

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force James A. Cody
Enlisted Perspective
AFA - Orlando
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CMSAF Cody: Thank you.

So as tough as that might have been to follow the Chief, I really have to follow the Chief, which is always my favorite part of AFA Orlando because it always winds up like this, despite our best efforts to say I need a day later. I need a whole day. But that doesn't work out. But it was good that we had some great folks up here that you can all recognize who gave me a little bit of breaking space on that. You could dry your eyes. The Chief always does a great job of inspiring I think all of us to just be better. Better at everything, just who we are.

A lot's happened since we were here a year ago. You kind of always try to kind of bring you back up to it and reset with the group that's here today. And I would think likely one of the most significant things that we have all contended with is the fact that we had to go through force management, and the end result of that is we are the smallest United States Air Force since 1947. And that's significant and can't be lost on any of us. And really, in that time that we have now become the smallest, we are still globally engaged at unprecedented levels and there has been truly no appreciable reduction in the demand signal for airmen or air power anywhere. The men and women that serve continue to step up and move forward.

I'm sorry, Secretary, I didn't acknowledge you. Thanks for being here. I didn't see you there right away. I know you were talking with the Chief a minute ago. I appreciate your steadfast continued leadership and support of our airmen and their families.

It's important that everybody understand just what General Welsh talked about, and I know the Secretary will talk about it tomorrow, about how there is a strategic vision for the future of our Air Force and we're making some very difficult choices today to ensure that we have what we need, so we're not just having that car that is faster than everybody else's car, you have to have the right people in that car, right? So that's the piece that I kind of want to talk a little bit about as we continue to move forward. I'll kind of give you a little snapshot, an update of where we are.

So you could think, based on what I kind of described in the onset here, that could have the tendency to paralyze the force. Right? So much pushing back on you, so many things that would just seem to be tearing at any type of ability to kind of

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continue to move forward, specifically when you talk about people type of things. That could happen but it hasn't happened, and it hasn't happened because of the leadership in our Air Force and because of the great airmen. So we continue to evolve our enlisted professional military education. I'm very excited about it. We have completely done it with our Senior NCO Academy. It's a blended approach. It's a higher level of learning. And the feedback we're getting - while extremely challenging for the men and women that are going through it - they absolutely come out of that saying hey, I am better prepared to be a leader. I am absolutely there. It is challenging, but engaging.

We're in the process of doing that with our NCO Academy and the two beta tests that we've done with that to make sure we have that curriculum set right is really producing solid feedback and going in the right direction.

We instituted, about nine months ago now, the Airman Comprehensive Assessment, the new feedback form for all airmen. I think that is a powerful thing in how we're redefining how we have these meaningful and purposeful conversations with our airmen. Making sure that it's more about that conversation, that relationship than just getting some words on a piece of paper, but really having that kind of common dialogue where at the end of that there should be a common understanding of what expectations are, where we all see things, and how we're going to work as a team -- supervisor and ratee -- to accomplish goals and to reach our full potential. And that will lead directly into what we've already started and that is the significant changes, changes that really span updates all the way back to the inception of our enlisted evaluation system and our weighted airman promotion system for the enlisted force.

We're really excited about it. I think we had the euphoric stage last year when we were talking about it because people realized we were going to do it. Now we're in that anxiety stage, severe anxiety in some cases because we're getting after a lot of things that our airmen have been asking for and that creates some uncertainty of where they fall, because they knew where they fell before, where everybody else fell. Now people are going to kind of fall in a little bit different order. But nonetheless, important.

I'm very excited about how we've been moving forward. We're getting ready right now to start our fourth round of developmental special duty nomination and selection. That process is absolutely working well for our Air Force. That doesn't mean that we executed it perfectly with the first round or the second round or even the third round. What we have done is just what we said we would do. We would go through the

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execution, we would take the feedback and we would make adjustments.

What has worked is the basic premise and concept behind it. That is a process by which our chain of command nominate their best qualified people to do these duties at the right time in their careers, and we've opened that up to every career field. So really, the feedback is great.

I'll tell you a little story about this and just how powerful this is in this significant change.

So in this new process the first hurdle we had to overcome is everybody was upset that we weren't taking volunteers anymore. Right? To be honest with you, and I always like to make this point and emphasize it. Everybody is a volunteer. All volunteer force. Nobody's hoodwinked at night, wake up at basic training and what the heck happened here? You might feel that way the next morning, but you actually showed up and asked to be here.

But this idea that we had volunteerism within a volunteer force. Sure, that existed. And I think what we have to look at today in our Air Force, being the smallest Air Force we are, and when you think about a human capital strategy with that small force, you have to be very deliberate about everything with everybody because you just don't have the size of force to make a lot of mistakes and not have it have huge impact to the right.

There were good examples of that that really led us and kind of became the burning platform to say hey, we've got to kind of move and evolve forward with how we select folks to do these, at least these ten very important special duties that have the impact on the entire force. That touch our entire force.

What we learned along the way as we went through this is you're not always the best judge of how you'll be at something, right? You might have a good indication, but most of what you think about yourself is what you want to do, not necessarily maybe what you would be good at. But part of what we do as leadership in our Air Force, part of what our commanders do, is they do discern amongst our people and look for potential and have this ability to understand what the enterprise needs and when you're ready to go meet that need.

So this is Sergeant Joe Anderson. He's a first sergeant out at Dyess in the maintenance group out there. He was selected under DSD. Did not volunteer beyond the fact that he volunteered with his recruiter and went to the MEPS station. Never thought about this. He never thought about doing anything but you know, his AFSC. But he went down there with the right attitude because the chain of command picked the right person to go down there. He

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stepped up. He said hey, my Air Force needs me to do this, I'm going to give it my best shot. He goes down there, he's a distinguished graduate at the First Sergeant Academy. He's also the Commandant Award Winner. Now -- This is what Joe will tell you today is, he says this has changed his life, because he saw the Air Force from that stovepipe in which we built him, and now he sees our Air Force in a much different light. That is creating a future leader that is going to be able to do all those things that General Welsh talked about in his presentation and we need into the future.

So I'm really, really excited about how we're moving forward.

We also have to continue to develop that team, right? As we really rely on industry, and I appreciate their continued support and partnership with our Air Force. It's absolutely essential for us getting it right into the future and having those things that our would-be adversaries are clearly going after just as we are, but we have to make sure we're developing our team to be able to leverage that technology because having the stuff isn't enough. That's still what gives us the distinct advantage in the United States Air Force and our military over any other country today. It's the team that we have that they don't have.

So you have to consistently look to develop the team. I'm really excited to say if you look at that spinning pyramid, I like to talk about that a lot, it goes to how we're considering development in this whole pyramid concept, not in this triangle you kind of climb up to that top. And we currently have about 18 percent of our career fields that are doing developmental teams on the enlisted side of the house. By the end of FY16 or calendar year '16, every one of our 133 career fields will have developmental teams, and part of doing that is they're assessing their career paths the whole way. What do you need to get to the top of that pyramid, wherever you may be traveling around that pyramid, and how do we ensure that at the right times in your career we're developing the right amount of people to be able to do that? And making that very transparent to our airmen so they can see how they're going to get there. So I'm really, really excited about that and it ties right into one of Secretary James' initiatives that we're working and how we're going to create that career path tool, how we're going to evolve that tool for all of our airmen to be able to look in, see what the career looks like, and there can be on and off ramps to that career, as well as leveraging it as a mentoring tool where our airmen can get in there and they cannot just have those people that are directly in their chain of command that they might be familiar with, but also themselves reach out to other people that they would like to be mentored by potentially and also give people they can mentor outside of their functional community. So it all goes to how you look at that, how do we develop the team. How do we help the

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team reach their full potential and how are we very thoughtful about that. You can't just hope that people have what they need to have to get where you need them to get unless you have a plan to get everybody there. And the first part of that is developing some of those key milestones. So I believe we're doing that.

I'm really proud to say up there in the top left of that screen, that's Chief Master Sergeant Danny Doucette. And so while we are doing this in our largest scale in our Air Force right now when you think about one Air Force, the three uniform wearing components and our civilian components, really holistically looking at that. So I talked a little bit about the First Sergeant Academy with Joe, but this is Chief Master Sergeant Danny Doucette, and he's the first Air National Guard Chief, Commandant of our Air Force First Sergeant Academy. First ever. [Applause].

And what I'm most excited about in that is not that hey, we picked a Guard airman to be the commandant, because he's an airman. We were going to pick an airman, and that's good enough, right? What I'm excited about is really, the First Sergeant Academy has been on the leading edge of all of this approach to how do we look at the entire Air Force, all components, and how are we developing the whole force so when it comes to these key leadership positions we can have representation from every component operating at that level and they have the prerequisite requirements, they have the credibility that comes with experience and training to take on those roles and it's not oh, it's time for somebody in the Air National Guard to have that role, you know, there is no better chief in our United States Air Force today better suited to be the commandant of the First Sergeant Academy than Chief Doucette, and that's exactly where we have to continue to develop the entire Air Force to get there.

I'm working with Chief Kirskey and Chief Hotaling right now. We are actually looking holistically at all of our enlisted force, all components, on how do we make sure we're developing the entire force to be able to integrate throughout the entire force versus having these parallel things that don't really mesh when we need them to mesh from a developmental standpoint. How do we acknowledge that while we are very comfortable on the active duty side of the house, how we build everything, right? We've thought this out, we'll evolve it, but we're very comfortable with it. But we have this great skill set within our reserve component airmen that we somehow don't backward engineer into what does that mean in military speak.

You can go out there and you can take every bit of your military experience and translate in that to a civilian equivalency. We've done that. But we have not had that same look and looked at all of our civilian experience and made an equivalent

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comparison to what would that mean to us in the military. How would we say that that is a comparable amount of experience, a comparable amount of training and capture that. And then understand that at all levels of our Air Force, then when we're making these decisions about airmen in the future, we're valuing them in the way that we truly should be valuing them. You have to do it both ways.

So we're working that really hard right now to make sure we kind of laid out what do we need airmen to have, and then as you kind of back that out you'll develop all the airmen in the right way.

And I want to make a point of emphasis on that because part of the discussion we've had with our reserve component airmen at different levels is, there is a contingent of our airmen that want to be that traditional citizen airman. They're perfectly happy they're going to come into a unit in a state, they're going to get that and they're going to do that for a life time. They have another career they're in for, you know, one weekend a month for their annual tour, and they'll respond when the nation calls. That's important that you don't jeopardize that in this idea of how do you develop the force. But it's also important to understand that there's a large contingent of airmen in the reserve component that do want this ability to progress and do not want to be capped by the fact that the person that came in at the same time they did has to leave for them to progress. So how do you create a development period for them, and where is their on-ramp to that decision?

Okay, I'm willing to move states. I'm willing to change career fields. I'm willing to do this, and how do we capture that? That's what we're working real hard with our reserve component enlisted leadership to develop that and kind of build on the force.

So really excited about how you develop the team. But you know, also when you think about the team you have to think about where our strength comes, that core. How do you strengthen that? And I'll be honest with you, you have a couple of pictures up there of Mrs. Welsh and Athena and the boss and I, and first and foremost, I can't thank them enough. They continually travel with us to all these different places, we run them pretty hard, and they reach out to all of our airmen and their families, they work with all these agencies as well as Mr. Beatty, the Secretary's husband. They get together and try to collaborate with all these plethora of agencies out there that are willing to support and help our airmen and their families. But there's a lot of disconnect there and it's sometimes very difficult to connect them all together. As well as bring those families together as a core within our military family. Within our own

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tight-knit community so they can draw strength on each other. And they're doing really some yeoman's work in those areas.

But there's also other things that we're doing. We have the Single Airman Initiative and this is a great story that Staff Sergeant Haida StarEagle. We were at Scott just a month and a half ago, and we're up doing all calls, it's always a pleasure to do that, and then we hang out just to thank our airmen, shake their hand. And Haida got in line and she came up and I tell you what, you know it's always very rewarding and uplifting for us to be able to do that, but she kind of came up and her attitude was five people ahead of her. I mean you could just feel it and sense it that she was just chomping at the bit to get to us and talk to us.

So she comes in and she's so excited about telling us about this Single Airmen Initiative that she was involved in where basically a young female, single, on her second assignment, talking about the challenges of fitting in. Kind of getting to a new place, moving all the time, didn't have a lot of friends. She's a command post controller. She was kind of struggling in this idea of fitting in. So she ended up getting connected with this Single Airman Initiative, going out and doing some hikes and things like that, connecting with other airmen, creating this friendship and bond with people that didn't work with her in her work center specifically, but where fellow airmen we're living the same type of lifestyle that she was living so it's really powerful about how exciting that was for her. But what was most exciting about what she wanted to tell us...so you would think that is good, right? And that is good. This initiative is doing exactly what we hoped it would do. But what was most exciting about it is she didn't find that. What was most exciting, she wanted to talk about how her supervisor recognized that she was somewhat being withdrawn, somewhat kind of seemed isolated, and he was the one that took her over there and connected her with the program. He said hey, I think this will be a good thing for you. That's the essence of how we have to take care of each other. That's -- We've got a lot of good stuff out there. We've got a lot of great people out there and there's a way for us to connect them. That was just a great story.

Again, she wasn't really excited about telling us about the fact that she made new friends and how she did it. What she was excited about was talking about her supervisor recognizing that she needed some help to get connected into her Air Force in a different way, a more meaningful way.

That kind of goes to the resiliency of our force, right? It really goes to the essence of if we can create these relationships, takes you right back to the feedback I talked about, built on respect, trust, how we care about each other.

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The boss talks about this all the time. You just can't care enough, but you've got to know these folks, you've got to know what they're going through to do it. Then that over time will build resiliency. And I can talk a lot about comprehensive airman fitness but I think a lot of you hear that. But you can classify that as a program, but when you think about resiliency, it's not a program. It's the essence, it's that core strength that we all have to have, our families have to have it for us to be able to serve.

Here's a couple of great, great airmen. So we talked about our air commandos, we talked about the great sacrifice that they had paid. There is no career field in the United States Air Force that has paid a greater toll of our operations than our EOD men and women. None greater. Here's a couple of them right here. Tech Sergeant Cole Pasley and Senior Airman Mikey Burris.

I first told this story just after the beginning of the year when I went down to Atlanta and spoke with a group of over 700 civic folks from Georgia. And these are two Georgia boys in our Air Force.

And you hear their story, and I'll kind of tee it up for you. So it really, it's Cole that tells this story. He's at the EOD schoolhouse right now, but he talks about how many of his team mates he's lost. And it's hard enough to lose maybe one airman that you're close to, right? It's hard enough any day we lose one airman. But to lose two, to lose three, to be connected to each and every one of these brothers and sisters just that tight-knit is a pretty emotional thing and it takes its toll on you and it takes its toll on your family.

So I'm going to let -- So there was this epiphany in Cole's career and life that came about when he was deployed, kneeling over an IED. All of this stuff that he'll talk a little bit about here in a minute came to light. Basically his whole life in this moment comes to a point where he's like why am I doing this? What does this all mean? He's got a wife, a young son. He's lost so many of his team mates.

Mikey and him became friends because they were from Georgia and Mikey is a Bulldog fan and Cole's a Georgia Tech fan. So they had their little rivalry going and they communicated on facetime a lot about that. Quite a bit, to be honest with you.

The night before Senior Airman Burris went out on a mission he and Cole were going back and forth on Facebook. Cole hit the rack for the night. During that time frame Mikey got called out to respond to an IED. Next morning Cole gets up, gets on social media like a lot of our airmen do to check in and there's this litany of folks passing on their condolences because Mikey was

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killed while he was out performing the mission that our Air Force needed him to perform.

So let me let Cole tell you the rest of the story here.

From that point on I kind of just threw myself completely into the EOD job. I ate EOD, I slept it, I breathed it, I went into work early, I stayed late, because I was bound and determined because I was going to do everything that I could because, you know, for these guys. Which wasn't really the right answer because I ended up inadvertently kind of sacrificing time with my family and my wife. But that's kind of how I handled it at that time.

So I ended up deploying out of here, going back to Afghanistan. That deployment would actually ultimately lead to my team, we got struck by an IED. Fortunately it wasn't bad. There's definitely been way worse. We walked away. But it did get me thinking, why am I here? Why am I willing to sacrifice all this stuff? And I kind of went through a period of soul searching and talking to people. I think I've got it figured out. It's still a work in progress. I don't claim to have all the answers. But now what motivates me is my family. My wife supports me, stands by me. She loves what I do as much as I love what I do and I'm pretty fortunate to have that. So they're my number one motivation.

Number two is Tom. Tom was my first experience actually losing somebody to combat that I knew. And I see Tom's wife and his three daughters on Facebook. I see his daughters going to prom. I see his daughters graduating high school. And I know that Tom can't be there for that. That motivates me to be a better person for my family, to try to be there for my family and be available to my family.

Mikey Burris, Mikey's Bulldogs beat my Yellow Jackets that year, and the year after that. But not this year. This year we're going to wear out UGA pretty bad. I feel it. It's coming. And to console Mikey for that, on my way to Arizona, I've got to swing through Georgia and get my things that are in storage, I'm going to go down to his cemetery and first and foremost I'm going to tell him just how bad UGA still sucks. [Laughter]. Then after that I'm going to tell him how he still motivates me to try to be a better person, and I'm going to tell him just how cute his little daughter's growing up to be.

These are the guys that push me to be who I am.

The EOD Memorial is down at Florida at our EOD School. All our students walk past this every day. The names of the guys and girls that have been killed doing our job are on this wall. And my in-laws still live in the area, so I get to go visit it pretty

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often. And every time I go there I'm reminded that every person on that wall gave everything they had and then some to do the job that we all love to do.

I go there and I'm reminded that mediocrity wasn't an option for those guys and I kind of remind myself to make sure that it's not an option for me in my day to day. Am I always successful? No. But I do always try.

That's my story. That's the story of my friends. I hope that you guys can take something out of it. But this is what pushes me and motivates me. Thanks for listening.

No doubt Cole is a resilient airman, but that can't just happen without us all coming together, strengthen our core as an Air Force family. It really can't.

You know, we're doing a lot as we move forward to kind of build that resiliency from the ground up, so what better place for us to look at this than the beginning. General Rand and his team is working this hard, but we just now had the first group of airmen in the BMT Capstone Week which really takes our 8.5 week program, gets the efficiencies out of the proper scheduling and we do all the same training we've always done with our airmen in expeditionary skills, and then we kind of at the end of that they become an airman after 7.5 weeks. That's a different epiphany that takes place. The minute we start calling you an airman it is a different program than it is when you're a trainee. We're going to set them down there for a week after that and let them kind of decompress from the fog of BMT, not that dissimilar to the Fog of War. It is that rapid of a pace when you're down there. This gives us an opportunity to let them take some time to reflect, for us to bring in some folks to help them build the resiliency skills that are absolutely going to be essential for them to be successful as airmen in our Air Force, to understand what they're part of. To really internalize those core values, to help them understand that character is important and we're real excited about that because we think if you start them off right then the potential for success is greater and greater and greater and it acknowledges in a different way who they are when we're bringing them in.

So we're really excited about that.

So now we have to think about this and how we advance the force. So everything I kind of talked about really advances the force. It goes directly to what General Welsh talked about when you think about innovation. So there's the innovation, from our industry partners that is absolutely essential to keep us on the leading edge of whatever might be out there whatever we might be able to leverage into the future to do what our nation and our

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partners around the world need us to do, but it's also about the innovation of our airmen which is absolutely critical. Secretary James and our Vice Chief of Staff, General Spencer, have been big proponents of this, kind of the spokesperson of this and manpower by innovation has certainly been producing some great positive results for us. We have about 3,000 inputs to that right now. Did have the potential to save in excess of \$35 million for the taxpayer. That is decision space for our country, decision space for our military if we're able to produce that.

So I think we've always been a service of innovative airmen. I don't think there's a better example of it than what General Welsh provided. But I think it's important that we really focus in on what he said, and it might have went by quick. That is, we can't afford at any level of our leadership to stifle our airmen. WE have to be prepared with this generation of men and women that we are going and are handing this Air Force off to. We have to enable them. We have to empower them in the right ways. We have to leverage things that they bring to the table that, to be honest, when were at their point in our careers we couldn't even comprehend. They're just that smart and they're not constrained by decades of doing something. They're unconstrained in those thoughts, and I think it's important that we understand that.

Let me have Master Sergeant Shane Snary just give you kind of a snippet of this. It's not always about the millions of dollars, but it is about innovation and having leadership that supports you.

My name is Master Sergeant Shane Snary. I work in the Air Force Repair Enhancement Program here at Nellis Air Force Base.

My job is to help the flight line fulfill its mission by supplying repaired aircraft parts, and then by saving the Air Force money and generating money for our maintenance crew.

A few years ago some versions of the F-16 went through a modification on their oxygen system for the ejection seats and this created a new requirement for a five year test on the oxygen bottles. Most Air Force bases don't have the capabilities to perform this test.

So I found a company locally here in Las Vegas that can do this test for us. It was considerably cheaper than the alternative of buying a brand new bottle.

My idea has the potential to save a few hundred thousand dollars every five years for the Air Force.

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The Air Force as itself changes every day, and because of the results of that change we have to improve and change our processes to make sure that we can fulfill our mission.

The airmen on the ground that are performing the mission day in and day out, they're the ones that actually adapt to the change, and because they're adapting to the changes, they can change the process to make things better.

I think the Airmen Empowered by Innovation program is a great program that provides the opportunity for every airman at every level to submit their ideas. And I think it's important because my idea really was very small, even though now it has an effect on the entire Air Force. That just goes to show that any airman can submit a small idea and it can turn into something very big.

I'm not really sure you can ever say it better than our airmen that are doing it every day. And that is a testament to our entire Air Force that that takes place. We just have to continue to support that initiative.

So advancing the force in innovation, also advancing the force and how we're doing and stuff. So I talked a little bit about it, how we're overhauling our enlisted evaluation system, how we're talking differently about feedback, meaningful, purposeful feedback that is built on a relationship of respect and trust. The changes to the weighted airman promotion system.

We had another great opportunity that I really think is a great example of advancing the force. We were just out at Barksdale a few weeks ago and we had the opportunity, great opportunity, Meghan Morehouse and her young airman Phillip Scott. And this is another guy that was busting at the seams to tell us something when you got in front of him. I mean he was just busting at the seams. He was, I can't believe he's smiling now because he was smiling while he was talking to us, he had such a grin on his face. What he told us about Meghan that I thought was so uplifting and really gives you some of some of your own motivation and inspiration from your airmen, which I think we always are fortunate to receive any time we get to spend time around them, is he wanted me to know more than anything that Sergeant Morehouse was the absolute best supervisor on Barksdale Air Force Base, and those were his words. He wanted me to know that more than anything else.

That's easily said, right? A lot of people make great accolades, something like that. And you think hey, it's the supervisor and he's a smart man. He says she's great and she's going to think nicely of him. So no dust on him either. He's got some of this figured out.

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So then I said okay, Airman Scott, why is she the best? I want to know why. What is she doing that makes her the best supervisor? This is when you know she's doing it right because he said, because she sits down and she talks to me. She knows me. She talks about what I need to do next and where I need to go. She asks me what I want to do. And he went through this whole litany of this relationship where it was no question that she was connected with Airman Scott and he felt that connection and valued that connection, and he realized he'd be successful as an airman because he had Meghan, because he had Sergeant Morehouse.

So I think that's really a great example of what we can do, what we are doing, and what we will continue to do in the future as we have these discussions, as we continue to evolve as an Air Force. So we'll evolve with technology, we'll continue to work with our partners, we'll leverage them into the future, and we will evolve the way we develop our people and advance the force, and how we care and strengthen our corps. There's just no question about it.

A great -- It's always good to go back to the beginning for us, so our first Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Chief Airey, I had the distinct honor and privilege of meeting him several times throughout my career before he passed, and he made a comment just really shortly before he passed about our Air Force, because again, you have this pioneer in our Air Force, pioneer in our enlisted force for sure. And we asked him about, you know, how he saw the enlisted force then, at this stage, versus when he first came in. And he talked. He was very open and candid about the Air Force he came into as a very amateur force, uneducated, basically just here to do whatever task was necessary to do. But this was his quote, that they made this decision along the way, and they started to lead people, not drive them. And it was a decided change. It wasn't something that just happened. It was a decided change that slowly but surely has evolved, and he was extremely proud of his Air Force and his enlisted force, extremely proud of it. And we stand on his shoulders, just like we stand on the shoulders of those giants that came before us.

But let's be clear. We stand on their shoulders, not in their shadow. Not in their shadow. We are the force we are today because they put us on the platform by which we could see how far we could go and we do that today.

WE will rely on industry for many things. We will rely on the American people's support of our airmen and their families. Make no mistake about it, the critical link will always be our airmen supported by their families. That will never be a question in anybody's mind. And again, I appreciate your support, Secretary James, General and Mrs. Welsh, your continued commitment to just that priority.

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We have to do all the things you have to do to be capable, but if you leave those people behind in any part of that equation, you lose. Those people that are trying to learn about our business understand that. That's why they're trying to learn about a business from us.

So again, it's been a distinct honor to continue to serve as the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force. It's been a great challenging year. There are challenges ahead, but we'll get through them, just because of those stories that we're able to tell, just because of the inputs that the Chief provided. So again, I look forward to the rest of AFA, although I'm going to jump on a plane here in a couple of hours to go spend some time with some other airmen up at Langley. It's really a pleasure to be here. Thank you so much.