

## HISTORY'S WHO'S WHO: MG Denholm April 27

Major General Charles J. Denholm was not your typical general in appearance. His hair was long and he constantly smoked a pipe. As head of the Army Security Agency (ASA) for eight years, he not only strengthened army cryptology, but also enhanced the entire U.S. SIGINT System.

Charles Joseph Denholm was born in 1914 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and followed his father's footsteps into a military career. He graduated from the military academy at West Point in 1938.

During World War II, Denholm served with several infantry divisions. He fought in campaigns in Algiers, Tunisia, Sicily, Rome, Arno, Southern France, Rhineland, Central Europe, Anzio, Naples, and Ardennes-Alsace. He participated in four amphibious assault landings. By the end of the war, when Denholm had been an officer for fewer than 10 years, he was commanding a regiment. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, Bronze Star Medal for Valor with Oak Leaf Cluster, and a Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster.

For the next 20 years, Denholm received assignments that gave him experience in managing intelligence activities at various levels. During the Korean War, he served as the G3 and later G2 of the Army Far East command. In 1962, Denholm was promoted to brigadier general, and from 1962 to 1965 he was assigned to the office of the assistant chief of staff for intelligence at the Pentagon. During this period, he spent some time as acting assistant chief of staff for intelligence. General Denholm was promoted to major general in 1966.

From September 1965 to February 1973, Denholm was the commanding general of ASA, an unprecedented length of service in that position. During Denholm's tenure, ASA grew to a worldwide strength of almost 30,000 personnel. Such growth was needed to support the Cold War and the Vietnam War.

General Denholm was an effective advocate for the entire U.S. SIGINT system. Under his direction, the Army took a number of critical steps forward in technology: improved airborne platforms, the use of remote intercept, the

deployment of several AN/FLR-9s (“elephant cage” antenna array), wideband intercept, secure voice for tactical forces, and increased use of computers in the tactical environment. A record five major field stations were added to ASA’s arsenal of worldwide fixed sites during Denholm’s tenure.



*General Denholm is the central figure in this group of soldiers.*

As a former combat soldier, Denholm especially recognized the importance of providing timely information to the tactical commander. Under his leadership, ASA units harnessed technology and honed procedures to provide critical information to commanders at unprecedented speed.

Commanders in Vietnam were the first to benefit from access to tactical SIGINT support in amounts and at a speed not available in prior wars.

The following quote is attributed to General Denholm. While the evidence that it is actually his quote is second-hand, he spoke his mind and was a strong proponent of SIGINT. General Denholm was biased against HUMINT, but his point of evaluating sources, whichever “INT” they are, is well taken.

HUMINT.... How and why should we be expected to believe, much less act in the name of the United States, on the hearsay, speculation, and nonsensical innuendos of the host of nefarious characters who are the source of HUMINT reporting? By what logic do we credit and rely upon information, no matter how plausible, derived from entirely unidentified individuals who are being paid huge sums of money to betray their own country? .... There’s no accountability in HUMINT. Everyone does their own thing and then hides behind the cloak and dagger when questions are asked.

COMINT is the only reliable source of intelligence information there is. It's from the horse's mouth, not his mistress. Let's get the spooks out of the bars and the bedrooms and put them behind a GUHOR stick\* where maybe they can do some good.



*GUHOR stick*

\*A GUHOR stick was a tool used in traffic analysis and sometimes symbolized COMINT analysis

After 35 years of service to his country, Major General Denholm retired from military service in 1973.

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**508 CAPTION: Major General Denholm standing in the middle of a group of six other officers.**

**Second photo --- A GUHOR stick is a rectangular item similar to a ruler, made of clear plastic, with a large circle, a smaller circle, and a rectangular shape cut out of it.**