

# Commander's Call Topics



**February 14, 2013**

*“Shallow men believe in luck, believe in circumstance. Strong men believe in cause and effect.”*

-- Ralph Waldo Emerson, American essayist, lecturer and poet. (1803-1882)

*Also in this issue...  
Just in time for Presidents'  
Day--presidential quotes.  
Please see page 2.*

## Commander-in-Chief Has Many Roles

When most Americans think of Presidents Day, they think of honoring our first president, George Washington, and our 16<sup>th</sup>, Abraham Lincoln. When Americans think of the impact of our presidents today, they think about the economy, jobs, a strong defense and future retirement.

When most of us associated with the military think of our president, we think of the ultimate boss—the president as commander-in-chief.

We think of a strong commander-in-chief as one who will ultimately protect the nation against foreign threats. But for many of our presidents, especially in our young years as a nation, many of the acts as commander-in-chief were cases of domestic muscle-flexing.

George Washington's first example as president was one where he actually led the column of troops to quell the Whiskey Rebellion. Andrew Jackson followed suit several decades later when he threatened South Carolina when they refused collection of a certain tariff. And, of course, there's Abraham Lincoln who stepped in to bring the Southern states back into the fold after they seceded from the Union, causing the Civil War. And there's a long history in both the 19th and 20th centuries of presidents enforcing court orders to end certain worker strikes.

More likely, our presidents have maintained close control over the military, especially in times of conflict or potential conflict. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, during World War II and President Lyndon B. Johnson, during Vietnam, reviewed military strategy, and in some cases controlled the details of specific missions. Others like Woodrow Wilson during World War I and Harry Truman at the end of World War II, set the overall parameters of how the war was to be fought, but left the details to their commanders. And, of course, Lincoln discovered during the Civil War, presidents also have the power to hire and fire commanders in the field who don't quite live up to expectations.

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### OF NOTE...

“Taking care of our service members and honoring the sacrifices of all military families are two core values of this nation. [Extending these benefits](#) is an appropriate next step under current law to ensure that all service members receive equal support for what they do to protect this nation.” -- Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta after signing a memorandum to the service secretaries and the Pentagon's top personnel official extending benefits to same-sex partners of service members.

### ► CURRENT ISSUES

[AF leaders: Sequestration, more budget cuts will be devastating](#)

Sequestration would leave the Air Force with untrained people, a lack of equipment and be “devastating” to the service, officials said Feb. 7.

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## ► RESOURCES

### AF.mil

<http://www.af.mil>

### Airman magazine

<http://www.airmanonline.af.mil>

### Air Force Outreach

<http://www.afoutreach.af.mil>

### Military OneSource

<http://militaryonesource.af.mil>

### Military HOMEFRONT

<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod>

### Air Force Personnel Center

<https://mypers.af.mil>

<http://www.afpc.af.mil>

### Air Reserve Personnel Center

<http://www.arpc.afrc.af.mil>

### Department of Defense News

<http://www.defense.gov>

### Department of Veteran Affairs

<http://www.va.gov>

### TRICARE

<http://www.tricare.mil>

### U.S. Government Website

<http://www.firstgov.gov>

### Employment Opportunities

[www.usajobs.com](http://www.usajobs.com)

[www.nafjobs.org](http://www.nafjobs.org)

### Air Force Association

#### Scholarships

<http://www.afa.org/aef/aid/scholars.asp>

### Air Force Safety Center

[www.afsec.af.mil](http://www.afsec.af.mil)

## ► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

**Feb. 14, 1989** - In its first launch, the McDonnell-Douglas Delta II space booster lifted the first operational NAVSTAR Block II GPS satellite into orbit.

**Feb. 15, 1948** - The XF-87 Blackhawk made its first flight at Edwards AFB, Calif.

**Feb. 16, 1966** - General John P. McConnell, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, presented astronaut wings to Col. L. Gordon Cooper, Col. Frank

Borman, and Lt. Col. Thomas P. Stafford.

**Feb. 17, 2007** - The 45th Space Wing supported the launch of a Delta II booster from Cape Canaveral AFS, Fla., carrying five National Air and Space Administration 'THEMIS' probes to study auroral substorms, an avalanche of solar wind powered magnetic energy that intensifies the northern and southern lights.

**Feb. 18, 1943** - The first class of 39 flight nurses graduated from the U. S. Army Air Forces School of Air Evacuations at Bowman Field, Ky.

**Feb. 19, 1936** - Brig Gen William "Billy" Mitchell died at Doctor's Hospital, New York City. He was buried in Milwaukee, Wis.

**Feb 20, 1953** - Lockheed announced a new C-130 turboprop-powered transport for the Air Force.

## HE SAID THAT?

Presidents' Day is a movable date, celebrated on the third Monday in February, the month when both Abraham Lincoln and George Washington were born. Whether a great president is a product of his own making or is forged through time and circumstance is always debatable. At the very least, as the following proves, a president is eminently quotable. (Dates of office are in parentheses.)

"I hope I shall possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain what I consider the most enviable of all titles, the character of an honest man." *George Washington (1789-1791)*

"One man with courage is a majority." *Thomas Jefferson (1801-1809)*

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader." *John Quincy Adams (1825-1829)*

"It is not strange... to mistake change for progress." *Millard Fillmore (1850-1853)*

"I do the very best I know how—the very best I can; and I mean to keep doing it until the end. Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power." *Abraham Lincoln (1861-1865)*

"The world is not going to be saved by legislation." *William Howard Taft (1909-1913)*

"Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself. We look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms. The first is freedom of speech and expression. The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way. The third is freedom from want ... The fourth is freedom from fear." *Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933-1945)*

"I learned that a great leader is a man who has the ability to get other people to do what they don't want to do and like it." *Harry S Truman, (1945-1953)*

"Leadership: the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it." *Dwight D. Eisenhower (1953-1961)*

"If we cannot end now our differences, at least we can help make the world safe for diversity." *John F. Kennedy (1961-1963)*

**"What Washington needs is adult supervision."** *Barack Obama (2009- )*

*Martha J. Lockwood  
Chief, Air Force Production Information Products*

## **OF NOTE...** *(continued from page 1)*

### [Air Force libraries bridge the digital divide](#)

Need assistance setting up a budget, learning a new language or doing your homework? Look no further than your online Air Force library, where Air Force library staff work to meet customers' needs in an evolving digital world.

### ► **PERSONNEL ISSUES**

#### [Company grade officers selected for undergrad flying training](#)

Several dozen lieutenants and captains have been selected for the undergraduate flying training program, Air Force Personnel Center officials said.

#### [Patrick NCO earns AF top CE manager award](#)

For Senior Master Sgt. Terry Wooldridge, being nominated for the 45th Space Wing-level award was surreal in itself.

#### [AF medical leader recognized with AMA's top government service award](#)

Assistant Air Force Surgeon General, medical force development and nursing services, Major General Kimberly Siniscalchi, M.S.N., received the American Medical Association's (AMA) top government service award in health care.

### ► **FAMILY, HEALTH AND SAFETY**

#### [Photo essay: Eglin Airmen hold active-shooter exercise](#)

When Airmen enlist in the Air Force, they take an oath to defend the Constitution "against all enemies, foreign and domestic."

### ► **ENVIRONMENT, SPACE AND TECHNOLOGY**

#### [Cannon debuts latest in moving target technology](#)

Explosions shook the air as the white truck, almost invisible through the dust and smoke, weaved its way across a training range towing a target being shot at by 40mm rounds from aircraft patrolling the sky.

#### [DISA highlights increase in use of collaboration tool](#)

Use of a Web-based application designed to offer an information exchange environment for Defense Department users has grown markedly as defense spending cuts loom, Defense Information Systems Agency officials said.

## Commander-in-Chief *(continued from page 1)*

Probably the stickiest issues when it comes to the powers of the commander-in-chief have involved presidents' relationships with Congress. There are 230 cases throughout American history where presidents have authorized a use of force without consulting Congress. Most of these cases involve minor incidents such as piracy against Americans, or, in the early years, involved gaining new territories in such places as Florida, the American Southwest and Hawaii. Actions against native Americans for western expansion were also examples. While not common, presidents use their powers to topple certain regimes unfriendly to the U.S., such as the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, Cuba (during the Spanish American War), Grenada and Panama.

Presidents have also used their powers as commander-in-chief to enforce blockades and quarantines of other countries. Cuba during the missile crisis in 1962, a blockade of Iraq during the Gulf War and a blockade of Haiti in 1993 are classic examples.

During the Cold War, presidents had the heady responsibility of carrying the nuclear suitcase, where they were responsible for launching either preemptive or retaliatory nuclear strikes against other countries.

Since the end of the Cold War, the role of commander-in-chief has taken on a more humanitarian tone with examples of using the armed forces during humanitarian, policing and peacekeeping operations.

As we celebrate Presidents Day, we can take a minute to also appreciate the extremely difficult challenges each president faces with the charge as our nation's military chief, and the many complex issues that job brings with it.

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*Chief, Air Force News Services*