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AFA's Mission

Our mission is to promote a dominant United States Air Force and a strong national defense and to honor airmen and our Air Force heritage. To accomplish this, we:

Educate the public on the critical need for unmatched aerospace power and a technically superior workforce to ensure US national security.

Advocate for aerospace power and STEM education.

Support the Total Air Force family and promote aerospace education.

Setting It Straight

I have, for the past 15 years, attempted to correct misunderstanding of the targeting philosophy my staff and I advocated during Operation Allied Force. I have focused that effort on professional forums and in classrooms, combined, joint, and Air Force. I have intentionally avoided responding to the myriad of well-intentioned but misinformed articles appearing in this and other publications. The article that appeared in the April edition of *Air Force Magazine* ["*Watershed Air War*," April, p. 58] has, however, prompted me to make an attempt to set the record straight. My staff and I believed from the very beginning of Operation Allied Force that the desired end state could best be achieved by targeting the strategic center of gravity. Our analysis was that Milosevic and the men and women who supported him constituted that strategic center of gravity. We did not wish to "target Belgrade" because "it would have been much easier to hit large fixed visible targets." We wished to strike a target set centered in and around Belgrade because we believed that affecting those targets would bring pressure to bear on Milosevic to a much greater degree than would striking tanks and armored vehicles in Kosovo. Military operations are conducted in order to have the desired effect on the adversary. The desired effect was to stop the killing in Kosovo, bring Milosevic to the table, and force him to accept NATO terms. I believed then and continue to believe now that airpower is most effective if applied against the strategic center of gravity from the beginning of a conflict. We had a purpose to our effort and it had nothing to do with the "ease" of attacking the targets. In fact, the risk involved in striking at the strategic center of gravity was much greater than the risk involved in striking tanks in Kosovo.

Just a couple of more corrections and I will allow my computer keys to cool. I served as the NATO CFACC because of my position as the Commander of Allied Air Forces Southern Europe, not because I happened to command 16th Air Force. The Air Force chest beating article fails to mention the joint contributions made by the aircrews of the *Teddy Roosevelt* Battle

Group and USMC F-18 crews stationed in Hungary. I was honored to be trusted by the heroic airmen of 16 NATO nations to serve as their CFACC. Each contributing NATO nation gave us their best and we did our best to employ those contributions in a tactically sound approach to achieve the desired strategic end state. Finally, the author observes that "in fact, there were no NATO fatalities." That observation tragically overlooks the death of two US Army Apache helicopter crewmen who died in a mission rehearsal in the mountains of Albania. Commanding the NATO air effort in Operation Allied Force was the highlight of my career and I will be forever thankful to the thousands of men and women from the NATO contributing nations who placed their trust in me.

Lt. Gen. Michael C. Short,
USAF (Ret.)
Suffolk, Va.

I Just Can't Even. Floppy Disks?

I have for years felt that the Air Force leadership had placed the continuous update and modernization of our strategic offensive forces on the back burner. But, I was awestruck by the picture on p. 44 of the April 2015 edition of *Air Force Magazine* ["*Nuclear Force Improvement*," p. 40]. A lieutenant loading strategic equipment software via a 5 1/4-inch floppy disk. Our strategic forces aren't just outdated, they are indeed, ancient. This one picture said a million words. Our land-based missile systems are based on early 1980s computer technology. The Air Force leaders who testify before Congress during budget hearings should show this picture and ask the members

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of Congress just how “safe” they feel with a major arm of strategic forces still using the very first generation of so-called modern computer age when Z-100 computers were first introduced. I have recently read a couple of articles of the current CNO that leads me to believe our strategic defensive submarines may be in a similar state. I hope Congress understands the vast need to modernize the strategic forces—and that they will provide the necessary additional funds to expeditiously accomplish that modernization.

Lt. Col. John Bredfeldt,
USAF (Ret.)
Dawsonville, Ga.

Talk about legacy systems! I was astonished to see the state-of-the-art in strategic missile operations today. When I was in SAC in the 1980s, we used 5 1/4-inch floppy disks in our new state-of-the-art computers. Apparently these are still the front line. I think I have an old box of unused floppies around somewhere in case USAF needs them. The 5 1/4” has been obsolete since the advent of Windows 95, two decades ago. Certainly Congress couldn’t procure them as they are long out of production! Maybe Amazon can help.

Lt. Col. A. J. Parmet,
USAF (Ret.)
Kansas City, Mo.

No Strategic Change

A myth has grown up that the Doolittle Raid resulted in the Midway Campaign. Robert B. Kane’s “The Raiders at Eglin” [April, p. 70] repeats this historical inaccuracy.

In actuality, the Japanese Imperial Headquarters issued the Midway-Aleutian Directive April 16, 1942, for the occupation of the Aleutians and Midway; the establishment of a defensive line from the Aleutians to Samoa, Fiji, and New Caledonia; and the destruction of the US Pacific Fleet. It came two days before the launch of the Doolittle Raid.

The Japanese had become overconfident following a six-month string of victories, but also realized they did not have the resources to fight a protracted war. By expanding their territory, occupying US outpost, and destroying the US Pacific Fleet, they hoped negotiate a treaty similar to the Portsmouth Treaty ending the Russo-Japanese War, where they confronted similar conditions.

The Japanese Research Division of the History Section, US Army Forces Far East, prepared Japanese Monograph No. 88, “Aleutian Naval Operations March 1942-February 1943,” not dated. It provided a detail account of the planning for the Aleutian-Midway operation.

The US Army Forces in the Far East under General MacArthur had a very large

history section manned by American and Japanese historians and scholars. They sought to document the Japanese side of the war through research of documents that had not been destroyed and oral history interviews with the principals.

Military Analysis Division, United States Strategic Bombing Survey (Pacific) Japanese Airpower, July 1946, also addressed the origins of the Aleutian-Midway operations. The Greenwood Press republished the strategic bombing survey in 1969. Chapter VI, “The Aleutian Campaign,” by Capt. James S. Russell, USN, provides details on the Aleutian Campaign Kurile operations and the planning that went into it.

The Strategic Bombing Survey focused on the effect of American air and naval

bombardments and the Japanese response. It also involved record searches and interviews.

Walter Lord, in his book *Incredible Victory*, Harper, New York, 1967, describes the planning that went into the Aleutian-Midway operations as does Hiroyuki Agawa, *The Reluctant Admiral, Yamamoto and the Imperial Navy*, Kodansha International, New York, 1979.

Despite all the overwhelming historical evidence, many still cling to the myth that the Doolittle Raid caused Midway. While it accomplished much, it did not change the Japanese strategy in the Pacific.

John Haile Cloe
Anchorage, Alaska
Melbourne, Fla.

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The World’s Sixth Sense



Hey, What About Our Heyday?

I really enjoyed the article "SAC's Heyday" [April, p. 50]. However, there is one thing missing: the FB-111A bomber. For 20 years the 509th BMW (M) and the 380th BMW (M) did their part in the mission of SAC with no mention in this article. Is it because year after year these two wings won Bomb Comp, over and over again until the B-1 came on the scene and the B-52 avionics were upgraded? For a lot of us in SAC the word bomber meant FB-111A. For me, 509th BMW meant state-of-the-art as it does today in the B-2.

MSgt John H. Cressy Jr.,
USAF (Ret.)
Exeter, N.H.

I really enjoyed the photos from "SAC's Heyday" in the April 2015 issue, but I looked in vain for any of the North American B-45 Tornado. Granted it was a stopgap between the B-29 and the arrival of the B-47, but it nonetheless was a frontline bomber in the 1950s. It racked up a number of firsts. According to Boeing, who absorbed North American, the Tornado was the first production jet bomber to enter service with the USAF, and the first four-engine jet to fly in the United States. It was also the first four-jet-engine aircraft to drop an atomic bomb, and the first to be refueled in midair.



Given the important role the B-45 played in the Air Force's transition into the jet age, it deserves to be remembered.

Larry Roth
Ravena, N.Y.

■ For posterity, below are the B-45 and the FB-111 in glorious color.—THE EDITORS

Kudos on continuing to provide us with a great magazine. However, in the article on SAC, p. 57, picture No. 3, you state that the B-52 pictured was on its way to Vietnam in late 1964.

The first combat mission for the BUFF was launched from Andersen on June 18, 1965, not 1964. I remember the date very well, I was the deputy commander of that mission.

Richard Ionata
Battle Ground, Wash.

Just Make the Dang Thing

I am confused by this whole topic and the problems that this country faces because we don't want to buy Russian RD-180 rocket engines [*Action in Congress*, April, p. 11].

What has happened to this country and our past engineering and manufacturing excellence? What has happened to the companies that built the rocket engines for the Saturn rockets? If the

RD-180 is such a great engine and we can't design a better one then why don't we do what the Russians did during World War II. They took three stolen or appropriated B-29s and reverse engineered them and built the Tu-4. Has all of this country's manufacturing and engineering excellence been so overwhelmed by OSHA, EPA, Dept of Labor, government rules and regulations and lawyers that we can't reverse engineer a rocket engine?

In 1940, North American Aviation took 102 days to go from contract signing to a flying prototype of the P-51 Mustang. We put men on the moon and now we are being told that we can't manufacture a rocket engine.

I'm sure I will be told that I do not understand something, but it just seems to be a basic question. Why can't we just make an engine?

Tom Daugherty
Clay, New York

The Smoking Gun(ner)

Great (& rare) close-in-trail frontal shot of a B-26 Marauder on p.19 of *Air Force Magazine* [*"Flashback: Close Up," April*]. But one is supposed to know his reportorial beat, particularly if he's dealing with the often arcane detail of military subjects. (At least so I was told in my time as a UPI photog long ago). Up in that distinctive greenhouse the captioned 'nose gunner sneaking a smoke' is in fact the bombardier/nav. And that's most likely the radioman/FE between the pilots, looking in from his radio rack just aft of the cockpit.

My dad, then-Lt. Russ Deever, flew Marauders over Europe in 9th Air Force's famed "Bridgebusters," the 394th BG/586th BS, 1944-45. His B/N, Lt. Mel Ott, was also the crew's tallest guy, which made it so much more tricky to shoehorn himself in behind a Norden bombsight and the manually fired forward .50 cal. (And boy did they all have fun now and again conning some new replacement in the squadron into believing Mel was *that* Mel Ott, of NY Giants fame!)

Howard "Huey" Deever
Omaha, Neb.

Fishy Fishbed Numbers

Two statements regarding MiG-21 claims need correcting [*"Airpower Classic: MiG-21 Fishbed," April, p. 80*]: "In December 1972, [a MiG-21] scored first-ever air combat kill of a B-52 bomber, over Hanoi." There were 15 B-52s lost over NVN during Linebacker II in December; all were attributed to SAMs. According to historian Marshall Michel in "The 11 Days of Christmas," a MiG-21 pilot claimed a B-52 kill on 27 December 1972. "Post-war analysis indicates that the MiG-21 flown by [Maj. Pham] Tuan attacked Ivory cell ... but his two ATOLL missiles missed. ... Tuan broke off his attack as soon as he fired, so when he saw Cobalt 01 explode and catch fire after being hit by a SAM, Tuan quite reasonably thought his missiles had scored the kill." (p. 206). The second claim occurred on Dec. 28. "A MiG-21 flown by Vu Xuan Thieu pressed an attack [on] the B-52s, but before he was able to get close Thieu was shot down by two prowling F-4s. The North Vietnamese later claimed Thieu's MiG collided with the B-52 and both crashed, but no B-52s were lost that night." (p. 213).

The second erroneous statement was: "In December 1966, North Vietnamese [MiG-21] pilots downed 14 F-105s with no losses." There were five F-105 combat losses over North Vietnam in December 1966, only one of which was attributed to a MiG-21. On 14 December, Capt. Robert B. "Spade" Cooley from the 357 TFS flying as "Fosdick 03" in F-105D 60-0502 was hit by an ATOLL fired by a MiG-21D. He ejected and was rescued an hour later by "Jolly Green 36" piloted by Capt. James A. Hartwig. Interestingly, Cooley's rescue became part of an escape and evasion film called "Here There Are Tigers" that was shown to aircrews in the PACAF Jungle Survival School at Clark AB, Philippines.

Lt. Col. Wilfred H. Plunkett,
USAF (Ret.)
Albuquerque, N.M.

AETC Deserves That Star

The recent decision to increase the command rank from three to four stars in the Global Strike Command [*"Nuclear Force Improvements," April, p. 40*] and decrease the rank of Air Education and Training Command (AETC) from four to three stars doesn't make sense. The Air Force explanation is 1: Global Strike Command is a combat command and as such requires a four-star commander. 2: The command had a number of security and morale problems and a four-star commander is required to address those problems.

Fine, it's a given, Global Strike Command required a four-star commander. But does it make sense to take the star from AETC? The command is much larger in scope and responsibilities today than any time in its history. AETC is the second largest command in the Air Force and one of the largest in DOD, with nearly 70,000 personnel, 1,100 aircraft, and 25 bases and installations. The command has one of the most critical missions in the military—recruit, train, and educate people so they can operate and maintain the sophisticated weapons systems of this day.

My guess is that the Air Force is between a rock and a hard place, i.e., not enough four-star authorizations to go around. The Air Force is authorized 12 four-star generals. It's been that way for years. In order to increase the rank of the Global Strike Command, you must decrease the rank of one of the Air Force's 10 major commands. (Currently, three of the 10 are commanded by lieutenant generals.) You have seven to choose from. Five are combat or combat-related commands—you can't touch them. Two are noncombat commands—AETC and Air Force Materiel Command. You can't touch AFMC because a woman was recently assigned

there and all hell would break loose if you took that star away. There is no question that she and AFMC deserve the four-star rank. There is only one place to get the four-star—AETC.

So how do you get from under a rock and a hard place? Request the Senate Armed Services Committee to increase the number of four-star generals for the Air Force from 12 to 13. The request would probably fall on deaf ears for many reasons—too many generals, rank heavy, why so many generals when you are a third smaller than you were 15 years ago? The ratio of officers to enlisted personnel is too high, and on and on ad nauseum. It's worth a try!

The request must come from DOD. Global Strike Command (formerly Stra-

tegic Air Command) is in peacetime an Air Force command but in wartime comes under the operations control of a unified command (Strategic Command) and as such a rank change should be supported by DOD. In addition, the state of Texas has a very powerful member on the Senate Armed Services Committee (John Cornyn). It's not wise, politically, to lose a four-star rank in Texas. John Tower realized the implications in 1983 when an effort was made to decrease the command rank of Air Training Command.

My thoughts may be an oversimplification of the problem but I feel there must be a better way.

Gen. Andrew P. Iosue,
USAF (Ret.)
San Antonio

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