

Dempsey promoted to four-star general

Carroll Kim, TRADOC News Service

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FORT MONROE, Va. (Dec. 8, 2008)—Lt. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey was promoted to the rank of general today on Fort Monroe.

Robert M. Gates, secretary of defense, delivered opening remarks at the historic Chamberlain hotel to crowd of more than 200 military, civilians and family members.

“Marty is a Soldier’s Soldier,” said Gates. “He’s happiest on the field with mud on his boots.”

Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr., host for the ceremony, read from Dempsey’s entry in the West Point yearbook to describe his time working with him. “Dempsey’s athletic prowess, keen wit, and diplomatic approach are unmatched,” Casey read. “When you read some of the lines from the yearbook, you can see that the characteristics that build the Soldier are well-defined even in his last year at West Point.”

Dempsey’s family, to include wife Deanie, daughter Megan, son Chris, an Army captain, and his mother, helped to pin the fourth star on the 34-year Army officer.

Dempsey most recently served as the deputy commanding general of U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla. During the period from March to October 2008, he served as CENTCOM’s acting commander. Prior to CENTCOM, Dempsey served as Commander, Multi-National Security Transition Command – Iraq, and was responsible for training and equipping the Iraqi security forces.

Dempsey attributed his career accomplishments to a network of leaders, peers, and subordinates who have supported him throughout the years. He relayed a story of a Soldier who had served in his command when he commanded the 1st Armored Division in Iraq who had distinguished himself in combat.

“I told this young man that what he did was very heroic,” said Dempsey. “And he replied, ‘I don’t think so, but I do walk with heroes everyday.’”

Dempsey recognized a number of supporters in the audience, to include his wife and family, who inspired him throughout his vast Army career.

Dempsey received his commission as an armor officer upon his 1974 graduation from West Point. Other previous assignments included operations officer and executive officer for 3rd Brigade, 3rd Armored Division, during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm; chief of the Armor Branch at U.S. Total Army Personnel Command; assistant deputy director for Politico-Military Affairs Europe and Africa J5; and special assistant to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Dempsey also deployed for 14 months to Iraq as commander of the 1st Armored Division and deployed again as commander of the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq from 2005 to 2007.

“The Army has answered the call, and it’s the dedication, the determination, and the willingness to sacrifice that the young men and women meet everyday in the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan that has to inspire us,” said Dempsey.

“This causes me to want to be part of the effort to make them a better, more effective fighting force. They’re unbelievable now, but we need to re-double our efforts to keep that edge and we must triple our efforts to make their lives more predictable. I’m extraordinarily excited to be a part of TRADOC and to do our best to make that all possible.”

Dempsey holds three masters degrees: in English from Duke University Durham, N.C.; in Military Art and Science from the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.; and in National Security and Strategic Studies from the National Defense University, Fort McNair, D.C. He also taught English at West Point, advancing to assistant professor before attending CGSC.

Dempsey has earned several awards and decorations through his career, including the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Bronze Star with “V” Device, the Meritorious Service Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Combat Action Badge, Parachutist Badge and Joint Chiefs of Staff Identification Badge.