

COLONEL THOMAS F. MCCORD **US Army, Retired (Deceased)**



COL Thomas McCord began his career with a number of diverse military assignments, including infantry combat in the Pacific Theater in World War II. His first Army Intelligence assignment was in 1950 as a student at the Army Russian language school. He was chosen for the Army's Foreign Area Specialist Training Program in Russian Studies at Regensburg, Germany. In 1954, he served as an Operations and Case Officer in Detachment 35, a clandestine intelligence collection unit based in Austria. He was involved in the defection of Soviet military personnel and in other operations developing intelligence on the Soviet forces in Austria.

In 1956, COL McCord served as the principal US Army Intelligence Analyst, Estimator, and Spokesperson in the preparation of US National Intelligence

Estimates (NIEs) on Soviet military capabilities, plans, and intentions. In 1959, he commanded the US Army Human Intelligence (HUMINT) collection and counterintelligence (CI) unit, Berlin Station, 513th MI Group, US Army, Europe. His unit was the first to report the impending construction of the Berlin Wall and continued to operate successfully behind the wall after construction was complete. His guidance and decisiveness regarding intelligence and CI operations neutralized Soviet efforts to limit Allied access into a free West Berlin.

COL McCord was selected to be the primary Defense Intelligence Estimator (DIE) on Soviet Ground Forces in 1963. Then in 1966, he became Deputy Chief, US Military Liaison Mission (USMLM) in Germany, and was subsequently chosen to serve as the Chief, USMLM, in 1967. By the end of this assignment, the Department of the Army selected COL McCord for promotion to the rank of Brigadier General. However, due to pressing family considerations, he had to request removal from the promotion list and retirement from active duty. At the time of his retirement, he was serving with great success in a general officer position—Assistant Chief of Staff/G2, Headquarters, US Army, Pacific (USARPAC). He retired 31 July 1969 as a Colonel.

After retirement, in July 1970, COL McCord served as the Senior Civilian Intelligence Operations Advisor and Assistant to the Commander, 500th MI Group, USARPAC, and later as the Senior Civilian Advisor, Special Intelligence Studies and Advisory Group, Headquarters, US Army Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM). In 1973, he

became the Chief, Security Branch, and later the Assistant Deputy Director, Office of Counterintelligence and Security, Defense Intelligence Agency.

From 1975 until 1980, COL McCord volunteered for a two-level civilian grade reduction in order to work as the Senior Interrogator, US Army Element, Westport Center, in Munich, Germany. Westport was a joint inter-agency, overt, HUMINT interrogation center managed by the Central Intelligence Agency. Under his leadership and expertise, his team documented evidence that US intelligence had badly overestimated the combat capability of the Soviet ground forces for years. In his last position, COL McCord was in charge of the Soviet émigré debriefing program under INSCOM, where his work played a vital role in the 1983 *Interagency Intelligence Memorandum on Soviet War Management*.

COL McChord's awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit (2 Oak Leaf Clusters), the Bronze Star Medal, the Army Commendation Medal (1 Oak Leaf Cluster), the Combat Infantryman Badge, the American Defense Service Medal with clasp, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, the World War II Victory Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the Army of Occupation Medal with clasp (Germany), the Armed Forces Reserve Medal with 10 Year Device, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the National Defense Service Medal (1 Oak Leaf Cluster), the Vietnam Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, and the General Staff Identification Badge.

COL McChord was inducted into the MI Hall of Fame in 2005. He passed away in 2008.