COLONEL SOLOMON T. KULLBACK
US Army, Retired (Deceased)

Born in 1907 in Brooklyn, New York, Solomon Kullback was a classmate of Abraham Sinkov (HOF 1987) at Boy's High School. Both boys were interested in mathematics and graduated in 1927 from City College of New York with Bachelors degrees in math. Both obtained Masters degrees from Columbia in 1929 and began teaching school. When Sinkov showed Kullback an announcement for a civil service position in math with the federal government, both applied. Kullback was initially rejected for employment by William Friedman (HOF 1988), head of the Signal Intelligence Service (SIS) because he lacked knowledge of a foreign language. However, by 1931, Kullback was hired as the second (with Sinkov the third) inaugural member of the SIS at a salary of $1,000 per year. Kullback was assigned to man the Spanish Language Post.

For the next 10 years, he was a member of an elite team (Friedman, Frank Rowlett [HOF 1988], Sinkov and Kullback) of the Army's rudimentary cryptologic organization, whose highest priority target was the Japanese diplomatic system. The organization succeeded in deciphering traffic from Japan's first diplomatic system, called Red, without having ever seen the machine. In 1940, now COL Kullback was called from Hawaii to join a team deciphering Japan's newest cryptographic machine, Purple. The team succeeded once again without having ever seen the machine.

In 1944, as a member of the Signal Security Agency (successor to SIS), COL Kullback and Friedman participated in the British-United States (BRUSA) negotiations. COL Kullback rose to Chief of Cryptanalysis in the Signal Security Agency in the spring of 1945. At the time, his office had 2,574 personnel, 82 percent of whom were working on Japanese Army messages.

COL Kullback concluded his military career in 1962 after serving as Assistant Director of Research and Development at the National Security Agency (NSA). He received a Legion of Merit from the Army and an Exceptional Service Award when he retired from NSA.

COL Kullback was inducted into the MI Hall of Fame in 1988 and passed away in August 1994.

Staff of the Signal Intelligence Service. COL Kullback is second from left.

DR. SOLOMON KULLBACK