

## No Longer a Distinction

Referring to Colonel Miranda's letter regarding "The Nightmare Before Christmas," I would add something that really bothered me about that operation [*Letters: It was a Nightmare, All Right, December, p. 6*]. It was a fact that before those careless SAC targeting decisions during Linebacker II were made, the Air Force had never been turned back in battle. (See Cpl. Ellsworth B. Laurence's poem, "Men of the Fortress.") Reading Marshall L. Michel III's book, *The 11 Days of Christmas*, one will find on p. 154 the passage: "Though they did not realize it, the North Vietnamese defenses had done something that the Germans, Japanese, Soviets, Chinese, and North Koreans had never been able to achieve. They had made an American bombing raid abort a mission for fear of losses." Thanks to the bull-headedness of SAC operations during the Vietnam War, we can no longer claim that distinction of never having been turned back in battle.

Col. Frank Alfter,  
USAF (Ret.)  
Beavercreek, Ohio

## Hey, That Was USAF's Map

Just got the new November issue. I had to smile at the map on p. 32 [*Boom on the Range, p. 30*]. You know, of course, the Navy is much more than just ships. Thus, I was amused at your cartographer's overwhelming use of a ship silhouette to indicate every Navy base, even when it was really a Naval Air Station featuring aircraft not ships. NAS Whiting, a training base for naval aviators, for instance, is inland, not approachable by sea. So is NAS Cecil Field. Kings Bay in Georgia is a submarine base. A silhouette of a "Boomer" submarine would have been much more appropriate. (Funny, when I was there going through advanced training in 1968-69, it was actually NAS Glynco, training various naval flight officers. It still retained a huge blimp hangar of the 1950s. But that was a long, long time ago.) NAS Key West is, indeed, an air station that often includes adversary squadron activities. And, naturally, NAS Pensacola is the "Cradle of Naval Avia-

tion," where future naval aviators still begin their flight training. It also is home to one of the greatest aviation museums in the world. No ships. I thought Air Force guys knew about such things. Maybe not. I still enjoy the magazine and have been a member for years.

Cmdr. Peter B. Mersky,  
USNR (Ret.)  
Alexandria, Va.

## CAP Members

In response to Lt. Col. C. J. Clemens (Ret.) in the November issue, "Join Us, CAP," thank you for the invite [*Letters, p. 7*]. Many of us are already members. I am ex-USAF (1972-77, -304X1 flight facilities), which led to a 38-year career with FAA techops, and have been a CAP member since 1998 and will continue to support AFA.

Dave Felber  
Florissant, Mo.

## No Ink

In regard to your article on the Iran nuclear deal, I would like to point out that Iran has not signed anything [*Iran and the Bomb, December, p. 34*].

This is just one of the uncomfortable aspects of the "deal."

Joseph Dooley  
Kingston, Tenn.

## Airman Stone

Regarding your November issue story, "Stopping Terror On The Tracks," [p. 24]. As a US citizen, I'm proud of all three Americans who subdued a heavily armed terrorist on a Paris-bound train. As a former Air Force officer (1964-68),

I'm particularly proud of one of those heroes—A1C Spencer Stone. We shared two things in common—the Air Force's blue uniform and Lajes Field, the Azores, Portugal. Airman Stone was stationed at Lajes as a medical technician with the 65th Air Base Group. I was an Armed Forces Network detachment commander there from 1966-67. The Air Force has downsized Lajes from a wing to a group but maintains it as a vital military base. For those of us lucky enough to spend time there, it's also a precious patch of paradise in the North Atlantic.

The Portuguese word for pride is "brio," which expresses all of our feelings for A1C Stone.

Richard Reif  
Kew Garden Hills, N.Y.

## Buffy the Slayer

Thank you for the wonderful article on B-52s [*BUFF Metamorphosis, December, p. 46*]. There is a mistake on p. 53, photo No. 1. The caption states this is a G model flying from Fairford, UK, but you state: "The eight TF33 engines have always produced a lot of smoke." G models were equipped with eight Pratt & Whitney J57-P-43WB turbojet engines. H models are equipped with the TF33-P-3 turbofan.

Trenton Twedt  
Radcliffe, Iowa

I enjoyed reading the article beginning on p. 46 titled, "BUFF Metamorphosis." Let me tell you a short story about my first experience with a B-52. I enlisted in the Air Force in July 1965. While we basic trainees were out marching at Lackland AFB, Texas, one day, our training instructor stopped the flight and told us all to look up at the airplane flying overhead. He said, "That's a B-52. They are getting old and won't be around much longer." That was 50 years ago! How wrong can a guy be! I retired from the Air Force as a senior master sergeant after 25 years. I'm pretty sure B-52s will still be going strong when I'm no longer around to look up and watch them fly over.

SMSGt. Carl M. Lehman,  
USAF (Ret.)  
San Antonio

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