

Training Spike

I just read with special interest your August article titled "Momyer" [p. 64] and learned many things that I wish I had known back in 1970 about General Spike. As a major and a combat crew training instructor pilot for the new A-7D course at Luke, I had been given a very unique mission.

General Momyer had personally called our wing commander to say that he wanted to fly TAC's newest fighter. He wanted to experience for himself its lauded head-up display (HUD) and other ahead-of-their-time avionics. In response to the colonel's query as to when the general would arrive at Luke for his quickie course, the general told him to have two birds at Langley the day after tomorrow. General Momyer also said he would be reading the A-7D flight manual in the meantime and to tell no one else about this. (There were neither two-seat A-7s nor a simulator until several years later.)

Lt. Col. Bobby Bond, the A-7D training squadron commander—who had yet to complete his full formal checkout—accompanied me in order to provide the second airplane and to "pull mobile" in the general's UHF radio-equipped staff car. We were met by General Momyer's old confidantes, the base commander and the two-star TAC LG and were billeted in the VIP quarters.

The next morning I briefed the general for two hours at the coffee table in the base operations VIP lounge. After helping him start the engine I chased him down the runway, around the Hampton Roads area, and through three low approaches and a full stop landing. Bond said Momyer made the better landing, and I believe him. I was far more nervous about all this than the general, having never before so much as even met a one-star. My real concern was the Air Force policy that general officers of all grades were not supposed to fly without an instructor pilot onboard, and that others of operational authority at TAC knew nothing about what was happening. For everyone else, the standard first-flight preparation was a week of academics and several hours of briefings. I knew

nothing of General Spike's skills. Of course, he did just fine.

A few weeks later I received a nice personal thank you note from the general, along with photos of the event. They hang prominently on my den wall.

Lt. Col. Greg Butler,
USAF (Ret.)
Encinitas, Calif.

I really enjoyed the Momyer story. As a captain, I was assigned to the ATC Stan/Eval board in early 1965 (to evaluate the conventional MAP training program (T-28/C-47) with the "additional duty" to implement the T-41 (Cessna 172) UPT lead-in program. I moved on to DCS/Ops where I was to continue to oversee the T-41 program in addition to conventional training. Being on the opposite end of the third floor of the headquarters building from the general, we were uncomfortably close to this legend.

When the regular ops briefer transferred, I was given the unpleasant duty of briefing the daily flying status reports to the staff for the eight UPT bases. General Momyer's reputation for attention to detail was well stated. One of the things that stuck with me was that he wanted to know the reason for each aborted sortie at each base as well as a myriad of other information. Another incident I will never forget was when I proudly sent a memo for record to the general stating we achieved 350,000 flying hours in the T-41 without an accident. He summoned me into his office, which had a large painting of a World War II air battle behind him. He said something like, "Korzy, that is a fine achievement, but I was against this T-41 program from the start. We are a jet Air Force and it should stay that way." Shortly after that he moved on to 7th Air Force in Vietnam.

Lt. Col. Darold J. Korzan,
USAF (Ret.)
Concordia, Mo.

I have a minor gnat bite with regard to the statement: "B-52 attacks were controlled by Strategic Air Command" (SAC). My concern is in the interpretation of the word "controlled." No question,

those were SAC airplanes and SAC crews, but one might get the impression that SAC controlled which targets were attacked. That was not the case, at least not during my time at MACVHQ. Target selection-approval came from the command section at MACVHQ, based on requests from field units, Army, Marines, and/or intelligence gleaned from other sources.

That is significant in regard to Colonel Boyne's article because of the widely held view at the time that General Momyer was particularly vexed by the idea that an Army general (Westmoreland/Abrams) controlled USAF resources.

Lt. Col. Neil V. Mesler,
USAF (Ret.)
Canton, Ga.

Records Fire

Thank you for the informative report about the St. Louis fire which destroyed 17 million armed services personnel records [*The Records Fire*, August, p. 48]. What a disaster—to lose the identities of so many of those who have given their lives [for] our country.

Replacement names and serial numbers should be immediately sought and replaced from:

1. The records of The National Service (government) Life Insurance Company from which all veterans acquired life insurance.

2. The records of those veterans past and present who have registered for health care or have resided in US veterans homes or hospitals.

3. Membership lists of present and

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past veterans who joined the American Legion and similar organizations.

4. Registration records from veterans' cemeteries around the world.

5. Veterans' family records that will identify serial numbers from soldier dog tags, etc. (My family has proudly kept records of those who served as long ago as the Civil War.)

6. Records from county draft boards. Hasn't the time arrived to make a major effort and place in the public record the names and serial numbers of all who were killed and have served for the protection of us Americans?

Conrad Leslie
Oxford, Ohio

My father's World War II records were destroyed in the fire. He was wounded in France, returned to Utica Army Hospital by air, and died on Jan. 9, 1945. I never knew what happened to him when I was growing up.

The son of one of the soldiers in his unit went through the trouble of getting all of the division's morning reports (mentioned in the article). From these reports, the few documents my mother had, an excellent book on the division's service in the war, and conversations with my father's brothers and sisters, I was able to piece together what happened to him. I also traveled to France with his division's association and met his battalion commander. I actually was

able to stand on the French farm field where he was wounded.

I continue to be concerned by the loss of documents that were mailed to the records center in St. Louis between 1971 and 1994. I went on Active Duty in 1965 and was a member of the Army Reserve between 1971 and 1994, when I retired. I was warned repeatedly by Army Reserve members from different units to stay on "active" status and to avoid "standby" status. A soldier who went on standby status risked having his personnel file lost because the unit had to send it to the St. Louis records center. I visited the records center when I was there on business for my civilian job and commanded a reserve unit. I researched my father's documents (some reconstituted through the Veterans Administration) and then looked for a personnel file that my unit sent. They could not find it. Individual documents that were sent for promotion boards were not in the appropriate files. We made sure, after that visit, that we copied complete files and mailed them to the appropriate promotion board. Hopefully the losing of mailed documents has been corrected since I retired.

Lt. Col. Peter Coppolino,
USAR (Ret.)
Leesburg, Va.

Photo ID

Loved the "Dinner for the Heroes" article [August, p. 43]. Brings back so

many memories. I'm the guy getting off the bird at Clark with Robbie Risner. My name is Leroy Thornal, Colonel, USAF (Ret). I was the Air Force escort officer on the second -141 to come out of Hanoi on Feb. 12, 1973.

Thanks for your time and thanks for keeping the memory of our heroes alive.

Col. Leroy Thornal,
USAF (Ret.)
Niceville, Fla.

Get Joint Fixed Fast

John Tirpak's "Out of Joint," *Air Force Magazine*, August [p. 24], strikes a blow for common sense. Joint is a subject I taught in an academic setting for many years as a USAF contractor. In its best application, joint forces bring tailored mission capability to a joint forces commander. Yet, our services still fight in a regional command setting where each service gets a chunk of the air and ground space.

There are competing themes affecting our ability to go joint: Specific service missions, service Title 10 functions enabling service missions, service acquisition, service specific requirements for test and evaluation, service specific deployments into theater, service doctrine, and more. For example, the Marines are famously expeditionary. The Marine constellation of acquisitions reflects expeditionary. By contrast, the Air Force acquisition reflects persistent application of airpower. In the

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case of the F-35, there is a cost to be shouldered for Marine expeditionary that may not apply to USAF deployed force structures. Services also acquire, commensurate with their acquisition reach, the capacity to operate jointly. For this, "joint" competes within service budgets and between services.

The problem we face today is the savaging of service budgets by political and fiscal issues. There is much media effluvia generated by overmarketed so-called experts who never drew a weapon or stood a post, but warm to a "peace" dividend. There is no liberty dividend. Liberty is existential. It ex-

ists or it does not. Shedding joint is a nonstarter because joint capability is precisely what is needed as our forces draw down. Every ounce of mission capability must be extracted from our joint forces, particularly when forces are deployed forward. In the joint arena, a Marine lance corporal on foot patrol down range is essential to engaging a threat, but so is the B-2 bomber called in by that marine using the Joint Tactical Radio System. Sadly, service chiefs may witness the dilution of both.

So where does this leave us? There is a convergence of threat where crimi-

nal cartels are snuggling with failed and failing regimes having access to weapons of mass destruction. The threat to the US national security is profound and there is no single service capacity for defending America. For this, perhaps the current acquisition system with all its faults and potential for reform is as good as it gets. So, now the question: What is the price of liberty, America?

Lt. Col. Tom Brannon,
USMC (Ret.)
Navarre, Fla.

Women Titans

Your article "Women in Combat" was very good, but you neglected to include the women in Titan II [August, p. 30]. I was an instructor crew commander circa 1978 to 1979 and remember my crew training the first female deputy missile crew commander. It was during this time frame we had many mixed male-female crews—well before Minuteman and Peacekeeper crews.

Lt. Col. Len Zigent,
USAF (Ret.)
Colorado Springs, Colo.

I understand that our military leaders must support the policies and directives from the current Administration. The President is our Commander in Chief. That is what the Constitution says and is how it should be. But the Air Force Association does not need to do so, and if the association is to mean more than just honoring airmen and our heritage and having a good time, we should push back on policies that are counterproductive to good military formation.

As a lifetime AFA member, I found the celebration of the feminization of the military that appeared in your August issue disappointing. It suggests you view a military that is 15 percent female—and much higher if considering just the Air Force—and going up, as a good thing. Only the most blinded progressives would suggest that a military, made up with a significant percentage of female troops, would be a more efficient and effective fighting force than an all-male force.

I feel sorry for our generals. They must be cautious about what they say, smile, and support the political policies while desperately trying to maintain a combat force shackled with an entirely new and extremely challenging set of discipline problems that detract from training and combat readiness. Air dominance is impacted by more than just aging systems, and one would hope that at least AFA would tackle the truth about the manning develop-

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ments, focus on what makes military sense, and not become a cheerleader for insane policies.

Col. Michael Sexton,
USAF (Ret.)
Albuquerque, N.M.

During my 40-plus-year Air Force career I developed a healthy respect and admiration for the women I worked for, with, and led.

I was disappointed at your choice of a six-year-old photo of a female airman who is no longer in the Air Force, standing watch at an air base that no longer exists, for your cover. In an article highlighting the successes and bright future of women in the Air Force, I think a more current photo would have been more appropos. Surely there is no shortage of Air Force women currently deployed in Afghanistan and other locations, though your photo pick might indirectly imply otherwise.

Col. Bill Malec,
USAF (Ret.)
O'Fallon, Ill.

GUMP Grumps

I always enjoy *Air Force Magazine* and read it cover to cover. I especially look forward to Walter J. Boyne's historical articles. I don't want to detract from his excellent article, but I did notice an error in his August article "The Checklist" which noted the 1935

crash of the Boeing B-17 prototype [p. 52]. On p. 55 he wrote that the familiar prelanding GUMP check stood for the gear, undercarriage, mixture, and propeller. "Gear" and "undercarriage" are redundant terms. The "G" actually stands for "gas." This can include several things such as checking fuel quantity, balance, pumps on, etc. Sometimes the check was GUMPS where the "S" stands for "switches" (landing light, nav radios, etc.).

Col. Ken Morris,
USAF (Ret.)
Merritt Island, Fla.

I must be among the thousands of readers who caught the "Checklist" article's incorrect definition of GUMPS. It should have read Gas, Undercarriage, Mixture, and Propeller! I guess that's why checklists are created and read. Let he who hasn't made an error cast the first stone. If they're alive.

Herminio Velez
Poinciana, Fla.

Incoming!

The screenshot on p. 15 of the August, issue showing a Fourth of July fireworks celebration at Osan AB, South Korea, brought back a vivid memory for me.

I was a young one-striper (A/3c) just out of tech school who had just arrived at Osan on June 13, 1960.

It was a long time ago and my memory is a little faded, but I don't remember reading or hearing anything about a scheduled Fourth of July fireworks show on base. I do remember that it was hot and humid and I was out for an evening stroll, when all of a sudden fireworks started going off.

Like myself, it was obvious that some of the Koreans who were on base at the time didn't get the word about any sort of planned fireworks show. I'm sure that the the Korean conflict was still fresh in every Korean's mind and I will never forget the panicked look on their faces, and some even started to run, probably thinking that the North was again invading the South.

MSgt. David D. Trotter,
USAF (Ret.)
Aurora, Colo.

Cheater McCheater Pants

John T. Correll is to be congratulated for analyzing so thoroughly the "détente" period in American foreign policy [*"The Decade of Détente," August, p. 58*]. He touched most of the weaknesses of this policy in terms of US security. Correll could have mentioned that glaring piece of deception perpetrated from the Soviet side: Moscow's cheating on the ABM Treaty of 1972, an ingredient of the flawed concept of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD). Former Soviet Foreign Minister



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Eduard Shevardnadze freely admitted, as the Soviet Union collapsed, that the USSR had cheated on MAD by secretly establishing an ABM site at Krasnoyarsk. This was in outright violation of the "détente" treaty. At the same time, Moscow kept upgrading its own ABM site defending Moscow. For its part, the US declined to build ABM.

Finally, by the end of the 1970s, the Soviets were building naval and air bases worldwide in geostrategic, blue-water areas in order to interdict our Sea Lines of Communication (SLOC) and to throttle sources of our imports of defense-related minerals in the Third World.

With most of our mainstream media in a pacifist, anti-Pentagon mood, Reagan woke everyone up to the Soviet threat. The new President showed how it had materialized globally along with Moscow's SS-20 deployments in Eastern Europe. The new President zeroed in on the "Evil Empire," thus ushering in a more realistic, post-détente policy toward the collapsing Soviet Union.

Albert L. Weeks
Sarasota Fla.

Camel Through the Eye of a Needle

I enjoyed the article about the Globemaster's history in [Japan]. The first "big bird" of transport had its struggles for sure [*"C-124 and the Tragedy at Tachikawa," July, p. 70*].

Another element to the history of this aircraft was the effort to certify its use in the Korean theater, notably its ability to land on the poor runways with heavy loads. My particular interest is simple: My father was the test pilot who accomplished this mission, opening up the Korean airlift fourfold.

Maj. Gen. William H. Tunner, deputy commander of the Military Air Transport Service, requested the C-124 be tested in Korea; he needed heavy airlift between Tokyo and Seoul.

In September 1951, the Air Proving Ground Command (Eglin Air Force Base) sent a C-124 to Tachikawa, Japan, for extended operational testing. The Globemaster was piloted by Maj. Roland L. Urquhart, aircraft commander, and Col. Kenneth Johnson, copilot and TAC observer. The C-124s represented an important cargo and personnel delivery advantage to 5th Air Force. With maximum loads of 200 passengers, 23 tons of cargo or 136 litter patients, each Globemaster could carry the equivalent of four to five loads of C-54s, C-46s, or C-119s.

The final Globemaster test mission in 1951 was on Oct. 21. Among those on the aircraft were Maj. Gen. John Henebry, commander, 315th Air Division, and Harold Stuart, former

assistant secretary of the Air Force (and then President of the Air Force Association). They flew with the C-124 as it took off from Ashiya with 50,000 pounds of hand grenades and landed at the then not very well developed airstrip at Chunchon. It was reported that at one point along the runway there were two buildings, one on each side, only 270 feet apart. Since the C-124 had a 173-foot wingspan this didn't leave much margin for error; the pilot guided the plane through without difficulty.

According to General Henebry, the C-124 performed brilliantly. His recommendation carried weight, and the "big bird" that roosted in Japan for a short while in 1951 was the first of many others that arrived the next year.

In gratitude for his performance, Douglas Aircraft Co. gave my father a cast aluminum model of the C-124A Globemaster. With a wingspan of 29 inches, it sits proudly among my other keepsakes.

As the years have passed, I've enjoyed "discovering" my father's military experience. There was and are a lot of real unsung heroes; we should be proud of their legacy.

Lt. Col. Robert Urquhart,
ANG (Ret.)
North Kingstown, R.I.

Proselytizing in the Air Force

When you see letters like [Steven E.] Zalesch's [*"Letters: Verbatim," August, p. 6*], you can be assured of several things: The writer has an axe to grind.

He is really talking about the elimination of religion and its influence. And he is really unfamiliar with the intimacies of the issue. The use of the term "religionists" is further proof of his ignorance. Freedom of religion does not mean isolation from religion. The mere exposure to religious belief does not incur forced belief. A religion you do not want to share with others is of little or no value. Everyone, atheists included, has a religion, even if it is a man-centered one. Just because you do not see someone attend a house of worship in a suit does not mean they are without religious beliefs. If he wants to complain, let us go back to the Middle Ages when you would almost be certain to be required to join a church or suffer social stigma.

The Bible makes no distinction of how people make a living or even their social status before witnessing and is quite clear not to hide the "light" under a basket. You witness to civil and military alike.

MSgt. John Wolf
USAF (Ret.)
Bethel, Pa.



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