



# POST SOLANT AMITY

And the Members of "G" Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment



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## What "Cold War Era?" *written by Ed Shea*

The officially recognized beginning is 28Feb46. Though, in fact, almost immediately after Germany's surrender on 8May45 did the ground swell begin for what would come to be called the "Cold War." Increasingly concerned over a great many things including the United States having as it's ultimate means of enforcement the atomic bomb and otherwise suffering a centuries old history of paranoia, Russia began to flex its muscle in a variety of ways leading to a series of reactions on the part of the United States. In response to which came still more actions and reactions, on both sides, over the next near five decades, until 25Dec91.

During that time the United States found itself involved in five major military offensives:

- Korean War (1950-1954)
- Vietnam "Conflict" (1962-75)
- Urgent Fury-Grenada (1983)
- Just Cause-Panama (1989)
- Persian Gulf War (1991)

None had a direct link with Rus-

sia nor did any provide a prospect for war in western Europe...the defense of which having *everything* to do with the premise behind the "Cold War." On the other hand, more than half had very clear connections with the spread of communism.

To conclude, however, that those five engagements constituted the sum of all military actions of consequence to American interests and/or presenting imminent danger to life and limb of America's servicemen and women would be a gross miscalculation.

Indeed, from 1945 until 1991, according to data retrieved from the Naval Historical Center in Washington, D.C., there was only one year in which America was NOT engaged in some military action, resulting in either the exposure to or the actual death or injury of uniformed personnel by the actions of hostile agents. That year was 1977.

For example, between 6Oct45 and 25Dec47, there were 13 marines killed and 43 wounded, by Chinese communist guerillas

in mainland China alone. The Berlin Airlift, extending from June 1948 until September 1949, resulted in the loss of 62 American military. Then, prior to, while engaged in and following the war in Korea through 1956, American planes were shot down by Soviet and Chinese forces over Latvia, Siberia and the Yellow Sea. These attacks resulted in 48 dead and 12 wounded navy personnel. Indeed, assaults of greater and lesser consequences commonly occurred outside of recognized war zones and from unanticipated belligerent sources. In 1967, for example, the USS Liberty was attacked in the eastern Mediterranean by Israeli forces. Result: 31 KIA and 168 WIA sailors; 2 KIA and 1 WIA marines.

On and on and on, reads the list of assaults: Terrorists of every ilk in Guatemala, Puerto Rico, Spain, Turkey, Greece, San Salvador and Italy; anti-American riots in Turkey; anti-aircraft fire over Cambodia; attacks on Embassies in the Philippines, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Iran, El Salvador and Pakistan. The notorious "Mayaguez Incident" on 14May75, described by some historians as the Vietnam debacle

in microcosm, was a battle with the Khmer Rouge on Koh Tang Island, Cambodia. Alone, it accounted for 16 deaths and 55 wounded, mostly marines. The Lebanon Peacekeeping efforts of 25Aug82 through 26Feb84 provided another 253 dead and 170 wounded sailors and marines.

Since 1978, aside from the above incidents, there have been U.S. military operations in places as far flung as Ethiopia, Zaire, Iran, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Korea, Cuba, Poland, Nicaragua, Libya, Egypt, Lebanon, Chad, Sudan, Red Sea, Gulf of Suez, Bolivia and Saint Croix, in the United States, Virgin Islands. All were absent from the aforementioned list.

Indeed, even the military mount-out for the Cuban Crisis of 1962 was omitted from the document—despite its dimensions, potential for catastrophe and the incredible melodrama—solely because of the absence of arms engagement.

So, the question begging an answer is "what "cold war era?" Where was it? When did it happen? If it is meant to define only the fortunate and '60s colloquial *cool* circumstance that the United States and Russia never locked horns in Belgrade or Paris...well, that would be fitting. But should it, instead, be used to describe the status of the period's world-body-politique or imply a level of sanity greater than history's preceding five decades, that

*(Continued on page 2)*



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## "Flags of Our Fathers," a reflection upon father's Iwo efforts

For Christmas, my wife, June, gave me a book: "Flags of Our Fathers," by James Bradley. For months it sat unread. Occasionally she would say, "Ron, why don't you read that book? You'll love it." But, for whatever reason, I didn't get into it until a recent vacation to Europe.

As usual, the "bride" knew best. Bradley's father, John, was a corpsman as well as one of the six men photographed by Joe Rosenthal raising the American flag on Iwo Jima's Mount Suribachi—perhaps the most famous photographic image in American history, certainly the most fa-

mous war scene. The story unearthed by the younger Bradley, after his dad died in 1994, is one that tugged this reader's heart from beginning to end and prompted frequent use of a fair number of tissues.

Bradley knew his dad was one of the flag raisers, but John Bradley, never spoke to his family about the photograph or the war. It wasn't until James was rummaging through boxes of memorabilia that had been closed for nearly half a century that he learned his dad had won the Navy Cross, the nation's second highest decoration for battlefield

valor during the third day of the bloody assault on Iwo Jima.

Why had he never mentioned this to his family? What caused the years of silence? That's what the son wanted to know. So, he embarked upon years of research, 300 interviews with survivors of the vicious fighting on that bloody volcanic island and with relatives of those who perished. The result is a penetrating, moving look at a generation at war. It is also a glance back at an America gone forever.

Historian Stephen Ambrose called it the best battle book he'd ever

read. When you discover just how fierce that battle was and of how three divisions of resolute Marines overcame all odds by killing 19,000 of the island's 20,000 Japanese occupants... well, you'll be amazed. Indeed, both amazed and moved by the stories of ALL six flag raisers, when you learn what the event meant to each and how some were destroyed by it.

Get it. Read it. Don't procrastinate like I did. [Ron Smith]

**Iwo Jima:** 5885 Marine air and infantry KIA, 17,232 WIA, 46 MIA in addition to 738 Navy doctors and corpsmen killed or wounded.

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[SolantAmity.com](http://SolantAmity.com)

**The First Marines in Monrovia**

## Was there ever a "cold" war era?

could not be further from the truth.

Over and over again, beyond the clear consequences of exposure to open hostilities, guerilla activities and terrorism, the men and women of our military have been called upon—and otherwise "voluntarily" assigned—to duties providing considerable risk. The list of such adventures is overwhelming: anti-drug campaigns; aerial sea rescues; U-2 surveillance; undersea close range probings for Soviet subs; the first underwater circumnavigation of the globe via nuclear submarine. They've cleared mine fields, defused bombs and endured medical, chemical and nuclear radiation experiments. They've taken part in countless humanitarian efforts both during and following harrowing times such as fires,

bursting dams, destructive hail storms, earthquakes, hurricanes, drought and famine. They have provided grain, food, clothing, medicine, blankets and blood. They've retrieved the victims of hostage situations, hijackings, military mutinies and piracy. They were the principle participants in our nation's race to space program.

None of these things occurred without serious risks to all hands.

When swearing an oath, they offered their youth, life and limb if necessary, while so many their age gave naught. They served with honor. They appeared, like firemen, at "doors" no one else could reach. They showed up, when others did little more than read of their exploits in newspapers, over coffee and croissants. They deserve more respect then is given.

## Retro Pay for Mess Duty

After Parris Island, Camp Geiger and some leave under my belt, I returned to Camp Lejeune filled with excitement—the kind only youth and naivety can provide—about my prospects of finally getting to "live the life of a marine."

Well, BAAAD-A-BIG, first morning's roll call, I was assigned thirty days of mess duty—a fourteen hour, seven day a week effort in pitiful servitude.

Awakened at 0330, at the mess hall by 0400, every mutt private like myself prepared and served food, scrubbed countless ENORMOUS pots, cleaned thousands of trays and pieces of cutlery in the equivalent of a steam room, then removed all furnishings to the street where they were washed and returned again to the squeaky clean and squeegied decks of the mess hall. After a half-hour break, you'd repeat the routine of preparation, service and clean up after lunch. And again, one more exhaustive time following dinner, before returning to the barracks at 1800. Oooo-RAH'd and out cold by 2100, you hoped for enough Z's before the next wake-up.

Clearly, bodies don't take well to the process. And, so, about the morning of day eight, I awoke—very late—to lights and a flippant "...drop your cocks *ladies*, it's

REVIELLE." With an "Oh, shit," I flung myself from the rack, hastily dressed and sped to the mess hall. A rather pointless effort really. Already AWOL, "justice" was swift.

At 1000 hours, and after explaining that I'd no recollection of anyone waking me, the Captain *compassionately* responded with "fourteen days restriction to the barracks" except for mess duty, of course.

Then, almost incomprehensibly, that night, it happened again!!! And, at my second office hours in as many days, I repeated my earlier defense: "I've no recollection of being awakened." The Captain asked a few questions then said "For *contrition*, you'll serve fourteen hours of extra duty, two hours per night at the Battalion headquarters." The upside, if there was one, came when he then turned to the First Shirt and directed that the duty NCO henceforth see to it that anyone awakened is fully seated, before leaving their bedside.

That night, the 2nd of my restriction and after performing my first two hour extra duty stint following fourteen hours of mess duty, I slept the sleep of the dead. And, at 0330, the Duty NCO saw to it that I was seated on the edge of the bed, feet-to-the-deck, before moving on to the next unfortunate.

Some years later, I calculated that I had endured more than one hundred and twenty such days—1680 hours—in four years ashore and at sea. And, while in college and receiving "dollars for scholars"—ultimately, amounting to some fifteen grand—from our old Uncle Sam, I concluded that I was simply receiving retroactive pay and had earned \$8.92 for each hour of mess duty.

Not bad, for the 60s. Not bad at all.

## What some of us have been doing since last we published

**Joe "JJ" Teklits** and his wife Marge met with Eugenie and I in Florida's Delray Beach. It was an all too short visit but we made the most out of it by having a really nice lunch in an outdoor café and chatting the afternoon away, beachside, in comfortable chairs.

**Trivia Question 1:** For what was Gamma Benzene ointment used? Answer found at sections end.

After experiencing a bit of confusion over his email connection, I learned a couple of things about **John Lemongelli**. First, his email address had been changed to [doprylemon21@aol.com](mailto:doprylemon21@aol.com). A subtle but important one to recognize. Secondly, I learned that John is a big-time doffer and a "traveling one" at that. He's the proud holder of the "Duffer Champion Award of 2003." No longer on the

campus at Rutgers, John whiles away his (semi-retired) free time on golf courses both near and far. He and his wife, Helen, spent six weeks in Palm Beach, Florida this past winter hoping to catch the "big one." Neither weather nor fish cooperated. Next time....

**Trivia Question 2:** In what year did the battle for Iwo Jima occur? Answer found at sections end.

When last I spoke with **Ed Hart**, he was in Florida. After a bitter winter experience in the northeast, he'd first discounted the possibility of proceeding to Ireland, in late May. However, by the time we spoke, he'd reconsidered and put the prospect back on his "perhaps" list along with heading across the Gulf of Mexico to the Panama Canal and up again to California.

An address for **Amadio DiBouventura** was furnished by **Dick and Diana McGibbeny**. **Charlie Wilson**, who served with DiBo in the Philadelphia PD is "checkin' it out."

Before overlooked, I want to take a moment to thank **Ron Smith** for his contribution to this issue. And, not to be overlooked is the important role his wife played in the effort. For June, after giving him the book, saw to it that Ron, a busy man, read it. A tip-of-the-hat to you, June! 😊

I hope your summer is a happy one and that those with friends and family serving in the middle-east see them safely returned to U.S. shores before too long.

**Answers:** 1) body lice, also know as "crabs;" and 2) 1945.

Mailed as a black on white copy, a colorized version can be found at our website, where on page one you will find a link to a downloadable version.

I hope you've enjoyed this effort. Send in your stories by e-or- snail mail to make for an even better next issue.

Semper Fi; Ed Shea

For those wondering what the ribbon posted in the upper right side of the first page was, it is for the National Defense Service Medal... one of which you rate.