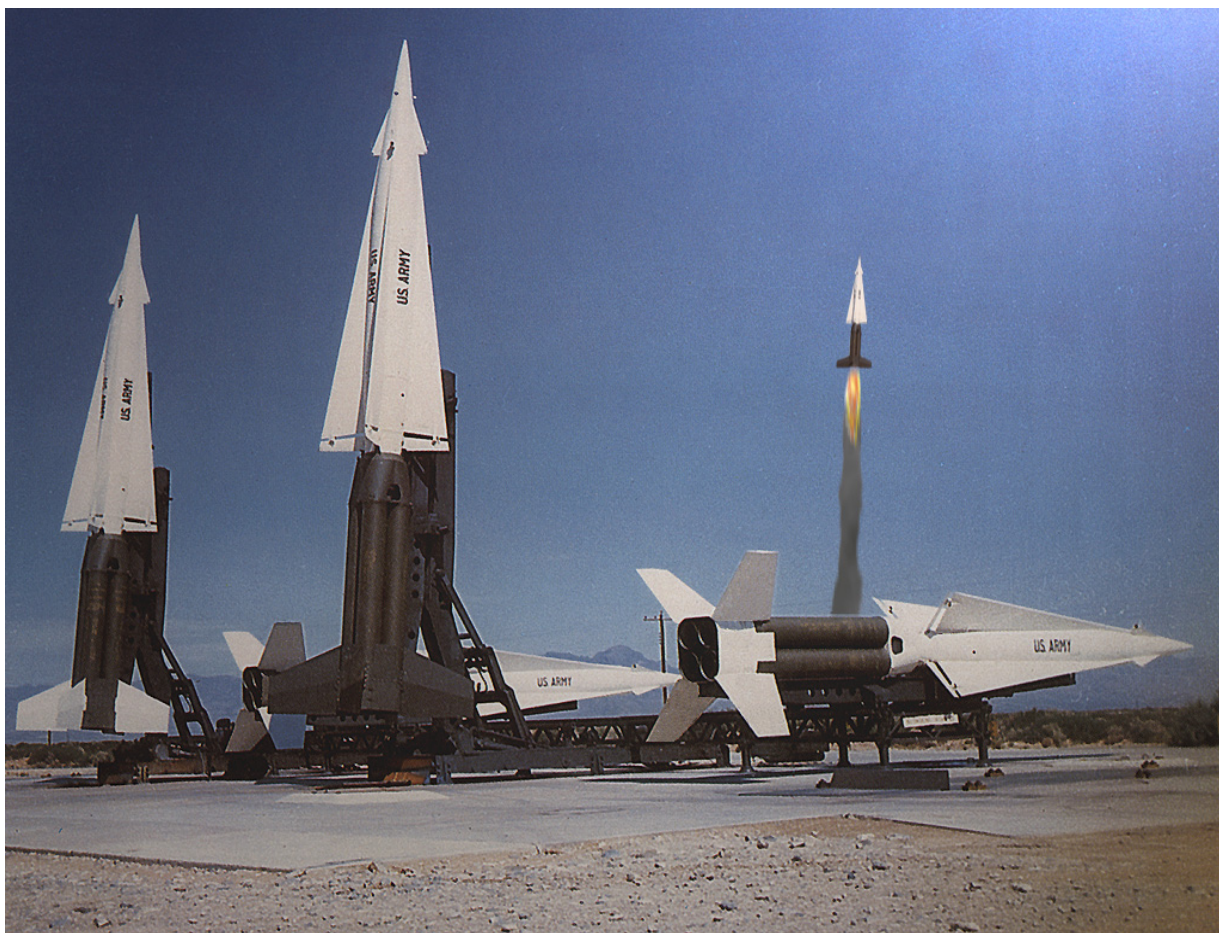


Cold War Times

The Internet Newsletter for the Cold War Museum
and Cold War Veterans Association

March/April 2004

Volume 4, Issue 1



*Nike-Hercules missiles
Photo courtesy of Fort MacArthur Museum*

The Nike-Ajax was the first ground-based supersonic anti-aircraft missile system to become operational in the United States. The Nike missiles were deployed at sites in a circular pattern around key American industrial and military locations. The first Los Angeles area Nike-Ajax battery was emplaced in the mountains above Malibu in 1954. By 1958, there were 16 Nike-Ajax launch sites guarding the greater Los Angeles area, protecting an area of some 4,000 square miles. The Los Angeles Defense area was manned by several battalions of US Army Regulars and National Guardsman, under the command of the 47th Air Defense Brigade from 1954 to 1969.

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About the Cold War Museum

Founded in 1996 by Francis Gary Powers, Jr. and John C. Welch, the Cold War Museum is dedicated to preserving Cold War history and honoring Cold War Veterans. For more information, call 703-273-2381, go online to www.coldwar.org or write: **Cold War Museum, P.O. Box 178, Fairfax, VA 22030.**

The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of Cold War Times, the Cold War Museum, the Cold War Veterans Association, and/or their Association, and/or their respective Board of Directors. As is the case with all history, the history of the Cold War is subject to some degree of interpretation.

Cold War Museum Update

Midwest Chapter

In November 2003, Executive Director Werner Juretzko represented the Midwest Chapter in Washington, DC, at a reception at the Bulgarian Embassy commemorating the Revolutions of 1989 and the end of the Cold War. This annual event was co-sponsored by the Ambassadors to the United States from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. We are grateful for the support these former USSR satellite countries are offering to the Cold War Museum. Werner also visited Arlington National Cemetery to pay tribute to John F. Kennedy as well as the gravesite of Francis Gary Powers. Also during November, Juretzko attended the Dinner Meeting of the Military Officers Association of America - North Shore and Chicago Chapter. He gave a presentation on "Espionage: a Weapon During the Cold War", speaking about undercover operations as a West German and US intelligence operative during the 1950s. The Association donated \$100.00 to the chapter for his talk.

Cell Door Presentation

The Stasi prison cell door is now on exhibit at the Milwaukee County War Memorial Center, situated on the beautiful lakeshore of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. On Friday, March 12, 2004, at 5:00 pm at the center, we will host a presentation by two former Stasi prisoners, John Van Altena of Milton, Wisconsin, and Executive Director Werner Juretzko of Mt. Prospect, Illinois. John was sentenced after attempting to smuggle a family out of East Berlin in his car in 1962, serving one and one-half years before being released. Werner was a western intelligence operative who served time from 1955 to 1961. In addition to the presentation, Francis Gary Powers, Jr. will be on hand to give an update on The Cold War Museum and to sell copies of *Operation Overflight*, which was recently republished about his father's shoot down over the Soviet Union on May 1, 1960. There is no cost to attend. Please contact Chris Sturdevant at csturdev@hotmail.com if you are interested in attending.

2004 Roundup of Officers

Terry Klimek, of nearby Mukwanago, Wisconsin, will act as the Secretary/Treasurer for the Midwest Chapter in 2004. Terry is a Wisconsin National Guard veteran of the Waukesha Nike installation, having served as a radar technician at two area Nike missile sites in the late 1960s. The Midwest Chapter will also have at least five board members to conduct the business of the chapter. The full Board of Directors will be announced in the next issue.

Intern Joins the Midwest Chapter

We are pleased to have the services of Frank Adams, a senior history major from Carroll College in Waukesha, for the next couple of months. Carroll College has been a big supporter of the Cold War Museum and we are grateful for the help Frank will offer us for the spring semester. He will be assisting predominately with research-oriented projects for the time being.

Veteran's History Project

The Cold War Veterans Association has been named an official partner in the Veteran's History Project, a program undertaken by the Library of Congress to record histories of America's veterans. The Midwest Chapter has been assisting CWVA in this endeavor by soliciting oral histories from Cold War Veterans. Anyone with service dates between September 1945 and December 1991 is encouraged to participate. Please contact Chris Sturdevant at csturdev@hotmail.com to take part in this extraordinary project. Visit the official website for more information: <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/vets>

Hillcrest Park Update

The City of Waukesha has accepted bids to survey the land of this former Nike radar base. The process will involve a site feasibility study for the city to determine what would be best suitable on this historic piece of property. Several city officials have warmly received the idea of a Cold War Museum and will keep our concept in mind while the process is completed.

Cold War Museum Update

Over the past eight years, the **Cold War Museum** has made great strides in honoring Cold War Veterans and preserving Cold War history. However, the work has just begun and we need to continue our fundraising efforts in order to prepare for use of the **Lorton Nike Missile Base**. I am writing to provide you with a brief update on the Museum's activities and to ask that you consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Cold War Museum's general fund. Donations to our general fund will allow us to develop architectural plans, conduct a site feasibility study, and prepare for our national fundraising campaign. If you know of any family members, friends, or colleagues that would like to assist with our efforts, please let them know that we welcome their support.

We are at a critical stage of our development. In January 2004, the Cold War Museum renewed its affiliation with the **Smithsonian Institution**. As a result, we have pledges of support for artifact loans from Smithsonian Air and Space, American History, National Portrait, and US Postal Museum. The Cold War Museum has submitted a proposal to Fairfax County Park Authority to locate at the former Nike Missile Base in Lorton, Virginia. We are working with the **Fort Meade Museum** and the **Historical Electronics Museum in Maryland**, the **International Spy Museum in Washington, DC**, and the **Florida International Museum** to temporarily display artifacts from our collection.

Annually, the **Bulgaria, Estonian, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Romanian, and Slovakian Embassies** co-host a reception to promote the Museum to the international community in Washington, DC. The 2001 reception to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the end of the Cold War was held at the Embassy of Slovakia. In 2002, the reception was held at the Romanian Embassy. The 2003 event took place at the Embassy of Bulgaria on November 14, 2003. Through these events, the Museum has acquired many important Eastern Bloc artifacts, including an East German admiral's uniform, a Checkpoint Charlie sign, a Stasi prison door and bed, and a piece of the "Iron Curtain" as a result of these receptions.

The mobile exhibit on the U-2 Incident, the "**Spies of Washington Tour**," and our book signing receptions continue to generate interest and support. The mobile exhibit returned from a one-year display at the Florida International Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida, and then began a one-year display at the EAA Museum in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. The exhibit opened to the public at the National Test Site Museum in Las Vegas, Nevada, on October 2, 2003, where it will be on display through June 2004. The educational "Spies of Washington Tour" (www.spytour.com) will start up again on March 27, 2004, and now includes an optional stop at the **International Spy Museum** in Washington, DC. Our latest book signing reception took place at the National Archives and featured author **John Fahey** who wrote, "Licensed to Spy" about his involvement with the United States Military Liaison Mission (USMLM).

As a result of our efforts, the **Commonwealth of Virginia** recently allocated a \$28,000 matching grant for the Cold War Museum. We are grateful to the **Springfield VFW (Post 7327)** who, in response to our matching grant campaign, donated \$20,000 to the Museum. In 2004, **Verizon** and **Dominion Power** both made \$5,000 donations to the Museum. Our Congressman, the **Honorable Tom M. Davis, III (11th Virginia)**, is working to assist the museum at the Federal level. Once again the museum is part of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC#7475), which allows for Federal government and military employees to donate to the museum through payroll deduction.

"We Remember" D-Day

On June 6th, 2004, a group of students from Durham Region High School in Port Perry, Ontario, Canada, will be traveling to Normandy, France, to place a "We Remember" time capsule at the June Beach Centre. The students will be 'adopting' a soldier that landed on Juno Beach. It is difficult for students today to grasp the reality of thousands of men hitting the beach but they can better understand if seen through the eyes of one man. The students will deposit pictures, medals, mementos, stories, poems etc. into the time capsule that will be unearthed on the 100th anniversary of D-Day.

What we wish to ask of you is your help in locating D-Day veterans and or their families to donate something to put into the capsule. Please contact us by email at lynniso@idirect.com or call 905-985-6434 for further information. The students have a web site at: <http://www.junobeach.ca>. Real time updates will be made to the web site on June 5th and 6th so that the viewers can see the events as they happen. Thank you for your support!

- Marlene Hodgson, Coordinator of "We Remember" time capsule.

A Letter from the Founder

Dear Friends and Supporters of the Cold War Museum,

I am pleased to report the Cold War Museum continues to make great strides in preserving Cold War history and honoring Cold War Veterans. Below is a brief overview of our recent accomplishments for 2002, 2003, and 2004. Together we can help make this vision a reality.

Accomplishments 2002:

- Received \$24,000 matching grant from State of Virginia.
- Received \$20,000 donation from Springfield Lorton VFW.
- Received extensive donation of former Civil Defense Headquarters facility items (maps, manuals, radios, supplies, etc) from Washington, DC Emergency Management Agency.
- Held Embassy Reception with Romania.
- Opened Cold War Museum exhibits at the Fort Meade Museum in Maryland.
- Loaned items to Leipzig Contemporary History Museum for exhibit on Cold War espionage.
- Loaned items to International Spy Museum for exhibits on Cold War espionage.
- Established Midwest Chapter with office in Chicago and potential site in Milwaukee.
- Opened mobile U-2 Incident Exhibit at EAA in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.
- Conducted 8 public and 6 private educational spy tours for 240 guests.
- Gave over 60 lectures on Cold War Museum progress.
- Added retired USAF Brigadier General to Board of Directors.
- Produced six issues of The Cold War Times newsletter distributed internationally by email to Museum supporters.
- Set up mobile Museum display at the Space and Missile Conference in Huntsville, Alabama.

Accomplishments 2003:

- Received \$5000 grant from Verizon.
- Received \$5000 grant from Dominion Virginia Power.
- Cosponsor of CWIHP Conference.
- Produced Proposal for Fairfax County Park Authority.
- Produced Site Feasibility Study compiled by Dr. Stephen Fuller, George Mason University.
- Opened U-2 Incident Exhibit at the Atomic Testing Museum in Las Vegas, Nevada.
- Held Embassy Reception with Bulgaria.
- Conducted 7 public and 8 private educational Spy Tours for over 380 guests.
- Gave over 60 lectures on Cold War Museum progress.
- Updated and improved website www.coldwar.org. Received an average of 24,000 online visitors per month during 2003.
- Briefed former National Security Advisor, General Brent Scowcroft on Museum efforts.
- Added Founding Curator of CIA Exhibit Center Museum to Board of Directors.

- Produced six issues of The Cold War Times newsletter distributed internationally by email to Museum supporters.
- Arranged for George Washington University Museum Studies Intern to assist with collections inventory.
- Arranged for Fairfax County Park Authority to store 23 display cases near Nike site.
- Received Resolution of Support from Fairfax County Historical Commission.

Accomplishments 2004:

- Received donation of 1000 books on Cold War events and activities for reference library.
- Cosponsor of VMI Cold War Conference.
- Opened Stasi Prison exhibit in Milwaukee County War Memorial Center.
- Arranged for George Washington University Museum Studies Intern to develop Museum Collection Policy.
- Opened dialogue with Fort MacArthur (California) Historical Group regarding a West Coast Chapter of the CWM.
- Preliminary development of Cold War Tour of Washington.
- Attended Association of USAF Missileers reunion and gave update on Museum efforts.
- Attended USS Liberty survivors reunion and gave update on Museum efforts.

Please consider making a donation to the Cold War Museum's general fund. Your gift will help us plan for the new year and the new physical location. Tax-deductible contributions and artifact donations to the Museum will ensure that future generations will remember Cold War events and personalities that forever altered our understanding of national security, international relations, and personal sacrifice for one's country. Please help spread the word about the Museum. Together we can make this vision a reality. If you have any questions or want additional information, please contact me.

Very truly yours,

Francis Gary Powers, Jr.

Founder

The Cold War Museum

P.O. Box 178

Fairfax, VA 22030

(703) 273-2381-p

(703) 273-4903-f

gpowersjr@coldwar.org

www.coldwar.org

Airman Takes The Helm

Scott T. L'Ecuyer

It is with great pride and excitement that I take the reins in my new role as the Cold War Times Editor. Bryan Dickerson has left big shoes to fill and I know we all appreciate his work and dedication in skillfully bringing the magazine to us for these past years.



GLCM BGM-109 "Gryphon", circa 1987

As a quick introduction, I am a former Air Force Missileer who spent most of my tour of duty in the great white north of Minot, North Dakota, as a Team Chief in charge of Minuteman missiles during the Reagan era. Now residing in the much warmer climate of southern California, I have spent the past two years involving myself in veterans' organizations and causes. Joining the CWVA over a year ago, I have enjoyed serving as the Membership Director and heading up the California Chapter.

If I were to have a motto, it would simply be "Veterans are Veterans". What that means to me is for all veterans to be recognized for their service and not put in categories based on old cultural paradigms and waged against one another. A Veteran is a Veteran, That's it! In my travels I find this to be the a growing issue in the veterans' community. We have forgotten our own. Warriors involved in cold war operations who really are veterans feel alienated due to their so-called "peacetime" level of service. With regard to our cold warriors, their story and sacrifices may have not been documented, declassified, or ever been told to educate the masses to understand this level of service -- it's a more complex issue. I am proud to have joined these organizations and think it is imperative that we share our stories, record our history, honor ALL our fellow veterans and learn from our experiences. For these reasons and many others, I am dedicated to furthering the work we've started here.

Although we're not that far into this new year, many great things are already happening that affect Cold War Veterans. Check out the list of accomplishments that Gary Powers has put together for us. The momentum is just beginning! And, as you may know, several bills to create a Cold War Service Medal or Cold War Victory Medal are pending in the House or Senate. Read more details about these bills on page 10 in this issue. Together, we can make our voice heard!

Locally, I have the privilege of being involved in the activities of the Fort MacArthur Museum in San Pedro, California. Our cover story shares some background on the Nike air defenses that were part of this remarkable military base. In addition, I'm currently involved in the planning of a couple of parades where we will officially honor the Cold War veteran: an Armed Forces Day Parade and the 2nd annual Redondo Beach Memorial Day Parade (for info, visit www.patriotcities.us). If you will be in the LA area during these weekends in May and would like to join us in any aspect of the parades, please visit www.freewebs.com/cwva-ca/news.html for more details of this exciting event.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the Cold War Times. I welcome your input and news for upcoming issues, so please feel free to send your articles and information to me at editor@coldwar.org.

Remember, keep aiming high! 'Till next issue,

Scott T. L'Ecuyer

Editor



Cover Story

The NIKE Missile Air Defense System

Story and photos courtesy Fort MacArthur Museum, San Pedro, California

The Nike-Ajax was the first ground-based supersonic anti-aircraft missile system to become operational in the United States. The Nike missiles were deployed at sites in a circular pattern around key American industrial and military locations. The first Los Angeles area Nike-Ajax battery was emplaced in the mountains above Malibu in 1954. By 1958, there were 16 Nike-Ajax launch sites guarding the greater Los Angeles area, protecting an area of some 4,000 square miles. The Los Angeles Defense area was manned by several battalions of US Army Regulars and National Guardsman, under the command of the 47th Air Defense Brigade from 1954 to 1969.



Nike missiles were launched from a self-contained launch area. Each site was equipped with two or three launching platforms each with an underground storage magazines, an elevator and four missile erectors. The missiles were stored underground on rails and were brought to the surface by an elevator. Once on the surface, they were pushed on rails to an erector and with the proper electrical and hydraulic connections completed, raised to an angle of about 85 degrees for firing.

The Nike missiles employed the "command guidance" system in which the major control equipment was ground-based and not part of the expendable missile. The missiles were guided from a control area located at least 1000 yards from the launch area. It contained the radar equipment for acquiring and tracking the target and missile. Separate radars simultaneously located and tracked both the target and the Nike missile. Data from these radars was fed to the electronic computer which sent "commands" to the missile in flight to guide it to the target.

Hercules and Ajax missiles on alert at LA88.

Photo courtesy of Fort MacArthur Museum: www.ftmac.org

The newer, more powerful Nike-Hercules missiles replaced the Nike-Ajax during the period 1958-1963. Nike-Hercules had the capability of being armed with a nuclear warhead. The Hercules was completely powered by solid fuels, eliminating the troublesome and dangerous liquid fueling procedure of the Nike-Ajax. Nike-Hercules also brought with it improved acquisition radar systems and an improved command coordinating system. The Nike-Hercules were installed into modified Nike-Ajax sites in the Los Angeles area. Only nine of the original sixteen sites were converted to fire the Nike-Hercules missiles.

The Nike-Hercules missile was designed for defense against attack by large formations of bombers. As the perceived threat changed from bomber attack to missile attack, the usefulness of the Nike Hercules diminished. On 4 February 1974, the Army ordered all existing US Nike batteries inactivated.

To get involved in the protection and restoration of missile batteries at Whites Point or to assist the Fort MacArthur Museum with donations of funds or time, please call the museum office at 310-548-2631. Museum hours: 12 to 5 PM Tues., Thurs., weekends and holidays. For special tour arrangements, contact the museum weekdays 10 AM-5 PM.

FORT MACARTHUR MUSEUM
BATTERY OSGOOD - FARLEY HISTORIC SITE
Fort MacArthur Museum Association P.O. Box 268 San Pedro, CA 90731

Cold War Veterans Association News

Message from the Chairman

By Vince Milum

Greetings Cold War Veterans and Supporters!

The CWVA is barely two years old and already:

- thousands are contacting the CWVA to join,
- our Honor Roll www.coldwarveterans.com/honor_roll.htm has over two hundred entries, and
- our main web site www.coldwarveterans.com has been accessed several hundred thousand times!

This past year, 2003, saw a number of states declaring **Cold War Victory Day on May 1st**. On that same day, Congressman and CWVA Member Dennis Moore read a moving statement about the CWVA and Cold War Victory Day into the Congressional Record. On Memorial Day, the CWVA was honored to be one of the official parties to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns.

We have kicked off this year with the introduction of the inaugural **2004 Official CWVA Cold War History Calendar**. This beautiful keepsake documents hundreds of Cold War events which occurred on specific dates of the calendar year. In so doing, this calendar is a priceless testimonial that **THE COLD WAR WAS A WAR!**

To order your copy of the CWVA Calendar, please visit the CWVA site at www.coldwarveterans.com/cold_war_calendar.htm

The year 2004 has also seen the launch of the **NEW CWVA FORUM**: <http://cwva.aimoo.com/>

The new forum site is easier to navigate and includes new features such as an International Section as well as a means of contacting an official CWVA Chaplain. And with this issue, we formally re-launch the **Cold War Times**, which is a joint publication of the Cold War Museum and the Cold War Veterans Association.

Finally, we want to remind all of you of the fabulous items available from the **Official CWVA Quartermaster at 800-810-8122**. Available items include shirts, caps, coffee mugs, mouse pads, coasters, and official CWVA patches and lapel pins. Coming soon -- official 3' x 5' CWVA flags!

As we embark on our third year as an official Veterans Service Organization, I want to thank each and every one of you who have helped make us such an overwhelming success to date. May 2004 bring you and the CWVA nothing but the best!

Message from our California Chapter:

Currently our partnership with the **Vietnam Veterans of America, local chapter 53**, has grown fruit as we have been active in joint efforts pioneering the city of **Redondo Beach's first veterans' related parade last Memorial Day**. On Armed Forces Day we honored the Cold war veteran specifically and were represented and honored as equals for the first time in a DOD sponsored parade. Now this year the parades have lots of interest from government contractors and supporters and we feel there is a groundswell toward our initiatives. **This year we will have the opportunity to dedicate Memorial Day remembrances to our forgotten MIA/KIA of the Cold War**. The chapter is working to build relationships with other veterans' service organizations around the state and growing its reach. Upcoming projects include establishing **Blue Star Memorial Highways** to honor the Cold War vet. We are active in trying to establish a **Western Chapter for the Cold War Museum** and have been supporting **Fort MacArthur** in its work to save the **White Point NIKE missile batteries** from commercial development. Please visit our chapter website for coming information on the parades and activities:

www.freewebs.com/cwva-ca

The Cold War Medal

Comments by the Cold War Veterans Association (CWVA)

Several bills to create a Cold War Service Medal or Cold War Victory medal are pending in the House or Senate. These bills generally have the same eligibility requirements, with some variation. Eligibility dates are pretty much the same as the Cold War Recognition Certificate. Specific language of the bills can be viewed on the Cold War Veterans Association website: www.coldwarveterans.com

Previous versions have been introduced, and one passed as a “Sense of Congress” resolution, recommending that the Secretary of Defense create and award a cold war service medal. The Department of Defense has declined to do so, and has consistently opposed bills of this sort. The President has been asked to create a medal, but has not seen fit to do so. The CWVA believes that DOD opposition is institutionally based, i.e., a desire to create and manage its own system of awards, and opposition to any attempt by Congress to dictate awards. This was especially true of the Korea Defense Service Medal, which is now a reality, thanks to Congress.

Congress is now awaiting Department comment on the bills, below, but it is likely that DOD will invoke its standard response. However, in a presidential election year, it is possible that politics will prevail. It is still an uphill battle.

Other Veterans Service Organizations – AMVETS, American Legion, and VFW – have each passed resolutions supporting some version of the Cold War Medal. Bills currently awaiting Committee Votes are:

In the US House of Representatives

HR 3201- to create a Cold War Service Medal

Referred to Committee on Armed Services. Sponsored by Rep Robert E. Andrews (D-NJ).

Co-sponsors:

Rep McGovern, James P. - 9/30/2003 [D – MA] Rep Boucher, Rick - 0/20/2003 [D – VA]

HR 3388 – to create a Cold War Victory Medal

Referred to Committee on Armed Services. Sponsored by Rep Tom Tancredo (R-CO)

Co-sponsors:

Rep Green, Mark - 11/4/2003 [R – WI] Rep Leach, James A. - 11/4/2003 [R – IA]
Rep McCotter, Thaddeus G. - 11/17/2003 [R – MI] Rep Moore, Dennis - 10/29/2003 [D – KS]
Rep Moran, James P. - 10/29/2003 [D – VA] Rep Musgrave, Marilyn N. - 2/10/2004 [R – CO]
Rep Shimkus, John - 11/4/2003 [R – IL] Rep Vitter, David - 11/17/2003 [R – LA]
Rep Wilson, Joe - 11/17/2003 [R – SC]

In the US Senate

S. 1841, “The Cold War Medal Act”

Referred to Committee on Armed Services. Sponsor: Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D – NY)

Co-sponsors:

Sen Durbin, Richard J. - 1/26/2004 (D – IL) Sen Lincoln, Blanche - 1/26/2004 (D – AR)
Sen Pryor, Mark Lunsford - 11/17/2003 (D – AR)

HR 3388 has bipartisan support. S. 1841 thus far has Democratic sponsors only. In order to gain the broad support it needs, Republican co-sponsors are needed in the Senate. **CWVA urges all readers to contact their senators and ask them to co-sponsor S. 1841.** Because the House and Senate mail systems are shut down due to security reasons, the best way to contact your Senator or Representative is by telephone, fax, or through their web pages. In the Senate, www.senate.gov has links to each senator's web page. Each web page has a link (contact) for e-mail to that senator.

Jana Denning Receives CWVA Award

On November 17, Jana Denning, Senior Legislative Aide to Representative Dennis Moore [D – KS], was presented with a recognition award by the Cold War Veterans Association (CWVA) for her work on behalf of all veterans. In photo, left to right, Dr. Frank Tims, CWVA Director of Public Affairs, Ms. Jana Denning, and Congressman Dennis Moore.



About The CWVA

The mission of the Cold War Veterans Association is:

- To fight for the rights of Cold War Veterans,
- to educate people as to why the Cold War was fought and won and why vigilance must be maintained, and
- to provide a fraternal community for men and women whose patriotism binds them together.

The Cold War Veterans Association is a tax-exempt, federally recognized 501(c)(19) veterans service organization open to honorably discharged veterans and active-duty personnel who served during the Cold War period – September 2, 1945 to December 26, 1991. (NOTE: Reservists who engaged in basic training, advanced training, and/or annual training during this period ARE eligible.) For more information, contact: Vince Milum, Chairman, Cold War Veterans Association, P.O. Box 13042, Overland Park, KS 66282-3042. Phone: 913-492-0070. Website: www.coldwarveterans.com

Get Your Cold War History Calendar Today!

The CWVA Official 2004 Cold War History Calendar is a keepsake commemorative on thick, high-gloss stock that documents hundreds of Cold War events that occurred throughout the calendar year. Every month you will have demonstrative evidence of why the Cold War was a "real war" and should be recognized as such. This one-of-a-kind treasure is great to own and also makes a great gift!

Each calendar costs \$12.00 with postage and handling included in the purchase price. To order this superb memento, simply write to: Frank M. Tims, 6372 Palma Del Mar Blvd. #508, St. Petersburg, FL 33715. Or visit the website to download order form: http://www.coldwarveterans.com/cold_war_calendar.htm

Operation Vulture – America and Vietnam in 1954

© 2004 Frank M. Tims, Ph.D.

The first Indochina war: preventing Communist domination

The French fought the first Vietnam War (actually the first Indochina War) from 1946 through 1954. The numbers of French and French Colonial troops killed in that war are estimated at 50,000 -- very close to the number of Americans later killed in Vietnam. The first Indochina War began as an attempt by France to re-establish control over its colonial empire. With the development of the Cold War and the emergence of Communist China as a dominant power in Asia, the war was increasingly viewed in foreign policy circles as part of a struggle to prevent Communist domination of Asia. The Korean War seemed to confirm the expansionist tendencies of Communist powers in that part of the world, and the Eisenhower administration encouraged the French to view Vietnam in that way.

The United States had a fundamental internal conflict: On the one hand, opposed to colonialism, but on the other, opposed to expansion of Communist domination. Eisenhower and his hawkish Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, often referred to “enslavement of free peoples” as something the US could not permit.

By 1953, the guerrilla war in Indochina evolved into a conflict in which the Vietnamese insurgents were fielding regular units of battalion, regimental, and even division size, which increasingly engaged French Expeditionary Corps (FEC) forces in battle. The Viet Minh forces were being equipped, trained, and supplied by Soviet and Chinese Communist governments.

The US role in Indochina: 1953

As the principal western power -- the United States -- took on more responsibility for supporting its allies with military and economic assistance, in FY 1953, the United States paid one-third of the economic costs of the war in Indochina (Anderson 1991). When President Eisenhower took office in 1953, the United States was already providing transports as well as fighter and bomber aircraft to the French Air Force in Southeast Asia.

By this time, the French were implementing General Navarre’s plan to pacify northern Vietnam and decisively defeat the Viet Minh forces by 1955. A system of fortified positions in the Red River delta and a mobile force of paratroopers were intended to deny the Viet Minh’s control and resupply in the north.

In November 1953, the French began occupying and fortifying a base in the valley of Dien Bien Phu in northwestern Vietnam. Astride Route 41, the route into Laos, and the Nam Yum River, the French hoped to draw the Viet Minh into a conventional battle where artillery and air power would be decisive. Dien Bien Phu had an airstrip, which was used to resupply the garrison.

Operations such as Dien Bien Phu placed an enormous load on the French airlift capability. They relied primarily on C-47s, mainly supplied out of USAF stocks. Their fighters and bomber aircraft were mainly U.S. models, including the B-26 bombers, and their ability to maintain these aircraft was limited by lack of training. They needed to request support from the United States.

President Eisenhower, having taken office with a pledge to end the Korean War, was understandably reluctant to commit combat troops to Vietnam. He was also mindful that he could not commit the United States to war without congressional support. So he met the French requests for support in three ways: (1) the loan of transport aircraft, including C-47s and C-119s, (2) transport of supplies from bases in the Philippines to Vietnam, and (3) temporary assignment of US Air Force personnel to bases at Touraine (Danang) and around Hanoi. These assignments began in August 1953. The USAF 315th Air Division began flying C-119s to Vietnam on December 5 of that year. On February 5, 1954, 200 Air Force personnel (primarily mechanics) of the 8081st Air Service unit were sent to Vietnam, and 145 airmen were sent to Danang. At the request of the French, the numbers increased, peaking at 462 in May 1954.



Dien Bien Phu situation worsens : 1954

The French garrison at Dien Bien Phu increased through reinforcement to about 12,000 men. Fire support included two battalions of twelve 105-mm howitzers each, a battery of four 155mm guns, and three heavy mortar companies. Also supporting the garrison were ten tanks and a battery of self-propelled quad-.50 caliber machine-guns. Having elected to defend a network of fortified positions on the valley floor, the French had discounted the possibility of the Viet Minh placing artillery in the surrounding heights. However, the Viet Minh forces (estimated at 50,000 regular troops, augmented by a large number of civilian laborers) had dug in and camouflaged about 144 field pieces (75MM and 105MM) in the mountains on the forward slopes. In addition, the Viet Minh had heavy mortars (122MM or 4.2 inch) and about three-dozen 37mm antiaircraft pieces which were being put into place at Dien Bien Phu. On March 10, 1954, the bombardment of the main airstrip began and, two days later, the airstrip was unavailable for conventional use. With about a 5-to-1 advantage in artillery and the inability of counter-battery fire to effectively silence them, the French artillery commander, despairing, committed suicide on or about March 15, 1954.

At the height of the resupply airlift, about 150 tons of materiel per day had been flown into Dien Bien Phu. On the ground, the relentless Viet Minh attacks developed a system of trenches and tunnels close to the French garrison and began systematic strangulation, even while sustaining high casualties of their own. A consequence of the tightening Viet Minh encirclement was that airdrops of supplies and reinforcement was to a shrinking perimeter. In fact, it was estimated that some 25,000 artillery rounds per day were being inadvertently supplied to the Viet Minh by French airdrops. By April the situation was desperate, and early arrival of the monsoon rains turned much of the French position on the valley floor into swamp.

Operation Vulture: seeking “united action”

Operation Vulture was proposed at some point toward the end of March 1954. The record is not clear on how it emerged – French General Ely stated that it was brought up by Admiral Radford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), during a meeting in Washington, DC, in late March. Secretary Dulles told Ely that the United States could not afford to stake its prestige on an intervention that failed, and that US military action would only be certain if the Chinese intervened with air forces. In a speech a few days later, Dulles stressed the importance of the French holding in Indochina.

Operation Vulture would consist of an intensive bombardment by the USAF B-29s to relieve the pressure on Dien Bien Phu. The question of Communist China coming into the war or attacking the bombers was considered, but thought to be unlikely due to lack of jet-capable airfields in that part of southern China. About fifty B-29s, operating out of Clark AFB in the Philippines, were to be tasked for the mission with loads of 500-pound bombs. Task Force 70 of the US Navy was already steaming toward the Gulf of Tonkin to provide fighter escorts from the USS Wasp and USS Essex aircraft carriers.

President Eisenhower, mindful of the constitutional requirement for congressional approval, called the Democratic and Republican leaders, including Senator Lyndon Johnson, to the White House for a meeting with the National Security Council and the JCS. The President outlined three essential requirements for going ahead with Vulture: (1) it had to be formally requested by the French, (2) it had to be a “united action,” with Britain at least nominally on board, and (3) he needed Congressional support.

While Secretary Dulles and Admiral Radford favored intervention, other members of JCS were less enthusiastic, and General Ridgway, who foresaw the inevitable commitment of ground troops after Vulture, opposed the venture. Lyndon Johnson, who was later to preside over a war of his own, did not favor intervention to save a French colony.

Further complicating the matter was the “new look” doctrine of Eisenhower, in which massive retaliation with nuclear weapons would be used if China entered the war. Some suggested that atomic bombs be used in Vulture, but that was quickly ruled out due to both political and operational considerations. Ultimately, the British refused to go along, and thus, the Australian and New Zealand commitment unraveled. Eisenhower had prepared to accept the need to go in unilaterally if “united action” was not possible, but viewed this as a last resort.

In order to keep the French troop movement and logistics going, the US Air Force took an active role. Beginning April 20, the USAF’s 62nd Troop Carrier Wing airlifted French paratroops from France to Vietnam using its C-

124 Globemasters. Clark AFB provided additional airlift, already under way since March, and continued until August, involving 1,800 flights.

US reconnaissance

The USAF Bomber Command, which provided the main force for Vulture, began preparations. Brigadier General Caldera, who led the bomber strike force, made three overflights of the Dien Bien Phu battlefield in French B-17s and a C-47. Given the shrinking French perimeter, close air support was problematic, but General Caldera believed the mission would have been successful. The operations plan for Vulture was complete by April 24.



F9F Panther. Photo: U.S. Navy

The US Navy was also involved in the reconnaissance. On March 25, Admiral Phillips flew over Dien Bien Phu. Three days later, he received an order for photographic coverage of the battle area and Viet Minh supply lines, with the photographs to be ready by April 12. Jet aircraft were spotted by both French and Viet Minh over the battle area April 7 and 8. The Navy also carried out photoreconnaissance flights over southern China to assess Chinese airfields and the supply transshipment center at Nanjing. In all, the two carriers flew 2,600 sorties in March and April. On April 10, French naval units sighted Task Force 70 in the Tonkin Gulf. What the French did not know was that Eisenhower had made the decision to recall the ships the previous day.

The Geneva Conference

If the foregoing seems to reflect confusion and lack of resolve on the part of the US, it should be remembered that European allies were looking forward to a conference on settling Asian questions in April. The conflicts in Korea and Indochina were on the agenda and participants included representatives of the Viet Minh and Communist China. The British, who were fighting their own war in Malaya, wanted to try and settle the Indochina question by diplomatic means. And as bleak as the Dien Bien Phu situation seemed, the French were giving a good account of themselves. Dulles took a hard line at Geneva and urged the French to reject any settlement that ceded the northern half of the country to the communists.

Of prime concern to the United States was that the French should remain in Indochina. A French pullout was likely to create a power vacuum that would invite a Communist takeover. Even the loss of Dien Bien Phu would not be a decisive loss for the French, since only four percent of the FEC were at the garrison.

As the Geneva conference entered its third week, word arrived that the garrison at Dien Bien Phu had been overrun and that its commander, General de Castries, had surrendered on May 7. The war continued until July 20, 1954, when a settlement divided Vietnam at the 17th parallel, pending national elections in 1956. All foreign troops were to be withdrawn. In France, the Laniel government fell, to be replaced by a coalition led by Pierre Mendes-France. A war in Algeria was beginning and the French redeployed their forces. The United States moved in to train and equip a South Vietnamese National Army under the newly created Diem government. The 1956 elections never took place, and the temporary division of Vietnam lasted for more than twenty years.

Conclusion

Operation Vulture might have bought time for the French, but there was the strong possibility that it could have led to much greater US involvement with American ground forces fighting what amounted to a colonial war. Had China intervened, the war might well have escalated to a nuclear attack and re-opening of the Korean front -- or worse. Dulles blamed the British for "going back on their word," though the record suggests that there was never a firm commitment by the British. Eisenhower's "New Look" of American military policy may have worked for the United States in Europe, but its limitations became clear in Asia.

A footnote to the American role in 1954 concerns five of the US Air Force mechanics supporting the French at Touraine who went on an unauthorized outing to nearby China Beach. They were taken prisoner by the Viet

Minh and were not released until September, when all POWs were to be released by both sides. Thus, these five became the first American prisoners of war in Vietnam.

A second (and personal) footnote is that I was an enlisted man in the US Army at the time. Public opinion polls in the United States narrowly favored US intervention (52% vs. 38%). Estimates of US ground forces needed were seven US divisions, which would have required mobilization at a time when the six National Guard divisions called up for Korea were being released. History might have been very different, but that is unknowable. Operation Vulture was stillborn but US involvement in Vietnam had begun.

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Nine Embassies Salute the Cold War Museum

By Bill Craig, Contributing Editor

The ambassadors of nine former Communist countries hosted a reception November 14, 2003, at the Bulgarian embassy in support of the Cold War Museum and in commemoration of the revolutions of 1989 and the end of that decades-long conflict. The salute has been an annual event in Washington since 1989, held at different embassies each year. Host countries in addition to Bulgaria were the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

Welcoming the guests, Bulgarian Ambassador Elena Poptodorova praised the efforts of the Museum to preserve the history of the Cold War and to ensure that the memory of that period will be preserved and passed on to younger generations. She emphasized the significance of the democratic revolutions of 1989 for the unification of Europe, inspired as it was by the common values of freedom and democracy. She paid tribute to the role that the United States played in promoting those values in Central and Eastern Europe and in bringing down the Iron Curtain. The ambassador also spoke briefly about the challenging and sometimes painful reforms that Bulgaria and other former Soviet bloc countries had to undertake in order to arrive at the present stage of close partnership with the U.S. and of membership in NATO.

Gary Powers, Jr., co-founder of the Museum, gave a brief overview of plans for its permanent home at a former missile base in northern Virginia. The Museum originally was founded in 1996 after Powers discovered that school children were ignorant of the 1960 incident in which his father was shot down in the U2 spy plane he was flying over the Soviet Union. The museum has been circulating traveling exhibits and sponsors “spy tours” of sites in Washington associated with celebrated espionage cases.

Powers thanked those present for their support and called for further aid in assembling artifacts of the Cold War era: “dusty items in basements, oral and written histories.” He reminded them of the continued need for financial donations. He quoted former President Kennedy who said, “*A nation reveals itself not only by the individuals it produces, but also by those it honors—those it remembers.*”

He noted that James Billington, Librarian of Congress, called the Cold War “*the central conflict of the second half of the 20th century, the longest and most unconventional war of the entire modern era—an altogether unprecedented experience for Americans. We were faced for the first time with an opponent who was both ideologically committed to overthrow our system and was equipped to destroy us physically.*”

Powers also quoted Washington Post columnist Charles Krauthammer who wrote: “**The Cold War did not have the dramatic intensity of World War II. But it was just as real and just as dangerous. Though often clandestine and subtle, it ranged worldwide, cost many lives, evoked much heroism and lasted what seemed like forever... Considering the stakes, the scope and the suffering, this was a struggle that surely deserves commemoration. Let us build a monument to it...let the President call for the building of a Cold War memorial. If he won’t, Congress should.**”

Project Camelot and the U.S. Army

By Frank M. Tims, Ph.D, Director of Public Affairs, Cold War Veterans Association

The Defense Department looked to science to address a host of problems and missions during the Cold War. In addition to their work in hardware and weapons systems, the DOD tasked numerous “think tanks” such as the RAND Corporation and the American University’s Special Operations Research Office (SORO) with applying the social sciences to inform the military on a variety of problems. During the 1950s, focus shifted to political and social instability in third world nations and the need to address American interests in changing political contexts. For example, the Soviet Union began attempting to expand its interest in the emerging nations of the Middle East and Africa. Fidel Castro’s victory in Cuba was followed by both alignment with the Soviet Union and a program of exporting revolution.

Project Camelot was conceived in the early 1960s as an effort to understand the dynamics of social instability and to create strategies to address the sources of this instability. Such a project had promise on one hand -- since it might enable social progress by enlightened governments -- but was controversial since it might also have provided a basis for repressive policies. Other social science projects undertaken by SORO included studies of rural violence in Colombia, studies of military civic action in Asia, and psychological operations. Project Camelot was ambitious, with funding of approximately \$2 million a year for three to four years, starting in 1964, which would more than double SORO’s budget.

A steering committee of prominent sociologists, psychologists, political scientists, and other academics guided Camelot. Its initial focus was on identifying societies that might be studied to identify possible measures of internal instability and methods of developing policies to reduce “revolutionary potential.” Methods for studying these countries might range from historical case studies to actual population surveys in the countries of interest. It was envisioned that Camelot might include studies of countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.

The first country selected for study was Chile, which was of interest because of its relative stability – with only two major interruptions (at that time) in its orderly constitutional process of changing governments (1891 and the period 1925-32). Kalman Silvert of Dartmouth University speculated that Chile might have been viewed as a “safe training ground” for Camelot researchers. Dr. Hugo Nuttini, a former Chilean who was a professor of sociology at the University of Pittsburg, made contact with academic colleagues in Chile. Nuttini made trips to Chile and, while he did describe the project as receiving funding from several US government agencies, its military sponsorship was apparently not mentioned (Silvert 1967).

Professor Nuttini was confronted by a Norwegian sociologist who had been invited to participate in Camelot planning meetings in Washington, DC, and who was aware of the Department of the Army’s sponsorship of the project. Until that time, awareness of the project had been mainly in academic circles. However, this revelation – at the time of the US intervention in the Dominican Republic – cast suspicion on the project and its real purposes. The news media and political circles in Chile picked up the story and it became quickly sensationalized. Complicating the matter was that the US Embassy in Santiago knew nothing of Camelot, and the fact that the distortion in the news media depicted Project Camelot as Plan Camelot, part of a US Government policy to support right-wing military dictatorships in Latin America as a counterweight to Cuban-inspired revolutionary movements.

The incident had far-reaching consequences. SORO’s Project Simpatico, a less ambitious study of how the Colombian military’s civic action programs (such as road building, school construction, and medical aid) in rural areas affected attitudes toward their government. Simpatico had been reviewed and approved by the US Embassy in Bogota as well as by the Colombian military, but the Defense Department was abruptly ordered to stop field work. Simpatico received the same sort of hostile press coverage and public suspicion. The U.S. State Department was less than enthusiastic about Project Camelot. The Chilean incident was awkward and threatened to undermine actual US foreign policies such as the Alliance for Progress. Congressional scrutiny followed and questions were raised in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee as to whether the U.S. Army should be sponsoring research on politics in third world countries.

To understand the significance of this event for the Cold War, one must remember that RAND and SORO were hardly unique organizations. The Operations Research Office (ORO) of Johns Hopkins University had long provided support to the Army's missions in such areas as psychological warfare research with regard to Korea, China, and the USSR. The MITRE Corporation supported the Air Force in areas of operations research. The DOD's Institute for Defense Analyses and the Center for Naval Analyses were other significant organizations doing studies that made direct contributions of military operations. These were but a few of the Defense research organizations legitimately serving the Pentagon at that time. Many other research organizations, including for-profit corporations, performed research in support of Defense Department missions.

The Army's response to the unwelcome scrutiny was to cancel Project Camelot in 1966. Project Simpatico was quietly concluded – its final report being written at a military base in Panama – and the only copies of the report classified and locked away in a Pentagon safe. The Congressional hearings were an uncomfortable time for SORO – its portfolio of studies came under scrutiny, especially those on foreign areas. The nature of research is that while many studies contribute in important and practical ways to knowledge, other studies are ill conceived or failures (for a variety of reasons, not all of them bad), and some sound downright silly. Senator Fulbright ridiculed one project sponsored by the CIA, "Superstition and Witchcraft in Combat," which was nothing more than a report on beliefs among rebels in the former Belgian Congo.

In the wake of Camelot, the anti-war movement focused on military research conducted on university campuses. In the most extreme attacks, radical groups such as the Weathermen bombed laboratories. Students at a midwestern university broke into the office of an anthropology professor who had done research for the US Army in Asia and burned his files. Arguments broke out within professional societies over whether academics should be doing research for the military; with factions taking the position that such activity was immoral or at least unethical. Many academics were intimidated and universities began divesting themselves of organizations with military contracts. SORO adopted the less provocative name of Center for Research in Social Systems (CRESS), and merged with the American Institutes for Research, an independent organization. The Operations Research Office of Johns Hopkins had become the Research Analysis Corporation (RAC) with no university affiliation and later was absorbed by the General Research Corporation, a publicly owned company. RAND had no university ties to worry about and continued to conduct studies for the military in Vietnam and elsewhere.

The military continued to sponsor research, but the Army's behavioral and social science research arm, responding to Congressional pressure, shifted toward such safer areas of inquiry as personnel selection and training, human factors research, and night vision or other capability-enhancing technologies. This was not the end of applied social research affecting military operations but it was a time of a much-lowered profile through the decade of the 1970s and into the 1980s.

The above article is based on both the author's personal knowledge of the projects discussed, discussions with personnel involved, and in particular a chapter by Kalman Silvert, "American Academic Ethics and Social Research Abroad; The Lesson of Project Camelot," in Irving Louis Horowitz's volume The Rise and Fall of Project Camelot. (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1967), pp. 80-106. Personal communications with Dr. Norman Smith, who was Director of Project SIMPATICO, are appreciated.

Cold War International History Project – Korea Initiative

The Woodrow Wilson Center's Cold War International History Project and the U.S. China Studies Program at the Miller Center of Public Affairs at the University of Virginia will hold an international conference on "China, North Korea, and the Cold War in Asia" at the University of Virginia October 22-24, 2004.

Following up on earlier efforts by the Cold War International History Project's Korea Initiative (coordinated by Kathryn Weathersby) and its partners (see the CWIHP North Korea workshop organized and co-sponsored by George Washington University's Cold War Group in March 2003, report at <http://cwihip.si.edu>), the primary aim of the meeting is to utilize archival documents from North Korea's former Communist allies, China in particular, to pursue a deeper understanding of China's changing relations with North Korea throughout the Cold War. A second objective is to illuminate the dynamics, logic, goals and strategies of North Korea's internal and external policies. The conference will explore previously inaccessible or unnoticed documentation kept by North Korea's

Communist allies (present or former). Selected documents will be edited and published in a documentary collection. The conference organizers also intend to publish a volume of selected conference papers.

Scholars are invited to submit proposals for papers. The proposals should outline the paper's topic and main themes/theses as well as the documentary sources that will be used. The conference organizers will cover the participants' expenses to attend the conference.

Proposals should be sent no later than February 25, 2004, to Chen Jian at jchen@virginia.edu and Christian Ostermann at ostermac@wwic.si.edu. For further information, see <http://cwihip.si.edu>.

Chen Jian, The Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia
Christian Ostermann, Cold War International History Project, Woodrow Wilson Center
Kathryn Weathersby, Cold War International History Project, Woodrow Wilson Center

THE COLD WAR INTERNATIONAL HISTORY PROJECT (CWIHP) is a clearinghouse and research institute for international Cold War history based at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, D.C. CWIHP collects, translates, and publishes declassified documents from former Communist world and other archives. It supports the full and prompt release of historical materials by governments on all sides of the Cold War, and seeks to accelerate the process of integrating new sources, materials and perspectives from the former "Communist bloc" and other countries into Cold War historiography. A tax-exempt public charity, the Cold War International History Project/Woodrow Wilson Center receives funding from the Korea Foundation, the Henry Luce Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the Andrew Mellon Foundation and other donors. For further information, please visit the CWIHP website: <http://cwihip.si.edu>.

In Memoriam



Earl E. Myers

Earl E. Myers, 80, Vero Beach, Florida, formerly of Independence, died Wednesday, Jan. 28, 2004.

Retired Air Force Col. Myers was born April 21, 1923, in Independence. He entered the Army Air Force in 1943. His assignments included Fairchild Air Force Base, Spokane, Wash., Forbes Air Force Base, Topeka, Torrejon Air Base, Madrid, Spain, and numerous other duty stations. He retired from the Air Force in 1965 at Pease Air Force Base, Portsmouth, NH. He was a command pilot and accumulated 41,244 hours total flight time in his military and civilian aviation career. He flew combat missions in World War II in the Pacific Theater and the Korean War, flying RB-29s. At the conclusion of the Korean War, he transitioned into the first sweep wing jet bomber, the RB-47. He flew this plane throughout the Cold War over hostile territories. His awards and decorations include the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, Air Medal, Air Force Commendation, Army Good Conduct, American Campaign, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign, WWII Victory, Army of Occupation, Korean Service, United Nations Service (Korea), Army Presidential Unit Citation and the Korean President Unit Citation. After his retirement from the Air Force, he continued serving his country with the CIA in Africa and other parts of the world including reconnaissance flights in the U-2. At the conclusion of his service with the CIA, he began a civilian aviation career and became type rated in the Lear Jet, Gulfstream II and III, Boeing 707 and 747. He visited 273 countries during his military and civilian career. He was a lifelong member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Independence. Other organizations include the Vero Beach Sunrise Rotary Club, the Quiet Birdmen Club, Vero Beach Hanger and the American Legion.

His survivors include three sons, Steven Myers, Vero Beach, Christopher Myers, Chicago, and Kipp Myers, Redondo Beach, CA; a daughter, Ann Marie Bosch, Independence; six grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Note from Gary Powers: I have finished the last additions to Chapter 32, the closing chapter of Earl's bio notes on our web site: <http://www.rb-29.net> The additions contain some meaningful and touching commentary by family members and complete our efforts to record and publish Earl's remarkable life story. You may access that chapter at this URL: <http://www.rb-29.net/HTML/biomaster/bioeemyers/32-01eemyers.htm>

In Memoriam



Capt. Lloyd “Pete” Bucher

WASHINGTON, DC – It is with sadness that we note the passing of Commander Lloyd (Pete) Bucher, US Navy, retired, who was the skipper of the USS Pueblo (AGER-2), captured by North Korea in 1968, and who was held as a prisoner of war by North Korea. CDR Bucher and the other crew members endured torture and savage beatings by their captors, and were released two days before Christmas 1968, exactly 11 months after their capture.

CDR Bucher was 76 at the time of his death at a hospice in San Diego. Orphaned as a child, he grew up in Idaho and California, and at Boys’ Town, Nebraska. He served as an enlisted sailor prior to being commissioned in 1953, and served aboard submarines. He was a graduate of the University of Nebraska

After taking command of the USS Pueblo, his ship was sent on an intelligence-gathering mission off North Korea, to collect Electronic Intelligence (ELINT) and Signals Intelligence (SIGINT). Her sister ship, the USS Banner (AGER-1) had previously conducted similar operations off North Korea. Auxiliary General Environmental Research (AGER) ships were conceived as small unarmed or lightly armed ELINT/SIGINT vessels. Manned by US Navy crews, communications technicians (CT) from the Naval Security Group and civilian oceanographers they would provide an equivalent capability to Soviet trawlers. Originally the US Navy envisioned a total of 40 ships in this new AGER class. The USS Pueblo was armed only with .50 caliber machine guns, which would be ineffective against armored ships and jet fighters. On January 23, 1968, the USS Pueblo was attacked by North Korean ships and MiG aircraft. Seaman Duane Hodges was killed in the attack, and several of the ship’s crew, including CDR Bucher, were wounded.

Despite urgent radio distress messages calling for air support, no aircraft were sent to rescue the ship. The North Koreans boarded and took control of the ship, and headed for Wonsan Harbor. Subsequent investigations found that the Navy had not made adequate provision to protect the ship in event of such attacks.

North Korea held the crew and attempted to exploit maximum propaganda value from their capture. CDR Bucher signed a “confession” that the ship was on a spy mission only after the North Koreans threatened to execute the crewmembers one by one until he did.

The United States/ United Nations Command managed to obtain their release by signing an admission that they had been sent to spy on North Korea. The admission was “signed under duress” and was repudiated by the United States after the crew had been released. The ship, USS Pueblo, has been in North Korea to this day.

After retiring from the Navy, CDR Bucher lived in Poway, California with his wife, Rose. His survivors include his wife and two grown sons.

Commander Bucher donated several items associated with the USS Pueblo Incident to the Museum, which we will proudly display in the near future.

For more information on Commander Bucher visit <http://www.usspueblo.org> and <http://www.coldwar.org/articles/60s/pueblo.html>

“War in Film, Television and History” Conference

Call for papers

The Film and History League, along with the Literature/Film Association announces a conference on "War in Film, Television, and History" for November 11-14, 2004. Papers, panels are invited with a deadline of 30 July 2004 for abstracts. *Film & History* and the *Literature/Film Quarterly* are the journals connected with this meeting and the web site for *F&H* will have a click point to the companion group. At least one book will emerge from this conference and the papers given will be in the pool for that project; in addition, a CD-ROM is planned, as are special issues of the journals. Many papers will, as a result, reach a broad audience.

The featured luncheon speaker is Adrian Cronauer whose "life" was appropriated by Barry Levinson for *Good Morning Vietnam* (1987), starring Robin Williams. Cronauer will discuss how his treatment and script evolved into the final projection. Full details are online at: www.filmandhistory.org

USS Midway

USS Midway Comes Home!

During the Cold War, the USS Midway was a platform for research and development, testing various kinds of equipment, and test fired a captured German V-2 rocket from her flight deck -- the first such launching from a moving platform.

Now the USS Midway is home to rest in San Diego, California, and a Grand Opening is being planned for June 2004. Volunteers are needed to make this happen. If you are in the San Diego area and wish to volunteer, please email midwayvols@san.rr.com or call 619-234-3497. For more information, visit <http://www.midway.org>

On This Day in Cold War History...

Cold War Events: March – April ©

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| Mar 1 1954 | H-bomb Castle-Bravo test. |
| Mar 1 1969 | U2C shot down over China, pilot KIA. |
| Mar 1 1990 | 11 th Armored Cavalry Regiment conducted the last border patrol of the Cold War in Europe, in the Fulda gap. |
| Mar 2 1973 | US Ambassador Cleo Noel and George Moore assassinated, Khartoum, Sudan. |
| Mar 3 1946 | US Army ordnance officer killed by Soviet sentry, Berlin. |
| Mar 3 1961 | Cuban Air Force shot down US Beechcraft AT-11. |
| Mar 4 1974 | LCDR Franklin West, USN, wounded by North Korean forces, Panmunjom, Korea. |
| Mar 5 1953 | Death of Stalin. |

Mar 6 1958 USAF F-86 shot down over North Korea, pilot rescued.

Mar 10 1953 USAF F-84 of 36th TFW shot down by Czech MiGs in West German airspace, pilot safely ejected.

Mar 10 1964 USAF RB-66 of 10th TRW shot down over East Germany, pilots injured and held.

Mar 12 1947 President Truman declared that US is guarantor of military security of both Greece and Turkey.

Mar 12 1953 British (RAF) AVRO Lincoln shot down over East Germany, 6 KIA.

Mar 12 1991 US airman killed by (communist) terrorist bomb in Athens.

Mar 13 1953 USAF B-50 attacked by Soviet MiG-15s, near Kamchatka Peninsula.

Mar 14 1978 USN LT Robert Nelson, (UN observer) in Lebanon wounded during Israeli attack.

Mar 15 1953 A US Air Force WB-50 Superfortress reconnaissance plane of the 38th SRS, 55th SRW, was attacked by a pair of Soviet MiG-15 *Fagots* approximately 25 miles off the Kamchatka Peninsula.

Mar 15 1968 PFC Calvin Lindsey killed by hostile fire, Korean DMZ.

Mar 15 1969 Eighty-one S. Korean and US soldiers killed during crash of helicopter evacuating wounded from firefight, Korean DMZ.

Mar 15 1981 RC-135 Cobra Ball II – 6 crewmen killed in crash, Bering Sea.

Mar 16 1946 Winston Churchill made his “Iron Curtain” speech, Fulton, MO.

Mar 17 1981 3 Marines wounded in terrorist attack, Costa Rica.

Mar 18 1965 US Army aircraft shot down by North Korean ground fire.

Mar 18 1974 US Navy minesweepers sent to Suez Canal.

Mar 21 1946 USAAF established Strategic Air Command (SAC).

Mar 21 1954 Two US Navy AD-4 Skyraiders, from VA-145 and VC-35, launched from the USS Randolph (CVA 15), attacked over or near the Czechoslovak border by a Czech MiG-15 *Fagot*. One AD-4 damaged.

Mar 24 1983 Major Arthur D. Nicholson killed by hostile fire in East Germany.

Mar 24 1984 Political Officer William Buckley kidnapped and murdered in Beirut, Lebanon.

Mar 27 1954 Eisenhower disclosed discovery of Soviet long-range “Bison” bombers, danger of surprise attack on the USA.

Mar 29 1954 Aircraft from USS Essex and USS Wasp began reconnaissance near Dien Bien Phu, Indochina, for possible US intervention. A total of 1,517 sorties were flown from the Essex and 1,116 from the Wasp during March and April, ostensibly as “training flights.”

Mar 30 1987 Pakistani F-16 shot down Soviet An 26.

Mar 31 1987 US Army SFC Gregory Fronius killed in El Salvador.

Apr 1 1955 Czech border guards fired on US patrol.

Apr 2 1980 BMCM Sam Novello, USN, shot and killed, Istanbul, Turkey.

Apr 4 1946 Ammunition supply point at Hsin Ho, China, attacked by Chinese Communist troops. 5 Marines KIA, 17 WIA.

Apr 4 1949 Secretary of State Acheson signed North Atlantic Treaty for USA.

Apr 4 1951 Congress authorized sending 4 additional US divisions to defend Europe.

Apr 4 1954 French government requested American intervention with aircraft to save their forces at Dien Bien Phu.

Apr 4 1957 U-2 crash, test pilot R. Seiker killed.

Apr 4 1974 3 US military officers killed in Philippines.

Apr 5 1946 US fleet anchored in the Bosphorous, opposing Soviet expansion into Mediterranean.

Apr 5 1986 Two US soldiers killed in bombing of West Berlin disco, 63 wounded.

Apr 7 1961 Accidental shutdown of B-52 over New Mexico, 3 crewmen killed.

Apr 8 1950 USN PB4Y-2 shot down by Soviets off coast of Latvia, 10 KIA.

Apr 8 1951 First of 4 detonations, Operation Greenhouse nuclear test.

Apr 9, 1954: A US Navy P2V Neptune from VP-2 was attacked by a Chinese MiG-15 while on patrol over the Yellow Sea.

Apr 10 1954 US Navy Task Force 70, including 2 aircraft carriers, sighted in Gulf of Tonkin, off Vietnam.

Apr 10 1963 Submarine USS Thresher lost in Atlantic, 129 killed.

Apr 11 1946 US Joint Planning Staff, JCS estimate that Soviets would overrun most of Europe, the Middle East, Korea, Manchuria, and China in a major war.

Apr 12 1950 Truman received NSC-68, which declared "the cold war is in fact a real war in which the survival of the free world is at stake".

Apr 12 1975 Operation Eagle Pull evacuation from Cambodia.

Apr 12 1984 Eighteen US servicemen killed and eighty-three people injured in bomb attack on restaurant near USAF base in Torrejon, Spain.

Apr 14 1968 Four US soldiers KIA, 1 wounded in ambush near Korean DMZ.

Apr 14 1988 Japanese Red Army terrorist bombing, Naples, Italy, 1 Sailor killed, 4 wounded.

Apr 14 1988 USS *Samuel B. Roberts* struck mine, Persian Gulf, 10 sailors wounded.

Apr 15 1969 US Navy EC-121 shot down over Sea of Japan, crew of 31 KIA.

Apr 16 1967 "Create two, three, many Vietnams" – Che Guevara.

Apr 16 1987 Pakistani F-16 shot down Soviet Su-22.

Apr 17 1955 USAF RB-47 shot down by Soviet MiG-15 fighters near Kamchatka Peninsula, 3 KIA.

Apr 17 1961 4 US B-26s shot down at Bay of Pigs, Cuba.

Apr 18 1956 USAF RB-47 lost Over Kamchatka Peninsula, 3 KIA.

Apr 18 1958 CIA B-26 shot down over Indonesia.

Apr 18 1961 1 US B-26 shot down at Bay of Pigs, Cuba.

- Apr 18 1983 4 US military, 13 others killed by bomb, US Embassy, Beirut.
- Apr 19 1961 2 US B-26s shot down at Bay of Pigs, Cuba.
- Apr 20 1954 US Air Force's 62nd Troop Carrier Wing began airlifting French troops from France to Vietnam .
- Apr 20 1954 Brigadier General Caldara, USAF, and 8 officers arrived in Saigon for the purpose of planning American air strikes against the Viet Minh. General Caldara made 3 flights over Dien Bien Phu to assess feasibility of bombing support.
- Apr 20 1961 US aircraft fired on by North Korean fighters. Pilot killed.
- Apr 20 1961 LTC DeLynn Anderson killed in Korea.
- Apr 20 1978 South Korean airliner shot down by Soviets, 2 passengers killed.
- Apr 21 1989 Army COL James Rowe assassinated in Manila, Philippines.
- Apr 22 1961 Two American soldiers killed in action, Laos.
- Apr 23 1953 USN Mercator aircraft and Chinese MiGs exchanged fire off Chinese coast .
- Apr 24 1980 Operation Eagle Claw – 8 US servicemen killed at Desert One, Iran.
- Apr 24 1987 US Army SGT Robert Judd wounded in Greece by terrorists.
- Apr 24 1988 Submarine USS Bonefish (SS-582) suffered fire while submerged, 3 killed, ship scrapped.
- Apr 24 1987 Terrorist bomb against bus carrying U.S. military in Greece. Eleven soldiers injured.
- Apr 25 1950 NSC Directive 68: It is the policy of the United States to resist communist threats to non-communist nations, "wherever they may be."
- Apr 26 1952 USS *Hobson* sunk in Atlantic after collision, 176 killed.
- Apr 26 1965 U-2 crash killed pilot E. Edens.
- Apr 27 1965 USAF ERB-47H attacked by 2 North Korean MiGs over Sea of Japan, shot down one MiG.
- Apr 28 1965 Intervention in the Dominican Republic, 28 Apr. 1965 - 21 Sep. 1966.
- Apr 29 1952 Air France DC-4 fired on by Soviet MiGs near Berlin, 3 passengers wounded.
- Apr 30 1975 Two U.S. Marines killed in rocket attack at Tan Son Nhut airport, last Americans to die in Vietnam War.
- Apr 30 (7:52 a.m.) Last helicopter lifted off from the roof of the U.S. Embassy, Operation Frequent Wind.

