



U.S. AIR FORCE

## This Week in USAF and PACAF History 22 November – 4 December 2010



1 December 1872 Maj Gen John M. Schofield, commander of the Military Division of the Pacific, (photo left) and Col Barton S. Alexander, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, sailed from San Francisco to Honolulu with secret instructions to evaluate Hawaii’s ports in terms of defensive capabilities and commercial facilities. They recognized the great potential of Pearl Harbor as a “harbor of refuge in time of war,” and recommended the U.S. obtain a deed.

1 December 1887 Hawaii’s King Kalakaua reluctantly agreed with his cabinet’s recommendation to **cede Pearl Harbor** to the United States. America now had exclusive rights to enter Pearl Harbor, improve its entrance channel, and establish a coaling and repair station.



1-16 December 1914 Army Signal Corps Lt Herbert A. Dargue and Lt Joseph O. Mauborgne accomplished the **first demonstration of two-way radio-telegraphy between the air and ground** to the Army, while flying a Burgess-Wright plane in the Philippines.

30 November 1925 A board appointed by President Calvin Coolidge and headed by Dwight W. Morrow released a report recommending conservative reorganization of the Air Service and its redesignation as the Air Corps, rather than establishment of an independent air force coequal with the Army and Navy. The Morrow Board Report also recommended a five-year expansion plan for Army aviation.

2 December 1936 **The Boeing YB-17 made its maiden flight.** Even after awarding a contract to the far less expensive B-18 Bolo, the Air Corps was so impressed with Boeing's bomber design that they used a legal loophole to order 13 YB-17s as test aircraft. The B-17 “Flying Fortress” went on to enter full-scale production as the first truly mass-produced large aircraft. It was used primarily in the strategic bombing campaign against Germany and it also conducted raids on Japanese shipping in the Pacific. The B-17’s legendary ability to survive extensive battle damage, belly landings and ditchings made it the favorite bomber among World War II aircrews. The B-17 dropped more bombs than any other U.S. aircraft in the war.



A severely damaged B-17



22 November 1940 The 15th Pursuit Group (Fighter), forerunner to the 15th Wing, is constituted. The 15th Pursuit Group was activated later at Wheeler Field, on 1 December 1940. The original 15 PG emblem (left) was approved, 5 Oct 1942. The 15 ABW chose to stop using the motto, “To pursue with wings” on 10 Dec 1992.



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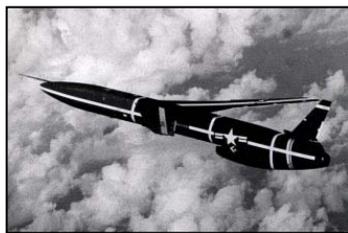


1 December 1941 By executive order, **President Roosevelt established the Civil Air Patrol** to facilitate civil defense during World War II. Included among its members were 17-year-old men not yet of draft age. They flew small liaison aircraft on disaster-relief missions or on missions to patrol the U.S. coasts to detect enemy submarine activity. In the fall of 1943, the Civil Air Patrol became an auxiliary of the Army Air Forces.

24 November 1944 After plans to reach the Japanese capital from China failed; B-29s took off from the Mariana Islands to bomb aircraft factories, docks and other targets in Tokyo. This was the first time Tokyo had been bombed since the Doolittle raid of 1942.

29 November 1945 **The Army Air Forces School**, formerly the Army Air Forces School of Applied Tactics, moved from Orlando, Florida, to Maxwell Field, Alabama, and was assigned directly to the Army Air Forces as a major command. It later became **Air University**.

28 November – 10 December 1950 In a **Korean War airlift**, Combat Cargo Command C-119s and C-47s air-dropped and landed some 1,580 tons of equipment and supplies, including eight bridge spans, for the 1st Marine Division, which Communist Chinese forces had surrounded at the Chosin (Changjin) Reservoir area in northeastern North Korea. The C-47s also evacuated almost 5,000 sick and wounded marines from Hagaru-ri and Koto-ri.



26 November 1952 The Northrop B-62 *Snark*—a turbojet-powered, subsonic, long-range missile with a 5,500 nautical mile range—first launched from a zero-length launcher. Operated by SAC from 1958-1961, but beset by many technical problems, the *Snark* was the only intercontinental surface-to-surface cruise missile deployed by the USAF. Multiple launch failures led to the ocean off Cape Canaveral being described as "Snark infested waters." The development of ICBMs made the Snark obsolete.

26 November 1956 The **Air Force was given responsibility for developing ICBMs**. SECDEF Charles E. Wilson issued a "Roles and Mission" memo to the Armed Forces Policy Council to fix jurisdiction over missile development. This gave the USAF control of surface-to-surface missiles with ranges over 200 miles and surface-to-air missiles with ranges over 100 miles, while the Army controlled missiles with ranges less than 200 and 100 miles, respectively.

30 November 1956 The **TM-61 Matador**, a jet-powered cruise missile, completed final testing and became the Air Force's first fully operational tactical missile.



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22 November 1972 The **first B-52 Stratofortress lost to enemy action** was hit by a surface-to-air missile over North Vietnam. The crew members ejected over Thailand and were rescued.

1 December 1974 All tactical airlift forces were transferred from the Tactical Air Command to the Military Airlift Command.

29 November 1975 The **first annual RED FLAG exercise** occurred at Nellis AFB. RED FLAG was organized to improve the performance of USAF pilots in air-to-air combat after the Vietnam War revealed that the Air Force relied too much on beyond visual range capabilities. Analysis showed that a pilot's chances of survival in combat increased dramatically after completing ten combat missions. RED FLAG was created to give U.S. pilots those ten missions in a realistic, but safe training environment. Today's RED FLAG exercises simulate entire air campaigns, and participants include other U.S. services as well as forces from allied countries. PACAF's equivalent of this exercise was Cope Thunder. Originally held in the Philippines, it was moved to the Alaska Range Complex and is now known as RED FLAG ALASKA.



**RED FLAG ALASKA aggressor aircraft**

29 November 1980 The American flag which flew over Hickam during the 7 December 1941 Japanese attack was returned to Hickam from the Air Force Academy. In a special ceremony supported by the Air Force Academy Band, Lt Gen James D. Hughes (CINCPACAF) received the flag from Lt Gen Kenneth Tallman (Commandant of the AF Academy).

22 November 1988 Northrop and the Air Force rolled out the B-2 stealth bomber at Air Force plant 42 in Palmdale, California.

26 November 1991 Following the summer-long series of eruptions of Mount Pinatubo in 1991, the Air Force transferred Clark AB to the government of the Philippines. Under Operation FIERY VIGIL (10 June - 28 June 1991), MAC transports and civilian airliners had carried over 20,000 military personnel and civilians from Clark AB and Subic Bay Naval Base to the United States. The withdrawal ended a U.S. military presence that dated back to 1903.

1 December 1993 **North Korean stated goal to reunify the peninsula by force.** Vice Marshal Choe Kwang, Chief of the General Staff of the North Korean military (and defense minister, 1995-97), declared at a major state function that the military "has the heavy and honorable task of reunifying the fatherland with guns in the nineties without fail."

28 November 2001 **Operation SWIFT FREEDOM.** C-17s landed in Afghanistan on an airstrip about 80 miles south of Kandahar to deliver Navy Seabees. The operation introduced U.S. ground forces into Afghanistan.



OPR: PACAF/HO