

= Herbert Loper =

Herbert Bernard Loper (22 October 1896 ? 25 August 1989) was a United States Army major general who helped plan the Mariana and Palau Islands campaign and the Okinawa campaign during World War II . He was chief of the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project from 1952 to 1953 , and Chairman of the Military Liaison Committee of the United States Atomic Energy Commission from 1954 to 1961 .

A graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point , he was commissioned in the US Army Corps of Engineers in 1919 . He graduated from the United States Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth , Kansas in 1940 , and became Assistant Chief , and later Chief , of the Intelligence Division at the Office of the Chief of Engineers in Washington , DC . In May 1942 , he negotiated the Loper @-@ Hotline Agreement , under which responsibility for military mapping and survey of the globe was divided between the United States and the United Kingdom . In 1944 , he was appointed Chief Engineer of US Army Forces , Pacific Ocean Areas . In this role he was involved with the planning of the Mariana and Palau Islands campaign and the Okinawa campaign . After the fighting ended , he participated in the Occupation of Japan .

Loper returned to the United States to become Chief of the Joint Photo and Survey Section of the Joint Chiefs of Staff 's Joint Intelligence Group in 1948 . The next year he was appointed as an Army member of the Military Liaison Committee of the United States Atomic Energy Commission . He wrote a report which became known as the Loper Memorandum , which was influential in the decision to develop thermonuclear weapons . He was Deputy Commander of Joint Task Force 3 , which was responsible for the conduct the Operation Greenhouse nuclear tests in the Pacific . In 1951 became Chief of the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project , but was forced to retire after he suffered a heart attack in 1953 . He subsequently served as Chairman of the Military Liaison Committee from 2 August 1954 to 14 July 1961 .

= = Early life = =

Herbert Bernard Loper was born in Norcatur , Kansas on 22 October 1896 , the son of Gilford (Gilbert) Lafayette Loper and Hulda Belle Scott . He graduated from Washburn College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1916 .

Loper was appointed to the United States Military Academy at West Point from Nebraska and entered on 14 June 1917 . However , due to World War I , the course was truncated and his class was graduated early on 1 November 1918 . He was ranked sixth in the class , two places behind Alfred Gruenther , and was commissioned as a second lieutenant .

After the Armistice with Germany ended the fighting in November 1918 , it was decided to have the 1918 class complete their studies . Loper therefore remained at West Point as a student officer until 11 June 1919 , when he again graduated , and was assigned to the US Army Corps of Engineers , as was normal for highly placed graduates . At this time , officers who had not served overseas were sent to Europe to tour the battlefields , and Loper visited battlefields in France , Belgium and Italy , as well as the Army of Occupation in Germany .

= = Between the wars = =

Loper returned to the United States in September and was initially posted to Camp A.A. Humphreys , Virginia . He was promoted to first lieutenant on 16 October 1919 . In October , he was sent to 8th Engineers at Fort Bliss , Texas . He was stationed at Camp Travis , Texas until June 1920 , when he commenced studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology , from which he graduated in August 1921 , with a Bachelor of Science degree in engineering .

Loper then became Military Assistant to the District Engineer at Jacksonville , Florida . He reverted to the rank of second lieutenant on 15 December 1922 , a common enough occurrence in the wake of the demobilization after World War I , but was again promoted to the rank of first lieutenant on 22 April 1923 . He married Eleanor Cameron Opie in 1922 .

In October 1923 , Loper was posted to the 11th Engineers in the Panama Canal Zone . He returned to the United States in December 1926 and was with the Engineer Reproduction Plant at the Army War College until 31 August 1929 . He then went back to Camp A. A. Humphreys , first as a student , and then , 1 September 1930 , as an instructor . In December 1933 , he became Assistant to the District Engineer at Omaha , Nebraska , where he was promoted to captain on 25 May 1935 . In February 1938 , he was posted to the 6th Engineers at Fort Lawton , Washington .

= = World War II = =

Loper attended the United States Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth , Kansas from August 1939 to February 1940 . On graduation , he was posted to the 7th Engineer Battalion at Fort McClellan , Alabama . He was Assistant Chief of Staff , G @-@ 3 , and then Assistant Chief of Staff , G @-@ 4 , of the 5th Infantry Division . In June 1940 , he became Assistant Chief of the Intelligence Division at the Office of the Chief of Engineers in Washington , DC , and then chief . Here , he was promoted to major on 1 July 1940 , lieutenant colonel on 18 September 1941 , and colonel on 8 June 1942 . In May 1942 , he negotiated the Loper @-@ Hotline Agreement , under which responsibility for military mapping and survey of the globe was divided between the United States and the United Kingdom . The agreement also specified technical features such as grids , scales and formats , so Allied servicemen everywhere would have common maps . For his services in this post , he was awarded the Army Distinguished Service Medal on 28 May 1944 .

On 28 May 1944 , Loper was appointed Chief Engineer of US Army Forces , Pacific Ocean Areas (USAFPOA) , on the specific request of the commander of USAFPOA , Lieutenant General Robert C. Richardson , Jr . Loper immediately became involved in planning for the Mariana and Palau Islands campaign . He discovered that the US Navy and Marine Corps did not have adequate map making units , so the task had to be undertaken by the Army . The 64th Topographic Battalion was assigned to the task of mapping the Caroline Islands and Palau . However , until B @-@ 29 photographic aircraft could be based in the Mariana Islands , much of the aerial survey had to be carried out by aircraft carrier @-@ based naval aircraft . Later Loper , who was promoted to brigadier general on 11 November 1944 , was involved in gathering engineer intelligence for the Battle of Iwo Jima , the Okinawa campaign , and Operation Olympic . When USAFPOA was merged with General of the Army Douglas MacArthur 's Southwest Pacific Area in 1945 , Loper became Chief of Engineer Intelligence under Major General Hugh J. Casey . After the fighting ended , Loper became Deputy Engineer of United States Far East Command during the Occupation of Japan . For his services in the Pacific , he was awarded the Legion of Merit on 22 September 1945 . He was awarded a second Legion of Merit for his services during the Occupation of Japan on 11 September 1948 .

= = Cold War = =

Loper returned to the United States in October 1948 , to become Chief of the Joint Photo and Survey Section of the Joint Chiefs of Staff 's Joint Intelligence Group . On 1 November 1949 , he was appointed as an Army member of the Military Liaison Committee of the United States Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) . Following the revelation of the espionage activities of Klaus Fuchs in 1950 , Loper and the Chief of the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project , Major General Kenneth D. Nichols , were asked to write a report on the impact of Klaus ' activities . Their pessimistic report pessimistically concluded that Soviet Union 's nuclear stockpile and production capacity could well be " equal or actually superior to our own , both as to yields and numbers . " They added that the Soviets might develop , or had already developed , thermonuclear weapon . The Loper Memorandum , as it became known , was influential in persuading the Joint Chiefs , the Secretary of Defense , and ultimately the President to authorize a crash program to develop thermonuclear weapons .

In 1951 , Loper was Deputy Commander of Joint Task Force 3 , which was responsible for the conduct the Operation Greenhouse nuclear tests in the Pacific . In 1951 , he succeeded Nichols as

Chief of the Armed Forces Special Weapons Project . Nichols considered that Loper was " a very capable engineer , easygoing but firm , and well liked by his associates . " However , his term in the post was cut short in 1953 when he suffered a heart attack , and he was ultimately forced to retire from the Army in 1955 . However , he served as Chairman of the Military Liaison Committee from 2 August 1954 to 14 July 1961 . He was also a consultant to the AEC and the Secretary of Defense .

= = Later life = =

In the early 1960s , Loper worked for Washington Associates , a Washington , DC , consulting firm . He had lived in Bozeman , Maryland , for 28 years . His wife died in 1979 , and he entered a nursing home in Palm Bay , Florida September 1988 , and died there of cardiac arrest on 25 August 1989 . He was survived by his two sons , Herbert Bernard Loper II and Thomas C. Loper , a retired Army colonel .

= = Decorations = =

Legion of Merit for services as Chief , Military Intelligence Division , Office of the Chief of Engineers .
Distinguished Service Medal for services as Chief , Pacific Ocean Areas
Legion of Merit (Oak Leaf Cluster) for services as Chief , Engineer Division , Office of the Chief of Engineers , General Headquarters , United States Armed Forces , Pacific .
Honorary Commander of the Order of the British Empire for service as Chief , Military Intelligence Division , Office of the Chief of Engineers .
Campaign Star : Western Pacific Campaign
Campaign Star : Southern Philippine Campaign