

**LIEUTENANT COLONEL ROBERT V. TAYLOR**  
**US Army, Retired**  
**Department of Army Civilian, Retired**



LTC Taylor, a native of Arizona, began his military career as a private in the Corps of Engineers. He had attended Officer Candidate School in 1952 and received a commission as a Second Lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers. By the time he was first assigned to Army Intelligence in 1962, he was a Captain.

In 1962, LTC Taylor was assigned as a Branch Chief in the Far East Branch, National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC) in Washington, DC. As an Imagery Analyst under the operational control of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), he was a member of a team of imagery interpreters who located and reported to the National Command Authority the presence of Soviet offensive missiles in Cuba. The exactness and timeliness of their reporting allowed the President to bring sufficient pressure on

the Soviet leaders to cause them to withdraw the missiles.

Later, in Southeast Asia, his team was first to discover the North Vietnamese efforts to construct a road network, which extended from North Vietnam through Laos and Cambodia to the border regions of South Vietnam. This road network became known as the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The intelligence provided vital targeting information to US Air Force Commands in Thailand, South Vietnam, and Guam, which was used for continual interdiction of the Ho Chi Minh Trail and destruction of surface-to-air missile sites in North Vietnam.

LTC Taylor's duty at NPIC, coupled with the knowledge he had acquired about national imagery systems, allowed him to be the first Army officer to realize the potential national systems had to satisfy tactical commanders' requirements. During subsequent assignments in Vietnam and US Army, Europe, he began a long crusade which eventually ensured that products from national collection systems were made available to tactical commanders in a timely manner.

In 1971, he was assigned to the US Army Combat Developments Command Intelligence Agency, Fort Huachuca. LTC Taylor retired in 1972 and returned to Fort Huachuca as a civilian in 1973. The remainder of his service was devoted to fulfilling

and advancing Army utilization of products from national imagery systems. He was the author of the *Army Tactical Reconnaissance Needs for National Level Reconnaissance Products* and the system interfaces in order to get those products to the tactical users. The system that he helped design served our nation well during Operation DESERT STORM.

LTC Taylor left the Army with sound programs, which, when completed, ensured that the Army would have systems to enhance the tactical commanders' ability to see the battlefield, whether from national imagery or from space-related intelligence systems.

His military awards include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, National Defense Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and Korean Service Medal. He was also awarded the Vietnamese Medal of Valor. When he retired from government employment in 1993, he received the Department of the Army Superior Civilian Service Award, the first civilian employed at the Intelligence Center to receive this recognition.

He was inducted into the MI Hall of Fame in 1999.