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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.

Seeing Red (Air)

As a longtime Active Duty Aggressor pilot and commander, I think it's important to provide some perspective and balance to the June article, "Enemies for Hire" [p. 42]. There is no denying that "contract Red Air," as currently provided by several companies, has its place in training our Blue forces to fight against modern and diverse threats. But the claim as stated in the subtitle, "Sometimes, the best 'Red Air' comes from the private sector," should be seen as just that—"Sometimes."

Cost is but only one of the assessment variables, and while fiscal constraints make that more of a dominant factor in today's Air Force, it is only fair to consider what the Air Force aggressor (comprising Active Duty, Guard, Reserve, and GS) force brings to the table and has for the last four decades.

First, Air Force Aggressors are threat experts with the mission to know, teach, and replicate the threat. The "replicate" portion of that mission statement is but one part of this important mission set. These pilots and controllers have clearances and attend venues and conferences that give them information not available to the general public or contractors. These Aggressors also travel the world to teach our warfighters about threats and make them smarter and more capable as a result of that knowledge and instruction.

Second, Air Force Aggressors bring currency of experience in operational Air Force units, including large-force employment. This recency of experience is paramount to ensuring the Aggressors not only know the threat, but know the Blue forces they are fighting against in order to provide the highest fidelity training possible.

Lastly, Air Force Aggressors take their threat knowledge and experience back to the operational Air Force after their Aggressor tour and are seen as the acknowledged experts in their Blue squadrons for threat knowledge, education, and replication. This is an invaluable asset for honing the edge of combat units.

While none of these are necessarily as quantifiable as "cost," they are important factors to consider in deciding the amount of "enemy for hire" versus Aggressors. They each have their place, but they are not entirely interchangeable. Unfortunately during tight budget times, the Aggressors have understandably been bill payers but regardless of size, they have always been the keepers of knowing, teaching, and replicating the threat, something we can't afford to lose as a nation.

Col. Paul Huffman,
USAF (Ret.)
Monument, Colo.

Mr. Boyne gives the air-to-air kill ratio in Vietnam as one-to-one. Difficult to believe when the heavily wing-loaded Thud, often in an unwieldy 16-ship box

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formation and heavily bomb laden, got 27.5 MiGs (one shared with a Double-Ugly) against 22 losses for a ratio of 1.25-to-one. And most believe Dave Waldrop got two, not one. Our Weasels got credit for two on one mission, but we believe they got three. Bob Bennett got one, but was Blue Sixteen with no film in his camera, so not confirmed. One unclaimed MiG was called out by Robin Olds, "Hey, anyone over here [near Bac Ninh], a MiG-17 just went down. Who got it?" A certain MiG-hungry colonel from the 355th, some 70 miles east, shouted out, "I got it! I got it!" Could the F-4s and others have done so poorly that the overall rate dropped to one-to-one?

Lt. Col. John F. Piowaty,
USAF (Ret.)
Titusville, Fla.

Not Made in Our Image

"This War Isn't Over" [*Editorial*, "July, p. 4]. Maybe a better statement should be, "When Will This War Ever Be Over?" The wars in both Iraq and Afghanistan seem to defy any logical conclusion. First, we supported Iraq in their war against Iran, and likewise we supported the Taliban in their efforts to expel the Russians from their homeland. Seemingly those efforts didn't work, as we invaded Iraq twice, first to expel them from Kuwait, followed by the second invasion to destroy the weapons of mass destruction as well as their support of al Qaeda both of which proved to be incorrect.

Then it was on to Afghanistan to now destroy the Taliban whom we knew had given support and sanctuary to al Qaeda and bin Laden in their preparation for 9/11. The United States has been in the Middle East in one form or another for over 30 years and as far as I can see we have had little or no success in the establishment of stable democratic nations.

While no one, especially the military members who have fought and sacrificed in both Iraq and Afghanistan, wants to see those efforts be for naught, just how long do we stay and how much do we spend in blood and treasure before we realize we cannot by force of arms make a nation in the image of ourselves?

A couple of events brought home very vividly to me why we must find some other solutions: A few years ago I was having breakfast at the new Hong Kong airport and at the next table was a crew from Air Vietnam. As I sat there and thought of all the lives lost, and the money spent in our efforts to win a civil war, it just broke my heart. And secondly, on May 13, Army Com-

mand Sgt. Maj. Martin Barreras died as a result of wounds from enemy fire in Afghanistan. This is the same man who aided in the rescue of POW Jessica Lynch in Iraq on April 1, 2003. How can we continue to ask the military to support a conflict with no discernible conclusion?

In our country there will continue to be disagreement of when to disengage in situations like Iraq and Afghanistan. The neo-cons would have us stay forever and would keep redefining what the criteria for leaving should be. And as to the concept that our presence "will help ensure peace for both nations," I would respectfully disagree. The internal problems in both Iraq and Afghanistan bear little or no resemblance to Germany, South Korea, or Kuwait. If our objective is to defeat terrorism I submit that "boots on the ground" in what are essentially civil wars is not the answer.

Lt. Col. Hugh D. Sims,
USAF (Ret.)
Fort Myers, Fla.

Response Vs. Prevention

It's time to look at methods designed to actively sift out and/or deter sexual predators from committing crimes against the men and women in our Air Force. The laser beam targeting on sexual assault prevention ("Breaking the Sexual Assault Stalemate," July, p. 34) has not slowed the rate of assaults. Why is this not surprising? After all the pressure put on leadership and funds invested to "fix it" the reports continue to mount. The focus is not significantly deterring predatory behavior and inspiring little confidence in others via the wingman concept. Instead, USAF's program seems to be more aligned with response than prevention. So what's the problem?

It goes beyond the uniform; American culture has become such a morass of moral relativism. The cultural battle for objective moral truth has taken on a very public dimension in each scandal. However, USAF leaders are not directly saying this. I think they should. Leadership is indirectly saying it with core values, bystander intervention, ethics, and sexual assault prevention training. I still recall a phrase from the recruitment pamphlets of my era that plainly stated what America sought from her pool of citizen volunteers: "You must be of high moral character." Why have we given up on searching out that quality in our recruits?

Until we can answer that I think it will be more money, manpower, and time spent on talking the issue to death and responding to victims, with no substantial progress in reducing the crime

rate. This is not helping. Leadership shouldn't just be waiting for victims to maybe come forward. They need to also be confronting the would-be predators. Predators are clearly not worried about committing their crimes, given the number. Pleading ignorance of the modus operandi of deviant sexual behavior, I can only suggest psychological profiling, which was mentioned and looks promising, as well as far greater penalties and punishments to send a message.

MSgt. Thomas Ruffing,
USAF (Ret.)
Bountiful, Utah

No A-10, Really?

Just how many persons are going to be killed or wounded because a less efficient aircraft is trying to do the job of the A-10 [*The A-10 and the Rescue Helicopter*, July, p. 28]?

Will the replacement be able to absorb the damage that the A-10 has proven it can absorb and still bring the pilot back?

Will the replacement have a re-engagement time equal to or less than the A-10?

C. J. Lingo
Henderson, Nev.

The A-10 was and is a great airplane. But what really makes it great are the people who maintain and operate it. I was involved with the program from the beginning. Close air support was our mission and we knew it. That's what we trained for. We didn't worry about any nuclear mission. We didn't worry about interdiction. We did just enough air-to-air to defend ourselves so we could get back to our real mission—close air support. Flexibility and responsiveness were ingrained in us. We loved it!

Multirole airplanes involve at least some compromise, but that can sometimes be overcome. Multirole crews, however, are a much greater compromise. For engaged ground forces, compromise is an uncomfortable thing.

We just don't know what the F-35 and its crews will be like. There are no F-35s ready for combat, and there won't be for several years. But our ground forces are engaged now. And even though we would like to disengage, the world seems even more dangerous and unpredictable than it did when this debate began.

Look at what the A-10 and its people have done since the Cold War ended. Do we want to be without that in the foreseeable future?

Col. John D. Smith,
USAF (Ret.)
Rose Hill, Kan.

Brilliance and Respect

I may have been the first officer to meet General Jones upon his arrival at 2nd Air Force headquarters [*“David C. Jones,” August, p. 46*]. It was a Saturday in late 1968, I was completing some routine paperwork. The general appeared in civilian clothes and introduced himself as “General Dave Jones,” the new commander. I immediately snapped to. He asked me a few questions about what I was doing. I told him my usual routine was to come in early Saturdays to ensure I had a clean slate for Mondays. He thanked me as he left and continued his walk around the headquarters. A golf tournament that day between the operations and maintenance directorates all but emptied the entire headquarters except for the command post.

The following Monday, General Jones held his first staff meeting. It did not go well. First the initial briefer posted golf scores from the DCO and DCM golf tournament. The general politely asked that there be no more items that did not relate to the 2nd Air Force mission. That directive came through loud and clear and [he] never again wasted his valuable time on frivolous items. The next briefer probably set the tone and established for everyone’s edification the unique and powerful memory and brilliance of the general. When the briefer paraded a matrix of performance statistics across the screen, the general stopped the briefing and asked why his numbers differed from those on display in his work area. What General Jones had done is retain every number and all the statistics of all directorates just by a casual walk around the headquarters. He had placed a premium on accuracy but also proved he would never be misled by faulty statistics. I was more than impressed by how quickly he was able to enter every domain and element of his new assignment.

Not long afterward, we had a SAC IG inspection. My little corner of the world involved the accurate management and control of all highly classified documents that arrived at the headquarters. For years it had been a career buster for several officers. My team of experts were knowledgeable and performed at a high level. Unfortunately, they lacked one crucial element—a good quality control process. We worked as a team to smooth out all the glitches and, to their credit, we had a perfect inspection—as reported by the inspector, even better than the program at SAC headquarters and, perhaps, even Air Force headquarters.

Not long after the inspection, I was summoned to General Jones’ office. Of course I was nervous, but reported to the general that afternoon. He was quick to point out the results of my IG inspection, but then wanted to know how people treated me as I was the only black officer assigned to his headquarters. I laid it all out, from lack of black products in the BXs and how during my numerous staff visits, black airmen and NCOs would approach me with many issues they had. I also had my own but conveyed them very briefly.

General Jones formed a Special Projects Team (SPO) composed of nine permanent members. I was so fortunate to be selected as one of the nine. We made no-notice visits to each of the 23 bases assigned to his headquarters. His direction was to immediately report to him any serious issues, even if we had to write it on an old envelope—which I did on several occasions. With his new SPO team, he sent a clear message that lax performance would not work well in his command.

Beyond these visits, I also had numerous special tasks the General assigned to me, which included sifting through huge volumes of message traffic. I often would send him stacks of messages—sometimes 200 pages or more. It only took him minutes to quickly read, retain, and return them to me.

He introduced two important concepts that I will never forget. One involved general inspection methodology, which dwelt mainly on compliance that mandated following policies. Most Air Force personnel would follow the mandates even though they intrinsically did not solve the basic issue. By introducing the management inspection policy, we began to require more thorough treatment of issues by following problems down to their root cause. This led to many changes, some even to SAC and Air Force policies. The next concept he required was cross fertilization of ideas between personnel, bases, and wings to capture and implement their best ideas across a wide spectrum.

General Jones planted the seeds of many Air Force programs now taken for granted, such as social actions and race relations training, not to mention his attention to mission. As I departed 2nd Air Force for a highly prized and special assignment, I will never forget when he told me if I encountered problems feel free to call him. I answered if I should by chance encounter issues, the problems would not be mine but the Air Force’s issues. During the rest

of my Air Force career, I only called him once. I commanded some 10 or so Air Force training programs. One was the first sergeants training class. Commands at the time were sending the worst of the worst to attend the course. My staff of instructors came to me to show a visible demonstration of their problems. It happened to be the drill and ceremonies module. It was awful. Some could not see, others could not hear, a few limped to the right, and others limped to the left. These anomalies caused collisions, a few falling down or marching the wrong way. Making it worse, crowds formed to witness the event.

At the time General Jones was Air Force Chief of Staff. I called his office, identified myself, and spoke to his secretary about a major issue unfolding in the first sergeants training program, not forgetting these men and women would be the mentors for thousands of young airmen throughout the Air Force. She said either she or the general would get back to me. Later that day, his secretary called and mentioned General Jones had rearranged his schedule to visit the course two weeks hence. He came, receiving one of the best, most succinct briefings I have ever heard. It was in my opinion the seed that eventually led to promoting the first sergeants class to what is now a prestigious academy, now at Air University. It also demonstrated the high level of integrity General Jones always had and his concern for both the Air Force mission and the troops.

I was very saddened to hear of his loss. He was perhaps my greatest inspiration and set the bar for what leadership is all about. His world-class brilliance and steel-trap mind were only matched by his sense of mission and respect for people under his command.

Col. Ramon C. Noches,
USAF (Ret.)
Austin, Texas

Lessons Not Learned

In your article “Air Base Defense,” from July [*p. 48*], you discuss in vague terms the Air Force’s efforts to deal with the evolving air base defense problem. While there are many highly capable defenders who contribute to this mission, the specific issues you highlight with regard to contingency deployments to multiple austere locations bring to mind one specific organization, the 820th Base Defense Group.

The Air Force “learned” these lessons during the early years of the

Vietnam conflict when their focus on internal security and a focus on covert threats of sabotage were found to be ineffective against the insurgents' use of well-planned and organized assaults utilizing small raiding parties supported by mortar and sometimes artillery support. By 1966, USAF realized it needed a better-trained and refocused defender force, leading to the development of the combat security police.

Trained at the US Army's Ranger School at Fort Benning [Ga.] and home stationed at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, Operation Safeside deployed to Phu Cat Air Base in the central highlands of Vietnam as the 1041st USAF SPS (Test). Their success spawned an urgent request from headquarters, 7th Air Force, for more combat security units in theater and the unit was designated the 82nd Combat Security Police Wing on March 8, 1968.

Unfortunately, while the lessons learned by the CSP continued to influence the training and evolution of security forces throughout the Air Force, the CSP program itself (along with its unique training focus) was disbanded after the Vietnam War. Recognizing the need for a dedicated unit for air base ground defense more specifically suited for the expeditionary mission of USAF in the 1990s, Brig. Gen. Richard Coleman sought to re-establish the CSP program. His efforts would receive an unfortunate boost when a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device destroyed the Air Force barracks at Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia.

On March 17, 1997, the 820th Security Forces Group stood up. With a focus on expeditionary base defense, the SFG inherited the unique combat training and capabilities of the original CSP. Since renamed the 820th Base Defense Group and composed of the 822nd, 823rd, and 824th base defense squadrons and enabled by the 820th Combat Operations Squadron, the 820th BDG continues to maintain a short-notice, airborne, airmobile, and air-land deployment capability in order to bring aggressive integrated base defense specialists to austere locations around the world.

Although the 820th BDG was recently recognized in an episode on the National Geographic Channel for its "outside the wire" missions, this is in fact a capability shared by all security forces units. Likewise, the contingency response groups, which provide a host of air base functions for immediate response to crisis situations, includes a rapidly deployable

security element as well. The 820th BDG simply has the unique designation of being fully integrated (including 22nd Air Force specialty codes) and prepared to provide the command and control of group-sized security forces operations on a short-notice tether. By focusing solely on this mission, with no in-garrison requirements, the 820th BDG is able to maintain a razor-honed capability in response to USAF-deployed security needs.

Lt. Col. Stephen Price
Valdosta, Ga.

Flight Suits

I realize it's been a while since I was on Active Duty, but when exactly did a flight suit become daily wear? I know pilots are proud of their duty assignment, but everybody wearing flight suits as a duty uniform away from the flight line just seems tacky to me. The impetus for my letter was the photograph on p. 58 [*"China Flies"*] of the July 2014 magazine, where it shows the Chief of Staff of USAF sitting next to the head of China's Air Force, sitting there in his green bag while the Chinese officer is in a uniform. Quite frankly, General Welsh looks like a bum in comparison to his counterpart. I would feel considerably underdressed if it were me in the bag, and if I were General Li, I'd feel insulted that General Welsh thought it was appropriate to wear such a "uniform" on a formal visit. I doubt that General Welsh just stepped out of his cockpit prior to the meeting. While I have no doubt that the flight suit might be more comfortable, General Welsh is the representative of the United States and should look the part, not like the lowliest loadmaster of a C-17 (not that I'm slamming the loadmaster).

James Cheney
Flagstaff, Ariz.

Use It or Lose It

Kudos to John Correll for his excellent summary of the causes and consequences of World War I [*"Short Fuze to the Great War," July, p. 22*].

The Schlieffen Plan, and specifically its causal effect on The Great War, remains controversial a century later. As Correll notes, this elaborate stratagem addressed Germany's perceived two-front threat from Russia and France and the reality that it could not defeat both simultaneously. Designed around a closely choreographed movement schedule to quickly deploy forces by rail either east or west, this plan and ones of similar philosophy from the

other European powers is credited by historian A. J. P. Taylor in his 1969 book, *War By Timetable*, as having forced the European powers into a mobilization race. Once initiated, the rush to mobilize caused the situation to get ahead of diplomatic efforts to defuse the crisis. The result was the catastrophe of The Great War.

For Germany, the Schlieffen Plan was a "use it or lose it" situation. If it delayed mobilizing during a crisis and its two-front rivals beat it to wartime footing, there would be no hope of prevailing. If, on the other hand, Germany chose to initiate mobilization ahead of its rivals, it had few options other than going to war if it ever hoped to achieve its grand geopolitical objectives. It chose the latter course.

Few historians of the 20th century note this "use it or lose it" link between the Schlieffen Plan and Cold War nuclear war plans—America's Single Integrated Operational Plan (SIOP) and its Soviet counterpart. Despite our best survivability and redundancy initiatives at the height of the Cold War, nuclear weapons became a "use it or lose it" proposition. Discussions of the efficacy of launch on warning and pre-emptive policy mark the apogee (or nadir, depending on your perspective) of MAD—Mutually Assured Destruction. It was an "all or nothing" game. We were lucky in October 1962. With a different roll of the dice it could have been a repeat of August 1914, only orders of magnitude more deadly.

There still are important lessons in crisis management to be gleaned from a century ago, as well as 1962, that may be useful in our future. Sadly, while we may record the lessons of war, they are not always lessons remembered.

Brig. Gen. Thomas D. Pilsch,
USAF (Ret.)
Atlanta

Hail to the Chiefs

Before receiving my commission, a relative, who retired as an O-6, told me to listen and learn from my Chief [*"The New NCO Way," June, p. 6*]. He was right; and I followed that advice from O-1 to O-6.

In my civilian career I hired CMSgt. Bob Gaylor, spelled out the mission, and left him alone. He never failed.

I found this high standard to be held by all chiefs, especially during my military career.

When I retired they made me an honorary chief. I still have the placard and hat (both prized possessions).

Col. Gerald Moore,
USAF (Ret.)
Fort Walton Beach, Fla.