



# Moments in MI History

How Did We Get Here?

## The U.S. Army Intelligence School Moves to Fort Huachuca (Part 2 of 4)

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This year is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fort Huachuca as the Home of Military Intelligence. In recognition of this significant milestone, *Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin* (MIPB) is publishing a history of how Army intelligence training transitioned from being scattered across the United States after World War II to its current location at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, in 1971. MIPB will publish this story in four parts.

### January–March 2021 issue

- ◆ The Story Begins at Fort Holabird.
- ◆ What’s Wrong with Fort Holabird?
- ◆ MG Joseph McChristian and the Intelligence Center Concept.

### April–June 2021 issue

- ◆ Blakefield Report Recommends Fort Huachuca.
- ◆ Could Fort Lewis Be a Better Answer?

### July–September 2021 issue

- ◆ The Smith Study.
- ◆ Readying the New Home.

### MIPB Online FY 2022

- ◆ Congressional Blowback.
- ◆ The Realization of a Dream.

*Author’s Note: All primary documents used in the writing of this article are in the historical documents collection at the U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence. This includes correspondence related to the various studies, study reports, newspaper articles, testimony and statements given during the congressional hearings, the Army’s information papers in preparation for the congressional hearings, the General Accounting Office’s report, and the final report of the congressional subcommittee. Also used were the annual historical reports of the U.S. Army Intelligence School for 1966 to 1970 and the U.S. Army Intelligence Center and School for 1971 and 1972.*

## Introduction

On 4 May 1971, the U.S. Army Intelligence Center and School (USAICS) Commandant COL Charles W. Allen and CSM Clyde Fields unfurled the school colors at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, and proclaimed USAICS open for business. This action concluded an almost 5-year effort to find the ideal “home” for military intelligence (MI). The story involves multiple staff studies and cost analyses, congressional investigations and hearings, careful movement planning, and critical liaison between the staff at Fort Holabird, Maryland, and Fort Huachuca. Ultimately, it was the first step to the consolidation of several disparate Army intelligence train-



MG William H. Blakefield, Commander, Army Intelligence Command, 1965 to 1967.

ing efforts into one entity now known as the U.S. Army Intelligence Center of Excellence.

### Blakefield Report Recommends Fort Huachuca

In 1969, MG Joseph McChristian, the Department of the Army’s Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, envisioned creating a “home” for intelligence, like the artillery center at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Taking a list of nearly 30 possible sites, MG McChristian visited the most reasonable selections and narrowed his candidates to two: Fort Riley, Kansas, and Fort Huachuca. At the same time, the Army initiated a Long-Range Stationing Study Group (LRSSG),

chaired by MG Linton S. Boatwright, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel's Director of Individual Training, which included finding a suitable location for a new Intelligence Center. On 24 January 1970, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army (VCSA) GEN Bruce Palmer Jr. turned the LRSSG's and MG McChristian's recommendations over to MG William H. Blakefield, who was then commander of the Army Intelligence Command, which oversaw all Army counterintelligence within the continental United States.

MG Blakefield was directed to conduct reconnaissance visits to Fort Riley and Fort Huachuca to determine their feasibility for the Intelligence Center. Just 3 weeks later, on 10 February, the Chief of Staff of the Army finalized and approved the Blakefield Report. Given only two locations for consideration, MG Blakefield eliminated Fort Riley because of the extensive new construction and renovations needed to accommodate the center. On the other hand, he believed Fort Huachuca offered many advantages, not the least of which was minimal air traffic and moderate weather that allowed for year-round flights and field training. Furthermore, the uncluttered electromagnetic environment would facil-

itate the development and training of sophisticated intelligence equipment. Fort Huachuca was also located in a minimally populated area with plenty of surrounding federal and state lands into which it could expand, if necessary.

Crucial to an acceptable location was the ability to integrate intelligence training, concepts, doctrine, and materiel: "The Army needed to locate the school at a facility where the capability existed to conduct realistic combat intelligence field training which is dependent on the effective and coordinated use of aviation, avionics, electronics, target acquisition devices, automatic data processing equipment, and tactical units."<sup>1</sup> With the already established presence of the Combat Surveillance and Electronic Warfare School, the U.S. Army Electronic Proving Ground, the Army Security Agency Test and Evaluation Center, and Libby Army Airfield at Fort Huachuca, Army intelligence could achieve that desired integration while saving the Army manpower and money.

The fact that Fort Huachuca was immediately available also figured into MG Blakefield's recommendation. His report endorsed the movement of the U.S. Army Intelligence School (USAINTS) and the Combat Developments Command Intelligence Agency to Fort Huachuca, but the proposed combat arms brigade was cut, as were all of the operational intelligence activities, which were recommended for retention within the Washington, DC, area for administrative purposes.<sup>2</sup> These reductions were necessary because of serious concerns about water and housing availability at Fort Huachuca that caused MG Blakefield to cap the move to only 2,100 permanent-party personnel. That number would not overtax the water situation because the arriving personnel would essentially replace those of a combat support training brigade scheduled for inactivation.<sup>3</sup> One downside was an estimated deficit of more than 200 on-post housing units for eligible families, but this would soon be alleviated by upcoming construction projects at the post. Approved fiscal year (FY) 1970 and FY 1971 budgets already accounted for the construction of 200 family units. Furthermore, construction of a 1,200-man barracks was scheduled to begin in September 1970, and a 180-man Bachelor Officer Quarters was in the FY 1972 budget. Additionally, the Army fully expected the civilian community to begin the construction of suitable residences once the move decision was finalized. MG Blakefield did not provide cost estimates for future construction but estimated "move-in" costs at \$13.8 million.<sup>4</sup>

On 4 March 1970, less than a month after MG Blakefield presented his recommendations, the Office of the Secretary of the Army informed Congress that Fort Holabird would be closed as part of a host of other consolidations,



U.S. Army photo

Aerial view of Fort Huachuca in the early 1970s, looking southeast, with Libby Army Airfield shown in the lower left. The uppermost grouping of buildings would become the original U.S. Army Intelligence Center and School academic complex.



reductions, and realignments. Two days later, the Army publicly announced the closure of Fort Holabird and transfer of USAINTS to Fort Huachuca. The move would begin on 31 December 1970 with Holabird to close permanently 2 years later.

Not unexpectedly, the public announcement drew immediate criticism. Maryland Congressman Clarence Long demanded the Army reexamine the issue and called a session of the Military Construction Appropriations Subcommittee to evaluate the decision and the proposed expenditures for the move. Calling Fort Huachuca “austere” and “a nice place to visit but not to live,” he declared, “I am more certain than ever that this move will be an injustice to the taxpayers and to the Holabird personnel who are being asked to transfer.”<sup>5</sup>

Further caution came from the Army Corps of Engineers, which warned about the lack of water, stating, “We are not yet sure that we have sufficient water for the current strength let alone any increased strength.”<sup>6</sup> A flurry of negative articles was published in national and local newspapers, primarily fueled by Congressman Long’s outrage.

At this point, MG McChristian was told to take his extensive Intelligence Center Concept and apply it to Fort Huachuca. Although he had initially favored Fort Huachuca if the entire post was turned over to intelligence activities, upon further study, he was reluctant to accept Fort Huachuca as the final answer. MG Blakefield’s recommended “reduced” center curtailed MG McChristian’s 21,000-person intelligence center to the bare minimum, leaving it little more than the USAINTS that already existed at Fort Holabird. Recognizing that his original vision was unfeasible in a shrinking Army, on 4 May 1970, he published his Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence Study. In the study, he revised his Intelligence

Center Concept down to a 9,700-personnel facility that included the school and the Intelligence Command, along with the 184<sup>th</sup> MI Company (Aerial Surveillance) and 14<sup>th</sup> MI Battalion to support training. Armed with MG Blakefield’s data stating that even that size center could not be supported at Fort Huachuca, MG McChristian recommended Fort Lewis, Washington, as an alternative.

### Could Fort Lewis Be a Better Answer?

By June, because of political opposition, the movement of USAINTS to Fort Huachuca was essentially stalled as the Army considered other options, particularly Fort Lewis. In preparation for a final decision brief for the Army Chief of Staff, MG Boatwright travelled to Fort Huachuca to determine which of the post’s current activities did not “enhance operation of the Intelligence Center.”<sup>7</sup> He was to consider whether these could be relocated elsewhere to allow more of the Army’s intelligence activities to move to Arizona but still keep the total population supportable by the available water supply.

While MG Boatwright headed to Fort Huachuca, MG McChristian went to Fort Lewis to determine its feasibility for his revised intelligence center. The Washington post had not been considered in any of the earlier studies because the Army had planned to move an entire infantry division there as activities in Vietnam wound down. By 1970, however, rumors surfaced that the division would not be moved to Fort Lewis after all, driving MG McChristian’s request that it be considered as an alternative to Fort Huachuca.

In its favor, Fort Lewis offered realistic training opportunities because of varied terrain and weather. However, the electromagnetic spectrum was cluttered, the air space was crowded, and the weather limited the number of training and flying days. Also, despite rumors to the contrary, the Army had not completely eliminated plans for stationing a division, or at least a brigade, at the Washington post.

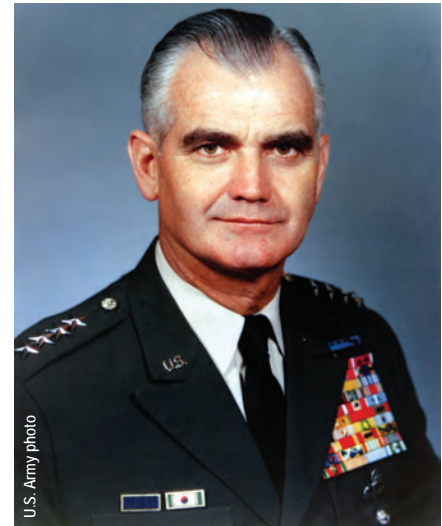
Returning to Washington, DC, MG McChristian made his pitch for Fort Lewis to the VCSA on 14 August 1970. Foremost, he argued that Fort Lewis had none of the water and housing shortages that plagued Fort Huachuca and that his concept of an intelligence center could be established at Fort Lewis whether an infantry division was located there or not. He contended that the “reduced” center at Fort Huachuca recommended by MG Blakefield would cost approximately the same as his “revised” center at Fort Lewis. According to his calculations, “an operational intelligence center, less a brigade, could be established at Fort Huachuca in mostly temporary facilities with minimum family housing in about five to six years for



U.S. Army photo

Maryland Congressman Clarence Long visits Fort Huachuca on 10 May 1970.

a cost of \$19M. Long range replacement of temporary facilities would cost an additional \$57.7M for a total cost of \$76.7M.” On the other hand, Fort Lewis provided an opportunity for “a complete and fully operational intelligence center,” essentially his 9,700-man concept, within 3 to 4 years for about the same cost: \$14 to \$15 million move-in plus \$54 to \$59 million long-range construction (total \$68 to \$74 million). He concluded, “A better Army Intelligence Center can be established sooner, at less cost, and with more favorable political impact under the [Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence] ACSI Plan at Fort Lewis.”<sup>8</sup> VCSA GEN Palmer reportedly replied, “Well and good, we have heard you, but I still think the Center should go to Fort Huachuca.”<sup>9</sup> To placate MG McChristian, GEN Palmer granted his request to brief GEN William C. Westmoreland, now the Army Chief of Staff, who deferred the decision pending yet another study, the sixth in 3 years. ✨



GEN William C. Westmoreland, Chief of Staff of the Army, July 1968 to June 1972.

### Endnotes

1. MAJ Kilday, *Information Brief: Advantages of Locating the Intelligence Center at Fort Huachuca*, n.d.
2. These included the majority of the Intelligence Command, as well as the Defense Central Index of Investigation, Department of Defense National Agency Check Center, the Data Handling Center, and the U.S. Army Personnel Security Group.
3. This refers to the “equivalent” population or the sum of the population resident on post 24 hours per day and one-third of the nonresident population who worked on post. For planning purposes, the study used 7,000 military personnel (permanent strength) and 6,500 civilian employees and dependents.
4. This figure included \$7.7 million relocation costs plus \$6.2 million for initial modifications and construction.
5. “Fighting Chance to Keep Holabird Here: Long,” source unknown, 21 May 1970; and “Long Fights Holabird Transfer,” *Baltimore Sun*, 14 May 1970.
6. Larry Phillips, “Huachuca Bombed as MI Site,” *Army Times*, 2 August 1972.
7. LTG W.E. DePuy, Assistant Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, to MG McChristian and MG Boatwright, “Location of U.S. Army Intelligence Center,” memorandum, n.d.
8. MG McChristian, “U.S. Army Intelligence Center,” briefing, 14 August 1970.
9. *Testimony before the Armed Services Subcomm. of the Comm. on Armed Services, House of Representatives, on Relocation of the U.S. Army Intelligence School from Fort Holabird to Fort Huachuca*, 92<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> Sess. 21-22 (10 May 1972) (statement of MG Joseph McChristian, U.S. Army, Retired).

