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1944. Boeing B-29 Superfortresses conduct a bombing mission over the Mariana Islands during World War II.

LEGENDARY COMBAT UNITS

KAMIKAZE!

Japan's Special Attack Units swept like a "divine wind" through Allied fleets in the final year of the Pacific War.



April 11, 1945. A Japanese kamikaze attacks the USS *Missouri* as the vessel operates off the coast of Okinawa. The plane hit the side of the battleship, below the main deck, causing minor damage.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

In the summer of 1944, as Lieutenant Commander Tadanao Miki of Japan's Aeronautical Research Laboratory struggled to develop an effective guidance system for a new "flying bomb" design, Sub-lieutenant Shoichi Ota offered him a solution: Put *pilots* inside the deadly rockets. Although Ota's suggestion for a foolproof guidance system horrified Miki, senior Japanese navy and army officers favored the idea that piloted suicide aircraft might turn the tide of the war back in Japan's favor.

Since the earliest days of the war, pilots (on both sides) had occasionally sacrificed themselves in suicide attacks. But with the conflict increasingly going badly for Japan, such attacks became official policy. Special Attack Units – commonly called kamikaze – began forming to wreak destruction on the powerful Allied fleets surging ever closer to Japan's home islands.

The first "official" kamikaze sorties by a *Tokubetsu Kogeki Tai* (Special Attack Unit) took place in the

Philippines in October 1944, principally at the Battle of Leyte Gulf. By early 1945 kamikazes had struck seven American aircraft carriers and sank or damaged 40 other ships. Far more effective than the conventional sorties by the then nearly impotent Japanese navy, these attacks quashed any remaining debate about the value of kamikazes versus the time and money wasted on training pilots and building combat aircraft. In fact, the program was expanded in time to undergo its next major test off the shores of Okinawa.

In waves of persistent aerial attacks termed Operation Kikusui (Floating Chrysanthemums), kamikaze strikes began in the waters off Okinawa on April 6, 1945. Initially concentrated against the screen of lightly armored destroyers and escorts 50 miles from the Allies' main fleet, the suicide attacks often devastated these smaller ships. (The USS *Laffey* was struck April 15 by four bombs and six kamikazes; remarkably it remained

FAST FACTS

DESIGNATION:

Special Attack Units
NICKNAME: Kamikaze
(divine wind)

ESTABLISHED: Oct. 19, 1944 (the first formal unit, the 201st Flying Group, was comprised of 24 volunteers; other navy and army units formed later)

NOTABLE CAMPAIGNS

AND BATTLES: Leyte Gulf, Oct. 23-26, 1944; Iwo Jima, Feb. 19-Mar. 26, 1945; Okinawa, April 1-June 23, 1945

NOTABLE KAMIKAZE

STRIKES: USS *St. Lo*, USS *Missouri*, USS *Saratoga*, USS *Essex*, USS *Bunker Hill*, USS *Franklin*

OTHER KAMIKAZE

WEAPONS: Ohka flying bomb, Kaiten midget submarine, speedboats



afloat, although nearly a third of its crew were killed or wounded.)

The Japanese eventually focused on the larger vessels of the main fleet. Wave after wave of kamikaze planes struck the Allied ships until the Battle of Okinawa ended in June 1945. All told, 1,450 Japanese aircraft took to the air against the Allied fleet, killing almost 5,000 Sailors and wounding nearly that number. Over 350 Allied ships and landing craft were damaged and 36 were sunk. However, of the several aircraft carriers (including the heavily damaged *Franklin*) and battleships that were hit, none was sunk. Kamikaze attacks contin-

The Culper Ring

George Washington's spies were the unsung heroes of the Revolutionary War.

The Culper Ring, a small group of men who served as General George Washington's private "intelligencers" (as Washington dubbed them) for nearly the duration of the War of Independence, was the most accomplished of any American (or British) intelligence network of that momentous struggle. Long, intimate correspondence between the ring members and Washington reveals not only their individual characters but also an appreciation of how ordinary men can perform the most extraordinary deeds when called upon by circumstance.

A BOLD PLAN

At the outbreak of the Revolution in

1775, there was not a single professional agent or trained intelligence officer in the Patriot ranks. No spy agency of any sort existed, nor were there instruction manuals to teach even the most basic spy craft. In short, no one knew *how* to spy.

Yet from mid-1776, George Washington desperately needed eyes and ears in New York, the key stronghold of the British Empire in America. The city was the primary transit point for fresh troops and was a major naval base in its own right. Thus in a bid to gather intelligence that summer, Washington sent Nathan Hale into this enemy-held territory. Hale's brave mission, however, was a fiasco that ended with his hanging.

Throughout 1777, as Washington led his

Instead of sending men on quick in-and-out reconnaissance missions, Washington could *permanently* station agents behind enemy lines, where they could pose as trusted Tory Loyalists and gather valuable intelligence.

THE CULPER SPIES

Tallmadge's first two recruits were Abraham Woodhull, a farmer, and Caleb Brewster, a fiery whaleboatman. The latter, in particular, enjoyed nothing more than risking his life if it entailed a chance to fight against the British. Austin Roe, a tavern keeper who liked his tipple, soon joined the nascent network. Importantly, Tallmadge had known all three of his agents since childhood, as they were from his hometown of Setauket, Long Island. Indeed, one reason British intelligence was never able to penetrate the Culper Ring was that its members never worked with anyone whose trustworthiness they could not personally verify.

Woodhull, codenamed Samuel Culper, originally acted as the organization's leader on Long Island, traveling back and forth to New York to pick up information about British troop movements and to observe naval maneuvers. However, Woodhull was a congenitally anxious man, and he spent much of the war close to a nervous breakdown. The pressure soon became too great for him to bear, so he stayed in New York while Roe took over as courier and Brewster took charge of evading British sea patrols on Long Island Sound to get Woodhull's messages to Tallmadge, now based on the south shore of American-held Connecticut.

Yet Tallmadge realized he needed a well-placed source in New York to replace Woodhull, who was desperate to return to his farm. In the summer of 1779 Tallmadge found his man: Robert Townsend, a wealthy merchant from Oyster Bay, Long Island, who had come to know Woodhull during Woodhull's sojourns in the city. Townsend boasted powerful connections with British



Above: September 22, 1776. Nathan Hale, considered one of America's first spies, is hanged in New York City following his capture by the British. In the early days of the Revolution, spying was risky business, as many operatives were killed or turned into double agents working for the British.

Right: Benjamin Tallmadge became George Washington's chief intelligence officer in 1778. Tallmadge and his fellow spy ring members from Setauket, Long Island, provided Washington with crucial information throughout the war.



battered army away from the city, he strove to find ways to improve American intelligence. New York nevertheless remained a stubbornly difficult nut to crack. Washington occasionally sent in inexperienced operatives, but they rarely returned – and when they did, it was impossible to know whether their information was accurate or even if they had become double agents for the British.

In mid-1778 a young dragoon officer named Benjamin Tallmadge proposed a daring solution to Washington's quandary:

General Raymond T. Odierno

Commander, Multi-National Force – Iraq

An exclusive interview with the U.S. Army general commanding Coalition forces on the front line in the War on Terrorism.

On September 16, 2008, General Raymond T. Odierno assumed command of the Multi-National Force – Iraq (MNF-I), replacing General David Petraeus, who became commander of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM). A 1976 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Odierno shares his keen insight regarding the successes achieved by the Coalition as well as the challenges that lie ahead.

ACG You are credited with recommending the “surge” of five Army brigades and several Marine units that achieved remarkable success in Iraq in 2007 and 2008. How did the surge contribute to the improvement in the security situation in Iraq?

ODIERNO: When I arrived in Iraq in 2006, General Casey – then the Multi-National Force commander – challenged me to break the self-perpetuating cycle of ethno-sectarian violence. Our assessment led us to believe that we needed both a change in the approach to the violence as well as additional resources to secure the population and stop the “accelerants” – our term for groups carrying out attacks and triggering reprisals. Efforts had been made along these lines before, but we were unable to achieve sustainable security. Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) were not capable of holding the ground that Coalition forces cleared of extremists, we had not eliminated the passive support of the population, and we transitioned responsibility to the ISF before they were ready.

Thus we developed a plan based on two main principles. First, we needed to change our approach and push our combat power into the towns, villages and cities. We had to build confidence in the people regarding local security and dismantle the cycle of intimidation, coercion and extortion. It meant

committing ourselves to securing the Iraqi people where they worked and slept – and where their children played. We deployed our forces to live among the population, establishing Joint Security Stations and around-the-clock checkpoints and protective barriers to create safe neighborhoods and eliminate freedom of movement for the insurgents. We also integrated our military efforts with other government agencies such as Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs). Emboldened by the enduring presence of Coalition forces, Iraqis rejected al-Qaida and the extremist groups and slowly began to join our forces.

Second, to ensure this was sustainable, we determined we needed more combat forces, combat enablers, and some key headquarters to manage our effort. We also came to the conclusion that not only did we need to secure the city of Baghdad, we also needed to eliminate support zones surrounding Baghdad.

ACG Why do you say that the security situation in Iraq remains “fragile”?

ODIERNO: I would argue that the security situation is becoming less fragile every day, but we still have a lot of work to do. In 2006 Iraq was a state on the verge of failure. As a result of our progress it has moved from a failed state to a fragile state. Our goal is to move Iraq to a stable state. However, there are three main factors preventing this. First, there continues to be underlying political tension and distrust. Until the Iraqis can agree on solving some existing key issues, such as Article 140, Hydrocarbon Laws, and distribution of wealth, the Government of Iraq (GoI) will remain vulnerable. Second, until the government can deliver adequate essential services to its people – such as electricity, clean water, effective sewage systems, and the basic necessities of life – security will be problematic. Finally, although ISF have made dramatic improvements, the Iraqi

Army still lacks sustainment capability and critical enablers – air assets, fire support and naval strength – and the Iraqi Police are not yet ready to provide permanent internal security. Therefore external groups such as al-Qaida in Iraq and Iranian-trained surrogates will attempt to exploit these vulnerabilities to cause long-term instability. (See *Dispatches*, “Iraq’s Rogues Gallery,” p. 14.)

ACG Have the Iraqis taken advantage of security gains to make progress in governance over the past year?

ODIERNO: Iraqi leaders have worked through contentious issues to enact over 20 pieces of major legislation, including a Pensions Law, the so-called Accountability and Justice Law (de-Ba’athification Reform), a Provincial Powers Law, an Amnesty Law, the 2008 Budget and Budget Supplemental, and most recently, the Provincial Elections Law. This summer an atmosphere of greater political trust led to the return to the Iraqi cabinet of the Sunni Coalition, whose ministers had walked out nearly a year earlier. While we’d certainly like to see things move more quickly, these are difficult issues, and I’m encouraged by the development of Iraq’s political process. But I’m still concerned about the underlying tensions that remain. I do believe the tensions are part of the evolutionary process here, but it has the potential to destabilize if not watched carefully. It is imperative that the political problems be solved through peaceful diplomatic efforts rather than through violence.

ACG Has Iraq made diplomatic progress?

ODIERNO: Iraq’s leaders are making strides to return their country to its place as a regional partner. Improved security has allowed many regional neighbors to re-engage and re-establish formal relations with Iraq. About 50 diplomatic missions are now active in Baghdad, and Iraq has taken

WORLD WAR II'S BOMBER BARONS

The strategic bombing campaigns of three key Allied leaders, Harris, Spaatz and LeMay, turned German cities to rubble and reduced Japan to ashes.

BY JEFFREY C. PRATER

At his High Wycombe headquarters, British Air Chief Marshal Arthur Travers Harris – aka “Bomber” Harris – was furious. He had just read a minute from Prime Minister Winston Churchill challenging the legitimacy of Britain’s nighttime area bombing of Nazi Germany, which had been practiced since the beginning of World War II. Dated March 28, 1945, the memorandum read in part, “The moment has come when the question of bombing German cities simply for the sake of increasing the terror, though under other pretexts, should be reviewed.” As commander in chief of Bomber Command, Harris found the message “abusive” and “an insult both to the bombing policy of the Air Ministry and to the manner in which that policy [had] been executed by Bomber Command.” The memo, which had been prompted by a public outcry against the infamous Dresden bombing of the previous month (and the Nazi propaganda surrounding it), was met with such disfavor that the prime minister withdrew it.

While Churchill’s note seemingly was a surprise, the pugnacious reaction it elicited from Harris was entirely predictable. He responded, “Dresden was a mass of munitions works, an intact government center, and a key transportation point to the East. It is none of those things now.” Revealing his view of total war as practiced by Bomber Command, which he correctly asserted was an approved instrument of formal British wartime strategy, he added, “Attacks on cities ... are strategically justified insofar as they tend to shorten the war and so preserve the lives of Allied Soldiers.” Paraphrasing Otto von Bismarck’s famous quip about the Balkans, Harris concluded, “I do not personally regard the whole of the remaining cities of Germany as worth the bones of one British Grenadier.”

Meanwhile at the London headquarters of U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe (USSTAF), General Carl Spaatz and his staff reacted to events by stating, “The U.S. Strategic Air Forces in Europe have not



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INTERACTIVE



COMBAT!

WINTER WAR 1939

NEXT PAGE

Armchair General challenges YOU to lead a Finnish ski platoon in an attack against a dangerous element of the Red Army.

GREGORY PROCH

GREGORY PROCH

Choose the correct course of action as Finnish ski troops face the invading "Russian bear."

You are Lieutenant Lars Konkari, leader of a ski platoon in the Finnish 64th Regiment. Five days ago, on December 24, your unit reached Suomussalmi, Finland, to face a massive invading force, the Red Army's 163d Rifle Division. The Soviets not only outnumber the Finns 4-to-1 but also possess tanks and heavy weapons while the Finns do not. Despite such David vs. Goliath odds, Finnish forces have exposed the giant "Russian bear" as a stumbling colossus.

Using innovative *motti* tactics (Finnish word meaning to chop firewood and stack it in the forest for future use), Finnish forces have "chopped" the road-bound Soviet 163d Division into numerous immobile, isolated elements. Furthermore, the coldest winter on record has left the demoralized, inadequately clothed Russians huddling around campfires in the snow. Thus now is the time to deal with these "stacks in the forest."

Last night, the 64th's commander ordered your platoon to launch a dawn attack against a Red Army element of about 80 men positioned to the north. He

cautioned that even though the enemy is freezing, starving and immobile, the "Russian bear" still has claws – in addition to the Russians' Mosin Nagant rifles, your men will face two anti-tank guns, several Maxim machine guns, and two anti-aircraft machine guns.

The majority of your men carry Mosin Nagant rifles, while five of them tote M-31 9 mm Suomi submachine guns – weapons whose firepower has often proved decisive in close-quarters combat. Your platoon also has a Lahti-Saloranta M-26 light machine gun. And should hand-to-hand fighting occur, your soldiers are experts with their razor-sharp *puukko* hunting knives. In fact, most of your men are hunters with years of experience surviving brutal winter weather. Their white camouflage uniforms keep them warm, while their skis

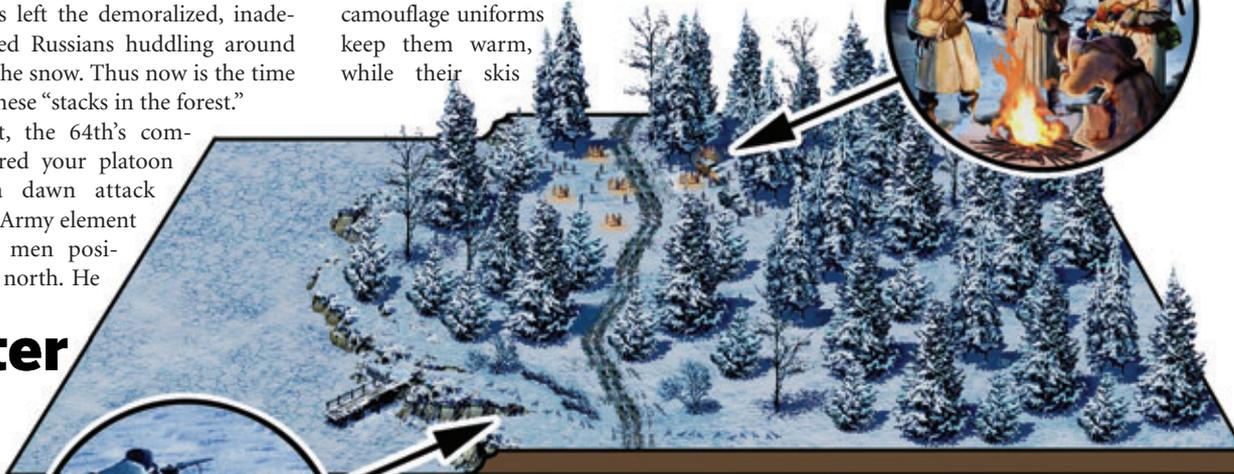
provide exceptional cross-country mobility – the Russians, on the other hand, can only stumble clumsily through the waist-high snow. After spending the night in a crude but cozy field expedient "log house," your soldiers are rested, well fed and ready for action.

Scouts report the Russians are strung along a logging road flanked by a frozen lake to the west and dense forest to the east. Surprisingly, Soviet security appears almost nonexistent. With dawn rapidly approaching, you must decide how you will attack.

TIME/DATE: 4 a.m., December 29, 1939
LOCATION: Near Suomussalmi, Finland
MISSION: Attack a cut-off Red Army combat element
UNIT: 21-man ski platoon of the Finnish 64th Regiment
ENEMY: 80 isolated soldiers of the Red Army 163d Rifle Division

What is your decision, Lieutenant Konkari?

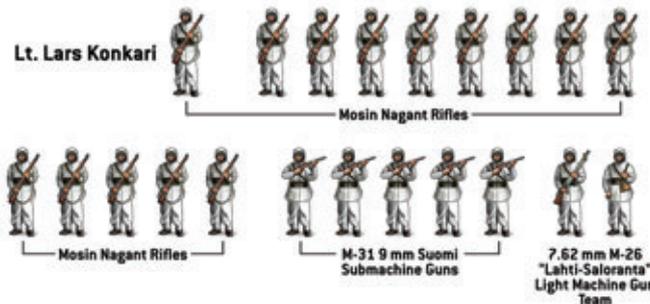
Turn the page and listen in as Konkari issues his orders.



Winter War 1939



0 25 meter 75 100
 0 25 yard 75 100



GREGORY PROCH



REVIEWS VIDEO GAME REVIEW

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Mercenaries 2

Mercenaries 2: World in Flames, the sequel to the critically ac-

claimed *Mercenaries*, is a shoot-'em-up game that transports its heroes thousands of miles from the cold, barren mountains of North Korea to the warm, lush hills of Venezuela. Although the climate has changed in this second iteration, the gameplay remains much the same. The player controls a mercenary in a chaotic, three-person shooting frenzy as the character plows through mission after mission doing his master's bidding – only this time, the player is the master.

The game opens with the mercenary seeking to rescue a Venezuelan military officer for a seemingly innocuous employer named Ramon Solano. Unfortunately, after the mercenary battles his way through the countryside (where almost everything is destructible) and saves the officer, Solano repays him by attempting to kill him. The remainder of the game chronicles the mercenary's pursuit of Solano – and quite an exciting pursuit it is, with an impressive amount of gunfire.

Although the *Mercenaries 2* universe is open-ended, allowing gamers to choose a variety of ways to tackle each mission, almost all methods involve

some serious carnage. The mercenary can select from an assortment of weapons – shotguns, sniper rifles, assault rifles, rocket launchers, etc. – as well as hop into almost any vehicle he finds – jeep, helicopter, speedboat, M-1 Abrams tank, or even a Chevy hot rod!

As exciting as the single-player mode is, the multiplayer co-operative mode might be even better. Participants can drop in on a friend's game and help him out in almost any way imaginable. For instance, one character can drive a jeep while the other mans the vehicle's machine gun. But the two don't have to stay close to each other – they can attack an enemy firebase from opposite directions. Or for some extreme action, one can use his chopper's winch to pick up an Abrams tank with his buddy in it and fly him about as he merrily blasts anything in his way. While this may not be realistic, it's definitely entertaining!

In fact, *Mercenaries 2* is all about over-the-top fun. In a gaming world that's occasionally too concerned with realism, this title provides an adrenalized good time. ★

Mark Holt Walker is a retired U.S. Navy commander. He has authored or contributed to over 40 books, and he designed the critically acclaimed board wargames "Lock 'n Load" and "World at War."



ARMCHAIR GENERAL

ACG RATES THIS GAME



- Released August 2008
- Rated Teen
- Developed by Pandemic

- Published by EA Games
- MSRP \$49.99-\$59.99
- Formatted for PC, Xbox 360, PS3, PS2

MERCENARIES 2



Things are tough in this banana republic, but nothing a team of hardened mercenaries can't handle.



The mercenaries can operate any vehicle or vessel they come across – like this boat.



Be forewarned: *Mercenaries 2* is loaded with gunfire!