

# DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE CIVIL AFFAIRS REGIMENT



**COLONEL CHARLES  
R. MUNSKÉ**

Inducted 04 May 2018



Colonel Charles R. Munske was born in New York, New York, on July 12, 1897. He enlisted on Dec. 14, 1914, with the 13th Coast Defense Command, New York National Guard, and was a veteran of World War I, World War II, and Korea. In 1917, he deployed to France with the 70th Artillery, Coast Artillery Corps, but did not see combat. His first exposure to Civil Affairs/military government activities was serving as a German interpreter for the post-war Engineer Operations Division of War Damages in the Allied Countries' section of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace in Paris. This section supported the Treaty of Versailles negotiations by assessing reparations. He was commissioned on June 7, 1920, as a second lieutenant in the New York National Guard.

He was called to active duty during World War II, serving in Coast Artillery units on the East Coast until 1944. Looking to get overseas, he volunteered for Military Government. From Nov. 3 to Dec. 16, 1944, he attended the School of Military Government at the University of Virginia. Then, from Dec. 17, 1944 to June 30, 1945, he received additional Military Government training at Harvard University before going to the Civil Affairs Staging Area at The Presidio, California, in preparation for deployment to the Far East.

He served on occupation duty in Japan for several tours, first with the G-5 of the 98th Infantry Division and later as Chief of the I Corps Military Government Section. After attending the School of Government of Occupied Areas at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, Lt. Col. Munske returned to Japan to head the Military Government Team for the Prefecture of Fukuoka. After a last tour in Japan as the Executive Officer and Deputy Commander for the Hokkaido Military Government District, he returned to the U.S. and was stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. There, Lt. Col. Munske served as commander of the 28th Military Government Company and in the 95th Military Government Group.

He was then called to serve in the Korean War. His first posting was in the United Nations Public Health and Welfare Detachment, to head the Pyongan Namdo (P'yongyang) Civil Assistance Team. He served as the "Mayor of P'yongyang" during the 37-day occupation of the Communist capital, the only one ever held by allied powers. Col. Munske's team resumed trash collection, established a fire brigade, paid city workers, immunized thousands, reestablished the police force, organized a healthcare system, set up insecticidal dusting stations, repaired two power plants, fixed the streetcar and telephone systems, and began reconstructing the key railroad bridge across the Taedong River. By December 1950, advancing Communist forces left Col. Munske with no choice but to destroy what his team had recently rebuilt and join the retreat. After helping to rebuild the severely damaged cities of Seoul and Inchon, he served as the deputy commander of the UN's Civil Assistance Command, Korea, before returning to the U.S. in 1952 for one last CA assignment.

Col. Munske retired on Feb. 28, 1958, with 20 years of active service while serving nearly 43 years in the military. He passed away on Nov. 14, 1985, at the age of 88 and is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.