



Cold War Times

The Internet Newsletter of the Cold War Museum

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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.

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Cold War Museum Update

Francis Gary Powers, Jr.

Dear Friends of the Cold War Museum,

As 2001 nears its end I find myself reflecting on the many accomplishments of the Cold War Museum in the past year and those of you who have made them possible. I am writing to provide you with a brief update on the Museum's activities and to ask that you consider making a year-end tax-deductible donation to the Cold War Museum's general fund. A year-end donation to our general fund will allow us to develop quality exhibits and educational programs about the Cold War. For those of you that work for the Federal Government or are in the military, donations can be made through the Combined Federal Campaign, CFC # 7475.

We are at a critical stage of our development. In January of 2001, the Cold War Museum became a Smithsonian Institution Affiliate Museum. As a Smithsonian Affiliate, the Cold War Museum can exhibit artifacts from the Smithsonian's National collection and use the Smithsonian name in conjunction with fundraising and promotional activities. In addition, we have walked through the Lorton, Virginia Nike Missile base location and are in the process of writing a proposal to the Fairfax County Park Authority for the use of the Nike site, which is situated on 20 acres of land with 120,000 sq. feet of building space.

In the meantime, we have displays at the Fort Meade Museum in Maryland and the Freedom Museum in Manassas, Virginia. Our mobile exhibit on the U-2 Incident, our Spies of Washington Tour, and our book

signing receptions continue to generate interest in the building of a permanent Cold War Museum facility. The mobile exhibit is currently on display at the Florida International Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida through March 2002.

Our educational Spies of Washington Tour has enjoyed substantial growth and is now complimented by a Robert Hanssen Tour and a walking Spy Tour of Georgetown that we conduct periodically with our Certified Tour Guide, Carol Bessette. Our next book signing reception will take place on November 7, 2001 when Washington, DC author Adrian Havill talks about his new book, "The Spy Who Stayed out in the Cold: FBI Spy Robert Hanssen."

On October 5, 2001 the Cold War Museum was a co-sponsor of an anti-terrorist dramatization and lecture hosted by the Vienna-Tysons Regional Chamber of Commerce, coordinated by ISSSOD (www.issodglobal.com), and broadcast live on the WMAL Victoria Jones Show. The International Strategic Services, Special Operations Division, (ISSSOD) provides high level security and protective services for corporations, particularly in an international setting. Participants experienced what it was like to be taken hostage and learned about terrorism from a distinguished panel of experts that included Congressman James Moran (D-VA 8th District), Maj. Gen. Donald W. Sheppard, USAF, Ret. (CNN Military Analyst), and Heinz Altmann (Founder of ISSSOD).

In late November or early December the Baltic Embassies will co-host a reception for the Museum commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the End of the Cold War. As a result of their past support, the Museum has acquired several wonderful and unique artifacts. We are looking forward to working with them to preserve their Cold War history within the context of the Cold War Museum.

Please consider making a donation to the Cold War Museum's general fund. Your gift now 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.

If you should have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to visit www.coldwar.org, www.spytour.com, or call me directly at (703) 273-2381. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 178, Fairfax, VA 22030. Please help spread the word about the Museum. Together we can make this vision a reality. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Wishing you health and happiness in the New Year, Francis Gary Powers, Jr.

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, Nov 6, 2001 Cold War Shot Down Memorial Dedication

Location: Arlington National Cemetery Time: 11:00 am

For more information, call Gary Powers, Jr., at 1-703-273-2381.

Wednesday, Nov 7, 2001 Book Signing and Lecture

Washington Author, Adrian Havill, will talk about his new book on FBI double agent Robert P. Hanssen, the most notorious modern-day American spy. Books will be available for purchase. Location: Old Town Hall, City of Fairfax, Virginia Time: 7-8 pm

Sunday, Nov 18 Hanssen Spy Tour Visit spy sites allegedly used by notorious FBI spy Robert Hanssen. Cost: \$45 per person Time: 9 am -1 pm www.spytour.com

Saturday, Nov 24 Spies of Washington Tour Learn About espionage sites in and around Washington, DC. Cost: \$45 per person Time: 9 am -3 pm (lunch on your own at Union Station) www.spytour.com

A Few Words From The Editor...

Bryan J. Dickerson

This edition of *Cold War Times* brings us a diverse cross-section of Cold War experiences spanning geographically from America's Atlantic and Pacific coasts to the formerly divided Germany to North Korea. Former Black Horse trooper Rick Laws takes us on an inside look at the Inner German Border which separated communist East Germany from democratic West Germany and his regiment's mission of patrolling the border during the early 1980s. Air defense missiles feature prominently in this edition as historian Donald Bender discusses the Nike Ajax and Hercules air defense system, which defended New York City and the "Cold War Tourist", visits a restored Nike site outside San Francisco, California. In the "News from the Net" section, we spotlight two websites dealing with Cold War espionage. The first focuses on the ill-fated USS Pueblo and the ordeal of its crew held prisoner for nearly a year by North Korea. The other site is about Werner Juretzko, a German agent who worked for the U.S. and spent several years as a prisoner of the East Germans. "This Month in the Cold War" examines the many nuclear-related events, which occurred in the month of November. "Congressional Update" reports on federal legislation to study and preserve Cold War sites in our country.

I would like to introduce Bill Craig as the latest addition to our *CWT* team. Bill will serve as our Contributing Editor. He is a former journalist and retired government information director. He continues to work part-time in Washington, D.C., as a researcher and writer, and recently finished a book for the Smithsonian Institution. He served as an Army Counter Intelligence Corps special agent in Korea in 1954 and '55 and is looking forward to working on the newsletter, helping to develop the Cold War Museum, and spreading the word about the events of that time.

I would like to say a special hello to my friends in the 2nd Cavalry Association. I was their guest at their Reunion, which was held in Baltimore 10 – 14 October. My thanks to them for their hospitality. Among its long and distinguished history, the 2nd Cavalry patrolled West Germany's borders with East Germany and CzechoSlovakia during the Cold War.

The next edition of *CWT* will be published on or about 1 January 2002. Next year we intend to publish bi-monthly. Stay tuned for more details. On behalf of *CWT* I wish everyone a safe and joyous Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas and New Year.

“Veterans’ Vision”

By Dave Eberhart

The old *Stars and Stripes* has now officially gone into bankruptcy. In the meantime, I've taken over as the Editor-in-Chief of *Veterans' Vision*. *Vision* is associated with Circle of Friends for American Veterans and the Center for Homeless Vets. I'd like to invite all to submit a 300-word letter-to-the-editor on the subject of your choice. I'd like to make this pub much more of a veterans' forum than S & S. I would also very much like to solicit articles [grounded in vet issues or the celebration of a particularly notable vet] from all who would care to go that route (650-1000 words). Articles should be MSWord docs and should be accompanied by a high-resolution picture -- 300 dpi (usually no less than 400KB file size.) Looking forward to hearing from all.

---Dave Eberhart, formerly News Editor, *Stars and Stripes*. E-mail forcehawk@starpower.net

Congressional Update

“Senators Introduce Bill For Fed Cold War Study”

Washington, D.C. --- On 27 July 2001, Senators Harry Reid (D-NV) and John Ensign (R-NV) introduced a bill for the commemoration of the Cold War by the Department of the Interior. The bill (S. 1257) has been referred to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources for review and action.

S. 1257 would provide \$300,000 to the Interior Department for a study to inventory Cold War sites, and recommend sites to become historic landmarks. The bill also directs the department to create a Cold War Advisory Committee to oversee the study and prepare an interpretive handbook about the Cold War.

“We have a responsibility to commemorate the Cold War and the many brave men and women who risked or gave their lives during the longest war in United States history,” said Sen. Ensign in a prepared statement.

In introducing the bill, Sen. Reid cited the importance of his home state of Nevada in America’s victory in the Cold War. “This legislation will allow us to commemorate sites like Fallon Naval Air Station and Nellis Air Force Base and the Nevada Test Site which helped to bring this nation safely through the Cold War conflict,” said Sen. Reid in a prepared statement.

Sen. Reid also praised the work of Mr. Steve Ririe of Las Vegas and Nevada State Senator Rawson to commemorate fourteen men who died in a crash of a C-54 transport plane on 17 November 1955 near the summit of Mount Charleston in central Nevada. These men were part of the effort to develop the U-2 spy plane.

“The result of our efforts to memorialize these Cold War heroes will not only express the tremendous debt felt by a grateful nation but also provide the families of these individuals the closure they so honorably deserve,” said Ririe of S. 1257.

[Editor’s Note: See Cold War National Monument story in the August 2001 CWT issue.]

To read the text of S. 1257, visit www.senate.gov and input “S. 1257” in the bill search window.



Look Both Ways

By Rick Laws

[Editor's Note: This article was originally published in the June 1982 issue of *EurArmy* magazine. It is re-printed here with the permission of the author who served in the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment at that time. More information & photos about 11th ACR may be found at borderlegion.topcities.com]

The Iron Curtain, patrolled by the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment and other USAREUR units, is the most visual and vivid reminder of the division of Germany into two nations. In thought and deed, the building of the Iron Curtain began immediately after the Allies' victory over Nazi Germany. The foundation of the Iron Curtain is built upon the Soviet Union's belief that both people and resources must be controlled. Western powers, especially the German people, viewed the Soviets' restrictive program as extremely repressive and a violation of their rights. After the political division became a physical reality, the only acceptable alternative to life under the oppression of the Soviet Union was escape. The Soviet Union's action to stop the mass flight of the refugees increased in intensity as the tide of refugees swelled. The most infamous and easily remembered Soviet action, which nearly plunged the world into war again, was the Berlin Blockade.

With Soviet logic, the physical building of the Iron Curtain was inevitable. By 1953, nearly three and one-half million East Germans had fled to the West. Even with new births, at the 1953 rate of escape, it would have taken less than a generation to depopulate the Soviet Zone. The Soviet conclusion was inescapable: in order to keep this satellite country populated, its citizens had to be prevented from fleeing.

The Communist East German Border Command, over 40,000 strong, patrols the border 24 hours a day. Its orders are to shoot first and ask questions later if anyone, including another guard, looks as though he is attempting to escape. The East Germans and the Soviet Union say the Iron Curtain is there to protect them from the West. As you look at the physical barriers and all of the protective measures, take careful note of the construction. The barriers are built to serve only one purpose: to prevent the flow of people traveling west.

The barriers that have evolved from simple barbed-wire fences in the 1960s to the elaborate metal grid fence of today, still under construction and modification in many areas, have made escape more difficult. People in several towns and villages near the border in East Germany were forced to relocate elsewhere. People working in fields and facilities within five kilometers of the border must have special passes authorizing their presence in the area.

If you are in East Germany and walk west toward the border, you will come upon a chain of observation towers built in vast, open areas and at other visual vantage points. There are also bunkers on hilltops adjacent to the towers. Communications lines on poles connect the towers. A patrol road runs parallel to the towers the entire length of the border. Several meters west of the patrol road are anti-vehicular ditches. If you cross these ditches you come within reach of the first fence. The fences are made of metal grid fence plates and cement poles. The fencing now most common along the border frontier is about three meters high with a heavy diamond pattern cut into the grid plates. The communists are thorough --- the nuts and bolts that hold the plates together are removable only from the west side of the fence.

From the first fence, again continuing west, you would next encounter the heavy concentration minefields about 50 meters deep. These minefields have anti-vehicular and anti-personnel mines. They are followed by a second fence, made the same as the first.

All these barriers are in the East German sector of the marked inter-zonal boundaries. Fifty meters west of the second fence are the actual border markers, which stick one meter above the ground. These markers are white poles with either a blue or a red stripe painted around the upper part of the marker. Beyond these markers, on the west side, are other markers warning persons in West Germany that they're approaching the inter-zonal boundaries.

In several areas of the border are many mobile monitoring sites which frequently appear and disappear at various points along the border section. Soviet and East German communications sites monitor Western activities. These monitoring units are in position a few days, pack up and then reappear again in a new location. Work crews continually move through the perimeters to repair eroded fence sections and replace older fence portions.

As of 1979, the double-fence configuration is being replaced in some areas with a higher, single-fence system. This system has the same features as the first, with the addition of shotgun-type personnel mines attached to the fence in vulnerable areas. And reinforced concrete anti-vehicular ditches are being constructed which are wider and have steeper sides. There are two types of East German watchtowers. The box-type towers are replacing the round "tube" towers in many areas along the border and in most newly constructed tower sites. Both types of towers are equipped with communication lines, high-intensity spotlights and, of course, automatic weapons. The round tube towers are mostly outdated and presumed most expensive in construction. Allied border patrols have reported that some of these towers have fallen over, weakened by erosion around the foundations.

Alarm trip wires are placed in many areas 500 meters east of the first fence. In construction areas there are increased guard forces, stretches of concertina wires and dog runs. Dogs are chained to long lengths of cable, and the animals patrol up and down the length of the cable. This security method is excellent for deterring and/or destroying would-be escapees. In areas of suspected crossings and escapes, the shotgun-type fence mines and surveillance devices protect the people in the East. In most cases where the terrain permits, there are wide, plowed strips so guards can watch for footsteps of persons walking in the area.

Three West German agencies patrol the west side; they are the Federal Border (Bundesgrenzschutz), Customs (Zoll) and the Bavarian Border Police (Bayerische Grenzpolizei). Assisting the German authorities is the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, nicknamed the Black Horse Regiment during the 1916 expeditions in Mexico. The 11th maintains the defensive watch for all of the NATO nations.

The mission of the 11th ACR is to conduct active reconnaissance and surveillance of the inter-zonal boundary, and thus serve as the eyes and ears of NATO. In conjunction with other surveillance systems, this unit would give the earliest possible notice of an enemy attack. The 11th handles the mission by assigning different company-sized units to rotational border tours of 20 to 30 days each. The unit on border duty is responsible for conducting vehicle patrols and manning field radar and observations 24 hours a day.

The 11th ACR has three squadrons, which conduct the actual border ground patrols. A command and control squadron provides rotary wing and support missions. The patrolling

squadron (battalion) has several separate functions. A Squadron Border Operations Center, controlled at the main garrison, is tied in with the border camp and the Regimental Headquarters Border Operations Center (BOC). The border camp is the operating base for a six-man border patrol, a six-man reaction force, a standby patrol, observation point teams, air surveillance patrols, field radar teams, and armored surveillance platoons.

The border camp is home for the border personnel during the border tour. This camp has the bare essentials for soldier comfort. Free time is scarce during a normal border tour, and nearly non-existent during a busy one. Professional support soldiers of the 11th ACR work hard to keep all the patrols, headquarters operations centers, observation points and aircraft running smoothly. It's a tough job, but they measure up. A unit such as the 11th ACR has many personnel and much equipment in its arsenal. In this geographical location, manning the tanks, mortar carriers, 155mm self-propelled howitzers, M901 combat vehicles (TOW), and armored personnel carriers with anti-tank missiles is a big responsibility. These men are the first contact defensive force in the event of hostilities.

A well-known principle stated by many European war experts is the importance of time and speed to the communist spearhead in the event of a Western Europe invasion. Each Black Horse trooper works to deny Warsaw Pact forces the time and speed they need to accomplish their objectives west of the inter-German border. That's what the training and preparedness of the 11th ACR is all about.

The East-West German border is marked with much more care than those border areas in East Asia. Instances of individuals unwarily crossing the German border are very rare. But observers have sighted many areas where East Germans have dared the concertina wire and minefields while risking their lives for possible freedom. The accounts of such escapes could fill volumes of books. Many persons concealed in transport crates and in the trunks of cars go undetected. But those who have succeeded are far outnumbered by those who have failed. They risked their homes and livelihood in a quest for a life without the restraining power of communism. Socialistic ideals of communism have spread beyond the geographic boundaries and man-made barriers of the communist Western front. Nevertheless, the spirit of free men has withstood the temptations of the so-called Workers Society. The strength of the free Western world lies cradled in the valleys of Europe, the foothold of the new frontiers of freedom.

DEFENDING GOTHAM: THE NIKE MISSILE DEFENSES OF NEW YORK CITY

By Donald E. Bender

New York City and the seaward approaches to America's largest city were defended by the big guns of the United States Coast Artillery through the end of the Second World War. Powerful naval guns of up to 16-inch caliber were manned at sites throughout the region during the war years, ready to defend against an attack by sea which, thankfully, never occurred.

Within a year or two after the war's end, the big guns were removed from their massive, reinforced concrete casemates, cut up and sold for scrap. They had been rendered obsolete by two technologies perfected during the war: bomber aircraft with intercontinental range, and the atomic bomb. Future wars, it was believed, would be fought by fleets of high-flying, long-range bombers capable of delivering their nuclear payloads to any part of the planet in a matter of hours. The seacoast forts, despite their impressive armament, offered no defense against such an attack.

As Cold War tensions between the United States and the Soviet Union continued to grow, it became clear that a new system of technologically-advanced anti-bomber defenses would be needed to counter this potential threat. The Army's Nike missile system was a key element in the defensive network created largely during the 1950s to protect the continental United States against a possible Soviet bomber attack. For roughly two decades, the sleek white missiles of ARADCOM - Army Air Defense Command - defended American cities, industrial sites, select Strategic Air Command bomber bases and other potential targets from Maine to California.

New York City was considered to be a primary target for Soviet bombers involved in a nuclear air attack against the United States. New York was the nation's most populous city as well as the center of its financial sector. The region surrounding the city contained other substantial cities and sprawling suburbs. Vital industrial sites, port facilities, rail lines, highways, airports and some significant military installations were also located here making

it a "target-rich" environment. A nuclear bomb dropped anywhere within the region would have produced enormous damage and massive numbers of casualties.

In order to prevent such an occurrence, the Army constructed no fewer than 25 Nike missile batteries at 19 separate locations throughout the New York metropolitan area. The sites were constructed within the confines of New York City itself, in Nassau and Suffolk counties on Long Island, and in Westchester and Rockland counties as well. To the west, twelve more Nike batteries were established at nine separate locations within New Jersey. All of the sites were constructed during the mid and late 1950s.

A typical Nike missile site consisted of two individual facilities, the Integrated Fire Control or "IFC" Area and the Launcher Area. These facilities were generally separated by distances of roughly one-half to two miles due to technological limitations of the ground-based guidance and control system. In many instances, the two facilities of a single Nike missile site were located within separate townships.

The IFC Area contained the radar systems used to detect and track hostile aircraft, and to track and guide the missiles to intercept them. Radar scopes, plotting boards, communications equipment and an analog missile guidance computer were all housed within trailers located at the site, reflecting the Nike system's potential mobile capability. Many sites featured tall towers designed to lift the radar antennas clear of the surrounding terrain that would have obstructed their functioning. The protective "radomes" covering the radar antennas, often referred to by local residents as giant "golf balls", were often highly-visible elements within the landscapes where these bases were located.

The missiles were located at the separate Launcher Area. As its name implies, the Launcher Area was also the site from which the missiles would have been launched in the event of an air attack. Underground storage magazines were used to house the missiles in order to enhance safety in the event of an accidental explosion. The use of underground facilities also helped to reduce the amount of land required as a safety buffer around each installation. When needed, missiles were brought up from the underground facilities to the surface of a site atop a missile elevator. They were placed upon launchers and raised to a near-vertical position prior to firing.

Not surprisingly, no missiles were ever fired from any of the sites in the New York City region. The Nike crews did, however, travel to Fort Bliss, Texas, each year for annual service practices during which live missiles were fired at remotely controlled aerial targets.

The Nike system used what is known as a "command" type guidance system. One tracking radar followed the aircraft-target reporting its position to the missile guidance computer located on the ground within the IFC Area. A second tracking radar followed the missile during its flight. By continuously and rapidly comparing the relative positions of both the aircraft and the missile, the ground-based computer guided the missile to intercept its target via radio commands. At the moment of closest approach to the target, the computer detonated the missile's warheads.

All of the Nike sites in the New York City metropolitan area were initially equipped with the first-generation, Nike missile system known as Nike Ajax. The Ajax was a slender, dart-like missile, capable of speeds of over 1,600 mph. It had a maximum range of about 30 miles and could intercept bombers flying at altitudes of 60,000 feet.

Beginning in 1958, roughly one half of the Nike batteries in the region were upgraded to use a vastly improved, second-generation missile system known as Nike Hercules. The Hercules could reach speeds of over 2,700 mph and was capable of intercepting targets at altitudes in excess of 100,000 feet. Its maximum range of 90 miles was roughly three times that of the Nike Ajax. Unlike its predecessor, the Nike Hercules could be armed with powerful atomic warheads. The atomic warheads enabled a single missile to destroy a formation of several incoming bombers. The Nike Hercules could also be armed with a powerful, conventional warhead. This might have been used, for example, against a single aircraft target, such as a high-flying Soviet equivalent of the famed American U-2 reconnaissance aircraft.

Sites converted to use the big Hercules missiles were bolstered by upgraded radar systems capable of detecting and tracking small, supersonic targets at long range. Due to the nuclear capability of the new missile system, site security was greatly enhanced at the Launcher Areas, including the introduction of Military Police equipped with sentry dogs. Following the introduction of the Nike Hercules, a curious proliferation of nuclear tipped

missiles within densely populated urban and suburban environs resulted that would last for more than a decade.

Yet, and even as the new Nike Hercules missile system was being deployed, events were occurring that would result in the eventual demise of the Army's Cold War air defenses. By the late Fifties, the Soviet Union had increased its efforts to develop Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles or ICBMs. The new missiles, unlike the Soviet Union's fleet of manned bombers, were immune to interception by the U.S. air defense network. Not only the Army's Nike system, but the entire U.S. air defense network - a system oriented to defend against manned bombers and not missiles - would ultimately be affected by an increasing emphasis on strategic missile systems.

The last operational Nike Ajax missile sites within the continental United States were shut down during 1964. During the following year, the Nike Hercules batteries defending a select number of the Air Force's Strategic Air Command bomber bases were also inactivated. Throughout the late Sixties and early Seventies, the total number of operational bases within the Army's Nike program was reduced on an almost annual basis.

The final inactivation of the nationwide Nike system occurred during 1974 when the remaining Nike Hercules sites, including several bases within the New York City metropolitan area, were closed down. Army Air Defense Command, the organization responsible for the Nike program, was deactivated a short time later. A small number of Nike sites remained operational for several more years in south Florida and Alaska. When those sites closed, however, the once vital role of the Nike missile system within the air defense network of the continental United States had ended.

The Nike missile bases soon became a part of our nation's historic defensive military infrastructure. Significantly, the Nike batteries represented the final series of large-scale, fixed, defensive "fortifications" constructed to defend the continental United States. As such, they were the late 20th century equivalents of the forts that defended the nation in earlier decades. Like those earlier fortifications, they remain an important part of our nation's history.

Within the New York City metropolitan area, a considerable amount of Nike infrastructure remains extant at this time. However, population growth and related

development within the region continues to threaten the existence of these historic Cold War era missile sites.

On the positive side, some of the buildings at former New York area Nike sites have been adapted to serve new nonmilitary purposes as art studios, environmental education centers, meeting facilities, storage facilities and even as horse stables. A few of the sites are still used for general military purposes, serving as facilities for Army Reserve or Army National Guard units. However, many other sites have simply disappeared beneath a tidal wave of houses, highways and shopping malls.

The author has documented each of the former Nike missile sites within the New York City metropolitan area in order to create a valuable historical record of these now historic Cold War era military facilities. Additional information can be found on the author's Web site, Nike Missiles & Missile Sites, online at <http://alpha.fdu.edu/~bender/nike.html>

During the summer of 2001, substantial progress was made regarding the preservation and eventual future restoration of one of the former Nike missile installations within the New York metropolitan area. The story of that site and the efforts to preserve it will be presented here in a future edition of the Cold War Times.

About the Author

Author Don Bender is the principal of Cold War Research a historical research and consulting organization specializing in Cold War era sites and facilities. He is one of the foremost authorities on the history of the Nike missile system and is the founder of the New Jersey Nike Survey which has surveyed all former Nike missile sites within the Garden State and the New York metropolitan area. He is the author of numerous articles and is a frequent and popular speaker. His work has been featured in major news media including the *New York Times*, *Philadelphia Inquirer* and *Washington Post* and he has appeared on most major television networks as well as on the History Channel and National Public Radio. He can be reached via e-mail at bender@alpha.fdu.edu.

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This Month in the Cold War

Nuclear November

From ships to tests, the month of November seems to be a busy month for events related to nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons systems.

The Soviet Union's first successful atomic bomb test in August of 1949 led the United States to embark upon research into fusion bombs. On 1 November 1952, the United States exploded the world's first thermonuclear fusion device at Eniwetok Atoll in the Marshall Islands in the Pacific. Named "Mike", the detonation was equal to 10.4 million tons of TNT or 1000 times as powerful as the Hiroshima bomb. The detonation dug a crater a mile long and 175 feet deep in the sea floor and obliterated an entire island.

The Soviet Union, too, embarked upon research into fusion bombs. Though they exploded a fusion-like device on 12 August 1953, the device was technically not a fusion bomb because it obtained most of its explosive yield from fission. The Soviets exploded their first true fusion bomb on 22 November 1955 with a yield of 1.6 megatons.



USS George Washington at her launching. The world's first nuclear powered ballistic missile submarine *USS George Washington* (SSBN-598) embarked upon the first nuclear deterrence patrol on 15 November 1960. The lead boat of a five boat class, *USS George Washington* was actually a converted *Skipjack*-class attack submarine. In order to expedite deployment of a SSBN, *USS Scorpion* (SSN-598) was split in two and a 130-foot missile compartment was inserted. *USS George Washington* and her sisters were 381 feet long, had a beam of 33 feet, and carried sixteen Polaris A1 ballistic missiles. Submerged she displaced approximately 6,800 tons and could attain speeds in excess of 25 knots. The last of the class was decommissioned in the early 1980s.

Twenty years later, a new generation of SSBNs began entering service with the U.S. Navy. On 11 November 1981, *USS Ohio* (SSBN-726) was commissioned. *USS Ohio* is the lead boat of a class of nuclear ballistic missile submarines second in size only to the massive Soviet Typhoon class. *Ohio* is 560 feet long, has a beam of 42 feet, and displaces 18,750 tons while submerged. She carries 24 Trident missiles which are amongst the most powerful weapons ever constructed.

Several other notable ballistic missile sub events occurred in November. On 1 November 1962, the first five boats of the *Benjamin Franklin*-class of SSBNs were ordered. This class was a significant improvement over the *George Washingtons*. *USS John Marshall* (SSBN 611) went in for overhaul to convert from Polaris A2 to Polaris A3 ballistic missiles on 1 November 1974. She was the last SSBN to do so. Four SSBNs were decommissioned during the month of November: *USS Thomas Edison* (SSBN-610) on 30 November 1983, *USS Henry Clay* (SSBN-625) on 5 November 1990, *USS James Madison* (SSBN-627) on 20 November 1992, and *USS Benjamin Franklin* (SSBN-640) on 23 November 1993.

Two other significant nuclear warships were commissioned in the month of November. 25 November 2001 marks the 40th anniversary of the commissioning of *USS Enterprise* (CVN-65), the world's first nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. Powered by eight nuclear reactors, *USS Enterprise* is 1,101 feet long, displaces 85,000 tons and holds 85 aircraft.

The lead boat of the *Los Angeles*-class nuclear attack submarine, *USS Los Angeles* (SSN-688), was commissioned on 13 November 1976. *USS Los Angeles* is 360 feet in length, and can reach speeds in excess of thirty knots while submerged. Though armed with torpedoes, later boats of the class were constructed with vertical launch systems for cruise missiles. *USS Los Angeles* and her sisters are the mainstay of the U.S. Navy's nuclear attack boat force and will be for many years to come.

News From The Net...

www.usspueblo.org

On 23 January, *USS Pueblo* (AGER-2) was attacked by North Korean torpedo boats and MIG fighter aircraft while on an intelligence gathering mission in international waters in the Sea of Japan. One American sailor was killed and several more were wounded. The ship and surviving 82 members of her crew were captured and imprisoned in North Korea. During their captivity, the men were subjected to frequent interrogations and torture. After enduring eleven months of brutal captivity, the crew of *USS Pueblo* was released on 23 December 1968.

The USS Pueblo Veterans Association has created an extensive website detailing the incident and its aftermath. The website includes accounts by Pueblo veterans, excerpts from historical documents and other information about the ship and the ordeal of its crew.

The website also includes a poem entitled "Bucher's Bastards" by former crewman E. Kislner. A portion of that poem is excerpted here:

**Out of Japan on the 5th of Jan.
The PUEBLO came a'steamin'.
Round Kyushu's toe, past Sasebo,
You could hear the Captain a'screamin',
"XO!", he said,
"Full speed ahead! We've got us some spyin' to do!"
"Timmy, be sharp!" Then with Charley Law's charts,
Away like a turtle we flew.
From morning til dark,
A gray Noah's ark,
We bounced and quivered along.
But instead of a pair of animals rare,
We carried agents, about 83 strong.
The mercury dropped the further north that we got,
So cold, front covered my glasses,
So cold, ice covered the focs' l and bridge,
So cold we froze off our asses.**

Cold War Tourist

Nike Missile Site, Golden Gate NRA

San Francisco, California

From 1954 to the late 1970s, the United States constructed and operated some 300 air defense facilities around urban areas and military installations to protect against Soviet bomber attacks. These facilities consisted of radar, command and control centers, and Nike Ajax and Nike Hercules missile batteries. Over time, however, the Soviet bomber threat diminished as ballistic missiles became the primary weapon in the Soviet nuclear arsenal. In accordance with the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, all operational Nike facilities were decommissioned in the 1970s.

Nike Missile site SF-88 was one of twelve air defense facilities constructed around the San Francisco Bay area in the 1950s. Located in the Marin Headlands north of the Golden Gate Bridge, SF-88 consisted of magazines and launchers for Nike missiles. Following decommissioning, SF-88 was turned over to the National Park Service for inclusion in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The site has been completely restored largely through the efforts of a private volunteer organization and is now perhaps the best preserved Nike missile facility in the nation.

Hours: Self-guided tours --- Wednesday to Friday 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm
Guided tours --- First Sunday of the month from 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm

Directions: ***From North*** -- Take Route 101 south and take last exit before the Golden Gate Bridge (Sausalito). Turn right and proceed under the highway. Go through a cut in the mountain and take first left. Proceed through tunnel and head west on Bunker Road towards Marin Headlands Visitors Center. Veer left on to Field Road. SF-88 is on the right side a short distance beyond the Visitors Center.

From South -- Take Route 101 north. After crossing the Golden Gate Bridge, take Alexander Road Exit and turn right. Follow directions as listed above for *From North*.

For more information, call 415-331-1453 or visit www.nps.gov/goga or www.nikemissile.org



Cold War Times expresses its most sincere condolences and prayers to the families and loved ones of the victims of the Sept 11th Terrorist Attacks and especially to those of our readers who may have lost loved ones.

Cold War Times also voices its unwavering support of our President and the members of our Armed Forces and law enforcement agencies in their efforts to keep America free and safe.

May God be with us and our nation.

