

## **MAJOR GENERAL DENNIS E. NOLAN** **US Army, Retired (Deceased)**



Dennis E. Nolan was born at Akron, New York, in 1872 and graduated from the US Military Academy in 1896. 2LT Nolan soon had the opportunity to test his military skills when he participated in the Spanish-American War of 1898. This he did with distinction, receiving two citations for gallantry in action against Spanish forces in Cuba. Next, he was off to the Philippines where he commanded one of the squadrons of the 11<sup>th</sup> US Volunteer Cavalry against insurgents. Between 1901 and 1915, Nolan held a variety of positions: instructor of law and history at West Point, Director of Southern Luzon in the Philippines, and officer with the 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry.

In 1915, then CPT Nolan arrived in Washington, DC, where he was detailed on the General Staff. Here, Nolan had his first opportunity to work directly in preparing finished intelligence products used by the General Staff for planning and mobilization purposes. With the entry of the United States into the European conflict in 1917, GEN John Pershing selected Nolan, now promoted to the rank of Colonel, to administer the intelligence operations of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF). Pershing created a five-element General Staff and made Nolan, in effect, the Army's first G2. This symbolized the beginning of modern Military Intelligence.

Nolan's staff compiled vital intelligence reports based on a variety of human and technological sources never before utilized by the US Army on such a scale: radio intelligence, communications security, counterintelligence, photo intelligence, topographics, and acoustic and optical sensors. Nolan played a direct role in organizing the Corps of Intelligence Police—the Army's first permanent counterintelligence organization and one of the traditional roots of the US Army Intelligence and Security Command.

Upon promotion to Brigadier General in August 1917, Nolan became the first general associated with modern Military Intelligence. In the closing days of World War I, BG Nolan was given the opportunity to command the 55<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, 28<sup>th</sup> Division. For extraordinary heroism in action near Apremont, France, on 1 October 1918, BG Nolan was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and later the French Croix de Guerre with Palm and French Legion of Honor.

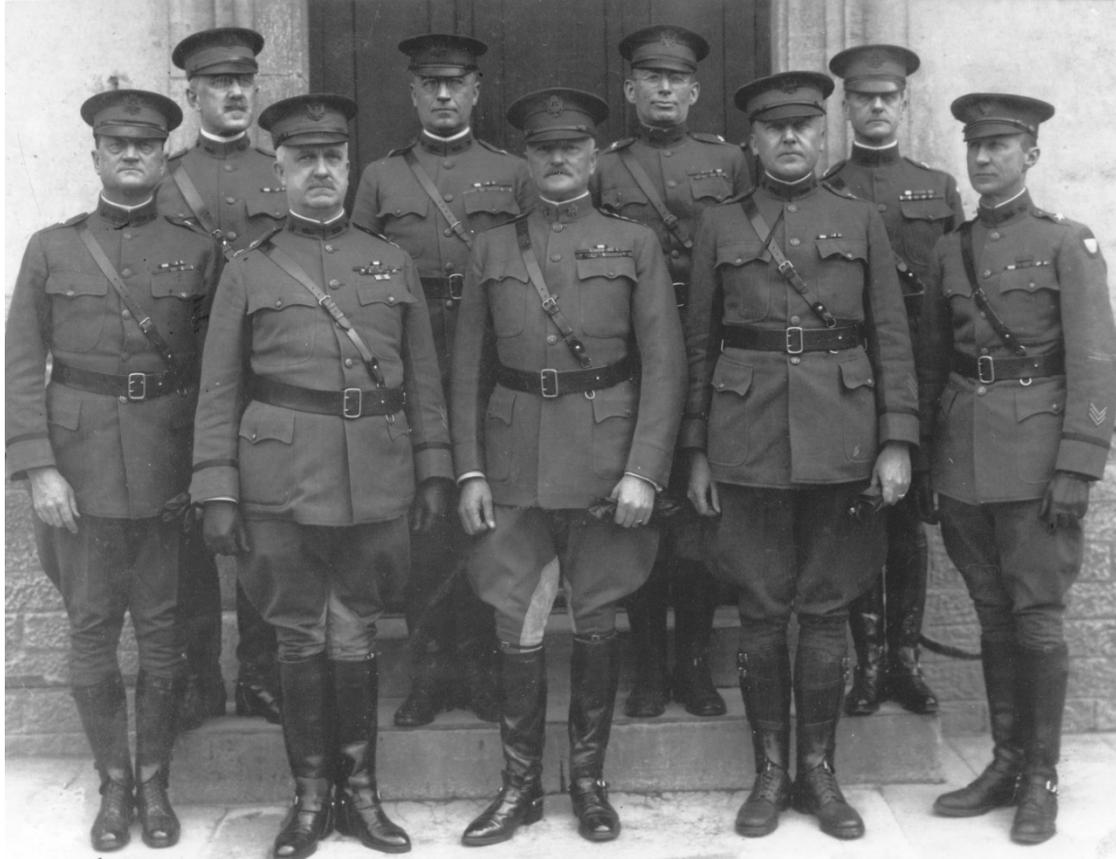
After the Armistice, BG Nolan was detailed to the Peace Commission until returning to Washington in July 1919. Here Nolan was placed in charge of instruction of the Military Intelligence Division of the Army War College. In August 1920, he was named as the Assistant Chief of Staff, G2 at the War Department, the second to hold the title. Perhaps his most important contribution during this latest assignment was the encouragement of the establishment of the Military Intelligence Officers Reserve Corps—the first formal recognition of need for professional MI officers and the forerunner of the Military Intelligence Branch. In 1925, he was promoted to the rank of Major General and, a year later, participated in the Geneva Disarmament Conference. His later assignments included commanding both the Fifth Corps Area and Second Corps Area prior to retirement in 1936.

MG Nolan died in 1956 at the age of 83.

MG Nolan was inducted into the MI Hall of Fame in 1988. The Intelligence and Security Command, located at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, dedicated its headquarters in honor of MG Nolan, the Army's first G2.



**CPT Nolan, 1912**



**CPT Dennis Nolan stands with Pershing and the rest of the General Staff of the AEF in 1917. Nolan is in the second row, second from the right.**



**COL Nolan, 1918**



**MG Nolan, 1924**



**MG Nolan as Grand Marshal of the National Recovery Act parade in 1933**