



Official Newsletter of the Michigan Company of Military Historians & Collectors
March 9, 2015

“The Bomb will never go off, and I speak as an expert in explosives.” This author later went on to say *“the use of this barbarous weapon at Hiroshima and Nagasaki was of no material assistance in our war against Japan.”* **Fleet Admiral William Daniel Leahy**

“The Nation that makes a great distinction between its scholars and its warriors will have its thinking done by cowards and its fighting done by fools.” **Thucydides**

At a prewar diplomatic conference, the Nazi Foreign Minister Ribbentrop *“sniffed”* to Eden and Churchill that *“if there was another war, the Italians would be on Germany's side!* To which Churchill replied: *“that seems only fair, we had them last time!”*

Our speaker will be Tom Kozura, a man with an unusual mission. He will be discussing his life passion, building planes. His current project will be the fourth plane he has built and his most ambitious. It is a completely authentic 1917 Sopwith Camel. It is not a replica but a reproduction for he has an original “data plate,” serial number B2337. He will discuss his efforts and favor us with a video presentation.

*MEETINGS take place the second Monday of every month at the **Riverfront Hotel Grand Rapids** 270 Ann St NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504 (616) 363-9001. Socializing begins at 6:00 (1800), dinner at 7:00 (1900), business meeting 7:15 (1915), and program at 8:00 (2000).*

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Company Notes

- ◆ **Hans Moederzoon Van Kuilenburg, a Dutch immigrant now living in Hastings, MI, was a 10 year old girl living in Amsterdam, when German soldiers invaded Holland in the spring of 1940. She has written a book, "The Silent Heroes: A Memoir of Holland During World War II", a true story of heroism, survival, and resistance by ordinary people living during extraordinary times.**
- ◆ **Our menu options have changed somewhat, more variety; but we will still have two regularly priced entrees available.**
- ◆ **Emails to 2014 members were sent encouraging 2015 membership.**

The editorial opinions and articles in *The Cannon Report* do not represent any official position of the Michigan Company of Military Historians and Collectors (MCMH&C) only the opinions of the editor. The MCMH&C is a non-partisan, non-ideological association. All members are welcome to submit material, letters, “For the good of the Company items”, etc. Direct inquiries or comments to kuziaks@me.com

Intelligence

“They’re your friends today and they’re enemies tomorrow, and when they’re on your side find out as much as you can about them because you can’t when they become your enemy.” This significant statement was uttered by Brigadier General Carter Clarke, an Army mustang who in May, 1942 took command of the Special Branch of the Army G-2 (intelligence) dealing with Signal Intelligence (SIGINT). His department was the recipient of not only all the top Japanese diplomatic and military encoded communications but also the codes of the three Axis Powers as well as the encrypted diplomatic and military traffic of more than forty other countries. He was described by his admirers as blunt, profane, hard-drinking, and demanding. Nevertheless he was selected to run the analytic side of SIGINT despite any previous intelligence experience and a file drawer full of bad fitness reports. Clarke was a good fit though, because he did not trust any man or nation. He is considered by many to be the founding father of the National Security Agency (NSA).

In 1942 the Navy had its own code-breaking unit at the Washington Naval Yard; the Army’s unit was across the river at a former girls’ school, Arlington Hall. Although these two cryptanalytic organizations both shared code-breaking responsibilities, cooperation was the exception rather than the rule. This duplication of effort without the overt sharing of resources has long been a detriment to all of our intelligence gathering agencies, even to this day. Intelligence is a broad category that encompasses strategic as well as tactical information. This newly discovered information leads to a paradox that continually plagues any intelligence gathering effort through SIGINT. How do you protect your sources and not tip off the sender that you are reading practically all of their communications? Your information has to be “sanitized” in such a way as not to disclose the source, but in doing so your information oftentimes does not reach those who could tactically benefit from it the most.

In 2009, Matthew M. Aid, an American military historian and author, published [The Secret Sentry](#), the untold history of the National Security Agency. Mr. Aid had been court-martialed in 1985 for unauthorized possession of classified information and for impersonating an officer while serving as a staff sergeant in the United States Air Force in the United Kingdom. He was given a bad conduct discharge and imprisoned for a year in 1986. Subsequently Mr. Aid found that over 25,000 documents had been illegally removed from the National Archives by five agencies, including the CIA, the Air Force, the Energy Department, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Archives itself. Among those papers he had forced to be returned was a history of NSA activities written by in-house historians chronicling the agency from its inception to 2005. This book is extremely revealing on the NSA operations, its problems with other agencies, and how its information can and has been misused by its consumers. One of the problems of signal intelligence is that the NSA cannot make any guarantees on how definitive and reliable the information was that it was providing. Verification, from sources other than different SIGINT communications can only be done by human intelligence, HUMINT, which unfortunately is the responsibility of other agencies.

In following the mandate long established by General Clarke, the NSA is a large (30-40,000 employees) organization staffed largely by cryptologists and linguists. It’s budget exceeds \$10 billion yearly and its manpower requirements can change dramatically when it is directed into areas that were never previously given a high priority. The late 20th century found the agency primarily dealing with countries that spoke the traditional European/Slavic languages and the various Far Eastern tongues. The allocation of resources was primarily determined by the perceived international climate and the staffing levels did not vary much. Cooperation with other agencies, notably the FBI and the CIA, was never very good which was not in itself a bad thing because there was seldom any overlap between

their respective responsibilities. The NSA has a classified number of listening posts scattered around the world to eavesdrop on the internal communications of nations that pose an interest to our government. But recent developments have caused the NSA to provide on the ground assistance to military units engaged with an enemy whose languages are not in the conventional lexicon. Most notably Afghanistan, where many operatives have been placed within combat units to translate the various dialects spoken by the opposition. Their immediate tactical information has saved many American lives.

On another level there are two instances in the history of this organization that have proven embarrassing to the NSA and the entire intelligence community. The Tonkin Gulf Affair and the Iraq WMD debacle demonstrate the most egregious use of intelligence data by their ultimate consumer. Under intense political pressure, intelligence collectors and analysts will more often than not choose as a matter of political expediency not to send information to the White House that they know will upset the president of the United States. The point being that intelligence information, if put in the wrong hands, can all too easily be misused or misinterpreted if a system of analytic checks and balances are not in place and rigidly enforced.

In 1963, control of covert operations inside North Vietnam was given to the U.S. Army's super-secret clandestine intelligence unit, the Military Assistance Command Vietnam Studies and Observation Group (MACVSOG). The operation plan was designated OPLAN 34-63 later modified to 34A. The U.S. Navy set up a secret base in Da Nang to train South Vietnamese military personnel to conduct maritime commando raids against the North Vietnamese coastline with PT boats provided by MACVSOG. These raids on the North Vietnam coast suffered severe losses and did nothing more than raise Hanoi's determination to meet further incursions with a greater force. No one in the NSA's Office of Asian Nations (B2), which was responsible for monitoring developments in the North, was cleared for access to the details of OPLAN 34A. Consequently they did not know that there were actions underway. Meanwhile, General Westmoreland tasked the Navy to conduct electronic surveillance missions along the coastline of the areas that had been attacked by MACVSOG forces to monitor their response to further incursions. The *USS Maddox*, and later the *USS Turner Joy* were fitted out with SIGINT communication vans, self-contained modules that were loaded aboard the ships to monitor enemy naval communications.

What transpired was similar to the actions taken by Nazi Germany in justifying their attack on Poland in 1939. The *Maddox* and *Turner Joy*, unbeknownst to their captains, were put in harms way and sent on missions to analyze the response of the North to attacks they did not know were happening. The presence of the two U.S. destroyers was seen as a deliberate provocation to the North Vietnamese Navy. On August 2, 1964 the *Maddox*, cruising between the islands of Hon Me, Hon Nieu, and Hon Gio. was attacked by three North Vietnamese Navy torpedo boats. A sea battle resulted, in which the *Maddox* expended over two hundred and eighty 3-inch and 5-inch shells, while four USN F-8 Crusader jet fighter bombers strafed the torpedo boats. One US aircraft was damaged and one 14.5 mm round hit the U.S. destroyer. Three North Vietnamese torpedo boats were damaged, and four North Vietnamese sailors were killed and six were wounded; there were no U.S. casualties. A second attack was said to have occurred on August, 1964, but instead involved "Tonkin ghosts" (false radar images) and not actual NVN torpedo boat attacks. Information sent to the White House as raw communication intercepts about the second engagement without the benefit of any analysis led President [Lyndon B. Johnson](#), in his rush to war, to convince Congress to pass the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution. This gave the President the authority to assist any [Southeast Asian](#) country whose government was considered to be jeopardized by "[communist](#) aggression." This resolution served as Johnson's legal justification for deploying U.S. conventional forces and led to the commencement of open warfare against North Vietnam.

In 2005, an internal National Security Agency historical study was declassified; it concluded^[7] that the *Maddox* had engaged the North Vietnamese Navy on August 2, but that there were no North Vietnamese Naval vessels present during the incident of August 4. The report stated that on August 2 the *Maddox's* gun crews were ordered by their captain to open fire if the boats approached within ten thousand yards. The *Maddox* fired three rounds to warn off the communist boats. This initial action was never reported by the Johnson administration, which insisted that the Vietnamese boats fired first. The NVA attack was due to the initial response by the *Maddox* but was reported otherwise.

The WMD debacle is not much different than the Gulf of Tonkin fabrication. Ambiguous information was upgraded to imminent threat status. On August 29, 2002 President GW Bush approved the final version of a war plan drawn up by General Franks, the commander of CENTCOM in Tampa, Florida, for the invasion of Iraq. On September 12, Bush flew to New York to try and sell the war to the United Nations, Congress, and the American people. The Presidents blistering attack on Iraq received only polite applause from the assembled world leaders, but fervent approval from American politicians and the U.S. news media. The few American people, the ones who took their heads out of their shopping bags and turned away from NASCAR and TV football, wondered what did al Qaeda and Afghanistan have to do with Iraq? What transpired next is widely acknowledged as one of the saddest moments in U.S. intelligence history. Lt. General Michael Hayden, head of the NSA, 2000-2006, signed off on the CIA produced National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), an agency Bush would later appoint Hayden to head in 2006, on the viable Iraq Weapons of Mass Destruction Programs. A report that not only turned out to be wrong in almost all respects (much like the attack on the *Maddox*), but would also serve as the principal justification for the United States to go to war with Iraq.

On October 7, a week after the NIE was released, the president gave his fateful "Axis of Evil" speech that concluded with the infamous line: "Facing clear evidence of peril, we cannot wait for the final proof—the smoking gun—that could come in the form of a mushroom cloud." He based his rationale for war on the allegations that Saddam Hussein had aided and abetted "the al Qaeda network, which carried a common enemy—the United States of America." This carried the implication that Iraq had been partly responsible for the 9/11 attacks. None of these statements were based on solid evidence. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld added that the evidence was "bulletproof." The White House had taken fragmentary information from NSA intercepts and CIA suppositions to weave a scenario for war. One we are still fighting 13 years later.

But in this editors estimation, the most egregious events took place in October, 1968. The NSA was reading all the high level military and diplomatic traffic of the South Vietnamese government. A week before the American presidential election of 1968 messages between Vietnam ambassador to the U.S. Bui Diem and South Vietnam's President Nguyen Van Thieu were decrypted by the NSA. The Paris Peace Talks had started in May of that year and President Thieu was angry at President Johnson for forcing him to participate in those sessions. Diem reported to Thieu that senior members of the Nixon entourage, including the vice chair of the Republican National Finance Committee and long-time Republican activist, Anna Chennault, widow of Claire Chennault, asked Thieu to stand firm in his defiance of Johnson. Thieu knew that Johnson was not running for re-election and he stood a good chance to abandon the talks depending upon who won. The Nixon campaign did not want Thieu to do anything that might help the Democratic candidate Humphrey get elected. Nixon wanted Thieu to stall and boycott the talks. He did, and refused to sit down with the Viet Cong, dashing Johnson's hopes of negotiating a last-minute deal. For reasons not yet known, Johnson chose not to go public. Even if he had it probably would not have helped. Three days later on November 5, Nixon won. On January 20, 1969 he became president and another 25,000 American soldiers would soon die

Military wound ballistics

The following article was taken in its entirety from the **Journal of the Royal Army Military Medical Corps**. The journal's self-described purpose is "to publish high quality research, reviews and case reports, as well as other invited articles, which pertain to the practice of military medicine in its broadest sense. It welcomes material from all ranks, services and corps wherever they serve as well as submissions from beyond the military. It is intended not only to propagate current knowledge and expertise but also to act as an institutional memory for the practice of medicine within the military." This particular article comes from the January 23, 2014 issue as an editorial authored by Dr. Leslie D. Payne. What the Cannon Report finds interesting is that after thousands of years of warfare it is only recently that a more than cursory investigation into the effects of projectiles upon the human body are being investigated. The irony is that these military investigations are two-pronged and the results are published simultaneously in the JRAMC. There are articles that discuss the most potent way of terminating a combatant, followed by discourses on how to more effectively treat those same victims. In reading the titles of some of the articles one can only feel somewhat confused, something akin to reading an engineering journal that describes a method of blowing up a building followed by a treatise on how to rebuild it from the rubble. Nevertheless there are many interesting articles to peruse on military medicine from ancient times to the present.

History and renaissance

When diplomacy fails and force becomes the deciding factor, the study of wound ballistics becomes the deciding factor, the study of wound ballistics becomes the common ground for two opposing sets of official researchers. On one hand, the biophysical scientist strives to enhance the effectiveness of the weapons system by refining the behavior of an optimized missile in neutralizing a potential threat, while on the other hand there are the military surgeons and medical scientists whose ambition is to reduce the long term sequelae of the target-missile interaction.

The first suggestions as to the mechanism of extensive wounds seen after close quarter combat were described by Monsieur Huguier who after assisting the wounded during the street fighting in Paris during the 'February Revolution' of 1848 came to the conclusion that the destruction of the tissues by projectiles involved a sudden catastrophic rise in pressure in them. The effect of the tissue being flung aside or bursting of tissues from the inside had mistakenly led to the assertion that explosive bullets were being used. Theodor Kocher published the first results of a series of experiments on wounds caused by relatively high velocity missiles using the Vetterli rifle in 1875. He methodically investigated all the physical variables he felt might have a bearing on the nature of wounds such as size, velocity and hardness of the projectile, and even the possibility of it fragmenting within the tissues. He supported this work with experimental data and included in the text the methods of calculation used to evaluate it. Over a century later, Colonel Ronald Bellamy pointed out that Kocher had emphasized the importance of maintaining projectile integrity and limiting projectile deformation if the extent of injury was to be limited. Sadly, Kocher's recommendations to an International Medical Conference in 1894 that a tapered point should be employed to reduce tissue damage may well have contributed to the introduction of the 'spitzer' bullet which, in effect, enhanced wounding by ensuring the instability of the bullet in dense media, a finding confirmed during the

Vietnam war when 5.56 mm caliber bullets were found to be liable to considerable fragmentation.

Surgeon-Colonel William Flack Stevenson, the Second Professor of Military Surgery at the Royal Army Medical College, reinforced the need for a practical knowledge of the weapons and their effects if surgeons were to appreciate the nature of the injuries they were to treat. His 1897 textbook **Wounds in War** reviewed in great detail contemporary views and work on terminal ballistics. He confirmed the work of Von Coler (1894) that energy transfer to the tissues was not simply due to hydraulic pressure as open water-filled lead cans were just as extensively damaged as closed ones when struck by rifle bullets and investigated the effects of various shapes of bullets—an involvement in wound ballistics research by the Professors of Surgery that continues to the present.

Nineteenth century marine engineers coined the term ‘cavitation’ to describe the mechanism of damage to ship’s propellers in high speed motion caused by the formation of vapor filled cavities. In 1898, Woodruff borrowed the term to describe the behavior of tissue through which a missile had passed. His theoretical diagram of its oscillating cavity outlined in a simple line drawing illustrated the concept clearly. Woodruff also suggested the use of the cinematograph to record the predicted ballooning of the fluid filled target and the possibility of tissue damage resulting from the violent collapse of the cavities. One of the first published uses of high speed ‘Cinematographie’ in Reverdin’s **Lessons in War Surgery** demonstrated the effect of a perforating wound of the intact head, clearly showing the ejection of material from both entry and exit wounds as well as the gross plastic deformation of the skull. The interwar years and World War II saw the establishment of high profile ballistics research facilities on both sides of the Atlantic—the work at Aberdeen Proving Ground in the USA and the Oxford Extra-Mural Unit of Professor Solly Zuckerman in UK.

In 1939, Zuckerman commenced the study of the possible effects of shock waves from the detonation of high explosives on people sheltering in underground shelters, demonstrating that the likely injurious effect was negligible. Reviewing the published works on the effects of explosives on the human body confirmed his suspicion that little of actual value was known. He later confirmed the hypothesis that blast injury was due to the direct effect of the pressure pulse on the body by subjecting rabbits protected by steel boxes with only their heads exposed to very high blast pressures. The animals suffered no internal injury nor did they lose consciousness, with the only physical injuries found being ruptured ear-drums.

Zuckerman, impressed by the wounding power of small splinters from exploding munitions, commented during a review of battle casualties’ injuries on the effect of a piece of metal weighing less than a fiftieth of an ounce (about half a gram), which had fractured the radius and ulna of a young soldier. This called into question the standard procedure for assessing the relative wounding power of fragmenting weapons where fragments of less than a twenty-fifth of an ounce (about a gram) were ignored. Using spark photography, a succession of shadow-graphs were taken illustrating the effects of the energy transfer on an elastic target. Progressing from blocks of meat to rabbit’s legs and then to gelatine blocks, this demonstrated for the first time the temporary cavity and the series of rapid pulsations which followed—the likely cause of the damage produced by small fast moving fragments.

For many years, the Ballistic Research Laboratories (BRL) at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, USA, used the results of direct experimental observations to predict the human wounding potential. Fragments, bullets and flechettes were fired into animals to establish physiological damage and to determine the depths of penetration into various tissues. On the basis of detailed anatomical drawings, the surface of the human body was divided conceptually into small areas on which the consequences of similar impacts were considered. Medical assessors examined each wound tract and decided what the effect of the wound would be on the ability of a soldier to continue fighting. These assessments were averaged for hundreds of wound tracts to give an estimate of the wounding potential of a random hit on a soldier for a given missile striking at a given velocity. This approach fell out of

favor with the advent of the computer and mathematical modeling. In 1961, BRL proposed a method for machine computation of the probability of a small missile incapacitating a man 'Wound tract analysis by high speed computer, such as the Computer Man'. The method presumed that a man could be represented by a number of small rectangular boxes, as small as might be desired for analysis. Wound tract analysis by computer reduced the time required for a typical incapacitation study of a single missile from several months to less than 1 hour—an important factor in the length of time required for an overall vulnerability analysis.

The need for real time data in the proposed systems gave rise to projects such as the Wound Data and Munitions Effectiveness Team (WDMET) in Vietnam. Until the Vietnam conflict, efforts to collect battlefield data on wound ballistics were rather limited. WDMET made a comprehensive study of wounds and the behavior of the casualties after wounding. The format was designed to meet the requirements of various government agencies with the Wound Ballistics Group at BRL designing a complete system for storage, retrieval and analysis of the WDMET data.

The British Army's Hostile Action Casualty System (HACS) has provided similar useful information on casualties in the internal security role. HACS was conceived in 1976 by Lt Colonel MS Owen-Smith, then Professor of Military Surgery, who was concerned that the British Army had no means of auditing wounds sustained in action, their cause, treatment and outcome. The conflict in Northern Ireland had resulted in large numbers of injuries to British troops, with reliable data available on most incidents. The intention was that a coding sheet be initiated if a serviceman was killed or when he first reached hospital; this coding sheet would accompany his medical records until he returned to normal duty or was discharged from the services. Analysis of the HACS database provided important insights into patterns of wounding

The appreciation of ballistic injury involves a wider sense than simply the biophysics and pathophysiology of tissue damage, their codex being insufficient to describe fully the total effect of the wound on the patient. Wound ballistics seeks to relate ballistic properties of a projectile to the effects of a hit. Military surgeons are perhaps the only members of the 'wound ballistics team' who really need to be aware of all aspects of the subject to perform at their best, perhaps explaining the enduring contributions of generations of military surgeons to wound ballistics research.

After a fallow period where attention has focused more on blast injury research, there is a renaissance in wound ballistics research. This and planned future editions of the journal will publish original ballistics research which further increases our understanding of how these wounds affect individuals; in addition, massive advances in computer modeling are discussed and their eventual contributions to injury mitigation. Future work must concentrate on refining our understanding of injury at a more cellular and anatomically localized level integrated with the physiological responses.

The Ballistic Injury Archive was established in 1978 by General Kirby, the then Director of Army Surgery, as a common resource combining the Department of Military Surgery's collection of papers on wound ballistics research and the private specialist collection of the author. Information processed related to the specialist and sometimes sensitive subject of terminal ballistics; it overcame the problem of various ministries, having only limited interest in certain aspects of the subject, pigeonholing their findings away from normal access, and so valuable hard won information was not available to others working in the field.

The purpose of the collection is to improve the current understanding of the mechanism of tissue trauma to enable speedy improvements in the protocols used in dealing with it for the benefit of the injured. This remains the driving force and the continued relevance of the Wound Ballistics and Missile Injury Databank today. It remains available to any interested researcher via the author, LDPayneBIA@gmail.com.

The Viet Nam Wall--Things most people never knew

There are 58,267 names now listed on that polished black wall, including those added in 2010. The names are arranged in the order in which they were taken from us by date and within each date the names are alphabetized. It is hard to believe it is 36 years since the last casualties.

The first known casualty was Richard B. Fitzgibbon, of North Weymouth, Mass. Listed by the U.S. Department of Defense as having been killed on June 8, 1956. His name is listed on the Wall with that of his son, Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Richard B. Fitzgibbon III, who was killed on Sept. 7, 1965. There are three sets of fathers and sons on the Wall. 39,996 on the Wall were just 22 or younger. 8,283 were just 19 years old. The largest age group, 33,103 were 18 years old. 12 soldiers on the Wall were 17 years old. 5 soldiers on the Wall were 16 years old. One soldier, PFC Dan Bullock was 15 years old. 997 soldiers were killed on their first day in Vietnam. 1,448 soldiers were killed on their last day in Vietnam.

31 sets of brothers are on the Wall. Thirty one sets of parents lost two of their sons. 54 soldiers attended Thomas Edison High School in Philadelphia. I wonder why so many from one school. 8 Women are on the Wall. Nursing the wounded. 244 soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War; 153 of them are on the Wall. Beallsville, Ohio with a population of 475 lost 6 of her sons. West Virginia had the highest casualty rate per capita in the nation. There are 711 West Virginians on the Wall.

The Marines of Morenci, AZ—they led some of the scrappiest high school football and basketball teams that the little Arizona copper town of Morenci (pop. 5,058) had ever known and cheered. They enjoyed roaring beer busts. In quieter moments, they rode horses along the Coronado Trail, stalked deer in the Apache National Forest. And in the patriotic camaraderie typical of Morenci's mining families, the nine graduates of Morenci High enlisted as a group in the Marine Corps. Their service began on Independence Day, 1966. Only 3 returned home.

The Buddies of Midvale—LeRoy Tafoya, Jimmy Martinez, Tom Gonzales were all boyhood friends and lived on three consecutive streets in Midvale, Utah on Fifth, Sixth and Seventh avenues. They lived only a few yards apart. They played ball at the adjacent sandlot ball field. And they all went to Vietnam. In a span of 16 dark days in late 1967, all three would be killed. LeRoy was killed on Wednesday, Nov. 22, the fourth anniversary of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Jimmy died less than 24 hours later on Thanksgiving Day. Tom was shot dead assaulting the enemy on Dec 7, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.

The most casualty deaths for a single day was on January 31, 1968—245 deaths. The most casualty deaths for a single month was May, 1968—2,415 casualties were incurred. For most Americans who read this they will only see the numbers that the Vietnam War created. To those of us who survived the war, and to the families of those who did not, we see the faces, we feel the pain that these numbers created. We are, until we too pass away, haunted with these numbers, because they were our friends, fathers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters. There are no noble wars, just noble warriors. For most Americans who read this they will only see the numbers that the Vietnam War created. To those of us who survived the war, and to the families of those who did not, we see the faces, we feel the pain that these numbers created. We are, until we too pass away, haunted with these numbers, because they were our friends, fathers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters. There are no noble wars, just noble warriors. *Submitted by Tom Sibley from an earlier email from Jerry Keizer.*

Made in the UAE



In the near future the United States will have to make some difficult decisions regarding defense spending. Like the Navy in the early part of the 20th century, the Air Force finds itself in a similar predicament. The USAF will experience a contest of wills between those members who want to give drones greater responsibility and those who feel that pilots must be given better, meaning more expensive, aircraft. The problem is further compounded by the presence of large defense contractors who not only employ ex-military leaders who formerly were entrusted with evaluating acquisitions from the very companies that now employ them but also congressmen whose districts contain the manufacturing sites of those same contractors. There is an attitude that prevails in some people associated with defense spending that the product they produce is not the product the military needs.

The USN had their Big Gun proponents who believed the battleship was the backbone of the Navy. Even when Billy Mitchell sank a battleship in 1921 to prove their vulnerability to an airplane he was court-martialed for insubordination after accusing our military leaders of an "almost treasonable administration of the national defense" for investing in battleships instead of aircraft carriers. The Big Gun Navy has always lived in the past to the detriment of the Navy at large and the American people. \$1,563,544,000 (not including outfitting and post-delivery costs) was spent to modernize three WWII battleships, the *Missouri*, *New Jersey*, and the *Iowa*, and their average life after refitting and before decommissioning was 7 years. Some of the justification for such a large expenditure with questionable utility was that it provided jobs. Now the Air Force finds itself funding

two fighters, the F-22 and the newer F-35, of more dubious value, while being distracted from addressing the real issue of manned fighters v. drones. The United States has spent nearly \$80 billion to develop what was assumed to be the most advanced stealth fighter jet in history, the F-22 Raptor. During mock combat in Alaska the Air Force found out firsthand that while the planes owned the skies at modern long-range air combat, it was “evenly matched” with cheaper, foreign jets when it comes to old-school dogfighting. At \$412 million a pop — the final price tag once a new round of upgrades is completed -- the F-22 became the most expensive fighter plane ever built in 2005. That's an unbelievably high price to pay for a show plane. But the manufacturer, Lockheed Martin did the country one better with their newer F-35, known as the “Jet That Ate The Pentagon” (see the YouTube video with that title). It has turned into a \$1.5 trillion mistake that can't be stopped because its going cost thousands of jobs.

Meanwhile, over in the Middle East drone technology is advancing at a rapid pace. In the United Arab Emirates they are building a 3.5 ton drone with a payload of 6.5 tons. Called the Global Yabhon (see above photo) it has an endurance of 120 hours (5 days) and has 18 hard points that can carry a variety of missiles, smart and dumb bombs, and even a torpedo. It can operate autonomously, run a pre-planned mission, or be remotely controlled. Like any weapon of war its utility is only limited by the imagination of its user. The drones potential capabilities have yet to be fully exploited, but the ultimate purpose of any weapon is how effectively does it protect the infantryman. This point is brought to the forefront in the discussion of pilot v. drone by Dan Hampton, called the most lethal Wild Weasel of all times. He flew the F-16 for the USAF on 151 combat missions in the numerous Desert named Iraqi conflicts. He wrote a memoir of his combat experiences call **Viper Pilot** and in it he makes a good case for the continued need of manned aircraft. As a weasel he was tasked to destroy enemy radars and their missile batteries with his own radar-seeking missiles; the ultimate goal being to destroy any threat to approaching friendly forces. To discover the enemy radar sites he had to expose himself, get them to commit to a missile attack, and then destroy that site without getting shot down himself. To envision a drone capable of such a task at the present time is just not probable. So until then the debate must be on going in anticipating the nature of future conflicts and what weapons can and should employ to successfully counter any threat. Pouring money into weapon systems that do not provided commensurate value only brings forth the ghost of Billy Mitchell.

The F-35 is funded by a system called concurrent spending. The final product is not yet in sight and never mind that what we have now doesn't work, to stop would cost thousands of jobs. The project must continue, and eventually we will get something that works. We have congressmen entrusted with the security of our country beholdng to defense contractors who help fund their re-election and employ former military officers who not only draw a pension but receive a paycheck for promoting their employers self-interest. But most distressing is that they are watched over by an electorate that is uninformed, misinformed, or just doesn't care; for what can just one person do.

Meanwhile one of the most effective close air support (CAS) aircraft ever is being mothballed by the Air Force. In its FY 2015 budget, the service will be retiring the A-10 and other single-mission aircraft, prioritizing multi-mission aircraft. Cutting a whole fleet and its infrastructure is seen as the only method for major savings. But the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve members argue that allocating all A-10s to their control would achieve savings; half of the fleet is operated by the Air National Guard. The U.S. Army had expressed interest in obtaining some A-10s, but Army Secretary John M. McHugh later stated there is "no chance" of that happening due to Army aviation fleet reconfiguration and that the aircraft's mission was for the Air Force to perform. Leaving the Army to only their own copters and any other services nearby aircraft for close air support. Again, the point of the spear sits at the bottom of the pile. *Battleship refit figures provided by Chris Johnson, Office of Corporate Communications, Naval Sea Systems Command.*