

# [February president. in the midst of a](https://assignbuster.com/february-president-in-the-midst-of-a/)

February 15 is an important date in history becausemany significant events took place. A famous philosopher and astronomer whomade contributions in the fields of astronomy, mathematics, and philosophy wasborn.

A naval ship exploded, resulting in devastating ramifications. Theexplosion also increased tensions between two countries and was a factor in thestart of a war. A United States president was gaining supporters in a paraderally when a man fired shots and killed a mayor in an assassination attempt onthe soon-to-elected president. In the midst of a war, an island who was astronghold of the British surrendered to a powerful country in Asia. A group oftalented United States athletes were headed to the world championships of theirsport when they were in a tragic crash.

OnFebruary 15, 1564, Galileo Galilei was born in Pisa, Italy to Vincenzio Galileiand Julia Ammanati (Geymonat 5). Galileo went to the University of Pisa tostudy medicine, but after four years he decided to focus more on mathematic andphilosophy. When he made this decision, he left the university without a degreein 1585 (“ Galileo”). In 1583, Galileo made his first discovery in the world ofphysics, which was when he first began to fully study mathematics. Hediscovered “ that the beating of a pendulum takes place in equal times”(Geymonat 8).

Galileo became a professor at the University of Pisa in 1589 andspent three years teaching. During this time, it was reported that he pointedout the errors of Aristotle, a philosopher, and demonstrated them to hisstudents. He dropped two objects that weighed different amounts off the LeaningTower. This showed “ the error of Aristotle’s belief that speed of fall isproportional to weight” (“ Galileo”).             Afterteaching at the University of Pisa, Galileo was chosen as the chair ofmathematics at the University of Padua in 1592 (“ Galileo”). In order to conductexperiments and do research, Galileo constructed a shop in his house in Padua.

During this time, he created different instruments used in mathematics. One ofthese was a compass. The compass had already been invented, but Galileo wasable to use the already constructed compasses and make them more useful. Thiscompass was used for rapid calculations and based on the idea of proportionalmagnitudes (Geymonat 26).             One ofGalileo’s most famous discoveries is the telescope. In August of 1609, Galileocreated a telescope and presented it to the doge of Venice. Galileo keptworking on his telescopes and soon built a telescope that had twenty timesmagnification.

This amount of magnification helped him discover mountains andcraters on the moon. With the help of his newly built telescope, Galileodiscovered Jupiter’s four largest satellites and found that the Milky Wayconsisted of stars. Galileo also discovered sunspots, the phases of Venus, lunar mountains and valleys, and the laws of falling bodies (“ Galileo”).            The USSMaine was first docked in Havana, Cuba at Havana Harbor on January 25, 1898 by Captain Charles D. Sigsbee (Hearn44). The day before, January 24, United States President William McKinley madeorders to send the naval ship to Havana Harbor from Key West, Florida, where ithad been residing. In order for the ship to be sent to Cuba, President McKinleyhad to speak with the government officials in Madrid, Spain.

After being veryhesitant, the government in Spain allowed for McKinley to send Maine to Havana Harbor (“ TheDestruction”). There were many Americans whose lives were in danger as a resultof Cuba’s revolt against Spain and the USS Maine’spurpose was to protect the well-being of those American citizens (Hearn 44).             OnFebruary 15, the USS Maine exploded. Theexplosion killed 253 of the 358 men aboard the ship. After several weeks ofinvestigations and examining the ship wreckage, it was concluded that the causeof the explosion was a mine that went off beneath the ship by Captain WilliamT. Sampson (Hearn 44). In 1911, the United States Navy Department began asecond investigation on the cause of the explosion.

This investigationdiscovered a six-inch magazine and came to the conclusion that a mine explodedunder the magazine, causing the ship to also explode. There were people thatdid not agree with either of these conclusions. Admiral Hyman G. Rickover conductedinvestigations and published his findings in a book. He concluded that theexplosion was a result of combustion of coal next to the magazine (“ The Destruction”).            TheAmerican people quickly became angered and blamed everything on the Spanishgovernment.

According to Hearn, “ Americans became enraged, shouting, ? Rememberthe Maine! To hell with Spain!'”(46). By April 25, the United States Congress had declared war on Spain, beginning the Spanish American War. The explosion of Maine did not directly cause the declaration of war by America, butit was a facilitator in the actions taken by the United States Congress (“ The Destruction”).            OnFebruary 15, 1933, president-elect Franklin Delano Roosevelt arrived in Miami, Florida to attend a rally.

The rally was to be held at Bayfront Park. WhenRoosevelt arrived, an estimated 25, 000 people surrounded the stage in any waythey could (Piket). These thousands of Americans gathered in anticipation ofhearing the soon-to-be-elected president Franklin Delano Roosevelt speak.

Therewas one person who was there for a completely different reason. Giuseppe, orJoe, Zangara attended with the intention of shooting and killing Roosevelt. Zangara traveled to Miami from Paterson, New Jersey.

As George McJimsey describes, “ he stood in the crowd wincing at the stabbing stomachpains that had tormented him for years and nursing a hatred for all those whoheld political power” (27). Zangara carried two things with him. He carried theweapon, a . 12-caliber revolver which he bought for eight dollars at a Miamipawnshop (27).

He also carried a newspaper clipping which described whatRoosevelt would be doing and where he would be during his time in Miami. Zangarawas a short man, just over five feet tall. He was dressed casually, wearingbrown pants and a brown shirt (Piket). Because of the thousands of peoplein attendance, Zangara was only able to make his way to a few rows from thefront.

When he arrived at his row which consisted of benches, many people stoodin front of him which blocked his view of Roosevelt. Roosevelt began to givehis speech, which was short and straight to the point. As Roosevelt made hisfinal points, the crowd began to sit down. This gave Zangara the perfect timeto take his shots. Roosevelt was in the middle of talking to reporters andAnton J.

Cermak, the mayor of Chicago, came up to Roosevelt to have a shortconversation. At this point, Zangara took a shot. A woman realized what washappening and took Zangara’s arm, but with his strength, he was able to let atotal of five shots off. Each bullet struck someone. He hit two people in thehead, one person in the abdomen, one on the hand, and struck Cermak in thechest. Cermak was rushed to the hospital, with Roosevelt by his side, and died nineteendays later (McJimsey 28; Piket). Ever since the nineteenth century, Singapore had been a colony belonging to the British and was considered astronghold of the British.

Singapore is an island that is the capital of theStraits Settlement of the Malay Peninsula. The Japanese made their intentionsto take over Singapore by telegraphing the British in July of 1941. While theJapanese were getting ready to attack Pearl Harbor, they also sent 24, 000members of the Japanese army to the Malay Peninsula.

After they sent troops, the Japanese attacked Singapore from the air and killed a total of 61 Singaporecivilians during this one air attack (“ February 15”). The Japanese forces and Britishforces continued to battle throughout December and January. These battleskilled hundreds more innocent civilians in the process. The constant Japaneseattacks resulted in the British being forced to leave many of their positionsin the island of Singapore. On February 8, the Japanese placed 5, 000 moremembers of their forces on the island. The Japanese began to drop leaflets thatcontained pro-Japanese propaganda which highly encouraged the British tosurrender the island to the Japanese.

Singapore’s main defensive weapons weretheir coastal guns. These guns were destroyed by the Japanese on February 13. Many miscalculations and bad communication by the British caused the British toslowly have less and less defense tactics (“ February 15”).            On February15, the seventieth day after the invasion began, Singapore surrendered to theJapanese forces. Before Singapore officially surrendered, the Japanese hadsurrounded Singapore City from three sides of the island. Domei, a Japanesenews agency, reported “ that Lieut. General Arthur E.

Percival, Britishcommander, signed the unconditional surrender dictated by Lieut. GeneralTomoyuki Yamashita, Japanese commander…” (“ World News”). After Singaporesurrendered, 62, 000 Allied soldiers were kept as prisoners. An estimated morethan half of these prisoners eventually died. As a result of the surrender ofSingapore, the British lost their foothold in the East (“ February 15”).

On February 15, 1961, the UnitedStates figure skating team was headed to Prague for the 1961 WorldChampionships. The figure skating team boarded the Boeing 707 ready for theirchance to win the championships, not knowing what would happen to them next. Whileattempting to land in Brussels, Belgium, the Sabena Flight 548 crashed. Thecrash killed all seventy-two people who were on the plane, and one farmer whowas on the ground in the fields of the airport. Of the seventy-two people onthe plane, thirty-four of them were members of the United States figure skatingteam (Ford).             Thecause of the plane crash was easy to find. There was poor communication betweenthe ground control members and the crew on the plane.

According to Bonnie D. Ford, “ for some unknown reason the pilot retracted the plane’s landing gear onhis initial approach.” Although there was no person who survived the tragiccrash, there were many possessions that were found at the scene of the crash.

There were airplane tickets, jackets with the United States of America patchessewn on them, and the latest issue of Sports Illustrated. The magazine featuredLaurence Owen who was just sixteen years old, the United States ladieschampion, and a victim of the plane crash. There were many great Americanathletes and citizens killed during the crash. Some include: Laurence Owen, hersister and mother, Eddie LeMaire, a figure skating judge, Larry Pierce, thenational ice-dancing champion, his partner, Diane Sherbloom, and Doug Ramsayare just a few of the many who lost their lives (“ Accidents and Disasters”; Ford).

Afterthe devastating crash, the International Skating Union cancelled the WorldChampionships that were to be held in honor of the skaters who lost their livesin the crash. There were many people who were supposed to be on the plane, butcertain circumstances allowed them not to be. Lorraine Hanlon was supposed tobe traveling to Prague, but her school would not allow her to miss any moredays of class.

The coach could not afford airfare for two skaters, Bob and PatDineen. Tim Brown became ill and could not travel to Prague. After theaccident, the “ United States figure skating executives issued a mandate thatstill stands: No team traveling to an international competition would ever flytogether again” (Ford).

Everyone of these events makes February 15 an important date in history. Each eventchanged how people would see the world and how the world works. Galileo Galileiwas born and made important contributions to the fields of mathematics, physics, and astronomy. The explosion of the USS Maine was a stepping stone in the declaration of war leading to theSpanish American War.

Chicago mayor, Anton J. Cermak, was shot and killed byGiuseppe Zangara who had the intentions of shooting and killing thepresident-elect Franklin Delano Roosevelt who went on to get America out of theGreat Depression. Singapore fell to Japan, which gave Japan more land and powerand caused Britain to lose its foothold in the East.

Part of the United Statesfigure skating team was killed in a plane crash which changed the lives oftheir families, other figure skaters, athletes of any sport, and the fans offigure skating.