

LIEUTENANT GENERAL ALVA R. FITCH US Army, Retired (Deceased)



A highly decorated veteran of World War II and the Korean War, Alva R. Fitch was commissioned in Field Artillery after graduating from the US Military Academy in 1930. His 36-year military career, which included service in both World War II and the Korean War, was spent in a mix of Artillery and Military Intelligence positions. Fitch would become known as one of the pioneers of Army Intelligence for his enduring contribution to the evolution and professionalism of Military Intelligence.

As a Captain, Fitch commanded an Artillery battalion in the Philippines at the outbreak of World War II. He earned the Distinguished Service Cross for delaying the advance of a Japanese force at Mauban until his ammunition and supplies were exhausted. After destroying the guns in his command, he helped supervise the withdrawal of Allied forces toward the Bataan peninsula in the

Philippines. On Bataan, MAJ Fitch received the Silver Star for organizing and leading an improvised force to drive off Japanese infiltrators and retake captured artillery. Following the surrender of Bataan on 9 April 1942, MAJ Fitch was captured and forced to take part in what came to be called the "Bataan Death March." He was initially imprisoned in the Philippines but later survived the sinking of two prisoner-of-war ships before being detained in a camp in Korea until the end of the war.

Following the war, LTG Fitch attended Command and General Staff College and became an instructor there. He then attended the Strategic Intelligence School before serving in his first MI assignment as the Military Attaché to El Salvador. He also worked as the Chief of the Latin American Section of the G2, Department of the Army, just prior to the Korean War. When MG Fitch reported for duty as the Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence (ACSI) in October 1959, the Army Intelligence field was facing a severe personnel problem. A highly decorated veteran of two wars, Fitch knew first-hand the criticality of intelligence to the commander, but he was watching the erosion of the pool of intelligence experience. He was convinced the only solution was to create a separate branch for intelligence.

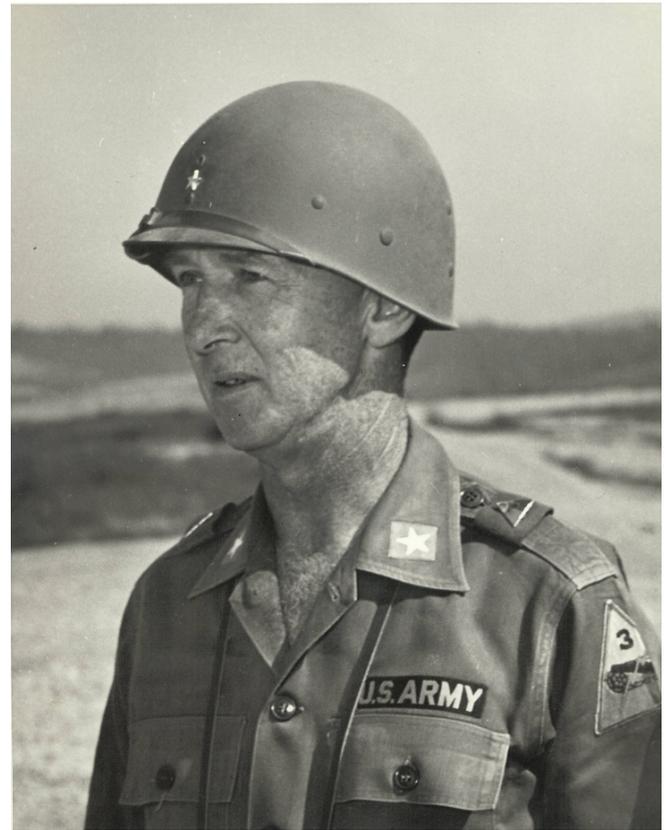
By the time LTG Fitch took over as the ACSI in 1961, the Army was finally ready to listen to him. He oversaw the execution of General Order 38 creating the Intelligence and Security Branch on 1 July 1962, signed by GEN G.H. Decker, Chief of Staff of the Army.

LTG Fitch retired from active duty in 1966 after a two-year tenure as Deputy Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). His awards include the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star, Legion of Merit (1 Oak Leaf Cluster), the Bronze Star Medal, and the Purple Heart.

LTG Fitch was inducted into the MI Corps Hall of Fame and selected as a Distinguished Member of the Corps in 1988. He died on 25 November 1989 at the age of 82. In 1991, Fitch Auditorium within Alvarado Hall at Fort Huachuca was dedicated in his honor.



MG Alva Fitch being sworn in as ACSI by MG J.C. Lambert, The Adjutant General, US Army, on 16 October 1961.



GEN Harold Johnson, Army Chief of Staff, congratulates LTG Alva Fitch, Deputy Director, DIA, after presenting him the Distinguished Service Medal during a retirement ceremony on 31 May 1966.

LTG (R) Fitch at the MI Hall of Fame Ceremonies in 1988, one year before he passed away