

America's Heroes

Little-Known Cold War Hero And Little-Known Cold War Facts

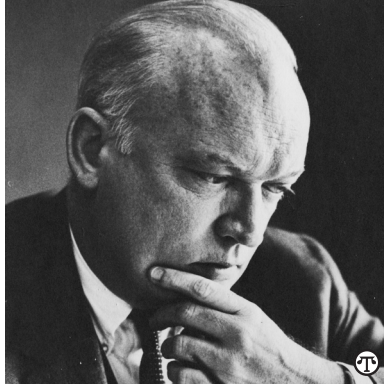
(NAPSA)—Attorney James B. Donovan—an American hero from U.S. history's Cold War era under Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy—was little known to most until the recent release of Steven Spielberg's Academy Award®-nominated motion picture "Bridge of Spies." A man of many achievements, Donovan is the center of the film, which depicts him defending Soviet spy Rudolf Abel and then negotiating the 1962 exchange of Abel for the Russian-captured American U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers. The film is available in various High-Definition formats from Walt Disney Studios.

Donovan (played by Tom Hanks) chose to defend Abel on the grounds that he, Donovan, would be upholding the basic principles of justice and human rights. But the lawyer feared for his life during a time when Cold War paranoia was at its height. High stakes and suspense power the film's story inspired by true events—one that brings Donovan's personal journey to life and captures the essence of a man who risked everything for his country.

It is worth noting that Donovan's accomplishments didn't end with this case. He later successfully negotiated the return of 1,113 prisoners from the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba. Two truly heroic accomplishments by a man who never considered himself a hero.

The Abel story was uncovered by "Bridge of Spies" screenwriter Matt Charman, who came upon a footnote in a JFK biography that referenced the Abel/Powers swap. Spielberg was immediately taken with Donovan's tale as the director had strong childhood memories of stories from his father, who'd been to Russia and had seen a display of the U-2 remains.

The Cold War era was a frightening time for the world. It lasted from the end of World War II until the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. Many older people remember the "duck & cover" under-the-desk drills American schools ran in case



Attorney James B. Donovan, a little-known American hero...

of Soviet attack, plus the Cuban Missile Crisis, which brought the U.S. to the brink of nuclear war with Russia over the establishment of missile sites in Cuba.

Just as Donovan was a little-known hero of the Cold War, there are a number of facts that are little known about that important time in history. Here's a look at 10 of them.

- The term "Cold War" was first used by George Orwell, author of "Animal Farm," the book satirizing Stalinism.

- Ten different U.S. presidents held office during the Cold War (Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush).

- The entrance of a missile-launch center in South Dakota was protected by an armed door with the Domino's Pizza logo on it. It read "worldwide delivery in 30 minutes or less, or your next one is free."

- When a CIA consultant spotted soccer fields along the coast of Cuba in September 1962, he became concerned because, as he put it, "Cubans play baseball; Russians play soccer." This led Kennedy to seek hard evidence and subsequent aerial photographs convinced the president that Russia was indeed putting missiles in Cuba.

- The U.S.S.R. thought that the heavily trafficked building in the center courtyard of the Pentagon



...was played by Tom Hanks in the movie "Bridge of Spies."

was a top-secret meeting room and pointed nukes at it. Turns out it was a hot dog stand.

- The term "Third World Country" does not mean poor; it refers to a country that was not aligned with either the U.S./First World or U.S.S.R./Second World during the Cold War.

- America sent Romania 20,000 Bibles, which the Romanians subsequently turned into toilet paper because they had a shortage.

- In the 1940s, Hollywood starlet Hedy Lamarr invented a new technology to stop Nazis from jamming Navy torpedoes, but the idea was rejected until 1962 and implemented during the Cold War. Her frequency-hopping technology is also the basis for modern Bluetooth.

- The most powerful air raid sirens ever built (during the Cold War) were powered by a 180-horsepower Chrysler V-8 engine, were nearly 12 feet long, and were rumored to be so powerful that they could start fires and turn fog into rain.

- During the Cold War, maps distributed in the U.S. displayed distorted proportions to make the U.S.S.R. and its allies seem larger, closer and more "menacing."

"Bridge of Spies" arrives on Blu-ray™ Combo Pack and Digital HD February 2, featuring four revealing documentaries about the making of the film and its historical background.