

LIUETENANT COLONEL GERO IWAI US Army, Retired (Deceased)



LTC Gero Iwai had an illustrious, and at the same time, a very unusual military career. He joined the Army on 30 May 1931 and retired on 30 June 1957 after 26 years of continuous intelligence duty. For the first ten years, LTC Iwai conducted critical counterintelligence missions in Hawaii, which included monitoring the Japanese consulate. His assignment was so sensitive that no one in his community, to include his immediate family, knew he was even in the Army until 7 December 1941, when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor.

Shortly after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, LTC Iwai assisted a fellow Nisei Naval officer on similar assignment and the FBI in the interrogation of the first Japanese prisoner of war captured in World War II. This prisoner, the commander of a Japanese midget submarine, provided

significant information on a map found aboard the submarine that LTC Iwai analyzed and interpreted. For his performance as a Special Agent and his superior translation skills, LTC Iwai was awarded his first Bronze Star Medal.

After World War II, LTC Iwai continued to engage in highly sensitive intelligence operations. His intelligence coverage was focused on the Communist threat against US military installations and personnel in Hawaii. He was later assigned to Tokyo where he used his considerable talents as a liaison between his counterintelligence organization and elements of the Japanese government. This resulted in close cooperation between the two entities. In recognition of his service, LTC Iwai was awarded The Gold Key to Tokyo by its Governor. He was the only American military officer to receive this honor. For his honorable service in Japan, LTC Iwai was awarded his second Bronze Star Medal.

LTC Iwai returned from Japan in 1957 and retired from military service.

LTC Iwai passed away in 1972. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame posthumously in 1995.