

**Gen. Mark A. Welsh III
U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff
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General Welsh: Thank you ladies and gentlemen, and thank you for taking the time from your schedules to be here with us this week.

To the Chairman, thank you again for hosting this great event. Thanks to all the AFA members, the chapter members who are here. Thanks to our international partners who have taken the time to be with us today.

One of the things I've noticed in talking to my fellow Air Chiefs around the world here in the last few months is they're concerned that because of resource issues we'll be pulling away from partnerships, and I think the smart money is on us going exactly the opposite direction. When you're having trouble with resources, when you really need to rely on partners, you hug them closer, you don't push them away. So that's the approach we're going to be taking.

Hawk Carlisle in the Pacific, Frank Gorenc in Europe are already all over that. Frank's spending a lot of time in Africa with the Air Chiefs there, developing a relationship, so we're excited about this and we're excited about you being here to talk a little bit about our Air Force this week.

I love the people in this slide. Old ones, young ones, it doesn't matter. I just love Airmen. That's what I want to talk about today. A little bit about Airmen, a little bit about airpower.

But before we start, first slide, please. Let me add my sympathies to John Greenert, to Secretary Mabus, and to every member of the United States Navy and in particular to the folks assigned to the Navy Yard who were traumatized, injured or killed yesterday, and of course to their families. Nobody expects to go to work and die. This is just wrong. But our heartfelt sympathies go from the United States Air Force to the United States Navy today.

Next slide, please.

By the way, it's been a pretty rugged year even before yesterday for our Air Force. We've lost some very courageous, very talented and very engaged in the fight young Airmen this year.

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We've also lost a couple of people who I consider to be legends of this business. There are a few of them, I just want to walk through it quickly and just say thanks to them.

First, General David Jones, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs; former Chief of Staff of the Air Force. Three hundred bomber sorties in Korea in a B-29.

Next slide.

General Bob Rutherford, Commander of U.S. Transportation Command; Commander of Air Mobility Command; 110 combat sorties in the F-4 in Vietnam. Three Distinguished Flying Crosses.

Next slide.

Colonel Ruth Lucas, the first African-American woman promoted to colonel in our Air Force, and a leader in education and training for the Air Force her entire career. She was promoted to O-6 in 1968 and all of us know what a time that was. A remarkable, remarkable American, a great lady, and a tremendously successful and professional Air Force officer. She was 92 when she died.

Next slide.

Colonel Ralph Parr. 641 combat sorties, flew a P-358 in World War II, flew the F-86 in Korea, a Double Ace with ten kills. A pretty impressive guy. Silver Star. Ten Distinguished Flying Crosses. Excuse me. Ralph Parr had 14 Air Medals.

Next slide.

General Boots Blesse. I just had the pleasure of attending his funeral along with my wife Betty and I had the chance to meet his wife, Betty, for the first time. I actually have a set of General Blesse's colonel's rank. My dad pinned them on my shoulders when I was promoted. Boots Blesse was one of his heroes and a pretty good friend of his.

This guy, of course, wore the Distinguished Service Cross. He wore three Silver Stars. He wore six Distinguished Flying Crosses, 21 Air Medals, also a Double Ace with 10 kills in Korea.

Next slide.

Most recently, Colonel Bud Day. The most highly decorated military warrior since Douglas MacArthur. Seventy decorations, 52 of them for combat including things like the Medal of Honor, the Air Force Cross, the Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross,

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four Purple Hearts, three Bronze Stars with Valor devices, and a POW Medal. Just a remarkable, remarkable American.

Next slide.

The good news for us is that all our heroes aren't gone. [Laughter]. You might not recognize the Chairman here. Back then they knew him as Gorgeous George Moellner. But you know before he was this worldly philosophical nattily dressed Chairman, he was a fighter pilot, a pretty darn good one. 750 combat sorties; four Distinguished Flying Crosses; 28 Air Medals; test pilot, test squadron commander; and first JSTARS combat detachment; and a fighter wing commander. George, thanks for who you were, not just who you are, buddy. [Applause].

Next slide, please.

I bring this up because I love this slide. This is my dad on your right, and my son John on your left. This slide is really significant to me for a couple of reasons. Betty and I took this picture at John's graduation from Air Force Pilot Training. He had called my dad and asked him if he would come pin his wings on him. Dad had been a pilot in the Air Force for 35 years. Dad of course agreed. About two weeks later John called me and said hey dad, you've got to call your father and tell him to calm down. He's buying a new service dress, he's buying a new ribbon rack, and it had been almost 30 years since dad retired. So I called dad and I tried to tell him hey, you don't have to worry about spending all this money, and I mean I got cut off. I got the literal hand on the phone. He said buddy, those wings deserve my respect and they're going to get them. So, Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi. Betty and I took this picture of my dad pinning my son's wings on.

John's about 6'4". Dad used to be about 5'9". He was shrinking at this point in time, so John was kind of doing the knee bend to let him get the wings in there. I'm just not sure who was prouder in this picture. But I guarantee you the two proudest people in the area were the ones behind the camera.

This picture to me signifies an awful lot of things for our Air Force. It's the passing of a legacy. It's the passing of heritage. It's the transition of responsibility between commanders, between generations, between organizations. This picture means a lot to me.

My dad died a couple of years after this picture was taken, and when he died he left a note for my mom that said hey, I've got a safety deposit box, you need to go open it up. So we did. There was a book in there. The book was titled, "The Croak Book", things to do when I croak. Authored by my father. The first item in the book, item number one, the only think in there that was underlined said "Bury me in my service dress." So we did. That service dress.

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The night before the funeral we saw him there lying in repose and I couldn't help but think about what he'd done when he wore it. My dad, like the guys I just mentioned, fought in three wars. He retired with a little over 9,000 fighter hours. He also wore the Silver Star and five Distinguished Flying Crosses, more Air Medals than I can remember. He also had five major Battle Stars. He towed a glider across the beach at Normandy. He resupplied Patton's 3rd Army as they broke out of the [Beaukage] with air drop, he flew a glider into Germany with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in the largest glider assault in history. The last guy out of the glider threw him a rifle, and that was the first time dad said he ever thought about how he got home. So he fought with the infantry for five months across northern Germany. After that he flew airplane after airplane. Nineteen of them total. He was nominated for the Medal of Honor in his last combat tour in Vietnam. He was the real deal, and I'm really really proud of him.

But he was really, really proud of you. And from the time I can walk I remember him telling me about this.

This pride thing is big to our Air Force, folks. It's what drives us. It's what causes these great people we bring in the door to become even greater performers. It's why we have 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year sitting here in this row that have separated themselves from their peers. They're not all that much more talented or that much smarter. They're just prouder. So they work harder and they commit themselves more and they take care of everyone around them better. It's just who they are. You instilled that, by the way. Thank you for doing it. I think they'll be proud and I know I'll be proud of this video I'd like you to watch.

[Video shown].

If that doesn't fire you up then you're not an Airman! The A stands for Air Power, and don't you forget it. [Laughter, Commenting about "Captain America" mask he is wearing].

The sad part about this is last night, I put this thing on like late at night and was debating on whether to even do this, and then I got distracted by something and about 30 minutes later I realized I was still wearing it. [Laughter, takes off mask].

Let me talk to you a little bit about the Air Force from my perspective. Through the prism of my focus areas which are these -- win the fight, always first; strengthen the team; shape the future.

Next slide.

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We've been winning the fight for a long time, gang. This Air Force is an incredible success story. It has been since the days of the Army Air Corps. You all know about all the things on this slide.

Next slide.

We've continued it since then. We have become the first option when diplomacy fails in several cases. Here are some examples of them.

Next slide.

We haven't quit winning the fight. We're doing it every single day.

This is just a lay out of what we're doing around the world today. It's not really surprising probably to you, but if you don't think about it every now and then you kind of lose track of the volume of it.

We've got people all over the world, 24x7, doing really important work. We're doing counterterrorism in three different combatant commands AORs. We're doing ISR, space activities every single day. Cyber in support of all the combatant commanders. We're doing mobility stuff all over the world, a sortie every two minutes, in fact. Every hour, every day of the year. All these kinds of things are happening. Ed Rice has got a thousand flights a day in the training enterprise.

So when we start talking about resource limited, downsizing, all those kind of things, you've got to step back every now and then and realize how big the enterprise still is. And don't panic too quickly.

Next slide.

Every day 222,000 Airmen are supporting our combatant commanders. Directly supporting them. Either stationed overseas, deployed overseas, or supporting them from home station. We've got 15,000 people doing space surveillance work, doing missile warning. 24x7, shifts around the clock, taking care of this nation, taking care of our combatant commanders. We've got over 100,000 people involved with that mobility enterprise I mentioned to you before.

We've got 35,000 people who do the ISR enterprise, collecting, flying aircraft with sensors, monitoring space sensors, moving data and information across the architectures of the DCGS and getting it to where it needs to go so that data becomes useable information. We've got 53,000 people every day who do nothing but command and control. Contingency operations, humanitarian operations, standing defense plans in different combatant command theaters, ballistic missile defense, and then ISR

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activity around the world. And of course in Central Command's AOR and in Africa Command we're actually doing combat operations.

So this stuff is happening all the time. Your Airmen are working hard. They're doing exceptionally well. That's where these 12 folks came from. That's why they're here, because they're unbelievably good at it.

Next slide.

We still do the same five core missions we started doing in 1947. We actually started before that, but we codified them in 1947 when the President gave us the order and we're still doing them now in three domains -- in air, space and cyberspace. Those domains are becoming more contested, they're becoming more congested, and we're having to figure out new ways of doing those missions in those domains. But that's what Airmen do. We'll get better and better and better at this, but those missions aren't going away.

So as we prioritize assets and resources of the future, that's where we'll focus. That's what the combatant commanders expect from us.

Next slide.

By the way, I'm getting really frustrated with hearing over and over again this comment about why do you need an Air Force? You've got to be kidding me. We're not past that yet? Here are the facts.

That's how many people in each of the other services do anything related to aviation. From a mechanic to a weapons loader to an aircrew member. Those are the numbers.

So let's let the Army do it. I don't think so. They're great at what they do. They're organic to Army maneuver units. That's what they do. The Marines can't do what we do. They're fantastically good at supporting the MAGTAF, that's what they do. They're really good at it, but they can't do what the Air Force does. The Navy is focused on the fleet. Fleet defense, near term strike ashore, they can't do what the Air Force does. Not in the air. Just like we can't do what they do at sea. These are great air arms. **There is one Air Force in America and you're it.** So let's just shoot this one in the head.

Next slide.

[Applause].

If a combatant commander wants airpower there's only one number to call. When they dial the phone, "Showtime may answer." Showtime is an Air Force Reservist at

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Elmendorf. He flies the F-22. He flies it really well. Did you guys see the news clip not long ago about the Iranian F-4s that intercepted a remotely piloted aircraft out over the Arabian Gulf? Then they were warned off? This is the guy who warned them off. After he rejoined on them, flew underneath their aircraft to check out their weapons load without them knowing he was there, and then pulled up on their left wing and then called them and said you really ought to go home. [Laughter].

Show Time is air superiority. It's still foundational to everything we do in the United States military. Without it, everything else has to change. We can't afford to forget that.

Next slide.

Meghan Ripple sitting right over here. Meghan, can you stand up for a minute? Let me tell you a little bit about Meghan Ripple. Meghan is an AC-130 gunship pilot. In fact she was the first AC-130 female aircraft commander in the gunship community. Meghan, please relax. You're making me nervous. [Laughter]. Turn around and wave like this. I know you do it in your squadron. Go ahead. You can sit down for a minute. You don't have to clap for Meghan, I'm going to bring her back up later.

Meghan's squadron, the 4th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt, last month came home from the desert for the first time since September or 2001. Thousands and thousands of combat sorties, combat hours, success on the battlefield over and over and over and over again. Meghan herself has 2500 combat hours. Almost 360 combat sorties. She's been doing this essentially since 2001. She took a brief break to get back with her husband for two years and have a couple of kids, but now it's back to work. She's the Ops Officer of the 4th Special Operations Squadron now and she deploys again in two months. This is how we're winning the fight. Not with the airplanes, with Meghan.

Next slide.

Maybe when they dial that Airpower number (TSgt) Zach Rhyner is going to answer. Zach is only the second Air Force Combat Controller to receive the Air Force Cross. That was back in 2008. He was held directly responsible and credited with saving his 10 man Special Operations team in a really brutal ambush as they tried to move into some mountainous terrain to go after one of the big kingpins in the region. Although he was wounded he spent three hours calling in close air support and walked away from that with the respect of some very very capable warriors and the nomination for the Air Force Cross, which he richly deserved.

I got a chance to meet Zach here earlier this year, here in DC when he was up at Bethesda in the hospital after being wounded again. Wounded pretty badly. He's now down at Fort Bragg. He's recovering. He'll be okay. He was hoping to get full mobility

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back. But this is one great young American who as soon as he can, will be back in the fight because that's what he does.

That's what Master Sergeant Paine does. He's a buddy of Zach's. He's going to tell him you gave him a round of applause.

[Applause].

By the way, when I first met Zach he told me he knew Bill McRaven, the Commander of U.S. Special Operations Command. So I gave Bill a call and I said I just wanted you to know I saw Zach, he's doing pretty well. Bill McRaven said yeah, you know, every time for the last 10 years, any time I went anywhere where the fighting was really ugly, I ran into Zach Rheiner. He's like a magnet. Nobody wants to travel with him anymore. [Laughter]. But they all know him.

Next slide.

Trae Clark's an Airman. I mean an Airman. He's also our cyber defense. He defends our networks. Right now he's evaluated over 100,000 violations, penetrations, miscalculations, things that have gone wrong in our network to find out what the real problems are. He's identified several hundred and either streamlined them, quarantined them, or shipped them off to people who do ugly things to them. This is what he does. He is the most productive guy in his squadron as a young Airman. This is how we fight the fight.

Next slide.

Brent Powell works in the 460th Space Wing for Willy Shelton. He works out of Buckley Field. In the last quarter he saved \$6 million just by reorienting sensors in space to collect intelligence in a different way. He did it. Senior Airman Powell. This is how we fight the fight.

Next slide.

These two guys are here, too. Jeff and Tyler, will you stand up for a minute? You guys can stay standing up because you look relaxed. [Laughter].

I was out at FE Warren last year and while we were visiting Chief Cody was there with me, Betty and Athena were there, and we got a briefing on Global Strike Challenge which is the big competition that Global Strike Command has on the nuclear business. Missiles and bombers. They gave us this briefing. We heard about Jeff and Tyler.

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Now there are four trophies you can win in this competition. Three of them are for missile teams and one is for a command. All the squadron teams are totaled up and then the group gets an overall grade. These guys won all three team trophies and then of course led their group to win the fourth one. Their Ops Group swept everything. This is the best ICBM missile team in the world. Right there.

[Applause].

Thank you, guys. Thanks for winning the fight every day for us. You can sit down guys, thank you.

Next slide.

Bandage 33 is kind of a routine aeromedical evaluation flight in Afghanistan. That's the aircraft crew on the left. Interestingly, the guy on the right side of that photo on the left is named Ryan Thornton. He was my son John's roommate at the Air Force Academy. Small world, isn't it? The team on the right is actually the medical team that does the work and care for the patients and the wounded warriors in the back, and the mission director -- next slide please -- is Adriana Valadez. Adriana, would you stand up please?

Adriana's an Air Force Reservist. She's actually, in her off time, she is a trauma nurse in the ICU at San Antonio Military Medical Center. She's been doing it a long time and she's really good at it.

Ryan Thornton, who by the way was a very very good rugby player. Ryan Thornton is scared to death of Adriana. He just calls her the "bad ass". [Laughter]. They had a mission not too long ago where they were asked to divert into Mazar-e-Sharif to pick up a wounded warrior. He'd been pretty badly injured. Had a bullet wound to his upper leg. The femur had actually been, as it turned out, it was damaged pretty badly, the nerve had been damaged badly. They didn't know that at the time. They'd done a brief surgery.

Bandage 33 shows up, loads him on the airplane. They're on a regular run and they think the patient's stable so they're going to continue to the next spot to pick up another patient. Adriana and the team start working on this guy and all of a sudden he starts to go downhill. All of his vital signs start to get shaky, he starts to bleed. Entry and exit wound are both bleeding. She knows that he needs to get to Bagram like right now or he's not going to survive this trip. She directs the pilot, get us to Bagram. They push the throttles up as far as they would go and they start rocketing as fast as a C-130 can rock into Bagram. The airplane is max performing, the merit medical team in the back is max performing, and the patient is still bleeding.

About the time they get ready to go down into Bagram, remember there there's mountains around the field, you have to come in high and then go down pretty steeply.

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They don't want to slow down. It's a little rugged inside the back of the airplane, so they're bouncing around a little bit. Adriana's having trouble now keeping pressure on the bleeding which she's now doing with her hands because that was the best way to try and do it. So she straps herself in the litter with the patient and hangs on as they go down this bumpy ride, get him on the ground. She stays there, keeping the pressure on the wound, trying to control the bleeding until they get him on an ambulance, start putting blood in him before they leave the airplane. She goes to the hospital with him. He survives. Actually keeps his leg. She saved his life.

[Applause].

I asked Adriana earlier if she'd ever managed to find out who this was and talked to him later. She said no, I heard he got out of the hospital.

Next slide. (image of Adriana next to (TSgt) Zach Rhyner, mentioned earlier)

Adriana, let me introduce him to you. He's an Air Force hero. He couldn't be here today but he asked me to say thank you. I'll give you his email. Thanks for saving our guy.

[Applause].

Thanks folks.

Next slide.

A couple of things I am concerned about in this area of win the fight. Number one is readiness. You guys know it's been slipping. We've got to do everything we can to keep it as good as we can. Mike Hostage has been working his tail off along with Paul Selva on the mobility side to try and keep our CAF and MAF forces as ready as we can. We're doing the same thing in the nuclear business. We've been doing the same thing in Korea. Everybody's doing everything they can to keep us as ready as we can be, but the longer this stuff stretches out, the longer the continuing resolution goes next year, if we encounter sequestration for another year or two, the worse it's going to get. We just have to keep our eyes open and understand that, and minimize the impact where we can. It's not going to be good.

Next slide.

Full spectrum training is something that fell off the table for us about six or seven years ago. We've got to get it back on the table. Our job as an Air Force is to be ready to fight the high end fight against a well-equipped, determined, well trained foe. I don't know how big a force we'll have to do that, but whatever we have better be able to do that. At least some of it better be able to. So that's where we're going.

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Next slide.

Things like Red Flag. We can't keep canceling it. We've got to figure out how to fund them. We need that training. Our partners need that training.

We have other things like Weapon School where we cancel a class; we'll never make that up. There will be that gap in our PhD warfighters for the rest of that year group's career. We can't continue to allow that to happen.

Our job is to fight and win the nation's wars. These are the PhDs in that business. We've got to train them.

Next slide.

Strengthen the team. Next slide.

You guys had a chance to hear the Secretary talk yesterday. Let me tell you something. He's pretty impressive when you hear him talk. He's pretty impressive when you first meet him. He's more impressive the longer you're around him. This guy's going to do great things for our Air Force. Either as the Acting or as the Under when we finally get our new Secretary confirmed which I hope happens here pretty quickly. Her hearing is later this week.

But Eric Fanning is a huge, huge plus for the United States Air Force. The more you see him, the more you're going to like him. So please welcome him warmly as often as you can, invite him out to see you, ask him questions, get him engaged. You're really going to like him.

Next slide.

Our Total Force Task Force has been working pretty hard along with Sid Clark, JJ Jackson, Frank Grass over in the National Guard Bureau, to try to figure out how we bring together this Air Force team and make sure that everything we do is focused on going forward together.

We've got a couple of TAGs working very closely with us in the staff. Buddy Titshaw from Florida who is here somewhere, and then Mike Edwards from Colorado. There you are, buddy. Thank you, Sir. And Mike Edwards from Colorado, the TAG there has been working with us. This group is going to come to a solution. We're going to come together with ideas that will help us move off of where we've been for the last six or eight months and come to solutions that make sense for states and makes sense for the nation. It's going to take us a little time to get all the analysis done because it's not easy. There's nothing easy about what we're trying to do here. But I think the idea of

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moving forward in a way that's constructive is really going to be helpful for us. Everybody's working this really hard. More to follow in a couple of months on this one as we get our POM input together for FY15.

But I think we're going to find that my initial guidance to the team was to push as much into the reserve component as we can without impacting operational capability or responsiveness. Finding out where that is is the trick. It's different in every type mission system and there won't be clear agreement in every case, so we're just going to have to grind our way through this.

The key is that we do it openly, transparently, and with everybody at the discussion. So that's where we're headed.

Next slide.

Here are three things I think are important for us in strengthening the team from here, moving forward. Number one, we've got to make sure that common sense is the first standard we apply. We have hundreds and hundreds of AFIs in the Air Force, many of which haven't been rewritten in a long time. The world changes real quickly in this business. We've got a lot of frustrated people out in the front end of the Air Force who don't understand why they are given guidance to do things that don't make any sense to them. My answer to them is they shouldn't do it. Just quit. If it doesn't make common sense, if it doesn't make the mission better, if it doesn't take better care of our people, then just don't do it and tell your boss you're done.

Now you can imagine the looks I get when I say that to them. But I'm dead serious about this. All the MAJCOM Commanders are hearing it. They understand what I'm saying. They're trying to do the same things from their positions in their commands, and we're going to have to just go back to thinking about commanders being commander, supervisors supervising, make decisions and enable your Airmen to do it.

Our force is better educated than it's ever been, it's better trained than it's ever been, and we've got to empower our Airmen. Better than they've ever been empowered. They're remarkably capable. Just listen to some of the stories I was telling you. They're remarkably capable. They don't feel empowered. They don't feel like they can make decisions or make suggestions because they don't think anybody will listen to them. We've got to change that. If we don't, we'll fail.

Communication, I'm referring here to corporate communication. This is my problem. I'm not doing a good enough job of getting information to the Air Force on issues that are important to them. We're trying, but it's not getting where we want it to go. It gets stuck in stovepipes or it gets stuck in a base paper or on a web site that not everybody's looking at. We're not waterfalloing it enough to get it to everywhere. We're desperate enough now; Chief Cody and I are now on Facebook and Twitter, which is

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terrifying. Follow us. [Laughter]. But we've got to fix this one because our Airmen are smart and they want answers, and they deserve them.

Finally, we've got to care more. We already care a lot. But our job is to fight and win the nation's wars. If that's your job description, you'll never be good enough at it, and you should never pat yourself on the back. We've got to get better every day. And the people we work beside are the greatest people on earth.

Our families are the most wonderful people on earth. Why would we not want to care more about all of them and figure out how to show it and make sure they feel it? We've got to do that, guys. We just have to.

Let me give you just one example of a question I'm asking everybody as I went around the Air Force. I basically ask them, if your best friend walked in to your office today and sat down in the chair in the corner and they didn't say a word, even if you hadn't seen them in three or five years or something, do you think you could tell if they were having a bad day? Probably. You'd kind of know what they're thinking. It's a little bit intuitive to you. You know their body language. You'd know.

If your young lieutenant or young Airman was raped last night and comes into your office and sits down and doesn't say anything, can you tell they're having a bad day?

The fact is 84 percent of the time, we can't because 84 percent of the time they don't report and we never know it.

Why is that? Why can't we tell?

I don't know the answer, but if we can figure that out we'll beat this thing.

I'll tell you this, it's not a big Air Force program. It's one on one. It's Airman to Airman, it's supervisor to supervisee, it's commander to supervisor. It's what Chief Roy used to call analog leadership. It's Chief Cody walking into a room and saying who's your best friend? Give me 90 seconds and I'll know more about them than you do, and challenging people with that. Then asking a series of questions and proving he can do it. Because we just don't take the time to ask. We've got to care more.

Next slide.

Like this guy does. That's Sergeant Andre Davis, one of our 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year. You heard his story last night if you were here. You've seen it in all the things that are published for this thing. Sergeant Davis, will you stand up for just a second? He is actually an education training manager in a civil engineering squadron down in Virginia Beach, Virginia, in a Red Horse unit.

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You know what strikes me most about his record and the reason I asked him if he would allow me to put his slide up today, is that he doesn't do anything spectacular. He does the normal stuff so spectacularly well that it becomes spectacular. He's the guy we all want working for us. He's the guy we all want to work for. That's why he's an Outstanding Airman of the Year. He deserves it richly because he cares about everything.

Thank you, Sergeant Davis, for the way you do your job. Thanks for being a role model.

[Applause].

Next slide, please.

This is Jhosselin Alonzo there with Betty. Betty met her at Wright-Patterson Base when we were out visiting General Wolfenbarger and her team. Senior Airman Alonzo started a group, actually helped start a group called Air Force Junior Support, AFJS. The whole idea is give young Airmen, and there are a lot of them at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, options other than going to bars and hanging out with people who like trouble. That's what it is. It's to teach people a different lifestyle from kind of the inside. It's to have them exposed to different groups of people who are more like them, who do things they like to do whether it's snowboarding or going to church or whatever it is. She arranges events, she arranges plays, she took a theater group downtown and teamed up with them to show a sexual assault play in the Airmen's dorm. Done by Airmen, coached by the theater folks from downtown. She does all these kind of things over and over and over again, and she does it with that smile on her face and a commitment to help everybody she touches. She is an unbelievable young lady and she is a Senior Airman in the United States Air Force. She strengthens the team every day when she shows up. And now she's going to spread it.

You would not believe how many young Airmen are doing this around our Air Force now. We saw groups like this on our trip to the Pacific last week. Hawk had told me we would, but we did. We saw them at Kadena, we saw them at Misawa, we saw them at Osan, we saw them at Kunsan, they're everywhere. Just taking care of each other. It's really a positive trend.

Next slide.

Alicia Hinds Warren is our Military Spouse of the Year this year. She's the first Air National Guard spouse to receive that honor, astonishingly, because we have some fantastic Air National Guard spouses. If you haven't met this lady, she's wandering around here this week, stop her when you see the face and just talk to her for a minute and your day will get better instantly. No kidding. She's got a magic to her. Meet her.

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Next slide.

This part of strengthen the team is important. I want to particularly thank George for having the Family and Spouse's Forum start up yesterday. That's a big deal. Even if it starts small and grows, it doesn't matter. It's started. A lot of people have tried to do this in the past, it's hard to keep it going, but it is important for the Airmen in our Air Force, especially the young ones, to understand that their priorities don't always lie with us. They can't afford to think that way.

So I tell them that on the day I die, when I'm lying on my death bed trying to decide if I won or lost at the game of life, the fact that I was Chief of Staff of the Air Force won't even be part of the equation. If Betty is standing there holding my hand, I won.

Our Airmen need to understand that. They need to keep their priorities straight. They don't have to work 18 hours a day and we shouldn't be making them. It's okay to have a life in this business, and if we want to keep our Airmen longer we need to make sure we express that to people.

Next slide.

Finally and really importantly these days, let's talk about shape the future for a minute.

Next slide.

We put the vision out early this year. The World's Greatest Air Force -- Powered by Airmen, Fueled by Innovation. We just followed that up --

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-- with a paper on Global Vigilance, Global Reach and Global Power for America. The focus in this, the content is basically those five core missions and how they translate into vigilance, reach and power for America.

This document is actually an internally focused document. The intent is for all of our Airmen who we send it to directly to understand where they fit in the broader scheme of the Air Force because most of them, know their piece really well. But they don't know a lot about the rest of it. They don't know how big the Air Force is, how many people do certain missions. Where do they fit in all that? That was the intent of this document.

But the important document is the next one.

Slide.

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It's whatever we end up calling our strategy which we've been writing for a while. The Air Force 2023 effort we had to figure out what force we could reasonably afford and expect to be able to build by 2023, given sequestration, was the start of the strategy build. And it's kind of been the outline of what we have to date. The idea here is we build the flight plan. We build the many flight plans that go with it. The different kind of documents that have to attach to it so we have resources connected to it. Then we start turning the ship and heading toward whatever that picture of 2023 looks like.

We can't finalize the track until we know what our top line budgets are going to look like so hopefully we'll get some stability soon.

We don't have that yet but we're going to have to make assumptions and get moving. If we don't, we won't be able to turn fast enough to get there when the decisions are made. So we're moving out.

Next slide.

After that, of course, comes QDR. Major General Steve Kwast is our QDR Chief. He's going to be fantastic in this role, he's already fantastic in this role. We're hoping that the QDR turns into a strategic discussion on where does the Defense Department need to go by 2023. What are the key parts of the joint warfighting force that have to be in place? Then let's fund those. Let's have the debate about mobility versus submarine warfare or amphibious assault capability versus infantry brigades. Whatever the debate needs to be, let's have it. Then let's invest in the priorities for the department in the right ratio and let's get going.

Next slide.

You've heard a lot about sequestration. This is one of our sequestration hearings from earlier this year. Let me give three areas that I'm concerned about with it. A couple of them have just popped up.

Next slide.

I think you know we furloughed our civilian work force. This is a breach of faith. For the last three years we have not given pay raises to our civilian work force who are essential to every mission area we have in the Air Force, and in some mission areas they are the mission area. They do the whole thing.

We were just down at AETC talking to the maintenance group. It's all Air Force civilians.

So for three years we didn't give them a pay raise and then we furloughed them. You know what they're saying to us when I'm visiting? They're not complaining about the

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furlough. They're upset by it but they're not complaining about it. They're worried that they don't have enough time to get their job done, their work done by the end of the year. That's the caliber of people we've got.

Corporately, the Air Force lost almost eight million man hours from furlough. That's a huge hit. That's a lot of work that's not getting done. We have no plans to furlough in 2014 in case anybody was wondering. As long as the continuing resolution doesn't go past six months, I don't see any reason we would have to. We never had any plans to furlough in 2013 until all this started. The nation has got to come up with a better solution than this. We've got to be part of that solution, and the Secretary and I are committed to be.

Next slide.

Another concern.

One of the wings I just visited had been grounded since the first of April, the airplanes had been. The ones that weren't deployed. I met with a bunch of young Airmen there, they had a lot of one and two striper at this base. I asked one of them how he was doing and he said great, it's a great place. I really like it. It's boring, so I'll probably do my four and get out. I haven't heard anybody say life was boring in the Air Force for the last 12 years. But they're sitting around looking at airplanes on a ramp. They got done with all the training they had to catch up. This guy works in the maintenance business. He's bored as a two striper. That's a little scary. We've got to think about this.

Next slide.

We've got to worry about retention. Expect the airlines to start hiring at the end of this year. Our rated force has options as they come out of their required period of service. They serve really proudly. They served exceptionally well and now they've got choices to make. This is another issue. If we're not making them as good as they can be, if we're not challenging them, if we're not letting them train, if we're not letting them keep that edge, they'll walk. We just have to recognize that and do everything we can to make sure they do keep it. That's why the joined. They didn't join to sit and look out the window at their airplanes.

Next slide.

Here's the decisions we're making right now. These are the kinds of things we're debating inside the building. Nothing's been decided for sure, but I'll tell you this. We're looking at everything because \$1.3 trillion out of the Department of Defense budget is going to leave a bruise. We just all have to know that.

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Should we recapitalize? Buy new? Or should we modernize old equipment? This is not an easy decision. There are some things we can't modernize to keep it viable against the threat after five or ten years from now. So there are some places we have got to recapitalize. That's going to take money away from the modernization effort which has been hit by sequestration.

We've got to look at whether we can use an airplane for multi-mission versus single mission. As Mike Hostage points out to me, it's pretty much a false argument. I don't think we have any airplanes where we just do a single mission with them. But if there are airplanes that are better suited to multiple missions than another airplane, then the one that isn't is at risk. As we look at downsizing, saving money. We've got to break the price curves, folks, in everything from services for our people, school costs, everything we do at a base, all the way to airplane costs.

1945, a really good airplane cost \$500,000. Thirty years later, 1975, it cost \$5 million. Thirty years later, in 2005, it cost \$100 million. We can't stay on that curve. In fact the Air Force is off of it now. The nation's off of it. We can't afford it. We need your help to figure out different approaches, and I'm looking forward to talking to the leaders of industry about this. We've got to come up with a different approach.

Then Air Force organization. With all this going on, we're taking a hard look here starting at the next CORONA at how should we be organized? Do we have it right? Do we need to adjust? What do we need to adjust? If you've heard rumors about all the changes, they're rumors. We haven't made any decisions. We haven't even had a real conversation about it yet. But it's coming.

What do we do with cyber? Space? ISR? Do we combine them? Split them? What do you do with the nuke enterprise? Do you make it bigger? Do you make it smaller? Do you put it under something? Do you keep it independent? All those things are going to be debated. A lot of people have opinions. We'll make decisions and we'll move on and we'll let you know what we're doing.

Next slide.

Here are things we've already decided. We're going to prioritize three programs for recapitalization. KC-46. We have to recapitalize the tanker fleet. After the last one's delivered we'll have 200-plus tankers that are 65 years old. We just have to recapitalize this fleet.

Next slide.

F-35. We have no other choice. The airplane's doing well. For the last couple of years it's actually performed solidly, on track. We're going to get there by IOC, I'm confident

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of it, and I'm not being Pollyanna. I'm confident we're going to get there. Assuming we have consistent funding between now and then.

The issue with F-35 is if you don't have it you can't operate in the advanced air defense systems of the future. You can't do it. And you can't compete with the fifth generation aircraft unless you have a fifth generation aircraft. It's that simple. You can't dress up an old one and make it a new one. You can make it better, but you can't make it this.

Next slide.

You're wondering why I'm showing a "Shape the future" slide with a B-52 in it? In 1962. Can you see the guy on the left there, the number 40 right behind his head? You can't see the 10 that's in front of it.

Next slide.

Maybe you can see it now. This is the same airplane. The long range strike bomber is another mandatory recapitalization program for us. We don't have an option. Operationally we have to have it to do what I described before -- Be ready to fight a determined, well-armed, well trained enemy in a high end fight.

Next slide. (image of "death star")

Without even asking me how we are on this program I can't talk about this. [Laughter].

Next slide.

The one thing I will tell you we will be doing a lot of in the future and talking about though is how do we shape this force? And we're going to have help from some pretty remarkable people like we always have. One of them is sitting right there, and most of you know her. Ms. Natalie Crawford. Would you stand up and wave to the crowd Natalie?

[Applause].

For a long time now Natalie Crawford has been part of our Air Force. She's worked for RAND for a long period, but during that whole time she's been in love with the Air Force and with Airmen and with their families, and she has done everything in her power to make this a better organization, to make us better equipped, better qualified. She knows more about the Air Force, about the technology that we use and about the technology we could use or should use than anybody in this room, I suspect. She's brilliant. And she cares more than any ten people I know.

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Natalie, I just want to say thank you for a lifetime of being a great Airman, and thanks for the help I know you're going to be as we try and figure this out for the next couple of years. I'm going to be leaning on you and so will many of these others. Thank you for your service.

[Applause.]

Next slide, please.

So, it sounds happy, doesn't it? You worried about the future? I get this question a lot. The answer is no. I'm excited about the future. It's a great time to lead in our Air Force at whatever level you're at. We've got some things we've got to figure out. We'll figure it out. Have you talked to these guys yet? They can figure anything out as long as we don't get rid of them. So we've got to be worthy of them staying. If we do that, we win. If we keep these guys on the job the mission will get taken care of, we've just got to figure out how to get them the tools they need to get the job done. We can do that.

There's another reason I don't worry about the Air Force. It has nothing to do with technology. It has nothing to do with their talent. It has to do with their heart.

I'm going to show you another clip here. This was kind of put together with a couple of pieces of film from the recent series Inside Combat Rescue. The guy in the tape is a young Air Force pararescueman named Justin. He's on his first combat tour. It's a short clip. Enjoy it.

[Video shown].

I'll never worry, not while these guys are on our side.

Would you guys come up and join me?

[Applause].

This is your Air Force.

Next slide.

This is what they stand for.

Next slide.

The heritage we share is a gift, given by those who have gone before and magnified by those we stand beside. Leadership is also a gift. It's given by those who follow and we have to be worthy of it. That's our job.

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When we are worthy of it then those who follow us stand a little prouder.

My name is Mark Welsh. I'm an Airman. Just like you. Airpower... because without it, you do lose.

Thank you, folks.

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