GENERAL ORDERS

No. 26

HEADQUARTERS
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, DC, *19 December 1975*

The death of GENERAL EARLE GILMORE WHEELER, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Chief of Staff, United States Army, which occurred on 18 December 1975, at Frederick, Maryland is announced with deep regret.

GENERAL WHEELER was born on 13 January 1908 in Washington, DC. He served in the District of Columbia National Guard from August 1924 until July 1928 when he entered the United States Military Academy. Upon graduation on 10 June 1932, he was commissioned a second lieutenant of Infantry and advanced through all the grades to general on 1 March 1962. From July 1932 until August 1936, he was assigned to the 29th Infantry, Fort Benning, Georgia. He attended the Infantry School, completing the Regular Course in June 1937 and after graduation was assigned to and joined the 15th Infantry in Tientsin, China.

GENERAL WHEELER was a mathematics instructor at the United States Military Academy from July 1940 until June 1941. He then served as an Aide-de-Camp to the Commanding General, 36th Infantry Division, Fort Sam Houston and Camp Bowie, Texas, until December 1941. He graduated from the Command and General Staff School, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in February 1942 and from April until August of that year commanded the 2d Battalion, 141st Infantry, 36th Infantry Division, Camp Blanding, Florida. He held the position of Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations, 99th Infantry Division, Camp Van Dorn, Mississippi, from October 1942 until March 1943. In May 1943, he was assigned as Chief of Staff of the 63d Infantry Division at Camp Van Dorn. He deployed with the division to the European theater of operations in December 1944 and participated in the Rhineland and Central Europe campaigns. GENERAL WHEELER returned to the United States in October 1945 and was assigned to the Artillery School, Fort Sill, Oklahoma, as an instructor in combined arms.

In May 1946, GENERAL WHEELER embarked for Paris, France, on an assignment with the Western Base Section, European Command, where he performed duties as Assistant Chief of Staff for Supply (G4); Acting Chief of Staff; and then as Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations. He subsequently served in Heidelberg and Stuttgart, Germany, as Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations, Headquarters, United States Constabulary, until June 1949.

He entered the National War College, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, DC, in August 1949 and graduated in June 1950. He became a member of the Joint Intelligence Group in the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Department of Defense, in July 1950 and served until October 1951.

General Wheeler was named Commander of the 351st Infantry in Trieste, Italy, in November 1951, a position he held until November 1952. He was assigned to Allied Forces Southern Europe, Naples, Italy, serving as Readiness Officer and later as Assistant Chief of Staff, Plans and Operations, until September 1955. Upon return to the United States, he was appointed Director of Plans, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, on the Army staff in Washington, DC. In June 1957 he assumed the post of Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, a position which he held until September 1958. During the period 30 October 1958 until March 1960, General Wheeler was assigned as Commanding General 2d Armored Division, and also served as Commanding General, III Corps, from March 1959 to March 1960. He was named Director of the Joint Staff, Department of Defense, in April 1960, and remained there until February 1962. He was nominated for four-star rank and assigned as Deputy Commander in Chief, United States European Command, on 1 March 1962, serving in this capacity until September 1962. General Wheeler was appointed as Chief of Staff, United States Army, on 1 October 1962, serving until 3 July 1964, when he became Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. He retired on 3 July 1970, after 6 years of service as the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

For his exceptionally meritorious and distinguished service, General Wheeler was awarded the Defense Distinguished Service Medal; the Army Distinguished Service Medal with Two Oak Leaf Clusters; the Navy Distinguished Service Medal; and the Air Force Distinguished Service Medal; Bronze Star Medal with Oak Leaf Clusters; Joint Service Commendation Medal; Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster; the Legion of Merit; American Campaign Medal; European-African-Middle-Eastern Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; Army of Occupation Medal (Germany); and the National Defense Service Medal. He also received the following foreign decorations: Ecuador—Order of Abdon Calderon, First Class; Finland—Order of White Rose; France—Legion of Honor, Degrees of Officer and Commander, and Croix de Guerre with Palm, degree of Chevalier; Germany—Great Cross for Distinguished Service; Korea—Order of Service Merit First Class; Mexico—Military Merit, First Class; Philippine—Legion of Honor in the Degree of Commander; Sweden—the Knighthood, Grand Cross of the Royal Order of the Sword; Thailand—Most Exalted Order of the White Elephant.

In the performance of his duties at the highest levels of responsibility, General Wheeler displayed outstanding judgment, great energy, and an ability of high order which proved to be invaluable to the United States. With his passing, the country has lost a prominent citizen and the Army a very distinguished leader.

As a mark of respect to the memory of General Wheeler, the National Flag will be displayed at half-staff on all installations under control of the Department of the Army from day of death, 18 December 1975 until retreat on day of burial, 22 December 1975.

The Commanding General, Military District of Washington, will provide appropriate honors.

By Order of the Secretary of the Army:

FRED C. WEYAND
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

Official:

PAUL T. SMITH
Major General, United States Army
The Adjutant General

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