

It Happens

Secretary of Defense Hagel announced support to change the UCMJ to strip convening authorities of their ability to modify findings of a court-martial [*"Air Force World: UCMJ Changes Recommended," June, p. 18*]. Hagel said, "These changes ... would help ensure that our military justice system works fairly, ensures due process, and is accountable." Of course, the Secretary is directly implying that the current process does not work fairly. All of this stems from political agenda fallout over Lieutenant General Franklin's decision to set aside and dismiss a wrongful conviction of an Aviano lieutenant colonel. Has no one in the political arena ever heard of a false accusation or wrongful conviction? Have they never heard of the Innocence Project? (Google Brian Banks.) Just as in the civilian world, sometimes the services get it wrong and convict the wrong guy. In fact, the Air Force's own study said that as many as 45 percent of all sexual assault accusations may be false. The Justice Department found 25 percent of rape cases they revisited with the ability to test DNA evidence convicted the wrong man. Even if the rate is as low as women's advocacy groups claim (two to eight percent), some men are wrongfully convicted. Ignoring that fact and changing the UCMJ does not help real victims and it hurts our military. Political pressure is no reason to send innocent people to prison. These are American service members. They deserve the truth, not a witch hunt. For the most part, the system works fairly, Mr. Secretary, including the review process by the convening authority. Politically motivated changes don't help.

Col. Bob Harvey,
USAF (Ret.)
Cocoa, Fla.

More Women to Train More Women

I wholeheartedly agree with General Iosue's comment in the June issue of *Air Force Magazine*, "Letters" section [p. 6]. I am not familiar with the statistics, but I believe, as the general said, we had very few cases of sexual assault when I went through [basic military training] in late summer 1969. We were separated back then, with the WAF (Women's Air

Force) on the other side of the base. Now, I don't propose that we go back to the days of the WAF, but I agree with General Iosue that we do need to separate the guys and gals at that critical stage in their military experience. The marines still do, and we don't hear about such assaults from them.

I also do not believe separating the sexes in basic will have a deleterious effect on their training as they will fight. They can be trained together in tech school. But I do believe that we should never, ever have male [training instructors] responsible for female basic trainees. This is a most critical time for many young women coming into a totally new and different environment. They are extremely vulnerable at that stage of training and for them to have a male TI is an absolute recipe for disaster. And, as the general said, we can find more women to be TIs for the young women coming into our Air Force.

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

I was a military training instructor (MTI) at basic military training (BMT), Lackland AFB, Tex., from 1969 to 1973 and from 1974 to 1976. I then was assigned to the then-ATC NCO Academy at Lackland until 1981.

General Iosue is correct, in my opinion, that the short separation of BMT between males and females shouldn't affect their careers, as they have to be assimilated during either tech school or into direct duty.

As far as female training instructors, do what happened during the Vietnam War: involuntarily (draft) cross-train them. I served with draftees that hated BMT duty and did just enough to get their tour over. Some were more prone to mistreatment of trainees than others. Some got to enjoy it and requested a follow-up tour, as they liked the stability. One USAF policy I strongly disagree with—and I made it clear when I was an MTI—was allowing anyone with under four years of service and not at least a staff sergeant to be an MTI, especially if it's a male training females. I strongly believe mature NCOs will make better instructors. Even though recent cases

have shown the power that supposedly mature male MTIs have over females, that doesn't mean without adequate oversight and supervision it can't be controlled.

I don't know if General Iosue's statement that "very few cases of sexual assault" during his tenure was because of a magic bullet or luck, but I can assure you I also seldom heard of any during that period.

CMSgt. Lou Georgieff,
USAF (Ret.)
San Antonio

Verbatim

I was more than a little surprised by the title "More Dreck from Headquarters" [*"Verbatim," June, p. 25*], third column. The title implies that AFA's position is that the Air Force's desire to provide a nonhostile workplace within the Air Force for non-Christians has no value. Even worse, why choose a Yiddish-derived term to express AFA's disdain for the goal of allowing non-Christians to help defend our country without being harassed by their comrades?

I inherited my *Air Force Magazine* subscription from my father-in-law who navigated B-17s for a full set of missions over Europe in World War II. I am trying to imagine his outrage at the implication that if his co-religionists want to serve in the Air Force they ought to be subjected to pressure to change religious views by the people around them.

I understand that some people feel a religious obligation to proselytize, but perhaps the welfare of the nation would be better served if they focus their activities on civilians rather than the military

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. (E-mail: 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

comrades who depend on their support and trust.

I hope to see an apology for the title in the next issue of *Air Force Magazine*.

Also, thank you for highlighting the Black Hawk helicopter in the Angel Thunder article. I have been Sikorsky's UH-60M requirements manager since 2001. It is gratifying to see our products being put to good use.

Steven E. Zalesch
New Haven, Conn.

Sheer Breadth, Really?

In "US Airpower in Africa" the author asserts that "the sheer breadth of the (African) landmass explains why ... there was no US military response force able" to save Ambassador Stevens and the three other Americans killed in Benghazi [June, p. 50]. Firstly, whether or not a US military response could have reached Benghazi in time to help is very much in dispute. Secondly, Benghazi is on the Mediterranean coast, and the "sheer breadth" of the African landmass would seem to have little to do with whether or not help could have arrived from Italy or other area locations.

MSgt. Bill Brockman,
USAF (Ret.)
Atlanta

A Convoluted Beginning

I love the annual almanac issue of *Air Force Magazine*, but there are a couple

of mistakes on p. 108 of the May 2013 issue ("Leaders Through the Years").

The page notes "Army Air Service" and "Army Air Corps," but those are not the correct terms. The correct terms are "Air Service" and "Air Corps."

The Air Service, American Expeditionary Forces, came into being on Sept. 3, 1917, with the appointment of Brig. Gen. William L. Kenly as its first chief. On Aug. 28, 1918, Mr. John D. Ryan became Director of Air Service, and he was replaced by General Charles T. Menoher on Jan. 2, 1919. The National Defense Act of 1920 provided congressional authorization for the Air Service.

The Air Corps Act of 1926 established the Air Corps. Because it was part of the US Army, people sometimes referred to it as the "Army Air Corps," as did a popular song, but it was technically the Air Corps.

On June 20, 1941, the War Department reorganized its air arm, creating the Army Air Forces. The Air Corps became a subordinate organization to the Army Air Forces, as did the Air Force Combat Command. The Air Corps was responsible for service functions, while the Air Force Combat Command was responsible for combat functions. General Henry H. Arnold served as head of the Army Air Forces, and, under him, Maj. Gen. George H. Brett served as Chief of the Air Corps and Lt. Gen. Delos C. Emmons served as

commanding general of the Air Force Combat Command.

War Department Circular 59, issued on March 2, 1942, further reorganized the War Department. It established three commands, the Army Air Forces, the Army Ground Forces, and the Services of Supply. At the same time, the Air Corps and the Air Force Combat Command effectively ceased to exist as functional branches of the Army Air Forces, and there was no more Chiefs of the Air Corps.

Another congressional statute, the National Security Act of 1947, established the Department of the Air Force and the United States Air Force.

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Return to Willow Run

I just read the article in the June issue titled "Roosevelt Builds the Arsenal" [p. 56]. Having visited the Willow Run bomber plant many times, I am very familiar with the plant and its history. The photo of the B-24s under assembly was taken in an adjacent hangar that was used to perform minor modifications to the bombers. The Willow Run assembly line was a "tandem" line with the bombers lined up nose to tail. The bombers exited the bomber plant at the end of the "L" shaped part of the plant



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through two 140-foot-wide electrically operated hangar doors, which are still in working order. The plant structure was turned 90 degrees to avoid taxes in an adjacent county.

Your readers might be interested to know that the historic Willow Run Bomber Plant is scheduled for demolition very soon because the plant is no longer marketable as a manufacturing site. What a shame to tear down this piece of world history where nearly 9,000 Liberators were built! There are less than 10 Ford-built B-24s left in the world today.

Col. Ray Hunter,
USAF (Ret.)
Ann Arbor, Mich.

I do need to disagree with one line in it on the second page of "Roosevelt Builds the Arsenal." "Its best fighter, the P-40, was no match for the German Bf 109." The 325th Fighter Group had great success with its P-40s against -109s when it went to North Africa in January 1943. Per Ernest McDowell's book *Checkertail Clan*, the 325th flew 128 missions—3,990 sorties—in P-40s. They are credited with 135 victories, 96 of them against -109s vs. 35 losses. It was while flying a P-40 that Axis Sally dubbed the 325th the "Checkertail Clan."

John B. Mier
Merrillville, Ind.

Who Was Manning the Guns, Huh?

Thanks for including the B-52 in "Airpower Classics" [June, p. 88]. I noticed the gunner (on board until the 1980s) was left out of the crew composition. Also "Interesting Facts" left out Linebacker I, April 1972, where U Tapao, Thailand, stationed B-52s (18 sorties, five missions) hit key targets over North Vietnam and proved that with proper countermeasures (ECM), tactical aircraft support (F-105G Wild Weasels, EA-6Bs, and EB-66s jammers), good intelligence, and well-trained BUFF crews the aircraft could unleash heavy destruction and survive the air defenses of North Vietnam. The successful test of strategic bombing during Linebacker I allowed for approval for Linebacker II.

Lt. Col. Sid Howard,
USAF (Ret.)
Midwest City, Okla.

SSgt. Dudley Phillips would have been surprised that his B-52F had only five crew members. He logged several thousand hours flying 150 feet behind the five of us in the forward compartment. We flew many airborne alert missions (Chrome Dome) of over 24 hours from Columbus AFB, Miss., with Dudley bringing up the rear. And

what about the gunners who shot down enemy fighters in Vietnam? Not real?

Lt. Col. Robert W. Riegel,
USAF (Ret.)
Littleton, Colo.

■ *The page should have specified the five-person crew composition as being specific to the current B-52H. For more on the gunner's position, see "The B-52 Gunners," January 2012.*

In your fine feature on the B-52, you mentioned in the Interesting Facts section that the B-52 "set a record for nonstop, around the world flight in 1957 nonrefueled nonstop flight of 12,532 miles (1962)." Your readers might be interested to know about a second nonstop around the world flight by the B-52 that occurred in March 1980 by two B-52Hs out of the 410th Bombardment Wing from K. I. Sawyer, Mich. The two aircrews were out of the 644th Bomb Squadron and were line crews, augmented only by one instructor pilot per crew. There were no wing or squadron staff on the flights. The flights launched on March 12, 1980, as part of a limited operational readiness inspection of the 410th Bomb Wing. Their mission was to fly east, half-way around the globe, then conduct sea surveillance and reconnaissance over the Soviet Fleet operating in the Indian Ocean, then continue on home to K. I. Sawyer. They landed in a snow storm on March 14, after flying approximately 19,353 nautical miles. For this flight, the two crews, S-21 and S-31, received the Mackay Trophy for 1980. The Mackay Trophy was awarded "for executing a nonstop, around-the world mission with the immediate objective of locating and photographing elements of the Soviet Navy operating in the Persian Gulf."

By way of background, this historic flight took place while the President and the nation were struggling to find a solution to the Iranian hostage crises. It also occurred before the tragic "Desert One" rescue attempt that ended in disaster in the desert.

Maj. Gen. R. M. Marquette,
USAF (Ret.)
Austin, Tex.

Fighter Pukes vs. Trash-Haulers

Retired Maj. Tom Phillips seems to carry a big burden concerning his Active Duty time in the Air Force. I saw from time to time some comments on trash-haulers, but they were not meant to demean the vital function that they filled in getting the logistical job done [*"Letters: Goldwater-Nichols Strikes Again," June, p. 6*].

I don't believe Major Phillips would call fighter pilots "fighter pukes" to their

face, especially at Korat in Thailand, where they probably just returned from Route Pack 6 Alpha and may have lost several F-105s and their pilots.

I always respected the job the airlifters and tanker pilots do in accomplishing the mission and had the utmost respect for them, especially the tanker crews, who did some heroic things to save lives of the fighter pilots who were in deep "kimchee."

I saw the Air Force as team of experts who, by working together, each doing their job, would succeed at the job at hand. I also don't believe any loyal Air Force members would ever do anything to reduce the chance of bringing a new aircraft into inventory to more effectively get the mission done, be it airlifter, tanker, or fighter.

Lighten up, Major Phillips.

Col. Ross Peeler,
USAF (Ret.)
Fort Myers, Fla.

No Naughty Bits

I enjoyed the gallery of photographs in the "Tinian's Atomic Bombers" piece in your June 2013 edition [p. 66]. The nose art was especially impressive, offering a perspective into this deep and rich aviation tradition dating back to the early 1900s. I'm happy that your staff saw the historical value of this unique military folk art, especially in this era where political correctness sometimes wins out.

A recent visit to an Air Force office building brought home that reality where I found that a wall mural hung there had not been so respected. The artwork impressively portrayed a World War II-era B-17 flying fortress on a bomb run over Germany. As part of the authentic detailing of the aircraft, the artist had painted nose art in the likeness of a naked female on the fuselage under the pilot-side cockpit windows.

During the Air Force's recent health and welfare inspection the painting was called on the carpet. After review the owning commander directed that the female's offending body parts be "covered up" and a red one-piece bathing suit was subsequently painted over them.

It's not clear which inspection category: pornographic, inappropriate or offensive, or unprofessional, the commander felt this artwork fell into. Evidently he felt his concerns trumped the historical correctness of the artist's rendering.

On the bright side, just thank goodness he's not the director of the National Museum of the United States Air Force.

Col. Bill Malec,
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O'Fallon, Ill.