palisades (iron stakes) and a palisade-protected blockhouse. Following the war, Archibald Gracie leveled the fort and, in 1794, built a Federal-style mansion on the site. Gracie's country house, with its view of the East River five miles north of New York City, has since been absorbed into the Manhattan metropolis and has served as the official residence of the city's mayors since Fiorello H. LaGuardia made it his home in 1942.

- **Jul 28 1854 – U.S. Navy:** USS Constellation (1854), the last all-sail warship built by the US Navy, is commissioned.
- **Jul 28 1864 – Civil War:** *Battle of Ezra Church begins* – At the Battle of Ezra Church, Georgia, Confederates under General John Bell Hood make a third attempt to break General William T. Sherman's hold on Atlanta. Like the first two, this attack failed, destroying the Confederate Army of Tennessee's offensive capabilities.



Generals John Bell Hood & William T. Sherman

Hood had replaced Joseph Johnston as commander of the Army of Tennessee on July 18, 1864, because Johnston had failed to keep Sherman away from Atlanta. Upon assuming command of the army, Hood quickly scrapped Johnston's defensive strategy and attacked Sherman, first on July 20 at the Battle of Peachtree Creek, and then on July 22 at the Battle of Atlanta. Both attacks failed, but that did not deter Hood from making another attempt to break the Union hold on the important Southern city.

When Sherman sent General Oliver O. Howard southeast of Atlanta to cut the Macon and Western Railroad, one of the remaining supply lines, Hood sent Stephen D. Lee's corps to block the move. Lee attacked at Ezra Church, but the battle did not go as planned for the Confederates. Instead of striking the Union flank, Lee's corps hit the Union center, where the Yankee troops were positioned behind

barricades made from logs and pews taken from the church. Throughout the afternoon, Lee made several attacks on the Union lines. Each was turned back, and Lee was not able to get around the Union flank.

The battle was costly for an army that was already outnumbered. Lee lost 3,000 men to the Union's 630. More important, Hood lost his offensive capability. For the next month, he could do no more than sit in trenches around Atlanta and wait for Sherman to deal him the knockout blow.

- **Jul 28 1914 – WWI:** *Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia* » One month to the day after Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria and his wife were killed by a Serbian nationalist in Sarajevo, Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia, effectively beginning the First World War.



Threatened by Serbian ambition in the tumultuous Balkans region of Europe, Austria-Hungary determined that the proper response to the assassinations was to prepare for a possible military invasion of Serbia. After securing the unconditional support of its powerful ally, Germany, Austria-Hungary presented Serbia with a rigid ultimatum on July 23, 1914, demanding, among other things, that all anti-Austrian propaganda within Serbia be suppressed, and that Austria-Hungary be allowed to conduct its own investigation into the archduke's killing. Though Serbia effectively accepted all of Austria's demands except for one, the Austrian government broke diplomatic relations with the other country on 25 JUL and went ahead with military preparedness measures. Meanwhile, alerted to the impending crisis, Russia—Serbia's own mighty supporter in the Balkans—began its own initial steps towards military mobilization against Austria.

In the days following the Austrian break in relations with Serbia, the rest of Europe, including Russia's allies, Britain and France, looked on with trepidation, fearing the imminent outbreak of a Balkans conflict that, if entered into by Russia, threatened to explode into a general European war. The British Foreign Office lobbied its counterparts in Berlin, Paris and Rome with the idea of an international convention aimed at moderating the conflict; the German government, however, was set against this notion, and advised Vienna to go ahead with its plans.

On July 28, 1914, after a decision reached conclusively the day before in response to pressure from Germany for quick action—apart from Kaiser Wilhelm II, who by some accounts still saw the possibility of a peaceful diplomatic resolution to the conflict, but was outmaneuvered by the more hawkish military and governmental leadership of Germany—Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia. In response, Russia formally ordered mobilization in the four military districts facing

Galicia, its common front with the Austro-Hungarian Empire. That night, Austrian artillery divisions initiated a brief, ineffectual bombardment of Belgrade across the Danube River.

“My darling one and beautiful, everything tends towards catastrophe and collapse,” British naval official Winston Churchill wrote to his wife at midnight on 29 JUL halt mobilization met with defiance, Germany declared war on Russia. Russia’s ally, France, ordered its own general mobilization that same day, and on 3 AUG, France and Germany declared war on each other. The German army’s planned invasion of neutral Belgium, announced on 4 AUG, prompted Britain to declare war on Germany. Thus, in the summer of 1914, the major powers in the Western world—with the exception of the United States and Italy, both of which declared their neutrality, at least for the time being—flung themselves headlong into the First World War.

- **Jul 28 1932 – U.S. Army: Bonus Marchers evicted by U.S. Army** » During the Great Depression, President Herbert Hoover orders the U.S. Army under General Douglas MacArthur to evict by force the Bonus Marchers from the nation’s capital.



Two months before, the so-called “Bonus Expeditionary Force,” a group of some 1,000 World War I veterans seeking cash payments for their veterans’ bonus certificates, had arrived in Washington, D.C. Most of the marchers were unemployed veterans in desperate financial straits. In June, other veteran groups spontaneously made their way to the nation’s capital, swelling the Bonus Marchers to nearly 20,000 strong. Camping in vacant government buildings and in open fields made available by District of Columbia Police Chief Pelham D. Glassford, they demanded passage of the veterans’ payment bill introduced by Representative Wright Patman.

While awaiting a vote on the issue, the veterans conducted themselves in an orderly and peaceful fashion, and on 15 JUN the Patman bill passed in the House of Representatives. However, two days later, its defeat in the Senate infuriated the marchers, who refused to return home. In an increasingly tense situation, the federal government provided money for the protesters’ trip home, but 2,000 refused the offer and continued to protest. On 28 JUL, President Herbert Hoover ordered the army to evict them forcibly. General MacArthur’s men set their camps on fire, and the veterans were driven from the city. Hoover, increasingly regarded as insensitive to the needs of the nation’s many poor, was much criticized by the public and press for the severity of his response.

- **Jul 28 1945 – WW2: Hamburg suffers a firestorm** » The worst British bombing raid on Hamburg so far virtually sets the city on fire, killing 42,000 German civilians.



On 24 JUL, British bombers launched Operation Gomorrah, repeated bombing raids against Hamburg and its industrial and munitions plants. Sortie after sortie dropped fire from the sky, as thousands of tons of incendiary bombs destroyed tens of thousands of lives, buildings, and acreage. But the night of the 28th saw destruction unique in more than three years of bomb attacks: In just 43 minutes, 2,326 tons of bombs were dropped, creating a firestorm (a word that entered English parlance for the first time as a result of these events). Low humidity, a lack of fire-fighting resources (exhausted from battling blazes caused by the previous nights' raids), and hurricane-level winds at the core of the storm literally fanned the flames, scorching eight square miles of Hamburg.

One British flight lieutenant recalled seeing “not many fires but one... I have never seen a fire like that before and was never to see its like again.” Despite the terrible loss of civilian life, there strange and awful irony: The horrific bombing runs affected Hitler’s war machine only marginally. It did more to wound the morale of the German people and its army officers than it did to the production of munitions, which was back running full speed within a matter of weeks.

- **Jul 28 1945 – WW2:** *Plane crashes into Empire State Building* » A United States military plane crashes into the Empire State Building on this day in 1945, killing 14 people. The freak accident was caused by heavy fog.



The B-25 Mitchell bomber, with two pilots and one passenger aboard, was flying from New Bedford, Massachusetts, to LaGuardia Airport in New York City. As it came into the metropolitan area on that Saturday morning, the fog was particularly thick. Air-traffic controllers instructed the plane to fly to Newark Airport instead.

This new flight plan took the plane over Manhattan; the crew was specifically warned that the Empire State Building, the tallest building in the city at the time, was not visible. The bomber was flying relatively slowly and quite low, seeking better visibility, when it came upon the Chrysler Building in midtown. It swerved to avoid the building but the move sent it straight into the north side of the Empire State Building, near the 79th floor.

Upon impact, the plane's fuel exploded, filling the interior of the building with flames all the way down to the 75th floor and sending flames out of the hole the plane had ripped open in the building's side. One engine from the plane went straight through the building and landed in a penthouse apartment across the street. Other plane parts ended up embedded in and on top of nearby buildings. The other engine snapped an elevator cable while at least one woman was riding in the elevator car. The emergency auto brake saved the woman from crashing to the bottom, but the engine fell down the shaft and landed on top of it. Quick-thinking rescuers pulled the woman from the elevator, saving her life.

Since it was a Saturday, fewer workers than normal were in the building. Only 11 people in the building were killed, some suffering burns from the fiery fuel and others after being thrown out of the building. All 11 victims were workers from War Relief Services department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, into the offices of which the plane had crashed. The three people on the plane were also killed. An 18 foot by 20 foot hole was left in the side of the Empire State Building. Though its structural integrity was not affected, the crash did cause nearly \$1 million in damages, about \$10.5 million in today's money.

- **Jul 28 1945 – WW2:** *U.S. Senate approves United Nations charter* » In a ringing declaration indicating that America's pre-World War II isolation was truly at an end, the U.S. Senate approves the charter establishing the United Nations. In the years to come, the United Nations would be the scene of some of the most memorable Cold War confrontations between the United States and the Soviet Union.



Harry Truman looks on as Secretary of State Edward R. Stettinius signs the United Nations Security Charter for the U.S.

In 1919, following the close of World War I, President Woodrow Wilson implored the U.S. Senate to approve the charter for the League of Nations. Postwar isolationism and partisan politics killed U.S. participation in the League, however. In July 1945, with World War II coming to a close, the U.S. Senate indicated the sea change in American attitudes toward U.S. involvement in world affairs by approving the charter for the United Nations by a vote of 89 to 2. President Harry S. Truman was delighted with the vote, declaring, “The action of the Senate substantially advances the cause of world

peace.” Acting Secretary of State Joseph Grew also applauded the Senate’s action, noting, “Millions of men, women and children have died because nations took to the naked sword instead of the conference table to settle their differences.” The U.N. charter would provide the “foundation and cornerstone on which the international organization to keep the peace will be built.” Once the charter had been ratified by a majority of the 50 nations that hammered out the charter in June 1945, the U.S. Senate formally approved U.S. participation in the United Nations in December 1945.

Whether the United Nations became a “foundation and cornerstone” of world peace in the years that followed is debatable, but it was certainly the scene of several notable Cold War confrontations between the United States and the Soviet Union. In 1950, with the Russians absent from the U.N. Security Council, the United States pushed through a resolution providing U.N. military assistance to South Korea in the Korean War. And in one memorable moment, during a speech denouncing Western imperialism in 1960, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev took off one of his shoes and pounded his table with it to make his point.

- **Jul 28 1965 – Vietnam War:** *Johnson announces more troops to Vietnam* » President Lyndon B. Johnson announces that he has ordered an increase in U.S. military forces in Vietnam, from the present 75,000 to 125,000. Johnson also said that he would order additional increases if necessary. He pointed out that to fill the increase in military manpower needs, the monthly draft calls would be raised from 17,000 to 35,000. At the same time, Johnson reaffirmed U.S. readiness to seek a negotiated end to the war, and appealed to the United Nations and any of its member states to help further this goal. There was an immediate reaction throughout the world to this latest escalation, with communist leaders attacking Johnson for his decision to send more troops to Vietnam. Most members of Congress were reported to favor Johnson’s decision, while most U.S. state governors, convening for their annual conference, also supported a resolution backing Johnson. This decision to send more troops was regarded as a major turning point, as it effectively guaranteed U.S. military leaders a blank check to pursue the war.
- **Jul 28 1972 – Vietnam War:** *CIA reports minor damage done to North Vietnam’s dikes* » In response to Soviet accusations that the United States had conducted a two-month bombing campaign intentionally to destroy the dikes and dams of the Tonkin Delta in North Vietnam, a CIA report is made public by the Nixon administration. The report revealed that U.S. bombing at 12 locations had in fact caused accidental minor damage to North Vietnam’s dikes, but the damage was unintentional and the dikes were not the intended targets of the bombings. The nearly 2,000 miles of dikes on the Tonkin plain, and more than 2,000 along the sea, made civilized life possible in the Red River Delta. Had the dikes been intentionally targeted, their destruction would have destroyed centuries of patient work and caused the drowning or starvation of hundreds of thousands of peasants. Bombing the dikes had been advocated by some U.S. strategists since the beginning of U.S. involvement in the war, but had been rejected outright by U.S. presidents sitting during the war as an act of terrorism.

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- **Jul 29 1862 – Civil War:** Confederate spy Belle Boyd was arrested by Union troops after her lover turned her in.



- **Jul 29 1914 – WW1:** *Leaders of Germany and Russia exchange telegrams* » Czar Nicholas II of Russia and his first cousin, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany, begin a frantic exchange of telegrams regarding the newly erupted war in the Balkan region and the possibility of its escalation into a general European war.



Czar Nicholas II of Russia & Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany

One day prior, Austria-Hungary had declared war on Serbia, one month after the assassination in Sarajevo of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife by a Serbian nationalist. In the wake of the killings, Germany had promised Austria-Hungary its unconditional support in whatever punitive action it chose to take towards Serbia, regardless of whether or not Serbia's powerful ally, Russia, stepped into the conflict. By the time an ultimatum from Vienna to Serbia was rejected on 25 JUL, Russia, defying Austro-German expectations, had already ordered preliminary mobilization to begin, believing that Berlin was using the assassination crisis as a pretext to launch a war to shore up its power in the Balkans.

The relationship between Nicholas and Wilhelm, two grandsons of Britain's Queen Victoria, had long been a rocky one. Though Wilhelm described himself as Victoria's favorite grandson, the great queen in turn warned Nicholas to be careful of Wilhelm's "mischievous and unstraight-forward proceedings." Victoria did not invite the Kaiser, who she described to her prime minister as "a hot-headed, conceited, and wrong-headed young man," to her Diamond Jubilee celebration in 1897, nor her 80th birthday two years later. Czar Nicholas himself commented in 1902 after a meeting with Wilhelm: "He's raving mad!" Now, however, the two cousins stood at the center of the crisis that would soon escalate into the First World War.

"In this serious moment, I appeal to you to help me," Czar Nicholas wrote to the Kaiser in a telegram sent at one o'clock on the morning of 29 JUL. "An ignoble war has been declared to a weak country. The indignation in Russia shared fully by me is enormous. I foresee that very soon I shall be

overwhelmed by the pressure forced upon me and be forced to take extreme measures which will lead to war.” This message crossed with one from Wilhelm to Nicholas expressing concern about the effect of Austria’s declaration in Russia and urging calm and consideration as a response.

After receiving the czar’s telegram, Wilhelm cabled back: “I...share your wish that peace should be maintained. But...I cannot consider Austria’s action against Serbia an ‘ignoble’ war. Austria knows by experience that Serbian promises on paper are wholly unreliable. I understand its action must be judged as tending to get full guarantee that the Serbian promises shall become real facts...I therefore suggest that it would be quite possible for Russia to remain a spectator of the Austro-Serbian conflict without involving Europe in the most horrible war she ever witnessed.” Though Wilhelm assured the czar that the German government was working to broker an agreement between Russia and Austria-Hungary, he warned that if Russia were to take military measures against Austria, war would be the result.

The telegram exchange continued over the next few days, as the two men spoke of their desire to preserve peace, even as their respective countries continued mobilizing for war. On 30 JUL, the Kaiser wrote to Nicholas: “I have gone to the utmost limits of the possible in my efforts to save peace...Even now, you can still save the peace of Europe by stopping your military measures.” The following day, Nicholas replied: “It is technically impossible to stop our military preparations which were obligatory owing to Austria’s mobilization. We are far from wishing for war. As long as the negotiations with Austria on Serbia’s account are taking place my troops shall not make any provocative action. I give you my solemn word for this.” But by that time things had gone too far: Emperor Franz Josef had rejected the Kaiser’s mediation offer, saying it came too late, as Russia had already mobilized and Austrian troops were already marching on Serbia.

The German ambassador to Russia delivered an ultimatum that night—halt the mobilization within 12 hours, or Germany would begin its own mobilization, a step that would logically proceed to war. By four o’clock in the afternoon of 1 AUG, in Berlin, no reply had come from Russia. At a meeting with Germany’s civilian and military leaders—Chancellor Theobald Bethmann von Hollweg and General Erich von Falkenhayn—Kaiser Wilhelm agreed to sign the mobilization orders.

That same day, in his last contribution to what were dubbed the “Willy-Nicky” telegrams, Czar Nicholas pressed the Kaiser for assurance that his mobilization did not definitely mean war. Wilhelm’s response was dismissive. “I yesterday pointed out to your government the way by which alone war may be avoided...I have...been obliged to mobilize my army. Immediate affirmative clear and unmistakable answer from your government is the only way to avoid endless misery. Until I have received this answer alas, I am unable to discuss the subject of your telegram. As a matter of fact I must request you to immediately [sic] order your troops on no account to commit the slightest act of trespassing over our frontiers.” Germany declared war on Russia that same day.

- **Jul 29 1915 – U.S.*Haiti:** Marines land at Port-au-Prince to protect American interests in Haiti.
- **Jul 29 1921 – Pre WW2:** *Adolf Hitler becomes the leader of the Nazi Party* » Adolf Hitler becomes the leader of the National Socialist German Workers’ (Nazi) Party. Under Hitler, the Nazi Party grew into a mass movement and ruled Germany as a totalitarian state from 1933 to 1945.



Hitler's early years did not seem to predict his rise as a political leader. Born on April 20, 1889, in Braunau am Inn, Austria, he was a poor student and never graduated from high school. During World War I, he joined a Bavarian regiment of the German army and was considered a brave soldier; however, his commanders felt he lacked leadership potential and never promoted him beyond corporal.

Frustrated by Germany's defeat in the war, which left the nation economically depressed and politically unstable, Hitler joined a fledgling organization called the German Workers' Party in 1919. Founded earlier that same year by a small group of men including locksmith Anton Drexler and journalist Karl Harrer, the party promoted German pride and anti-Semitism, and expressed dissatisfaction with the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, the peace settlement that ended the war and required Germany to make numerous concessions and reparations. Hitler soon emerged as the party's most charismatic public speaker and attracted new members with speeches blaming Jews and Marxists for Germany's problems and espousing extreme nationalism and the concept of an Aryan "master race." On July 29, 1921, Hitler assumed leadership of the organization, which by then had been renamed the Nationalist Socialist German Workers' Party.

In 1923, Hitler and his followers staged the Beer Hall Putsch in Munich, a failed takeover of the government in Bavaria, a state in southern Germany. In the aftermath of this event, Hitler was convicted of treason and sentenced to five years in prison, but spent less than a year behind bars (during which time he dictated the first volume of "Mein Kampf," or "My Struggle," his political autobiography.) The publicity surrounding the Beer Hall Putsch and Hitler's subsequent trial turned him into a national figure. After his release from jail, he set about rebuilding the Nazi Party and attempting to gain power through the democratic election process. In 1929, Germany entered a severe economic depression that left millions of people unemployed. The Nazis capitalized on this situation by criticizing the ruling government and began to win elections. In the July 1932 elections, they captured 230 out of 608 seats in the Reichstag, or German parliament. In January 1933, Hitler was appointed German chancellor and in March of that year his Nazi government assumed dictatorial powers. The Nazis soon came to control every aspect of German life and all other political parties were banned.

Following Germany's defeat in World War II, during which some 6 million European Jews were murdered under Hitler's state-sponsored extermination programs, the Nazi Party was outlawed and many of its top officials were convicted of war crimes. Hitler had committed suicide on April 30, 1945, shortly before Germany's surrender.

- **Jul 29 1950 – Korean War:** After four days, the No Gun Ri Massacre ends when the US Army 7th Cavalry Regiment is withdrawn. The U.S. Army cites the number of South Korean refugee casualties as "unknown."
- **Jul 29 1965 – Vietnam War:** *101st Airborne Division arrives in Vietnam* » The first 4,000 paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Division arrive in Vietnam, landing at Cam Ranh Bay. They made a demonstration jump immediately after arriving, observed by Gen. William Westmoreland and outgoing Ambassador (formerly General) Maxwell Taylor. Taylor and Westmoreland were both former commanders of the division, which was known as the “Screaming Eagles.” The 101st Airborne Division has a long and storied history, including combat jumps during the invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944, and the subsequent Market-Garden airborne operation in the Netherlands. Later, the division distinguished itself by its defense of Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge.



The 1st Brigade fought as a separate brigade until 1967, when the remainder of the division arrived in Vietnam. The combat elements of the division consisted of 10 battalions of airmobile infantry, six battalions of artillery, an aerial rocket artillery unit armed with rocket-firing helicopters, and an air reconnaissance unit. Another unique feature of the division was its aviation group, which consisted of three aviation battalions of assault helicopters and gunships.

The majority of the 101st Airborne Division’s tactical operations were in the Central Highlands and in the A Shau Valley farther north. Among its major operations was the brutal fight for Ap Bia Mountain, known as the “Hamburger Hill” battle.

The last Army division to leave Vietnam, the remaining elements of the 101st Airborne Division returned to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, where today it is the Army’s only airmobile division. During the war, troopers from the 101st won 17 Medals of Honor for bravery in combat. The division suffered almost 20,000 soldiers killed or wounded in action in Vietnam, over twice as many as the 9,328 casualties it suffered in World War II.

- **Jul 29 1967 – Vietnam War:** *Fire ravages U.S. carrier off Vietnam* » A fire on a United States Navy carrier stationed off the coast of Vietnam kills 134 service members. The deadly fire on the USS Forrestal began with the accidental launch of a rocket.



USS Forrester on fire, the worst US carrier fire since WWII; USS Rupertus (DD-851) maneuvers to within 20 ft. to use fire hoses.

During the Vietnam War, the USS Forrester was often stationed off the coast of North Vietnam, conducting combat operations. On the morning of 29 JUL, the ship was preparing to attack when a rocket from one of its own F-4 Phantom jet fighters was accidentally launched. The rocket streaked across the deck and hit a parked A-4 Skyhawk jet. The Skyhawk, which was waiting to take off, was piloted by John McCain, the future senator from Arizona.

Fuel from the Skyhawk spilled out and caught fire. The fire then spread to nearby planes on the ship's deck and detonated a 1,000-pound bomb, which killed many of the initial firefighters and further spread the fire. A chain reaction of explosions blew holes in the flight deck and had half the large ship on fire at one point. Many pilots were trapped in their planes as the fire spread. It took a full day before the fires could be fully contained.

Hundreds of sailors were seriously injured and 134 lost their lives in the devastating fire. Of the carrier's 80 planes, twenty were destroyed, 42 were damaged, and \$100 million in damage resulted. It was the worst loss of a life on a U.S. Navy ship since World War II. Temporary repairs were made to the ship in the Philippines before the Forrester headed back to Norfolk, Virginia. It was repaired and put back into service the following April, but never returned to Vietnam. John McCain narrowly escaped the fire and, afterwards, volunteered for duty on the USS Oriskany. Just three months later, his plane was shot down over North Vietnam and he was taken prisoner. He was not released until five-and-a-half years later, in 1973.

- **Jul 29 1972 – Vietnam War:** *Former U.S. Attorney General visits North Vietnam* » Former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark visits North Vietnam as a member of the International Commission of Inquiry into U.S. War Crimes in Indochina. This commission was formed to investigate alleged U.S. bombing of non-military targets in North Vietnam. Clark reported over Hanoi radio that he had seen damage to hospitals, dikes, schools, and civilian areas. His visit stirred intense controversy at home. Nothing ever came of Clark's claims, but he was lauded by antiwar activists for pointing out the damage done by the U.S. bombing attacks. Other Americans condemned Clark as a traitor to the United States.

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- **Jul 30 1863 – Indian Wars:** Chief Pocatello of the Shoshone tribe signs the Treaty of Box Elder, agreeing to stop the harassment of emigrant trails in southern Idaho and northern Utah.
- **Jul 30 1864 – Civil War:** *Union forces stopped at the Battle of the Crater* – at the Battle of the Crater, the Union’s ingenious attempt to break the Confederate lines at Petersburg, Virginia, by blowing up a tunnel that had been dug under the Rebel trenches fails. Although the explosion created a gap in the Confederate defenses, a poorly planned Yankee attack wasted the effort and the result was an eight-month continuation of the siege.

The bloody campaign between Union General Ulysses S. Grant and Confederate Robert E. Lee ground to a halt in mid-June, when the two armies dug in at Petersburg, south of Richmond. For the previous six weeks, Grant had pounded away at Lee, producing little results other than frightful casualties. A series of battles and flanking maneuvers brought Grant to Petersburg, where he opted for a siege rather than another costly frontal assault.



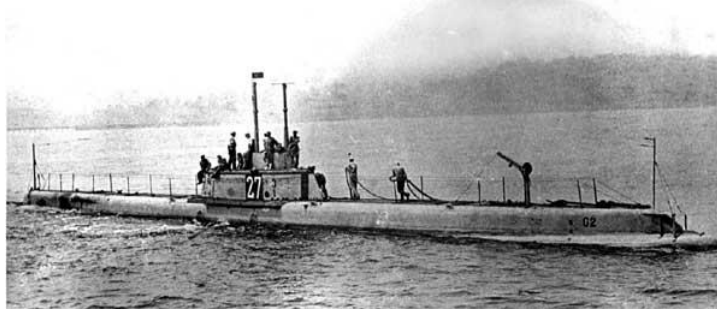
In late June, a Union regiment from the 48th Pennsylvania Infantry began digging a tunnel under the Rebel fortifications. The soldiers, experienced miners from Pennsylvania’s anthracite coal regions, dug for nearly a month to construct a horizontal shaft over 500 feet long. At the end of the tunnel, they ran two drifts, or side tunnels, totaling 75 feet along the Confederate lines to maximize the destruction. Four tons of gunpowder filled the drifts, and the stage was set.

Union soldiers lit the fuse before dawn on 30 JUL. The explosion that came just before 5:00 a.m. blew up a Confederate battery and most of one infantry regiment, creating a crater 170 feet long, 60 to 80 feet wide, and 30 feet deep. As one Southern soldier wrote, “Several hundred yards of earth work with men and cannon was literally hurled a hundred feet in the air.” However, the Union was woefully unprepared to exploit the gap. The Yankees were slow to exit the trenches, and when they did the 15,000 attacking troops ran into the crater rather than around it. Part of the Rebel line was captured, but the Confederates that gathered from each side fired down on the Yankees. The Union troops could not maintain the beachhead, and by early afternoon they retreated back to their original trenches.

This failure led to finger pointing among the Union command. General Ambrose Burnside, the corps commander of the troops involved, had ordered regiments from the United States Colored Troops to lead the attack, but the commander of the Army of the Potomac, George G. Meade, nixed that plan shortly before the attack was scheduled. Fearing that it may be perceived as a ploy to use

African-American soldiers as cannon fodder, Meade ordered that white troops lead the charge. With little time for training, General James H. Ledlie was left to command the attack. The Battle of the Crater essentially marked the end of Burnside's military career, and on April 15, 1865, he resigned from the army. Casualties and losses: US 3,798 - CSA 1,491.

- **Jul 30 1919 – U.S. Navy:** USS G-2 (SS-27) foundered and sunk in Long Island Sound. 3 died.



- **Jul 30 1942 – U.S. Navy:** FDR signs bill creating women's Navy auxiliary agency (WAVES).
- **Jul 30 1943 – WW2:** *Hitler gets news of Italy's imminent defection* » Adolf Hitler learns that Axis ally Italy is buying time before negotiating surrender terms with the Allies in light of Mussolini's fall from power.

Hitler had feared that such a turn of events was possible, if not probable. Hitler had come to Italy on 19 JUL to lecture Il Duce on his failed military leadership—evidence that he knew, even if he was not admitting, that both Mussolini and Italy were about to collapse, leaving the Italian peninsula open to Allied occupation. Despite a half-hearted reassurance from Mussolini that Italy would continue to battle on, Hitler nevertheless began preparing for the prospect of Italy's surrender to the Allies.

When Mussolini was ousted from power and arrested by his own police six days later. Hitler gathered Goering, Goebbels, Himmler, Rommel, and the commander in chief of the German navy, Karl Doenitz, at his headquarters to reveal the plans of action he had already been formulating. Among them: (1) Operation Oak, in which Mussolini would be rescued from captivity; (2) the occupation of Rome by German forces and the reinstatement of Mussolini and his fascist government; (3) Operation Black, the German occupation of all Italy; and (4) Operation Axis, the destruction of the Italian fleet (in order to prevent it from being commandeered for Allied use).

Hitler's advisers urged caution, especially since it would require recalling troops from the Eastern front. The Allies had not made a move on Rome yet, and although Mussolini was under arrest, the Italian government had not formally surrendered. Germany had received assurances from Mussolini's successor General Badoglio that Italy would continue to fight at Germany's side. Then on 30 JUL, Hitler read a message from his security police chief in Zagreb that an Italian general had confided to a Croat general that Italy's assurances of loyalty to Germany were "designed merely to gain time for the conclusion of negotiations with the enemy."

- **Jul 30 1944 – WW2:** U.S. 30th division reaches suburbs of St-Lo Normandy.

- **Jul 30 1945 – WW2: *USS Indianapolis sunk*** » The USS Indianapolis is torpedoed by a Japanese submarine and sinks within minutes in shark-infested waters. Only 317 of the 1,196 men on board survived. However, the Indianapolis had already completed its major mission: the delivery of key components of the atomic bomb that would be dropped a week later at Hiroshima to Tinian Island in the South Pacific.

The Indianapolis made its delivery to Tinian Island on July 26, 1945. The mission was top secret and the ship's crew was unaware of its cargo. After leaving Tinian, the Indianapolis sailed to the U.S. military's Pacific headquarters at Guam and was given orders to meet the battleship USS Idaho at Leyte Gulf in the Philippines to prepare for the invasion of Japan.



Survivors of Indianapolis on Guam (left) and Capt. Charles Butler McVay III, five days after being rescued (right) in August 1945

Shortly after midnight on July 30, halfway between Guam and Leyte Gulf, a Japanese sub blasted the Indianapolis, sparking an explosion that split the ship and caused it to sink in approximately 12 minutes, with about 300 men trapped inside. Another 900 went into the water, where many died from drowning, shark attacks, dehydration or injuries from the explosion. Help did not arrive until four days later, on August 2, when an anti-submarine plane on routine patrol happened upon the men and radioed for assistance.

On August 6, 1945, the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, inflicting nearly 130,000 casualties and destroying more than 60 percent of the city. On August 9, a second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, where casualties were estimated at over 66,000. Meanwhile, the U.S. government kept quiet about the Indianapolis tragedy until August 15 in order to guarantee that the news would be overshadowed by President Harry Truman's announcement that Japan had surrendered.

In the aftermath of the events involving the Indianapolis, the ship's commander, Captain Charles McVay, was court-martialed in November 1945 for failing to sail a zigzag course that would have helped the ship to evade enemy submarines in the area. McVay, the only Navy captain court-martialed for losing a ship during the war, committed suicide in 1968. Many of his surviving crewmen believed the military had made him a scapegoat. In 2000, 55 years after the Indianapolis went down, Congress cleared McVay's name.

- **Jul 30 1964 – Vietnam War: *South Vietnamese boats raid islands in the Tonkin Gulf*** » At about midnight, six "Swifts," special torpedo boats used by the South Vietnamese for covert raids, attack the islands of Hon Me and Hon Ngu in the Tonkin Gulf. Although unable to land any commandos,

the boats fired on island installations. Radar and radio transmissions were monitored by an American destroyer, the USS Maddox, which was stationed about 120 miles away.



The South Vietnamese attacks were part of a covert operation called Oplan 34A, which involved raids by South Vietnamese commandos operating under American orders against North Vietnamese coastal and island installations. Although American forces were not directly involved in the actual raids, U.S. Navy ships were on station to conduct electronic surveillance and monitor North Vietnamese defense responses under another program, Operation De Soto. The Oplan 34A attacks played a major role in events that led to what became known as the Gulf of Tonkin Incident.

On 2 AUG, North Vietnamese patrol boats attacked the Maddox, which had been conducting a De Soto mission in the area. Two days after the first attack, there was another incident that still remains unclear. The Maddox, joined by destroyer USS C. Turner Joy, engaged what were thought at the time to be more attacking North Vietnamese patrol boats. Although it was questionable whether the second attack actually happened or not, the incident provided the rationale for retaliatory air attacks against the North Vietnamese and the subsequent Tonkin Gulf Resolution. The resolution became the basis for the initial escalation of the war in Vietnam and ultimately the insertion of U.S. combat troops into the area.

- **Jul 30 1964 – Vietnam War:** *Nixon visits South Vietnam* » During his first overseas trip as president—which included stops in Guam, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Pakistan, Romania, and Britain—Richard Nixon makes an unscheduled five-and-a-half hour visit to South Vietnam. On the South Vietnam stopover, Nixon met with President Nguyen Van Thieu to discuss U.S. troop withdrawals and later met with senior U.S. military commanders to discuss possible changes in military tactics. Nixon also visited U.S. troops of the U.S. 1st Infantry Division at Di An, 12 miles south of Saigon.
- **Jul 30 1975 – Cold War:** *Summit meeting in Helsinki begins* » Thirty-five nations, called together by the United States and the Soviet Union, begin a summit meeting in Helsinki, Finland, to discuss some pressing international issues. The meeting temporarily revived the spirit of detente between the United States and Russia.

By 1975, the policy of detente—the lessening of tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union—was slowly deteriorating. Richard Nixon, under whose administration detente began, had resigned from office in disgrace in August 1974. The collapse of South Vietnam in April 1975 left many Americans worried that the U.S. was losing the Cold War. In an effort to reawaken the policy of detente, President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger joined with the Soviet Union in calling for a multination summit in Helsinki in July 1975.



Officially known as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the meeting was attended by the United States, the Soviet Union, Canada, and all European nations (except Albania, which continued to plot its own very independent, and confusing, foreign policy). On August 1, 1975, the summit attendees issued a “Final Act,” outlining the broad agreements that had been reached at the conference. All signatories to the Final Act agreed to respect the state boundaries established after World War II and abide by the rule of international law. In addition, human rights were emphasized and all states agreed to protect the basic rights of their people. Finally, all nations agreed to pursue arms reduction treaties in the future.

The agreements reached at Helsinki gave a temporary jumpstart to the idea of detente, but in the years to come most aspects of the Final Act were disregarded or forgotten. Although the Soviet Union agreed to respect human rights, it savagely attacked human rights groups in Russia (known informally as the “Helsinki groups”). And discussion about arms reduction treaties disappeared and was not revived until the mid-1980s. On a positive note, however, the Helsinki agreements did establish a foundation for more fruitful U.S.-Soviet relations in later years. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev used the basic premises of the Final Act to pursue a number of diplomatic initiatives in the mid- and late-1980s, including dramatic breakthroughs in nuclear arms control.

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- **Jul 31 1777 – American Revolution:** *Marquis de Lafayette becomes a major-general without pay*
» A 19-year-old French aristocrat, Marie-Joseph Paul Roch Yves Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette, accepts a commission as a major-general in the Continental Army—without pay.



During his service as the Continental Congress' secret envoy to France, Silas Deane had, on December 7, 1776, struck an agreement with French military expert, Baron Johann DeKalb, and his protegee, the Marquis de Lafayette, to offer their military knowledge and experience to the American cause. However, Deane was replaced with Benjamin Franklin and Arthur Lee, who were unenthusiastic by the proposal. Meanwhile, King Louis XVI feared angering Britain and prohibited Lafayette's departure. The British ambassador to the French court at Versailles demanded the seizure of Lafayette's ship, which resulted in Lafayette's arrest. Lafayette, though, managed to escape, set sail and elude two British ships dispatched to recapture him. Following his safe arrival in South Carolina, Lafayette traveled to Philadelphia, expecting to be made General George Washington's second-in-command. Although Lafayette's youth made Congress reluctant to promote him over more experienced colonial officers, the young Frenchman's willingness to volunteer his services without pay won their respect and Lafayette was commissioned as a major-general.

Lafayette served at Brandywine in 1777, as well as Barren Hill, Monmouth and Rhode Island in 1778. Following the formal treaty of alliance with Lafayette's native France in February 1778 and Britain's subsequent declaration of war, Lafayette asked to return to Paris and consult the king as to his future service. Washington was willing to spare Lafayette, who departed in January 1779. By March, Franklin reported from Paris that Lafayette had become an excellent advocate for the American cause at the French court. Following his six-month respite in France, Lafayette returned to aid the American war effort in Virginia, where he participated in the successful siege of Yorktown in 1781, before returning to France and the further service of his own country.

- **Jul 31 1917 – WW2:** *Third Battle of Ypres begins in Flanders* » The Allies launch a renewed assault on German lines in the Flanders region of Belgium, in the much-contested region near Ypres, during World War I. The attack begins more than three months of brutal fighting, known as the Third Battle of Ypres.



While the first and second battles at Ypres were attacks by the Germans against the Allied-controlled salient around Ypres—which crucially blocked any German advance to the English

Channel—the third was spearheaded by the British commander in chief, Sir Douglas Haig. After the resounding failure of the Nivelle Offensive—named for its mastermind, the French commander Robert Nivelle—the previous May, followed by widespread mutinies within the French army, Haig insisted that the British should press ahead with another major offensive that summer. The aggressive and meticulously planned offensive, ostensibly aimed at destroying German submarine bases located on the north coast of Belgium, was in fact driven by Haig’s (mistaken) belief that the German army was on the verge of collapse, and would be broken completely by a major Allied victory.

After an opening barrage of some 3,000 guns, Haig ordered nine British divisions, led by Sir Hubert Gough’s 5th Army, to advance on the German lines near the Belgian village of Passchendaele on July 31; they were joined by six French divisions. In the first two days of the attacks, while suffering heavy casualties, the Allies made significant advances—in some sectors pushing the Germans back more than a mile and taking more than 5,000 German prisoners—if not as significant as Haig had envisioned. The offensive was renewed in mid-August, though heavy rains and thickening mud severely hampered the effectiveness of Allied infantry and artillery and prevented substantial gains over the majority of the summer and early fall.

Dissatisfied with his army’s gains by the end of August, Haig had replaced Gough with Herbert Plumer at the head of the attack; after several small gains in September, the British were able to establish control over the ridge of land east of Ypres. Encouraged, Haig pushed Plumer to continue the attacks towards the Passchendaele ridge, some 10 kilometers from Ypres.

Thus the Third Battle of Ypres—also known as Passchendaele, for the village, and the ridge surrounding it, that saw the heaviest fighting—continued into its third month, as the Allied attackers reached near-exhaustion, with few notable gains, and the Germans reinforced their positions in the region with reserve troops released from the Eastern Front, where Russia’s army was foundering amid internal turmoil. Unwilling to give up, Haig ordered a final three attacks on Passchendaele in late October. The eventual capture of the village, by Canadian and British troops, on November 6, 1917, allowed Haig to finally call off the offensive, claiming victory, despite some 310,000 British casualties, as opposed to 260,000 on the German side, and a failure to create any substantial breakthrough, or change of momentum, on the Western Front. Given its outcome, the Third Battle of Ypres remains one of the most costly and controversial offensives of World War I, representing—at least for the British—the epitome of the wasteful and futile nature of trench warfare.

- **Jul 31 1942 – WW2:** USS Grunion (SS-216) sunk by gunfire from torpedoed Japanese transport Kashima Maru; 10 miles north Segula, near Kiska Island, Aleutians. 70 killed.



- **Jul 31 1945 – WW2:** *Fugitive Vichy leader surrenders in Austria* » Pierre Laval, the puppet leader of Nazi-occupied Vichy France, surrenders to American authorities in Austria, who extradite him to France to stand trial.



Laval, originally a deputy and senator of pacifist tendencies, shifted to the right in the 1930s while serving as minister of foreign affairs and twice as the French premier. A staunch anti-communist, he delayed the Soviet-Franco pact of 1935 and sought to align France with Fascist Italy. Hostile to the declaration of war against Germany in 1939, Laval encouraged the antiwar faction in the French government, and with the German invasion in 1940 he used his political influence to force an armistice with Germany. Henri Petain took over the new Vichy state, and Laval served as minister of state. Laval was dismissed by Petain in December 1940 for negotiating privately with Germany.

By 1942, Laval had won the trust of Nazi leader Adolf Hitler, and the elderly Petain became merely a figurehead in the Vichy regime. As the premier of Vichy France, Laval collaborated with the Nazi programs of oppression and genocide and increasingly became a puppet of Hitler. After the Allied liberation of France, he was forced to flee east for German protection. With the defeat of Germany in May 1945, he escaped to Spain but was expelled and went into hiding in Austria, where he finally surrendered to American authorities in late July. Extradited to France, Laval was convicted of treason by the High Court of Justice in a sensational trial. Condemned to death, he attempted suicide by poison but was nursed back to health in time for his execution on October 15, 1945.

- **Jul 31 1948 – U.S. Navy:** USS Nevada (BB-36) is sunk by an aerial torpedo after surviving hits from two atomic bombs (as part of post-war tests) and being used for target practice by three other ships.



- **Jul 31 1953 – Cold War:** *Senator Robert A. Taft dies* » Senate Majority Leader Robert A. Taft (R-Ohio) dies of cancer at the age of 63. Branded by critics as an “isolationist,” Taft was a consistent critic of America’s Cold War policies.



Taft, known as “Mr. Republican” because of his ferocious partisanship, was a true conservative in every sense of the word. First elected to the Senate in 1938, Taft lashed out at Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal programs as being too expensive and wasteful of taxpayers’ dollars. During World War II, he warned against the tremendous growth of presidential power, which he claimed threatened the people’s liberties and freedom. This same kind of criticism also brought Taft into conflict with the American government’s Cold War policies after World War II.

He attacked President Harry S. Truman’s policy of containment of the Soviet Union, arguing that the United States was provoking Russia into a war. He vigorously opposed the Marshall Plan, designed to give billions of dollars in aid to Western Europe, as far too costly. He also voted against U.S. participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) because he believed it impinged on the nation’s freedom of action. Overall, Taft feared that Truman and the U.S. government were using the Cold War to take on powers they were never intended to have. For this reason, he also opposed Truman’s call for a peacetime draft in 1948. Taft’s harsh criticisms sometimes brought him into conflict even with members of his own party. After winning the presidential election in 1952, Republican Dwight D. Eisenhower publicly attacked what he called Taft’s “isolationism” and “fortress America” mentality.

In the years following his death, however, Taft’s views gained new credibility. The immense costs of the Cold War and the brutal and inconclusive Vietnam War seemed to bear out many of Taft’s criticisms of America’s Cold War policies. During the 1960s, a number of scholars noted the similarities between Taft’s opposition to the draft and American military intervention overseas and the objections raised by the anti-Vietnam War movement.

- **Jul 31 1964 – Vietnam War:** *Agreement on conduct of war* » In a news conference, Secretary of State Dean Rusk admits there are differences between the United States and South Vietnam on the issue of extending the war into North Vietnam, but agreement on the general conduct of the war. He stated that U.S. warnings to communist China and North Vietnam indicated total U.S. commitment.

Ambassador Maxwell Taylor had met with South Vietnamese head of state Gen. Nguyen Khanh on 23 JUL to register U.S. disapproval of the recent calls by Khanh and Prime Minister Nguyen Cao Ky to extend the war into North Vietnam. The meeting was reportedly “heated.” It was also said that Khanh stood firmly against Taylor’s reprimands, arguing that the war had changed because of the presence of North Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam. In a second meeting, Khanh offered to resign, but Taylor, who became convinced that Khanh was at least partly right about taking the war to the North Vietnamese, not only dissuaded him but also ended up cabling Washington that the United States should undertake covert planning with the South Vietnamese for bombing the North.

Despite ongoing disagreements about how best to conduct the war, President Lyndon B. Johnson insisted that relations between the U.S. and South Vietnam were good. Rusk’s comments were seen by many to be part of a campaign to reassure to the South Vietnamese that the United States would continue to stand by them in the struggle.

- **Jul 31 19 – Vietnam War:** *Hanoi claims that U.S. bombers have struck dikes* » Hanoi challenges the Nixon administration on the dike controversy, claiming that since April there had been 173 raids against the dikes in North Vietnam with direct hits in 149 locations. On 28 JUL, in response to claims by the Soviet Union that the United States had conducted an intentional two-month bombing campaign designed to destroy the dikes and dams of the Tonkin Delta in North Vietnam, a CIA report was made public by the Nixon administration. It stated that U.S. bombing at 12 locations had caused accidental minor damage to North Vietnam’s dikes, but the damage was unintentional and the dikes were not the intended targets of the bombings.

The nearly 2,000 miles of dikes on the Tonkin plain, and more than 2,000 miles of dikes along the sea, made civilized life possible in the Red River Delta. Had the dikes been intentionally targeted, their destruction would have destroyed centuries of patient work and caused the drowning or starvation of hundreds of thousands of peasants. Bombing the dikes had been advocated by some U.S. strategists since the beginning of U.S. involvement in the war, but had been rejected outright by U.S. presidents sitting during the war as an act of terrorism.

- **Jul 31 1991 – DoD:** Senate votes to allow women to fly combat aircraft.

[Source: <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history> & <https://www.historycentral.com> | June 2019 ++]