



Air Force Association

1501 Lee Highway • Arlington, VA 22209-1198

Telephone: (703) 247-5800

Toll-free: (800) 727-3337

If you know your party's extension enter it or:

Press 1 to enter their last name.

Press 2 for Membership.

Press 3 for the Air Force Memorial Foundation

Or, stay on the line for the operator

Fax: (703) 247-5853

Internet: <http://www.afa.org/>

Email Addresses

Events..... events@afa.org

Field Services..... field@afa.org

Government Relations..... grl@afa.org

Industry Relations..... irl@afa.org

Insurance..... afa@marshpm.com

Member Benefits..... membership@afa.org

Membership..... membership@afa.org

Communications (news media).....
communications@afa.org

CyberPatriot..... info@uscyberpatriot.org

Air Force Memorial Foundation.....
afmf@airforcememorial.org

Magazine

Advertising..... airforcemagsales@afa.org

AFA National Report..... natrep@afa.org

Editorial Offices..... afmag@afa.org

Letters to Editor Column..... letters@afa.org

Change of Address

Requires four weeks' notice. Please mail your magazine label and first and last name to the Membership Department at 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22209-1198. You may also update this information under the Members Only area of our website at www.afa.org, by calling our Membership Department at 1-800-727-3337, or emailing membership@afa.org.

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.

Is Treason So Wrong?

In "Verbatim," *Air Force Magazine*, June 2015, Michael J. Morrell, former deputy director of CIA, was cited from his book, *The Great War of Our Time: The CIA's Fight Against Terrorism From al Qaeda to ISIS*, stating that leaks by Edward Snowden resulted in terrorists modifying their actions, drying up their communications sources, and changing their tactics and that Snowden's actions clearly played a role in the rise of ISIS [*"Get the Noose,"* p. 10].

Snowden's self-righteous action is now seen as a weakness in the security of America's intelligence system, because anyone in the system or any authorized user of intelligence could use the same whistle-blower excuse that Snowden used. America's allies, coalition forces, and potential lucrative human sources have doubts that America's intelligence procedures are secure and reliable. Having said that, I am concerned that a court of law in the US may not find Snowden guilty beyond any reasonable doubt, because it could be difficult to convince everyone in a jury that Snowden did wrong.

Lt. Col. Russel A. Noguchi,
USAF (Ret.)
Pearl City, Hawaii

Eglin Schools, Too

The June 2015 *Air Force Magazine* [*"Air Force World: Lightning's Day Out,"* p. 18] states that Luke AFB, Ariz., was "home to the F-35A schoolhouse." This seems to say this is the *only* schoolhouse and that's simply not true. The first one—and still going—is the one at Eglin's 33rd FW. Maybe it should have said one of two F-35 schoolhouses, or home to an F-35 schoolhouse.

Col. Al Haberbush,
USAF (Ret.)
Niceville Fla.

No Lake Wobegon

Regarding "Secret Solutions From the Desert" in the June 2015 issue [p. 28]:

Asking that every government acquisition be modeled after the Lockheed Martin Skunk Works is like mandat-

ing that every elementary and high school course be an advanced placement course. Unfortunately, the Skunk Works approach isn't for everyone, as admirable as it is. In addition to the monumental organizational issues to overcome, there are also the likely objections from those that would demand "appropriate" representation for all genders, ethnicities, and life styles. Our high school track coach told us that when we performed our running broad jumps, we should try to jump over the trees on the horizon. Of course, it was impossible, but if it helped us land just a bit further than we would have otherwise, it was still a useful objective.

Hank Caruso
California, Md.

The picture of the "A-12s—secret CIA spyplanes," June 2015, p. 30, is not of three CIA A-12s. The airplanes in the picture have a second crew compartment and the A-12 was a single-seat aircraft. My guess would be that it is a picture taken for a historical record of the initial production of the YF-12A fighter interceptors. During the construction of the A-12s, production was changed on the seventh, eighth, and ninth models to add a second crew position and several other modifications to make the change to the Air Force YF-12A. After the three variants, the assembly line went back to produce nine more of the single seat A-12 aircraft for a total of 15. Six of those 15 crashed. It is also possible

Do you have a comment about a current article in the magazine? Write to "Letters," *Air Force Magazine*, 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington, VA 22209-1198. (Email: letters@afa.org.) Letters should be concise and timely. We cannot acknowledge receipt of letters. We reserve the right to condense letters. Letters without name and city/base and state are not acceptable. Photographs cannot be used or returned.—THE EDITORS

that the three aircraft were SR-71s. We would need to know the date of the photograph to know for sure.

Col. Edward E. Mutch,
USAF (Ret.)
Bellevue, Neb.

Lining Putin's Pockets?

The five Air Force advisors in your report deserve the Distinguished Flying Cross for their valor and professionalism under fire [*"Heroism From the Hip," June, p. 52*]. But your article raises a disturbing question. Why does our military purchase Russian helicopters for Afghanistan's National Army? What's wrong with US helicopters from Sikorsky and Bell? As your report noted, they're easier for most aircrews to operate than Russian Mi-17 choppers. The Air Force took heavy flak from Congress for using Russian RD-180 rocket engines to launch satellites. Why compound that error by giving Afghan forces helicopters made by a nation that tried to conquer them 35 years ago? We can't condemn Putin for his current aggression with one hand while lining his pockets with the other. That won't work in the Cold War 2.0.

Richard Reif
Flushing, N.Y.

Puff, Spooky, Shadow, Stinger, Spectre
I always enjoy reading Mr. Correll's

articles, which are insightful and fascinating. May I offer one slight correction to a minor error in the article entitled, "Gunships on the Trail" [*June, p. 64*]? The US Air Force did indeed fly AC-47s after December 1969. Three Spookys were provisionally reassigned from the 4th SOS to Udorn RTAB, Thailand, on 10 December 1969 and designated as Det. 1, 56th SOW, identified by the tailcode, OS.

I was an airframe repair technician, assigned to the 432nd FMS and performed maintenance on these aircraft (AC-47Ds, serial numbers 44-76625, 43-16133, and 43-49010) during their tenure at Udorn. The final sortie performed by this detachment took place on 29 May 1970 and all three aircraft were flown by Det. 1, 56th SOW, aircrews to Vientiane, Laos, where they were transferred to the Royal Laotian Air Force.

As a sidebar, it is interesting to note that the office facilities and vehicles at Udorn were transferred to the 18th SOS, on 4 June 1970, which operated three AC-119K Stingers designated as Flight D, detached from the 14th SOW at Nakhon Phanom RTAB, Thailand. This assignment was apparently rotational in nature, since I observed 11 different Stingers there by serial number, although there were never more than four on station at one time.

I also participated in maintenance on these aircraft, as well.

One Stinger was lost on 6 June 1970 (#52-5935), while a second successfully recovered at Udorn following massive battle damage on 8 May 1970, resulting in the loss of 15 feet of the right wing and the right aileron. The aircrew was subsequently awarded the Mackay Trophy for 1970 in recognition of the most meritorious flight for that year. Named "Super Sow" (with appropriate artwork), the aircraft was AC-119K, #52-5982.

Thanks for consistently publishing an outstanding magazine of unparalleled professionalism and journalistic competence.

Dave Hansen
Oak Creek, Wis.

I would like to thank you for the excellent article in the June 2015 magazine, "Gunships on the Trail." I spent three years in Ubon, Thailand, on the AC-130. In 1969-70, I was a crew chief on the AC-130A gunship. In 1971-72, I became an illuminator operator flying on the AC-130A models, logging numerous combat missions flying over the Ho Chi Minh Trail. In 1974-75, I went back to Thailand, and as an IO I flew on the AC-130A and AC-130E aircraft. What a great experience it was to be a part of this wonderful organization.



**YOUR AWARD-WINNING
AIRPOWER AUTHORITY**

WWW.AFA.ORG/MAGAZINEAWARDS

This article brought back many fond memories of those years and all of the great individuals I worked with. I have been able to stay in touch with some of the guys I flew with.

SMSgt. Danny E. Krouse,
USAF (Ret.)
Hesperia, Calif.

I enjoyed the article "Gunships on the Trail" by John T. Correll. Having spent one year at NKP (1966-67) flying the AT-28D at night on the trail, I was disappointed when the -28 was not mentioned in third paragraph as one of the vintage aircraft attacking trucks on the trail. Our call sign was Zorro and our mission and call sign was picked up later by the A-1s.

[Retired Col. Ronald W. Terry], the father of the gunship, was inducted into the Air Commando Hall of Fame in 2013. Our Air Park/Museum at Hurlburt Field has each of the three gunships on display.

Lt. Col. Felix Sambogna,
USAF (Ret.)
Fort Walton Beach, Fla.

One slight correction/addition to your excellent article on the AC-47. The original test bed—call sign Puff 99—was assigned to the C-47 Section of the 1st Air Commando Squadron. Gradually, all C-47s assigned to the 1st ACS were modified to the AC-47 and all used the call sign Puff. The C-47s assigned to the 4th Air Commando Squadron were also modified in the field and used the call

sign Spooky. Eventually, the AC-47s, and crews, were transferred to the 4th ACS and the call sign Puff went into the history books. For those of us unreconstructed veterans of the 1st ACS, the AC-47 will always be Puff, the dragonship.

Col. Dick Sexton,
USAF (Ret.)
Colorado Springs, Colo.

Regarding the last USAF missions of the Spooky gunships: We flew out of Udorn RTAB well into May of 1970. Lieutenant Opdyck (aircraft commander) and I (navigator) were awarded Silver Stars for a mission on 13 May 1970. I visited the Lima site via Air America in July and was told by the Laotian general there that "without Spooky, we no exist."

Several crew members and I were transferred to Vientiane to train the Lao to take over the mission. When I left in September that mission was still in progress.

Ron Terry was right—the side-firing gunship concept was "right on."

Robert Manns
San Antonio

Great article. I think gunships in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan are just potent weapons.

I wonder if a UAV gunship could be designed. Let me throw out a possibility: Let's say that the goal was simply to have a .50-caliber machine gun in the sky hovering over some Army or Marine patrol for support. Why?

(1) A gunship circles its target and can put continuous fire on it vs. a conventional plane that just makes a pass.

(2) Our UAVs are generally designed for more time aloft while sacrificing speed and performance (no 9G turns).

The Predator and Reaper are our main UAVs. Neither is really suited to a side-firing gun, which easily fits in a C-130. However, I think our designers (say, aerospace engineer Burt Rutan) could come up with one. Rutan designs his plane with a box structure of two fuselage elements for structural strength, which is what you would need for a side-firing .50-caliber. It would sort of look like a P-38 without the pilot pod. The .50-caliber could be hung under the wing. If this destroyed too much of the lift efficiency, you could hang it between the two fuselage elements. Naturally you would have balance issues, but I think you could get around that with shifting fuel. Also, UAVs don't fly too fast (and wouldn't have to in order to keep up with a ground patrol). Even wing walkers didn't destroy the lift of the old biplanes.

You could fly the UAV .50-caliber at 10,000 feet to be out of the range of small arms. It would only descend to firing range in support of ground troops. It could be a cheap, persistence answer for close support. Obviously you still need planes for bombs and major ground support.

William Thayer
San Diego

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

RUSSIAN AIRPOWER ALMANAC

AIR FORCE MAGAZINE'S **2015**
COMPREHENSIVE REFERENCE
ON TODAY'S RUSSIAN AIR FORCE.

In Stock, Order Now!

Leadership • Order of Battle • Bases • History
Detailed Aircraft Summaries • Maps • Superb photos • and More!

PRICE: ONLY \$10
(AFA Members receive a 50% discount)
plus shipping & handling

To order call: 1-800-727-3337