

HONORABLE VERNON A.WALTERS
Lieutenant General, US Army, Retired (Deceased)



LTG Walters enlisted in the Army as a Private in 1941 and ultimately served at the center of world affairs during his 35-year military career. After America entered World War II, Walters attended the Infantry School at Fort Benning, graduating as a Second Lieutenant in 1942. He then attended the Military Intelligence Training Center at Camp Ritchie, Maryland. Heading overseas, he took part in the assault landing at Safi, Morocco, and then led the interrogation of hundreds of prisoners of war there and in Tunisia. Receiving a promotion to First Lieutenant, he returned to the US to teach prisoner-of-war interrogation at Camp Ritchie.

LTG Walters served overseas a second time during the war, serving as Aide-de-Camp to Fifth Army Commander, GEN Mark Clark. He was also the Combat

Liaison Officer for the Brazilian Infantry Division in Italy, where he remained until the end of the war. In this role, he conducted key negotiations and liaison with high-level French, Portuguese, and Brazilian leaders.

Later in his career, LTG Walters served as Military Attaché to Italy, Brazil, and France, and as an interpreter, negotiator, and troubleshooter for five presidents. During the Korean War, Walters accompanied President Truman to his meeting with GEN Douglas MacArthur at Wake Island, and went to Paris in 1951 with General Eisenhower to set up Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) headquarters. As the Defense and Army Attaché to France he participated in secret negotiations with the North Vietnamese conducted by Henry Kissinger in Paris. Concurrently, he established contact with the Chinese Communists in Paris and delivered to them President Nixon's first letter to Chairman Mao. He spent two years conducting secret negotiations with the Chinese that resulted in President Nixon's historic trip.

LTG Walters concluded his military career in 1976 after four years as Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, a job that earned him the rank of Lieutenant General. He was called out of retirement by Secretary of State Alexander Haig to serve as Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State until he was nominated by the President for the position of Ambassador-at-Large. His travels in this role took him to some 100 nations on troubleshooting missions. He was subsequently appointed by President Reagan as Ambassador to the United Nations with cabinet rank. He also served as the

Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany from 1989 to 1991. In recognition of his lifelong commitment to the Intelligence Community, the National Military Intelligence Association created the LTG Vernon A. Walters Award for members of the Central Intelligence Agency. Additionally, the LTG Vernon Walters Prize for Linguistics is awarded annually by the CryptoLinguistic Association of the National Security Agency to the agency's outstanding military linguist.

Ambassador Walters was fluent in seven languages in addition to English. He holds the United States National Security Medal, the Distinguished Service Medal (2 Oak Leaf Clusters), the Legion of Merit (1 Oak Leaf Cluster), the Bronze Star, the Air Medal, the Distinguished Intelligence Medal, and many campaign medals. He has been decorated by France, Italy, Brazil, Vietnam, Spain, Portugal, Morocco, and Peru.

After retirement from active duty, LTG Walters published his memoirs titled Silent Missions in 1978.

LTG Walters was inducted into the MI Hall of Fame in 1987 as one of the premier Distinguished Members of the MI Corps. He died in 2002.



LTG Walters accepts his induction as a Distinguished Member of the MI Corps from MG Parker at the inaugural MI Hall of Fame ceremony in 1987.