

## LIEUTENANT GENERAL WILLIAM E. ODOM US Army, Retired (Deceased)



Following graduation from the US Military Academy, LTG Odom entered active duty in 1954 as a Second Lieutenant in the Infantry. After completing numerous assignments in combat arms, he attended the Defense Language Institute in 1960; completed his Master's degree in Political Science from Columbia University in 1962; and attended the Russian Institute in 1964. These prepared him for his assignment as Liaison Officer, US Military Liaison Mission, Germany, and launched his illustrious career as a Soviet military expert.

After serving in Vietnam as Plans Officer on the Staff for Civil Operations and Rural Development, Military Assistance Command, LTG Odom was the Assistant Army

Attaché with the US Embassy in the Soviet Union until 1974. This key developmental assignment ultimately led to his appointment as Military Assistant to the Presidential Assistant for National Security Affairs, where he served with distinction from 1977 to 1981.

In 1981, LTG Odom became the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence (ACSI). During his tenure as ACSI, he created the Soviet Battlefield Development Plan—a key document projecting the full range of Soviet doctrine and capabilities which provided the threat baseline against which much of US Army doctrine and materiel systems were developed during the Cold War. In 1985, General Odom was appointed Director, National Security Agency/Central Security Service.

LTG Odom retired from active duty in 1988. His awards and decorations include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal (1 Oak Leaf Cluster), the Distinguished Service Medal (1 Oak Leaf Cluster), the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal (1 Oak Leaf Cluster). He received the National Security Medal and the National Intelligence Distinguished Service Medal when he retired.

Following his military career he began a second career in academia, teaching at Yale University. He was the author of several books: [The Soviet Volunteers: Modernization](#)

and Bureaucracy in a Public Mass Organization (1973, republished in e-Book version in 2009); On Internal War: American and Soviet Approaches to Third World Clients and Insurgents (1991); co-author of Trial After Triumph: East Asia After the Cold War (1992); America's Military Revolution: Strategy and Structure after the Cold War (1993); co-author of Commonwealth or Empire? Russia, Central Asia, and the Transcaucasus (1995); The Collapse of the Soviet Military (1998); Fixing Intelligence: For a More Secure America (2003); and America's Inadvertent Empire (2004).

LTG Odom was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1989. He passed away on 30 May 2008.

