

MAJOR GENERAL CLOYD H. PFISTER

US Army, Retired



MG Mike Pfister graduated from Oberlin College and enlisted in the Army Security Agency (ASA) as a linguist in 1957. Two years later, he received his commission from the Infantry Officers Candidate School and was assigned to the 507th ASA Group and Headquarters, USASA, in Germany as a Manpower Programmer. In 1964, he obtained a Master's degree in International Relations from American University and studied in Africa as a Foreign Area Officer. From 1964 to 1968, MG Pfister served at the National Security Agency as a Cryptologic Staff Officer and Deputy Branch Chief. In 1968, he was assigned to Vietnam, first as a War Plans Officer in Saigon, then as the Operations Officer for 303rd Radio Research Battalion, II Field Forces, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV).

In 1969, while assigned to Fort Bragg, he helped develop and direct the Military Assistance Officer Command and Staff Course for politico-military career specialists. From 1972 to 1975, MG Pfister served in the Strategy, Plans and Policy Directorate, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Headquarters, Department of the Army. During this period he was instrumental in having the Secretary of Army designated the Executive Agent for Department of Defense support to United Nations Peacekeeping Operations.

In 1975, MG Pfister assumed command of the 307th ASA Battalion in Ludwigsburg, Germany. He reorganized the battalion into an Combat Electronic Warfare and Intelligence Battalion in support of VII Corps. He then served as the Assistant Chief of Staff, G2, 8th Infantry Division in Germany. After completing his tour in Germany, he was assigned to the National Defense University as a Fellowship Senior Researcher. In 1979, he worked for the Assistant Secretary of Defense, International Security Affairs, as the Political-Military Staff Officer in the Near East-South Asia Directorate handling policy initiatives with Jordan, Egypt and Lebanon. He was then selected to command the ASA Field Station in Berlin.

As the Chief of Staff and Deputy Commandant of the US Army Intelligence Center and School from 1984-1986, MG Pfister initiated facility planning and construction programs to prepare for the relocation of the intelligence courses at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, to Fort Huachuca.

Selected for General Officer in 1985, MG Pfister became the Director of Intelligence, J2 US Central Command (CENTCOM), MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. In 1986, while visiting Pakistan on temporary duty, the Pakistani President's plane crashed, killing the US Ambassador and Defense Representative. MG Pfister was immediately appointed Acting Defense Representative by the Commander-in-Chief, CENTCOM.

After serving in CENTCOM as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence for US Army Europe and Seventh Army during the fall of the Berlin Wall, MG Pfister provided the vision and planning guidance for restructuring US Army and the Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM) European intelligence operations for post Cold War requirements. From 1991 to 1993 he served as the Assistant Deputy Chief Of Staff, Intelligence, Headquarters, Department of Army. In this role, he initiated an interagency review of Turkey's situation in the post Cold War and the policy implications for the US and Europe, and initiated the recruitment, screening, and deployment of Somali linguists in record time to support Joint Operation RESTORE HOPE.

MG Pfister retired from active duty in 1993. His awards and decorations include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit (2 Oak Leaf Clusters), the National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal, and numerous other US and foreign awards, including Germany's highest award for Allied officers, the Ehrenkreuz Der Bundeswehr in Gold.

MG Pfister was inducted into the MI Hall of Fame in 1994.