

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ATOMIC AIR FORCE: ARTIFACTS OF THE AIR
FORCE'S PEOPLE PROGRAMS

by

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ABSTRACT

From its inception recruitment and retention concerned Air Force leaders, more specifically Strategic Air Command (SAC) and Air Defense Command (ADC) leadership in the early years, and it continued as a recurring theme throughout the Air Force's very short lineage. Early Air Force leaders recognized a need for attracting the nation's most desirable and competent, as well as the need to retain those individuals for an extended amount of time. Recruiting methods that only targeted the Airmen quickly changed as Air Force leaders realized that the Air Force recruited Airmen, but retained families. Early airpower leaders, including SAC's longest serving commander General Curtis E. LeMay, thus offered benefits, or as many later labeled them, entitlements, to attract and retain the whole family. The majority of these programs for the Air Force originated in the late 1950s and matured during the mid- 1960s. Beyond recruitment, SAC's "People Programs" contributed to the Air Force's integration process while building a foundation for race and gender equality. The creation of the Air Force's welfare programs, while successful, also created a slew of bills that leadership now struggles to pay.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR.....	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LOCATION OF DOCUMENTS AND FORMATTING	xi
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1	10
Recruiting After WW II and Before 1950	10
SAC's Response to Manning Shortfalls and Recruiting	19
The Army and Air Force Reach an Agreement	24
CHAPTER 2	44
Retaining A Qualified Force.....	44
LeMay's Housing Programs	47
SAC Dormitories	55
The People Programs	58
Recruiting the Right Person.....	61
CHAPTER 3	64

The Turbulent Years	64
CHAPTER 4	72
The Air Force And the All-Volunteer Force.....	72
Personnel Programs and the Erosion of Benefits.....	72
Social Programs	76
The New Definition of Family, Daycare and Dual Income.....	79
CHAPTER 5	88
The USAF's Entitlement Artifacts	88
Housing.....	94
Bachelors' Quarters	99
Child Care	105
Education	106
Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR)	106
CHAPTER 6	109
Conclusion	109
Figure 12 Air Force People Programs circa 2010	112
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	113

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Wherry & Capehart Housing Constructed between 1949 and 1962.....	54
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LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1	Mt Home AFB circa 1948.....	9
Figure 2	Model plane contest-Air Force Day 1948 Davis-Monthan.....	31
Figure 3	Example of U.S. Army U.S. Air Force recruitment poster.....	38
Figure 4	Example of U.S. Army U.S. Air Force recruitment poster.....	39
Figure 5	Example of U.S. Army U.S. Air Force recruitment poster.....	40
Figure 6	Base Map from Mountain Home AFB circa 1967	49
Figure 7	Wherry and Capehart Layouts	51
Figure 8	Transformation from Barracks to Dormitories	57
Figure 9	Examples of SAC's People Programs.....	59
Figure 10	Gen LeMay and SAC's People Programs.....	60
Figure 11	Memes of Air Force Living Conditions.....	101

LOCATION OF DOCUMENTS

AND

FORMATTING

Much has been written about the overall military benefits established in the 1950s and 1960s, but this study focuses on the programs established by the Air Force, more specifically Strategic Air Command, that directly influenced recruitment and retention demand. Because the national command authority placed the emphasis on Strategic Air Command and Air Defense Command throughout most of the time period covered by this study, a great deal of emphasis is placed on document collections from those two organizations. The collection of SAC documents reside in part at Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, in the Bohn Global Strike Research Facility. All but two of the cited documents are freely available.

Air Force recruitment histories are currently in storage in an attic at Randolph AFB, Texas. An effort to protect these documents is underway. The author surveyed the documents and cites several throughout the text, but further study is warranted along with production of follow-on products.

INTRODUCTION

The evolution of Strategic Air Command's "People Programs" and its air base designs supported the Air Force's overall recruitment and retention goals while improving the quality of life for its Airmen and their families. The roots of these concepts are traced to the seeds planted in the 1950s and 1960s. The efforts of General Curtis LeMay and his staff played a critical role in the development of the Air Force, but the true success of SAC's People Programs came from the young service's ability to create rather than inherit.

General LeMay is critical to the discussion, not only because of his unwavering support to SAC's People Programs, but more so for his longevity as SAC's leader and his follow-on assignments. General LeMay served as SAC's second commander from 1948 until 1957, and in that time created SAC's People Programs, championed efforts to build Air Force housing, and created a culture unlike any in the past. He departed SAC to become the Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force and then a few years later assumed the duties as the Air Force's leader, the Chief of Staff. In those 17 years, he was responsible for shepherding the Air Force through its early critical growth, building a solid foundation for quality of life programs that supported the idea of recruitment and retention, but he also played a key role in the Air Force embracing the concept of equality.

Even with a powerful leader, the Air Force could not have made such monumental changes if it not been for the fact that its leaders were allowed to create new programs and processes rather than replicating the old processes from the other services. It began with the way the Air Force chose to project power. Contrasting the other services that viewed

their home station's as just a port or just a post, the Air Force viewed the air base as not only its power project base, but also its home. The Air Force's runways represent modern American strategic airpower while its housing and its People Programs represented a shift in the military's thinking, one from a society focused on the single man to one embracing the society of families. The ability to create air bases, or in some cases revive old World War II installations, while developing innovative personnel policy allowed the Air Force to build a system of entitlements that attracted and retained a talented workforce. The other services did not enjoy this benefit of creating and were wed to old practices. As expected, they fell victim when they did not adopt better quality of life programs to attract and retain their recruits. Their decisions to not change were rooted in their history and how they fought in the past. The Army's post was just a stop over until the next fight and the Navy's port was just a way point until they got underway again. The Air Force elected to choose a different path. Together with a strong leader and the ability to take a different path, SAC and the Air Force created a new future for the young service.

In the afterglow of the atomic bomb mission and the demonstration of American airpower might, some asked if the United States needed a large standing force. Mr. Charles C. Rohrer summed up the sentiment when he stated, "We all recognize the next war will be won by the nation which has the latest in scientific achievements. Masses of foot soldiers can no longer compete with the atomic bombs."¹ Later, Lt. General Jimmy Doolittle claimed "a 'small, but adequate, ultramodern, highly mobile' establishment built around air

¹ Address Before Committee on Military Affairs. *Demobilization of the Armed Forces, Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Armed Forces on S. 1355, 79th Congress, 1st Session, 1945.*

power was the most economical defense organization for the U.S."² Some continued to argue for a larger force and they received feedback that they were planning for the last war, rather than the war of the future. With the Air Force clearly earning favor for its future military role the question of how to man the postwar military began very early. Air Force leaders chose volunteered recruitment. However, by January 1946, the volunteers failed to make up for the lack of military members recruited under selective service, the draft.

By the latter part of February 1946, despite a decline in the uproar over demobilization, the Secretary of War, Robert J. Patterson braced himself for another wave of public protest this time over the Army's caste system. In the glow of the end of World War II, enlisted men voiced their disapproval for officers' restaurants, hotels, nightclubs and bars that were "Off Limits to Enlisted Men" and "For Officers Only;" the separate post exchanges, hospital wards, and even latrines. They lamented officers having better access to female companionship, their extra liquor rations, and their reserved seats at the theater. Robert Neville, a writer for the *Stars and Stripes* summarized the repercussions this would have on enlistment writing, "that until the Army changed its practices despite lures of pay, travel and vacations, relatively few men in this country of ours will elect to enter a caste-ridden organization in which they immediately become the untouchables."³ The Secretary of War agreed with Neville's findings and appointed Lt General James "Jimmy" Doolittle to lead an investigation with Major Wilson R. G. Bender as his recorder. Together with Robert Neville and General Troy Middleton, the "Doolittle Board" surveyed the allegations

² Address Before Committee on Military Affairs. *Demobilization of the Armed Forces, Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Armed Forces on S. 1355*, 79th Congress, 2nd Session, 1946.

³ Robert Neville, "What's Wrong With Our Army?," *Life* 20 (25 February 1946). 105.

and the issues and then made recommendations to the Secretary of War.⁴ The announcement of the board composition received mixed comments. Some believed the board members were not qualified, lacked diversity, and would probably white wash the whole report until the establishment could take over once again. Others stated quite the opposite, claiming that "from Doolittle on down to the buck sergeant the personnel of the committee is representative of our civilian Army."⁵ In April 1946, the board announced that the first phase had been completed and that in the next phase they would study the testimony, letters, and literature on the subject.

In early May 1946, just two months after the War Department re-designated Continental Air Forces as Strategic Air Command, Doolittle reviewed the draft report and began making changes.⁶ By the end of May, Secretary Patterson released the report to the public, which was generally well received. The Doolittle Board recommended 14 suggestions and Patterson approved twelve. The recommendations, some vague and some very specific, quickly received flak from the regular soldier. "Thanks to some noisy and completely un informed civilians we have about killed the caste system and in doing so we have all but killed an innocent bystander--the non-commissioned officer."⁷ Later during the Korean War, the professional soldiers who led the small and half trained army in the

⁴ Kevin Phillip Anastas, "Demobilization and Democratizing Discipline: The Doolittle Board and the Post World War II Response to Criticism of the United States Army," (Duke University, 1983), pp. 47, 50, 58-62, 69.

⁵ Anastas, "Demobilization and Democratizing" Discipline 69.

⁶ Dr. Daniel Haulman, "Lineage and Honors of the Air Force Global Strike Command (USAF)," Air Force Historical Research Agency, June 30, 2009.

⁷ The Doolittle Report: The Report of the Secretary of War's Board on Officer-Enlisted Man Relationships, May 27, 1946.

first few battles realized that something was very wrong with the system and they loudly voiced their opinion of the source of the problem. Sergeant Lloyd Pate noted a lack of discipline. "That Doolittle Board who wanted to make everything dandy for the poor damn private, that's what did it. And you can quote me on that."⁸ In later testimony he said, "The post-war 'Doolittle Board,' caused severe damage to service effectiveness by recommendations intended to 'democratize' the Army--a concept that is self-contradictory."⁹

In total, seven of the Doolittle recommendations were partially or completely implemented and only two were outright disapproved. So, the only real change the Doolittle Board made was to stop enlisted men from saluting officers off post or when off duty, but the perception that the Board had indeed made change took on a mythical status. It empowered the average G.I. while making leadership believe that they had been stripped of some authority. The reality was that the "Caste System" study achieved Secretary Patterson's main goal, which was to quiet the public and make them believe that change had taken place, and portray the military as a place an enlisted man could make a career. As a second order effect, and arguably more damning, many began to believe that the recommendations, and the changes, of the Doolittle Board led to problems in recruitment

⁸ Kevin Phillip Anastas, "Demobilization and Democratizing Discipline: The Doolittle Board and the Post World War II Response to Criticism of the United States Army," (Duke University, 1983), pp. 93.

⁹ Kevin Phillip Anastas, "Demobilization and Democratizing Discipline: The Doolittle Board and the Post World War II Response to Criticism of the United States Army," (Duke University, 1983), pp. 93.

and retention of soldiers.¹⁰ They were probably correct as the old traditions of the military had been put on trial as Doolittle sought "to make the army more compatible with a democratic nation."¹¹ The report's authors stressed, "Note must be taken of changing concepts, social unrest, a transitional period in which thinking is directed toward the perfection of democratic processes, with greater emphasis on human relations, security, the dignity of the individual."¹²

Some later debated the true power of the Doolittle Committee in reference to the Code of Military Justice after WW II. In a May 1961 *St. John's Law Review* article, "The Background and the Problem," Robert J. White argued that while the Doolittle Committee recommended "a review of the machinery for administering military justice and the court-martial procedure,"¹³ the follow-on efforts were what really changed the military justice system. He added, "To attribute a dominating influence to the Doolittle Report is to fall into the same error as the Board itself--a fascination with the reform of social amenities, salutes, and fraternization."¹⁴ While his argument is sound, it is wrong to overlook the

¹⁰ Kevin Phillip Anastas, "Demobilization and Democratizing Discipline: The Doolittle Board and the Post World War II Response to Criticism of the United States Army," (Duke University, 1983), pp. 93-97, 109.

¹¹ The Doolittle Report: The Report of the Secretary of War's Board on Officer-Enlisted Man Relationships, May 27, 1946.

¹² Mark R Grandstaff., *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), 62.

¹³ Robert J. White. "The Background and the Problem," *St John's Law Review* Issue 2 Vol. 35, May 1961, Number 2, pp 203.

¹⁴ Robert J. White. "The Background and the Problem," *St John's Law Review* Issue 2 Vol. 35, May 1961, Number 2, pp 203.

power of America's desire for reform in the post-WW II era and how the Army embraced these concepts.

America was changing. It was becoming modern and futuristic and the average American wanted the opportunity to embrace the American Dream. In response, and in an effort to make the military a more desirable career choice, several years after World War II, the Army announced that every youth drafted into the Army "will be treated as a human being, never a raw recruit."¹⁵ This and other changes in the Army, together with the G.I. Bill and a VA loan, and the Air Force's move to become more businesslike, confirmed that the Doolittle Report signaled the need for major change in how the military would recruit and retain qualified and later highly trained men and women. These post war reforms would become the cornerstone of the newly created Air Force and from its inception, these issues would dominate its very existence. It must be stressed, however, that the Air Force, unlike some of the other services, recognized these lessons very early. Because of this, early airpower leaders embraced the idea to offer entitlements to entice Airmen to enlist, but better yet, to stay.¹⁶

As the Air Force began to build up in late 1946 and early 1947, so too did the United States, and like the Air Force, great change was coming. The nation began building massive neighborhoods and the military offered returning WW II veterans access to the G.I. Bill

¹⁵ Edgar L. Jones. "You're in the Army--Again," *The Atlantic*, Jan 49, retrieved 6 September 2016.

¹⁶ R. B. Pitkin, "How the First GI Bill was written," *The American Legion Magazine*, Jan, Feb, May 69.

and options for purchasing a home.¹⁷ So, as leaders in SAC and the Air Force worked to attract the best and brightest, they competed with the temptation of the American Dream of owning a home and having a good life. To offset these temptations, SAC and the Air Force leaders implemented numerous People Programs and constructed Levitt Town-like neighborhoods at each air base to replace the dilapidated structures at most WW II bases- (Figure 1.) The majority of these programs for the Air Force originated in the late 1950s and matured during the mid- 1960s. This social welfare apparatus pre-dates the Army's reaction to All Volunteer Force changes of 1973 and has shaped the culture of the United States Air Force. The Air Force's early decision to focus on quality of life programs created a successful recruitment and retention program.

¹⁷ R. B. Pitkin, "How the First GI Bill was written," *The American Legion Magazine*, Jan, Feb, May 69.



Home sweet Home

Dean Jones Collections, John Bohn Research Facility, Barksdale AFB, LA.



Figure 1 **Mt Home AFB circa 1948**

CHAPTER 1

Recruiting After WW II and Before 1950

In the mid 1950's, Mr. George F. Lemmer, an Air Force historian assigned to pen portions of *A History of the United States Air Force* wrote, "Many of the Air Force's later manpower difficulties had their roots in the chaotic demobilization after World War II."¹⁸ Statements from Maj. Gen St. Clair Streett, the Deputy Commander of the Continental Air Forces in October 1945 supported Mr. Lemmer's thoughts.

It is clearly apparent that the emphasis on demobilization has served to obscure the fact that we will have soon reached a point, if it has not been reached, at which the *Army Air Forces can no longer be considered anything more than a symbolic instrument of National Defense* [Italics added]... Our Zone of Interior potential, because of the "willy-nilly" discharge of trained maintenance specialists and key men, is rapidly becoming impotent to provide anything in the form of units approaching the combat capacity which would be required in the event of any emergency. *The attitude of Russia, if gleaned from no other source than the newspapers, should serve to jar any complacency we might now have as to a final and entirely satisfactory settlement of the Peace.*¹⁹

General Streett believed the nation had demobilized in a haphazard manner and too quickly. In his words, this method would produce a "potpourri of warm bodies inadequately seasoned by too few regular army officers and enlisted men. The basic structure of what

¹⁸ Alfred Goldberg. *A History of the United States Air Force*. New York: Arno Press, 1974, pp. 161.

¹⁹ John C. Sparrow, *Department of the Army Pamphlet No. 20-210: History of Personnel Demobilization in the United States Army* (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 1952), pp. 268.

has been our Air Force will have dissipated.”²⁰ To offset these poor decisions he directed that the Air Force reinstate a training system “to prepare the men who are going to be left with us for the job that we are going to expect of them.”²¹

On V J Day, the Army Air Forces had 2,253,000 men and women in its ranks. By the end of December 1945, that number had been cut to 888,769 and by May 1947, the Air Force's military strength reached its low point of 303,600. Referencing the drastic cuts to troop strength, in 1945 General Carl Spaatz openly stated that overseas commanders "had insufficient personnel to carry out the responsibilities assigned by the Joint Chiefs of Staff."²² On VJ Day the Army Air Force had 218 combat groups, but by the end of 1945, demobilization had reduced that number to 109. A year later, the Air Force had been reduced to 55 groups with only two combat ready and effective. The mass migration back home had left airfields, both overseas and in the states, untended and silent, airplanes un-serviced and on the ground, and the Army Air Forces in shambles.²³ This, and many other aspects of the demobilization process took President Truman by surprise as his inner circle had briefed him that all was well. President Truman had told James Forrestal that the

²⁰ John C. Sparrow, *Department of the Army Pamphlet No. 20-210: History of Personnel Demobilization in the United States Army* (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 1952), pp. 268.

²¹ John C. Sparrow, *Department of the Army Pamphlet No. 20-210: History of Personnel Demobilization in the United States Army* (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 1952), pp. 268.

²² John C. Sparrow, *Department of the Army Pamphlet No. 20-210: History of Personnel Demobilization in the United States Army* (Washington D.C.: Department of the Army, 1952), pp. 270.

²³ Alfred Goldberg. *A History of the United States Air Force*. (New York: Arno Press, 1974), pp. 105-106.

demobilization process "had been done efficiently and thoroughly."²⁴ His confusion more than likely stemmed from the compartmentalization of the process, but he quickly jumped into action to address troop strength and morale issues.

As planned, the post war force would dwarf previous peacetime American militaries, but the debate of Universal Military Training (UMT) and an independent air force, coupled with the combinations of post-WW II benefits, including the G.I. Bill, and the suburbanization of America perpetuated problems with recruitment, training, and retention. To meet the problems of recruitment, as a rule, each service determined its own policies and administered its own programs. While the War Department opted to rely on the draft, the Army Air Force, later the United States Air Force, wanted to do what it had always done, recruitment through volunteers.²⁵ Beginning in fall of 1945, General Spaatz, who would later become Commanding General of the Army Air Forces in February 1946, began writing to General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who had succeeded Marshall as Army Chief of Staff, explaining how the Army's recruiting system continued to fail the Army Air Forces and requested that the Air Force have greater control over its own recruiting. Under the Army recruiting system of 1946, the Army Air Force received too many non-specialized, non-skilled technicians, but General Eisenhower opposed a separate air force system citing it would duplicate existing agencies and might be unfavorable to the

²⁴ Daniel Eugene Garcia, "Class and Brass: Demobilization, Working Class Politics, and American Foreign Policy between World War and the Cold War," *Diplomatic History*, Vol 34, No 4 (September 2010). pp. 696.

²⁵ Herman S. Wolk. *Planning and Organizing the Postwar Air Force 1943-1947*. (Washington D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1984), pp. 74-75; Mark R Grandstaff., *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), pp. 85, 99.

unification program. Of the 200,000 recruits pushed to the AAF, many were non-specialists lacking education and mental aptitude and Spaatz believed they had played a role with the alarming climb in accidents due to poor maintenance. In addition, the AAF leaders learned the Regular Army recruiters had made promises to potential recruits in order to meet quotas. Those promised had not always been kept.²⁶

To counter the poor quality of the Army's recruits, Spaatz proposed several options. First, he requested that the AAF have an opportunity to screen recruits that the Service Force recruiting agencies obtained for the AAF. He offered to place an Air Force Sergeant at each of the principle Service Force recruiting centers and the AAF would have each recruit undergo a simple trade test before they were accepted. He also wanted to stimulate recruiting in any way possible and to actually accept applicants at any location as long as it did not duplicate efforts at existing recruiting facilities. To make recruiting in small towns and at country fairs and other gatherings easier, the AAF planned to deploy recruiting caravans from current Air Force bases carrying specially prepared displays. He thought that the recruiting service of the Service Force should prepare bill boards, write articles and advertise in newspapers while using any other method to encourage war-trained technicians to return to the Air Force. To support that effort, he offered to supply these agencies with information specific to the Air Force mission.²⁷

General Spaatz also addressed his desire to separate men who did not meet the needs of the Air Force. Because Army recruiters had filled the Army Air Force's ranks with

²⁶ Memorandum, General Carl A. Spaatz to General Dwight Eisenhower, "Present Status of Air Force Recruiting," March 21, 1946.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

non-specialized, non-skilled technicians, many of these men fell below the Air Force standard and could not perform as needed. They also occupied valuable manpower billets that Air Force leaders wanted to use for qualified technicians that they had selected. So, in order to recruit the proper men, the AAF needed to get rid of the dead wood. General Spaatz stressed, "It should not be necessary to produce evidence that a man is practically a moron before he can be eliminated from a technical arm of the service."²⁸ Lastly, General Spaatz requested that the Army raise the required Army General Classification Test (AGCT) score for AAF recruits.²⁹

In April 1946, General Eisenhower responded to General Spaatz's requests. He strongly opposed the idea to refuse enlistment in the AAF to recruits who had lower AGCT scores as it "is not compatible with the continued induction of the same type personnel for assignment to the Army Air Forces." Because of this, at the time, he refused to let the AAF discharge personnel with lower AGCT scores. He made General Spaatz aware that he had learned that the AAF had started construction on twelve caravans and while AAF personnel would operate the vans, he directed that General Spaatz work directly with the Military Personnel Procurement Service to avoid duplication of effort. While he did not oppose the caravans, he did not authorize the AAF to operate, to recruit, independent of the Army.³⁰

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Mark R Grandstaff., *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), pp. 91-92.

³⁰ General Dwight D. Eisenhower to General Carl A. Spaatz, Memorandum, "Present Status of Air Forces Recruiting," April 22, 1946.

The following month General Spaatz reinforced his stance on the need for better AAF recruitment and retention procedures. His letter focused solely on enlisted men highlighting that the structure of the AAF at the time was unsound due to the large numbers of men who were of no real value. Prescribing a long lasting remedy, Spaatz offered that an aggressive, sustained, and realistic recruiting program that was open and selective would allow the AAF to procure the men and women it needed. He had no desire to duplicate the efforts of Military Personnel Procurement Service's current recruiting procedures as he more than likely saw that organization as part of the problem. Addressing the AGCT scores, it was also not his intent to insist on higher qualifications for AAF enlistment at the detriment of the Army and Navy. However, Spaatz believed the AAF could take action on two efforts, better recruitment campaigns and raising the AGCT score, without harming the other services.³¹

Out of the demobilization-shattered remains of the mightiest air force in the world, peace-time leaders strove to weld an airpower arm by turning their attention toward the war-experienced youth and recent high school graduates in a recruiting campaign to attract three-year enlistees to whom General Spaatz pledged “a betterment of the situation of the enlisted man, including technical training and opportunity for degrees in civilian educational institutions.”³² Of minor importance, but one that spoke to the Doolittle Committee’s findings, enlisted men and officers would wear the same uniform and plans had already been put in place to field a distinctive air force-only uniform. Also, the AAF’s

³¹ General Carl A. Spaatz to General Dwight Eisenhower, Memorandum, "Present Status of Air Force Recruiting," March 21, 1946.

³² AAF, War Department Bureau of Public Relations. *Many Jobs For Graduates In Reorganized Air Force*. May 28, 1946, pp. 5.

proposed recruiting program offered individual needs to enlistees that aligned with a democratic society. A sample of entitlements included:

1. Good living conditions with better food, clothing, quarters, and recreation available under a peacetime system.
2. An interesting day-to-day life with an opportunity for participation in the rapidly advancing research and development projects throughout the world.
3. The opportunity to prepare for the future in either military or civilian life through the increasingly facilities of AAF schools and through off-duty and post-service educational opportunities.

While the proposed recruiting program emphasized benefits that included better living, Spaatz made clear the AAF's marketing tagline, "To maintain the peace; to pioneer the future, noting that "[t]he advance of air power depends on scientific progress."³³ Because of the air force's role in futuristic combat, the AAF marketed advancements like all-weather flying, radio research, guided missiles, new aircraft and the atomic armada in hopes of attracting the best and brightest.

Education became a cornerstone of the future air force. Spaatz wrote, "Education is of prime importance, to the furtherance of air power." To this end, the AAF established Air University at Maxwell Field, Alabama, and the Air Forces Institute of Technology at Wright Field, Ohio, for continuing formal and specialized technical training. In addition, AAF recruiters made every potential recruit aware that any man who enlisted for a three-year period before July 1, 1946, would receive full privileges under the G.I. Bill. Therefore, a man enlisting for three years would be able, at the end of his enlistment, to attend college for as long as 48 months, receiving up to \$500 per year for tuition as well as \$65 or \$90

³³ AAF, War Department Bureau of Public Relations. *Many Jobs For Graduates In Reorganized Air Force*. May 28, 1946, pp. 2.

per month for living allowances, dependent on marital status. However, while on duty, each enlistee would have valuable training in many fields, from radar physics to administrative bookkeeping, and would have an opportunity to take fully accredited correspondence or extension courses or to attend civilian colleges with part of his expenses paid.³⁴

The Army Air Force also planned to pay specialist ratings that included multiple lucrative bonus packages. As an example, if a former aircraft maintenance crew chief with more than 30 months' of service elected to return to service, he would return as a technical sergeant, rather than a private. Airplane and engine mechanics returned as staff sergeants. If a man reenlisted 90 days since his separation date, he would reenlist in the grade at the time of discharge. As for first-time enlistees, if they elected to enlist for three years they not only selected their branch of service, but they selected an area of assignment, such as Germany or some other overseas location. Other highlights of the AAF program included: an increase in reenlistment bonuses to \$50 for each year of active service since the bonus was last paid, mustering out pay to all men discharged, family allowances for the term of enlistment for dependents of men who enlist before July 1, 1946, life insurance, and the best pay scale, medical care, food, quarters, and clothing in the history of the Army.³⁵

For the proposed recruiting program, General Spaatz requested that the Army provide \$600,000 for a specialized advertising program that appealed to the type of man the Army Air Forces needed. This type of publicity had worked in the past and filled the

³⁴ AAF, War Department Bureau of Public Relations. *Many Jobs For Graduates In Reorganized Air Force*. May 28, 1946.

³⁵ AAF, War Department Bureau of Public Relations. *Many Jobs For Graduates In Reorganized Air Force*. May 28, 1946.

WW II Army Air Forces with qualified men. Of note, General Spaatz wanted to use the minimum AGCT score of 80, rather than 70, as the prerequisite to determine eligibility for enlistments and reenlistments. The War Department refused to approve either of these requests, so the discussion continued throughout the remainder of 1946 and into mid-1947.³⁶

During this time, the AAF tested its recruiting caravan concept, effectively making contact with potential recruits; however, those operating the caravans did not have the authority to enlist candidates on the spot. Rather, the caravan recruiters told the potential recruits to proceed to the nearest Army recruiting office and make that facility aware that they wanted to join the Air Force. While the caravan concept proved useful, the War Department refused additional funds, so the AAF discontinued the operation in the winter of 1946.³⁷ Maj Gen Frederick Lewis Anderson, the AAF Director of Personnel and Administration summed it up well.

Since the personnel needs of the Army Air Forces are peculiar and differ considerably from the other arms and services, it appears essential that we be permitted to select and recruit the type of people we need. The Navy and Marines have undertaken their own recruiting programs with exceptional success. They have been able to exercise selectivity and recruit people for their individual needs. It appears desirable that the Army Air Forces be permitted this same freedom.³⁸

³⁶ General Carl A. Spaatz to General Dwight Eisenhower, Memorandum, "Army Air Forces Recruiting," May 1, 1946.

³⁷ General Carl A. Spaatz to General Dwight Eisenhower, Memorandum, "Army Air Forces Recruiting," May 1, 1946; Maj Gen F.L. Anderson to Mr. Stuart Symington, Memorandum, "Army Air Forces Recruiting Program," September 24, 1946; Maj Gen F.L. Anderson to Maj Gen St. Clair Streett, Memorandum, "Proposed Recruiting Organization," January 9, 1947.

³⁸ Maj Gen F.L. Anderson to Mr. Stuart Symington, Memorandum, "Army Air Forces Recruiting Program," September 24, 1946.

Enlistments for the Regular Army and the Army Air Forces had dropped off sharply towards the end of 1946 and it was the opinion of many AAF leaders that the trend would continue if the War Department did not embrace change.

SAC's Response to Manning Shortfalls and Recruiting

Demobilization had created many complex and multifaceted problems for SAC and its leaders. The first, and most obvious, the mass migration of talented, well trained men and women to civilian life. The loss of manpower hounded SAC and from March to December 1946 officer strength decreased from 14,739 to 4,120 while enlisted strength plummeted beyond repair, so much that it was necessary for SAC to institute an extensive recruiting campaign to offset its hemorrhaging of enlisted personnel. Despite a concerted effort, SAC could not maintain its authorized enlisted end strength at any time during 1946.³⁹

For those left behind, SAC relied on them even more, but many of these recruits did not have the requisite skills sets to perform SAC's critical jobs and for some who desired training, they did not possess the mental acumen for the type of instruction. Maj. Gen. St. Clair Streett, the Deputy Commander of SAC in 1946, labeled this situation as the "dead-wood" problem and outlined his opinion without feigning concern for the sensitive.

we find ourselves with the people who elected to come into the Air Forces; they weren't invited by us, but were taken in by the Adjutant General's Department, which were out for quantity and not quality...We truly have a job in this increasingly technical service of ours which does not call for a high degree of intelligence, not necessarily book learning, but native intelligence, people capable of receiving and taking training. All of our airplanes and all of our gadgets and all of the things that go with them require brains, or at least some brains if they are to be operated

³⁹ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1946*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1948), pp. 177-179; SAC Statistical Summaries, June-Dec 1946; HQ SAC Adjutant General to Chiefs of staff offices, Routing and Record Sheet, "Demobilization of staff offices," July 11, 1946.

efficiently...Unfortunately, we find ourselves with a bunch of guys that can't be used because they haven't not enough between the ears to be of any value to use.⁴⁰

The War Department defined this type of man as those "who normally lack the mental qualifications necessary to become soldiers (generally personnel whose AGCT is below 70) or those who, because of repeated commission of minor offenses requiring disciplinary action, cannot be economically utilized."⁴¹ Most understood that during the war, the military lowered its standards to fill its personnel coffers, but with the advent of peace, SAC strove to procure and retain only the higher type of personnel. SAC leaders, and for that matter Air Force leaders, felt that the time had come to build a strong peacetime force on stable foundations. SAC leaders believed, "Our peacetime organizations should consist entirely of personnel who we either retain or procure as skilled specialists and who, in case of any future emergency will become the nucleus of an efficient striking force."⁴² Although SAC strove to balance its enlisted strength while aggressively working to discharge inapt personnel, by late December 1946, 15th Air Force leaders openly

⁴⁰ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1946*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1948), pp. 181; Maj Gen St Clair Street to Col William T. Hudnell, Memorandum, "Personal letter about dead wood," November 20, 1946.

⁴¹ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1946*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1948), pp. 179; HQ AAF to Commanding General SAC, Letter, "Elimination of Inapt Enlisted Personnel," September 13, 1946.

⁴² SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1946*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1948), pp. 179; HQ AAF to Commanding General SAC, Letter, "Elimination of Inapt Enlisted Personnel," September 13, 1946.

complained that Training Command continued to dump inapt personnel into the field, leaving the separation process to field commanders.⁴³

Due to the mass separation issue and the imbalance of technical work to untrained, unskilled workers, SAC leaders proposed two immediate initiatives. The first, that for those who had been assigned to work outside of their original military occupational specialty (MOS) that the service specialty numbers (SSNs) be awarded "on the basis of careful testing, extended observation of ability, and in accordance with highly selective criteria and that commanders should be allowed to divert personnel to other tasks under certain conditions and in accordance with broad general policy."⁴⁴ Second, but also SAC's top priority project, was recruitment to replace those who departed under demobilization and those who SAC separated because they did not meet the intelligence standards of the Air Force.⁴⁵

By June 1946, the manpower situation in the AAF looked grim and the solution rested on the recruitment program, so much that General Arnold directed that all commanders make it a top priority project. At the time, the AAF had recruited 182,571 enlistees, slightly half the objective of 338,000. To make up the difference, the AAF placed special emphasis on three-year enlistments because AAF leaders believed those would

⁴³ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1946*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1948), pp. 189.

⁴⁴ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1946*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1948), pp. 170; Major Frank Rogers AGD, Ass Adj General, SAC for Commanding General to Commanding General, Army Air Forces, Washington 25, D.C., Memorandum, "Revision of the Personnel Classification and Accounting System," December 23, 1946.

⁴⁵ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1946*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1948), pp. 183.

come from career men who already received training. However, a cloud overshadowed the current recruiting efforts as the AAF could not overcome the amount of short term enlistments (18-24 months) preparing to leave the service. Even though the AAF lacked the personnel numbers, General Arnold and his staff continued to stress quality over quantity.⁴⁶ As SAC historians later wrote, “The AAF needs intelligent, high type three-year enlistees. Every effort must be made to obtain quality instead of quantity. Mental and physical examinations must be fairly and impartially administered. Unqualified personnel are not desired or needed in the AAF.”⁴⁷ To this end, SAC began an aggressive recruitment program.

The AAF, and SAC for that matter, used a variety of methods to recruit. As already mentioned some AAF recruiters used caravans with nominal success, but a lack of funding cut those operations by September 1946. In the meantime, in a novel approach, recruiters at MacDill Field flew personnel enlisting at MacDill to the reception center at Fort McPherson. For many, this was the first time they had ever flown. Other air force leaders encouraged base commanders to use skywriting. Pilots would use smoke to pen recruiting slogans in the air. This normally took place in conjunction with a local air show, which ensured a large audience. Strategic Air Command personnel also gave speeches at civic gatherings and contacted graduating high school classes. However, even with all this effort,

⁴⁶ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1946*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1948), pp. 177-179; War Department Headquarters of the Army Air Forces, Washington D.C. to Commanding General, Strategic Air Command, Bolling Field, D.C., Memo, “Local Recruiting Feature,” May 28, 1946; War Department Bureau of Public Relations, Press Branch, AAF, Press Release, “Many Jobs for Graduates in Reorganized Air Force,” circa May 1946.

⁴⁷ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1946*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1948), pp. 181.

SAC still struggled to attract recently discharged personnel. So, they wrote letters encouraging those recently discharged to reconsider the air force as a career.⁴⁸

For as much effort as the Air Force and SAC put into its recruitment drives, potential candidates made it clear why they elected other avenues of employment. Many cited the lack of permanence in the assignment process, lack of increased pay, lack of promotions, isolated base locations, and the failure of the Air Force to fulfill promises made by recruiting personnel. To gain a perspective of why the short-term enlistees elected to leave versus reenlisting, the Air Force conducted a survey. The survey revealed similar reasons as above, but in addition, many cited a lack of housing for married personnel, lack of modern quarters for some enlisted men living on base, a lack of recreational facilities, poor food administration, and high PX and commissary prices. More shocking was the revelation that many enlisted to gain access to the G.I. Bill with no intent to reenlist.⁴⁹

In December 1946, General Kenney's SAC Headquarters team ordered a concentrated effort to underscore the importance of reenlisting and while communicating that the Army Air Force needed these men and women. While SAC leaders recognized the role of the central recruiting stations, General Kenney stressed that recruiting needed to become the job of every person in the AAF, not just the recruiters. In a letter to the field,

⁴⁸ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1946*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1948), pp. 185-187; War Department Bureau of Public Relations, Press Branch, AAF, Press Release, "Many Jobs for Graduates in Reorganized Air Force," circa May 1946; Colonel H.M. Jones, Deputy AGD to Colonel Martin, Memorandum, "AGSP 341, Army Air Forces Recruiting Program," December 20, 1946.

⁴⁹ 1st Lt Ralph H Stowe to Commanding General Strategic Air Command, Memorandum, "Report of Result of Interview of Short Term Enlistees," January 22, 1947; SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1946*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1948), pp. 186;

the SAC Assistant Adjutant General, Major Frank Rogers wrote, “Individuals reenlist because they are happy in their work, because their friends are reenlisting, because they are proud of their activities and accomplishments and because they see opportunities for advancement and self-improvement.”⁵⁰ He added,

The other benefits of an Army Career such as good pay security, training, etc. can be pointed out by the Recruiting Officer; but only when a man is otherwise satisfied with his Army life will such inducements convince him to reenlist. The feeling that every ‘G.I Joe’ is an individual and that the Army, by virtue of the responsibility placed upon every commissioned officer, is vitally interested in his person welfare and ambitions must permeate throughout the Strategic Air Command.⁵¹

As a result, General Kenney directed SAC commanders to initiate a program and have personnel specialists interview short term enlistees to ascertain their dislikes and gripes. SAC would use this information to form a game plan and increase reenlistments.⁵²

The Army and Air Force Reach an Agreement

By December 1946, General Anderson had added several new aspects to the AAF's campaign for a separate recruitment and retention program. First, to support his argument, he explained that approximately 100 AAF stations (bases) had recruited almost 50% of the AAF's enlistments over the last five months of 1946. At the time, the Army used two methods for recruiting, first from the central recruiting stations in major cities and second by allowing base commanders to conduct their own programs. In the past, the latter

⁵⁰ Major Frank Rogers, AGD, Ass Adjutant General, SAC to Commanding General, Fifteenth Air Force, Colorado Springs, CO, Memorandum, “Short Term Enlistees,” December 13, 1946.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² 1st Lt Ralph H Stowe to Commanding General Strategic Air Command, Memorandum, “Report of Result of Interview of Short Term Enlistees,” January 22, 1947.

program had centered almost entirely on reenlistments and not so much on initial recruiting. The AAF base recruiting programs had accomplished this feat without the expenditure of appropriated recruiting funds and the program showed that “AAF personnel who operate under the direct control of AAF commanders are much more effective in recruiting for the Army Air Forces than is the Army Recruiting Service.”⁵³ General Anderson used this and examples from progressive organizations like Pontiac, Buick, and Chevrolet who decentralized their procurement activities, to again stress the need for the AAF's autonomy. This would allow the AAF to divorce itself from the Army's present recruiting drive, which General Anderson believed lowered efficiency and the prestige of the AAF.⁵⁴

When discussing advertisement programs, General Anderson felt the AAF should mimic many of the Marine Corps' themes. Specifically, he thought the Marines' theme “If you are good enough we may take you” was much better than the Army’s “Make it a million.” It had been brought to General Anderson’s attention that the Military Personnel Procurement Service had botched the AAF's recruitment advertisements inadvertently omitting the AAF’s theme, “You’ve got to be good” while highlighting the Army's secondary theme, “40,000 good jobs each month.” None of the Army's themes spoke to the technical nature of serving in the AAF and it had become understood that the bureaucratic

⁵³ Maj Gen F. L. Anderson, AC/AS-1, to Colonel Robert M. Warren, Memorandum, “Army Air Forces Recruiting Program: The Problem,” December 16, 1946.

⁵⁴ Col Robert M. Warren to Gen F. L. Anderson, memorandum, “Independent Air Force Recruiting Program,” December 13, 1946; General Carl Spaatz, Commanding General, Army Air Forces, to General Handy, memorandum, “Proposed Solution to Air Force Personnel Shortages,” December 16, 1946; Maj Gen F. L. Anderson, AC/AS-1, to Colonel Robert M. Warren, memorandum, “Army Air Forces Recruiting Program: The Problem,” December 16, 1946.

nature of the Army's print service had taken five months to produce the AAF's recruitment pamphlet which was obsolete by the time it hit the mass market. Furthermore, while the national advertising program was the most complete coverage available, the themes and approaches were of little value to AAF recruiting. Much of the material that had been prepared for the AAF had not been cleared by AAF personnel and though General Anderson and his staff had furnished N.W. Ayer and Son, Inc, the advertising firm that handled the Army's recruiting programs, with material very little of it had been used by December 1946. Because of all this, General Anderson requested that the AAF have control over its recruiting advertisement budget.⁵⁵

Lastly, General Anderson addressed two very specific recruitment programs. The first would allow the AAF to enlist civilian technicians in grades commensurate to their background and training. This would allow the AAF to attract highly qualified personnel who could enter the service at a higher grade rather than enlisting as a private. Next, to recruit pilots the AAF planned to reopen its aviation cadet program. General Anderson requested that the AAF have sole control of this recruitment program to allow recruitment of the best possible candidates.⁵⁶

If approved, an independent recruiting program would allow the AAF to completely fill its requirements with voluntary enlistments and maintain the necessary force to fulfill its assigned mission. This was of particular interest to Gen George Kenney, the first

⁵⁵ Col Robert M. Warren to Gen F. L. Anderson, memorandum, "Independent Air Force Recruiting Program," December 13, 1946; Maj Gen F. L. Anderson, AC/AS-1, to Colonel Robert M. Warren, memorandum, "Army Air Forces Recruiting Program: The Problem," December 16, 1946.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

commander of Strategic Air Command (SAC), and Lt Gen George E. Stratemeyer, the first commander of Air Defense Command (ADC). Though the reorganized air forces consisted of eight major commands, with the threat of the U.S.S.R growing more and more possible, ADC would warn of a pending enemy attack and SAC would generate the bombers and aircrews who would respond. Therefore, in the post-WW II time, manning these two commands became the Air Force's primary responsibility. Fortunately the wartime relationships continued after the war with wartime leaders taking their rightful place of power in the recreated Air Force. As expected, SAC had its influence on the early Air Force from almost the start.⁵⁷

Just before Christmas 1946, General Spaatz met with General Streett, who now served as the commander of the Military Manpower Procurement Department (MMPD) at the War Department. During that conversation, General Spaatz discussed the previous staff work and proposed a test program that would address all that has been discussed above, but he also stressed the importance of the caravan program. He wanted the recruiting caravans to operate as complete central examining stations that would go out and contact potential candidates, sell them on the Air Force by using effective, attractive, specialized displays, and then enlist them on the spot. Furthermore, he wanted authorization to create an Air Force Procurement Division of the Military Personnel Procurement Service that would report to the commanding generals of each major command like SAC and ADC.

⁵⁷ Herman S. Wolk. *Planning and Organizing the Postwar Air Force 1943-1947*. (Washington D.C.: Office of Air Force History, 1984), pp 132.

This new division would use the air force installations and facilities of the major air commands, thus seceding from the War Department.⁵⁸

By early 1947, General Streett had reviewed the ongoing debate between the AAF and the War Department concerning an independent Air Force recruiting program. After great consideration, he approved the AAF to raise the minimum Army-wide AGCT score to 80, later 110, and to set its own AGCT standard if the need drove further changes. This would allow the AAF to screen potential applicants and to discharge those who did not meet the standard. He also gave the AAF responsibility for its own recruiting advertising budget (40% compared to 60% for the Army) and he increased the number of AAF recruiters in the Army. He did not separate the two programs. In 1947, the responsibility of the AAF recruiting program fell to major Air Force commanders and all base commanders. Each air base was assigned the responsibility of recruiting within a certain area. The personnel who worked in downtown recruiting offices within that area reported to the local base commander. In short, the air base headquarters assumed essentially the same functions that had been performed by the district recruiting headquarters of the Army Areas and the scarcely populated areas.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Maj Gen F.L. Anderson to Maj Gen St. Clair Streett, memorandum, "Proposed Recruiting Organization," January 9, 1947.

⁵⁹ Mark R Grandstaff., *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), pp. 92; Pamphlet, AETC Office of History, "A Brief History of the Air Force Recruiting Service," Sep 12, pp. 4; Lee White, Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force, to Secretary Stevens, memorandum, "Agreement to Continue a Unified Recruiting Effort," June 12, 1953; Brig Gen D.C. Strother, Chief, Military Personnel Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff (A1), memorandum, "Future AAF Recruiting Organization," July 23, 1947.

In the afterglow of General Streett's approval to raise the AGCT minimum score from 70 to 90, some worried that enlistment may dwindle by more than half. To compensate for the potential losses, AAF commanders emphasized off-station recruiting. In yet another modification of its recruitment offerings, the AAF now allowed potential enlistees a choice of technical training. In short, after the potential recruit took an AAF-centric test, recruiters tabulated the results and then offered the recruit several options for employment based on their scores. If a recruit tested well in electronics or mechanical skills, recruiters could offer him a job in radar or working on jet engines. If the recruit tested well with attention to detail and a penchant for numbers, he may be offered a job in finance. The AAF hoped this new program would increase voluntary enlistments from high school graduates and target an improved caliber of personnel. The Air Force felt the plan would result in large numbers of recruits because none of the other branches of service offered such opportunities. Lastly, to promote interest in aviation and the AAF, General Spaatz's staff suggested that each base establish model airplane clubs-Figure 2. The Air Force believed these clubs would promote general aviation interest, but to avoid duplication of effort, local commanders worked with Civil Air Patrol units that planned similar programs. These early social programs, created for recruitment and retention purposes, would serve as the beginnings for a transformation of the overall cultural fabric that would become part of the modern United States Air Force.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1947*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, June 1, 1949), pp. 41-45, 61-62, 72-73, 88-89; Lt Colonel Alvin C. Gillem II, Senior Visiting Officer, to HQ SAC Commanding General, memorandum, "Report of Supervisor Staff Visit: Smokey Hill, Salina, Kansas," March 28, 1947; Brig Gen Roger Ramey, HQ 8AF, to Brig Gen Donald R. Hutchinson, HQ 311 RW, memorandum, "Personal Letter detailing extracts from General Spaatz' monthly letter to Commanding Generals," April 16, 1947; General Dwight D. Eisenhower to General

In 1947, when the Air Force reduced its planned 70-group commitment to 55, SAC leadership, specifically its vice commander, grew more interested in cutting expenses and shifting manpower to the correct levels in the organization, but SAC leaders also discussed options for expanding its recruitment program to attract women and African-Americans. In addition to pushing previous headquarters authorization down to the wings, SAC discussed the best methods for utilizing the pool of African-American troops stationed both in the United States and overseas. At the time, with restrictions dictated via regulations, SAC commanders could only employ enlisted African-Americans in such units as mess, transportation, and aviation squadrons, so many were used to rebuild the dilapidated bases. Although direction from higher authorities would direct integration in 1948, SAC leaders wanted to immediately expand opportunities for African-American troops along with promotion opportunities now. SAC leaders believed African-Americans represented an untapped personnel resource that would add to the labor pool and therefore improve efficiencies and production for the new command. because they viewed the group as . In addition, the Air Force saw women as a potential area of recruitment expansion as plans for base hospitals had been established and the Air Force would need nurses. Lastly, towards the end of 1947, the influence of the family, predominately the spouse, became an area of concern for SAC and the Air Force as more and more complaints poured into SAC suggestion boxes concerning housing, or the lack thereof.⁶¹

Spaatz, memorandum, "Air Force Recruiting," May 23, 1947; General Carl A. Spaatz to Commanding General SAC, memorandum, "Recruiting," June 2, 1947.

⁶¹ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1947*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, June 1, 1949), pp. 41-45, 61-62, 88-89; SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1948*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1948), pp. 76-80; 1st Lt Montie Thompson, Jr, Acting Asst Adjutant General for General Kenney, to Commanding General Fifteenth Air Force, Colorado Springs, CO, memorandum,



USAF Photo, circa 1948.

Figure 2 Model plane contest-Air Force Day 1948 Davis-Monthan

Housing would go on to become the best known SAC's People Programs because it not only assisted the person serving in the Air Force, but also the family. Generations of children who lived in Air Force housing would later reminisce about how great their

“Utilization of Negro Manpower,” December 28, 1947; Lt Col Noel T. Cumba, Chief of Personnel Analysis Division, Visiting Staff Officer, to SAC Commanding General, memorandum, “Report of Supervisory Staff Visits, Ft Worth AAF, HQ 8AF, Smokey Hill AAF,” January 10, 1947; Lt Col D. T. Hamilton, Asst Adjutant General, to Commanding General, SAC, memorandum, “Reenlistment Survey,” July 11, 1947; Lt Col Thomas Badger, Jr, Executive Military Personnel Division, to Commanding General, SAC, memorandum, “Off-Station Recruiting Activities,” July 2, 1947.

childhood had been living on base and therefore it became the leading topic when asked about SAC's People Programs. Strategic Air Command purposely located its bases in isolated areas and because of this off base housing had been limited. The post-war housing shortage amplified the problem and affected reenlistments so much so, that in early 1948, Eighth Air Force leadership lobbied SAC headquarters to further restrict, if not eliminate all together, the policy of reenlisting military personnel in the lower grades if they had families. At the time, and for many years to come, the policy of "rank has its privileges" (RHIP) formed the basis for who received base housing and who did not. The military reserved housing for officers and non-commissioned officers, but when vacancies existed, lower ranking enlisted men could apply to live on base. This was a rare occurrence. The increased cost of living and living on the local economy made it difficult for enlisted men in the lower four grades who needed to provide for their families while maintaining a standard of living comparable to civilians living in the suburbs being built around the United States. Eighth Air Force leadership believed that the quota method used in Army recruiting had resulted in high pressure salesmanship where the recruiter only discussed the attractive aspects of Air Force life while limiting, or purposely omitting, the problems with the lack of housing and life for the family. The lack of housing led to morale issues and because the military did not have the budget to build houses, the immediate answer was to exclude lower ranking airmen with families from reenlisting.⁶²

⁶² SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1948*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, nd), pp. 79-82; 7 BW to Commanding General of 8AF, Letter, "Enlistment Policies," January 12, 1948; 28 BW to Commanding General of 8AF, Letter, "Base Recruiting Program," nd; Command Summary, Strategic Air Command, July 1948.

In 1948, two legislative acts paved the way for equality and integration in the military. The first came when Congress passed the Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948 on June 12, 1948, which allowed women to serve as permanent, regular members of not only the Army, but also the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the Air Force. As part of this effort, the Air Force sought 300 WAF officers and 4,000 enlisted women to join over the next two years. While this passage did not clear women to serve in all capacities, because the 1949 Combat Exclusion Law forbade women from serving on combat ships and in combat aircraft squadrons, it did present opportunities for women to serve in greater roles. In preparation to the new legislation, the Air Force began selecting females who would fill the recruiter role for its Women's Air Corps (WAC) and Women's Air Force (WAF) recruiting program. The Air Force required potential women recruiters to have an AGCT score of 110 or higher, "be between 25-35 years of age, be neat in appearance, be of high moral character, and have the ability to express herself easily, cogently, and tactfully."⁶³ The Air Force directed potential recruiters to encourage potential recruits to seek employment in base hospitals, where they could replace enlisted men and civilians, but to also communicate that women would not be limited to strictly clerical and administrative jobs. Of interest, the Air Force did not allow married women to enlist and SAC leadership directed the Numbered Air Force commanders, like Eighth Air Force and Fifteenth Air Force to assign women to bases that had suitable housing or where quarters could be converted.⁶⁴

⁶³ Major Earl C. Miller to Commanding General Fifteenth Air Force, memorandum, "WAF Enlisted Personnel for Recruiting Duty," August 5, 1948.

⁶⁴ Stephanie Gutmann. *The Kinder, Gentler Military: Can America's Gender-Neutral Fighting Force Still Win Wars?*. (New York: Scriber, 2000), pp. 147; Major Earl C. Miller to Commanding General Fifteenth Air Force, memorandum, "WAF Enlisted Personnel for

The second piece of legislation came in July 1948 when President Harry S. Truman directed the armed forces to integrate. Immediately after the war, a few key, far sighted individuals sought to disband the 33d Fighter Group, the famous Red Tails of WW II, and integrate its personnel into the greater air force, but this met resistance. It must be stressed that at the time, the military reflected the accepted societal norms so segregation existed in many forms in the military. As a result, many injustices took place and the MacDill Field riot, while only one incident, still reflected the feeling African-American soldiers had towards the Air Force. A later report explained that the black airmen rioted because MacDill Field lacked proper on- and off-duty activities and that there were fewer or no technical jobs available to them and very little encouragement given to them to attend technical schools. Many believed “there was no future for them at MacDill Field or in the Army” because they were not assigned important jobs. Riots took place at other air bases including Roswell Army Air Field, New Mexico, the home of America’s Atomic Air Force.⁶⁵

During this time, SAC leaders agonized how to best employ African-American soldiers. The massive demobilization had stripped precious manpower from the military and while the AAF had implemented a robust recruiting effort, white men had not

Recruiting Duty,” August 5, 1948; 1st Lt Montie Thompson, Jr. to Commanding General Fifteenth Air Force, memorandum, “Utilization of WAF and WAC Personnel in Medical Installations,” September 17, 1948; Colonel Richard T. King to Commanding General Fifteenth Air Force, memorandum, “Utilization of WAF Personnel,” October 27, 1948; Colonel Richard T. King to Commanding General Eighth Air Force, memorandum, “Utilization of WAF Personnel,” November 15, 1948; SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1948*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, nd.), pp. 86-87.

⁶⁵ Alan L Gropman. *The Air Force Integrates 1945-1964*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1985), pp iv, 65-70; Mr. Walter L. Harris, report, “Undercover Agent’s Recommendations concerning the MacDill Riot,” nd.

reenlisted or joined in the numbers that would offset the losses. Therefore, SAC leaders studied possibilities of how to fully integrate black soldiers into the SAC operations, but the basics like housing, entertainment, and off-base life stymied progress. To prepare for integration, SAC evaluated potential bases, and for example, leadership at Spokane AFB, Washington, and Castle AFB, California, indicated they may be able to accept African-American soldiers immediately. However, to determine housing availability and to gauge community prejudices, those base commanders polled local communities and the surveys revealed towns unwilling to accept blacks. But this was not the only case. A blatant form of bigotry took place when the Mount Clemens Board of Commerce, adjacent to Selfridge Field, Michigan, wrote, “Needless to say, Mount Clemens with a population of approximately 16,000 people and only a very small minority of colored citizens, is decidedly lacking in adequate entertainment, housing, and other recreational facilities pertinent to the welfare and general high morale of colored troops.”⁶⁶ They went on to add, “While it is not our intent to be prejudiced in any way to the addition of colored personnel to your organization, we do feel that because of existing conditions and in complete fairness to troops involved that the present time is not conducive [sic] to a completely harmonious relationship between all parties concerned.”⁶⁷ As a result, SAC leaders elected to not assign black soldiers to these bases. They did have success, however, at Godman Field in Kentucky and Lockbourne AFB in Ohio.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ John E. Sedan to Colonel William T. Hudnell, Commanding Officer, Selfridge Field, Michigan, memorandum, “Board of Commerce, Mount Clements, Michigan discussion on moving colored troops into Selfridge Field and Mount Clements,” January 16, 1948.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Alan L Gropman. *The Air Force Integrates 1945-1964*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1985), pp iv, 75-78; John E. Sedan to Colonel William T.

While it took some time to fully integrate the Air Force, the military had no control over the local communities. Air Force leaders realized they had no “power of right to insist on a change of local community practices with respect to racial segregation...Where segregation is required by law in the community, the base has an obligation to stimulate activities on behalf of its Negro personnel among the Negro community, just as it does for its white personnel in the white community.”⁶⁹ While the Air Force would eventually build on-base housing where black airmen could live and schools where their children could receive an education without harassment, lower ranking black airmen still had to live downtown and suffer the indignities of local intolerance. Worse yet, some technical schools under civilian contract remained segregated and black airmen had to decide to choose humiliation or refuse the opportunity to gain rank or knowledge. Eventually, the fence line of the base would form a barrier between the military and the local community and the base neighborhoods would become a sanctuary from blatant racism and therefore an even more powerful recruitment tool.⁷⁰

In 1948, even though the Air Force was now a separate service, the Army and the Air Force formally united their recruiting service under the banner of the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Forces Recruiting Service. As cited in Grandstaff's book, *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*, almost prophetic in his opinion

Hudnell, Commanding Officer, Selfridge Field, Michigan, memorandum, “Board of Commerce, Mount Clements, Michigan discussion on moving colored troops into Selfridge Field and Mount Clements,” January 16, 1948.

⁶⁹ Alan L Gropman. *The Air Force Integrates 1945-1964*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1985), pp 163.

⁷⁰ Alan L Gropman. *The Air Force Integrates 1945-1964*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1985), pp iv, 162-168.

concerning the Army and its recruitment program, General Stratemeyer contended at the Sixth Meeting of the Air Board the week of September 9, 1947, that.

We can get all the recruits we need if we enlist them ourselves and go out and get them. But if we have to do it through the Army I don't know...I'll just issue a warning...whenever there is a chance, where they are going to take something over we are entitled to, we have to step out and insist on our rights and recommendations.⁷¹

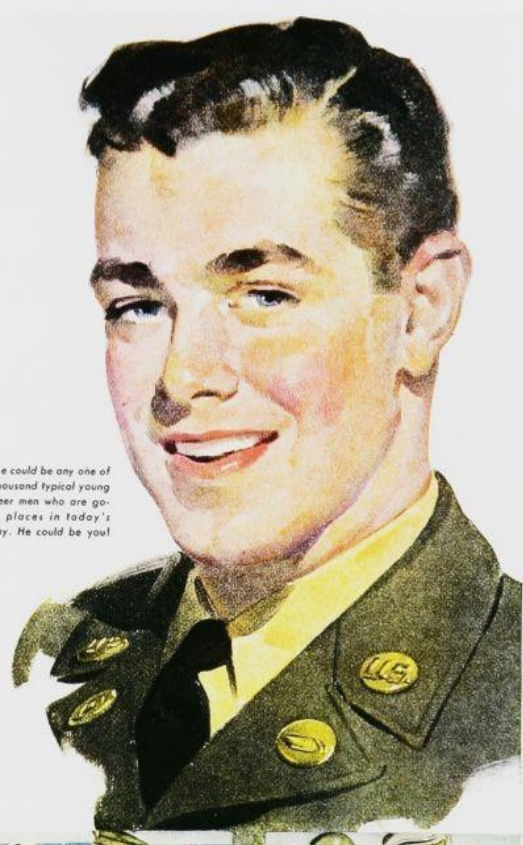
This organizational structure continued until March 6, 1954, when Secretary of Defense Charles E. Wilson signed an order directing the USAF to assume operational control of Air Force recruiting no later than July 1, 1954. This split took place, because although the Air Force had met its recruitment quotas, it was the opinion of Air Force leaders that the Army did not always have the Air Force's best interest in mind when it came to recruitment.⁷²

⁷¹ Mark R Grandstaff., *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), pp. 92.


⁷² AETC Office of History, "A Brief History of the Air Force Recruiting Service," Sep 12, pp. 4; Lee White, Assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force, to Secretary Stevens, Memorandum, "Agreement to Continue a Unified Recruiting Effort," June 12, 1953; Memorandum, Brig Gen D.C. Strother, Chief, Military Personnel Division, to Assistant Chief of Air Staff (A1), "Future AAF Recruiting Organization," July 23, 1947.

Wanted... More Men Like Mike!


—men who want to go places,
and have plenty of the stuff it
takes to get there!




Mike could be any one of
a thousand typical young
career men who are go-
ing places in today's
Army. He could be you!




Mike lived a lively American boyhood. An average student, a popular athlete, he finished high school in '46, decided to start building a career in the Army.




Careful studies of Mike's personal aptitudes led to his selection for technical training in tanks and other armored vehicles. He took to it like a duck to water!



Finishing technical school as a Private, First Class, Mike progressed steadily in skill, efficiency and rank. Each year he took a 30-day vacation trip, with pay.



Mike studied, worked, watched his chances. Finished his first "hitch" as a Sergeant. During leave he went home and married his high school sweetheart.




Now, only four years after enlisting, Mike is a Sergeant, First Class, with an assured career ahead. He wouldn't trade places, or future opportunities, with anybody!

The young man of today who wants to get ahead can continue his education and start building a career at the same time, in the new U. S. Army. More than 200 courses of specialized training for many different career fields are taught in the various Army schools. Each man's abilities are

charted, to place him where he should develop rapidly. Working with career-minded young men like himself on the frontiers of military science, he can serve his country with true professional pride. Today's U.S. Army is providing excellent career opportunities for America's finest young men.

U. S. ARMY

VISIT YOUR NEAREST U. S. ARMY AND U. S. AIR FORCE RECRUITING STATION



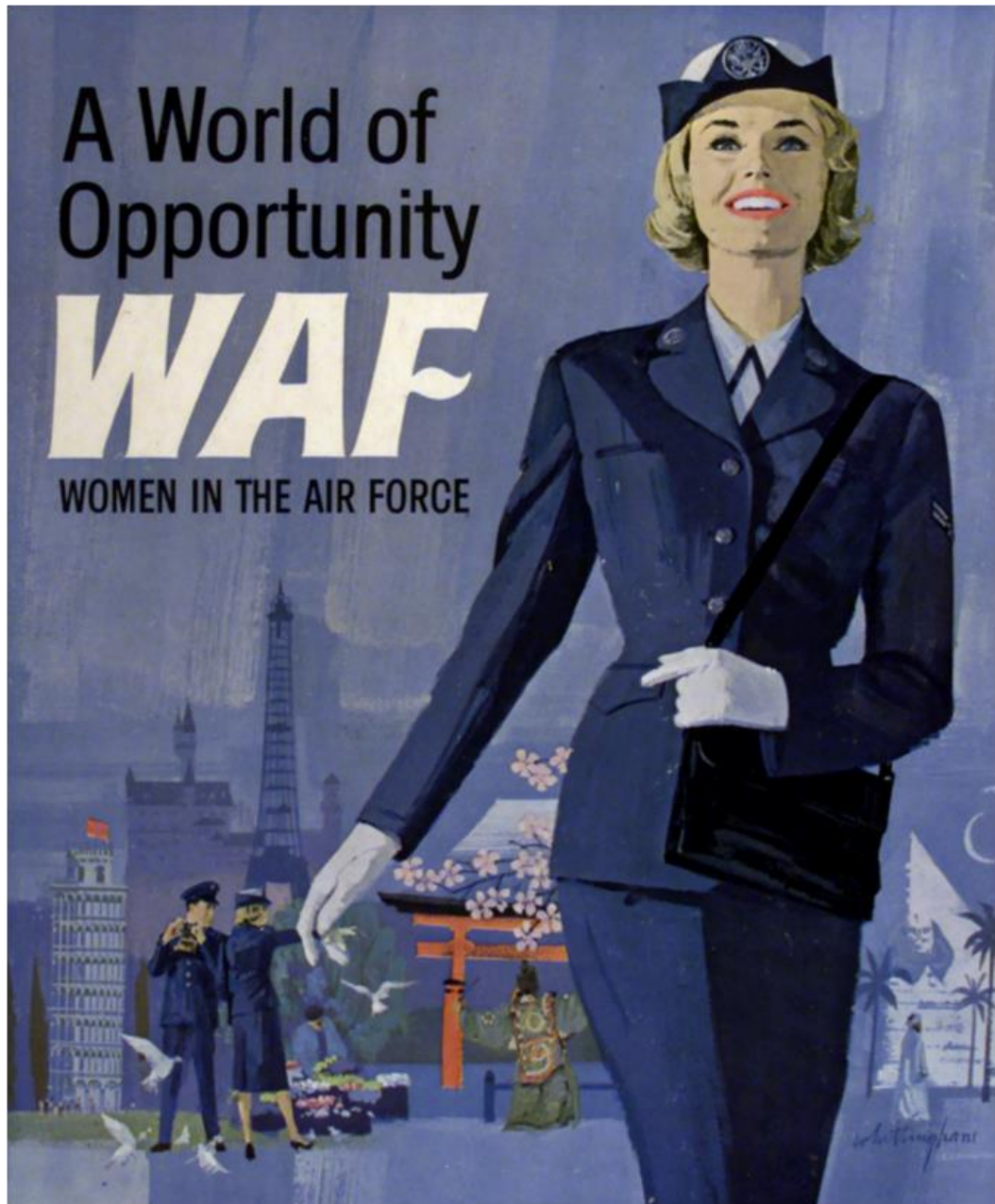
Air Force Magazine circa 1952.

Figure 3 Example of U.S. Army U.S. Air Force recruitment poster



Air Force Magazine circa 1954.

Figure 4 Example of U.S. Army U.S. Air Force recruitment poster



Air Force Magazine circa 1954.

Figure 5 Example of U.S. Army U.S. Air Force recruitment poster

In the post WW-II period the Army relied primarily on the draft to fill its ranks, while the Air Force, during the late 1940s and 1950s, maintained its authorizations through a volunteer program. The newly created service did this through a robust "Corporate man" image-based advertising system. Pamphlets and movies focused on a futuristic career with some imagery of families and housing. In "Your Son and The Jet Air Age," recruiters tailored messages especially for parents. "We are living in the Jet Air Age, an era of expansion and growth, or new adventures, careers, and opportunities. Your boy can train himself for an important place in this new world."⁷³ Contrasting this, the Army's recruitment products in the late 1940s and early 1950s focused on patriotism, rarely showing a spouse, but instead focusing on the life of a single man who lived in the barracks. The Army recruitment products provided potential recruits with options including desired job training, the ability to travel, or the selection of a combat branch. The Marines focused on traditions and the ability of the fighting man.⁷⁴

Though the Berlin Crisis slowed reformation in the overall Air Force a bit in 1948 and 1949, measured progress continued, especially in SAC. On October 19, 1948, Lt Gen Curtis E. LeMay took command of SAC from General Kenney who went on to command Air University. Within two weeks of his arrival, General LeMay directed the creation of a Personal Affairs Services section to promote the welfare of SAC Airmen. This section administered the Air Force Aid Society's functions, rendered information on savings, life

⁷³ U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force Recruiting Service, recruiting pamphlet, "Your Son and the Jet Air Age," 1955.

⁷⁴ U.S. Army Recruiting PSA-1950s. <https://video.search.yahoo.com/search/video?fr=mcafee&p=army+recruiting+videos+1950s#id=1&vid=45f5056fa7b4485b8b7a2c0511fd3bae&action=click> (accessed 9 August 2016).

insurance programs, monitored family allowances, and counseled Airmen on voting, education, governmental rights, and benefits, just to name a few.⁷⁵ In direct response to dependents' needs, SAC created the Dependents Assistance Program "to keep the dependents of all military personnel informed of matters affecting their security and welfare, and to provide assistance to dependents at any time, but especially in the absence of the military member of the family."⁷⁶ By 1955, SAC had established this program at 46 of its bases with nearly 20,000 dependents completing orientation and training courses. That same year, the Air Force realized the utility of this program and adopted it worldwide.⁷⁷

To achieve a higher degree of stability for SAC, General LeMay stressed the need to eliminate undesirable and substandard personnel. In a December 27, 1946, Commander's Conference he made his position clear that "people are not tough enough and are hesitating to throw those out who are misfits in the air force. This must be corrected, firmness must be established and wherever necessary, there will be housecleaning." For the high performers or those who saw the military as a calling and a career, he recognized the lack of adequate family housing, temporary bases assigned, and temporary duty

⁷⁵ Mark R Grandstaff., *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), pp. 99; SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1948*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, nd.), pp. 138-139, 141-143.

⁷⁶ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command July-December 1956*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, nd.), pp. 21.

⁷⁷ Mark R Grandstaff., *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), pp. 182; Earl H. Voss, "Why Air Force Wives Are Happier: Morale Begins at Home," *Air Force Magazine*, Sep, 1955, pp. 121-125.

requirements as why some had left the Air Force. From this, LeMay focused SAC's energies on morale problems and the bigger Air Force took note.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Mark R Grandstaff., *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), pp. 99; SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1948*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, nd.), pp. 138-139, 141-143.

CHAPTER 2

Retaining A Qualified Force

In January 1951, the President authorized the Air Force to expand from 95 wings with a completion date of June 1952, to 143 by the middle of 1955. In both cases the Air Force struggled to hold enough skilled workers because civilian jobs were plenty and lucrative. In 1953, the shortage of manpower, coupled with the destructive power of the atomic armada, caused President Eisenhower's administration to take a "New Look" at the nation's military. Prior to completing that look, the Secretary of Defense, Charles E. Wilson, reduced the number of Air Force wings to 120, but the Joint Chiefs of Staff eventually established a goal of 137 wings by the end of June 1957. President Eisenhower approved this goal in December 1953. During this time and into the late 1950s, the Air Force struggled to recruit and retain enough active duty personnel to man 131 wings. To offset these shortages, the Air Force hired additional civilian employees and in overseas locations, the Air Force substituted natives of foreign countries for non-critical positions.⁷⁹

No other author has better captured the role of benefits as they pertain to Air Force retention than Mark R Grandstaff in his book, *FOUNDATION of the FORCE*:

In the 1950s, the young Air Force learned a significant lesson about its enlisted personnel. Advertisers might successfully promote the need for a standing military, internal reforms might make the armed forces appear more democratic, recruiters might find the men and women the service desired, and training might make them a valued commodity, yet an airman would eventually pit the benefits of

⁷⁹ Alfred Goldberg. *A History of the United States Air Force*. New York: Arno Press, 1974, pp 164-166.

an Air Force career against the perceived opportunities of civilian life. Pay, housing, the job, working conditions, and other fringe benefits were what provided the most incentive for enlisted personnel to remain in the Air Force. If these incentives were less than satisfactory, then enticements from the outside world would influence airmen to seek employment elsewhere.⁸⁰

The combination of an aggressive marketing and recruiting campaign and a poor job market in the late 1940s combined with the Korean War and the draft, put the Air Force in a position where it had not worried about retention. That would change. With the cracks starting to form in the retention and recruitment dikes, Air Force leaders began looking for answers of why people chose civilian life over a military career.

Almost immediately upon arriving at SAC, General LeMay began directing his staff to research SAC's retention problems. While SAC continually received enough people to do the work, it struggled to retain them. Competition from the private sector, which was building the Air Force's futuristic air armada, the scarcity of promotions and pay raises, and the stress produced by heavy work schedule played a role, but the need for quality-of-life programs led most Airmen to leave the Air Force. LeMay hoped his "People Programs" would convince them to stay.⁸¹

With all the difficulties associated with building a new service, this process had many advantages for the Air Force that left the Army and Navy at a disadvantage when it came to recruiting and quality of life. The Air Force was creating air bases and personnel

⁸⁰ Mark R Grandstaff., *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), pp. 157.

⁸¹ Dr. Edgar F. Puryear Jr. Interview with General Curtis LeMay. For National Geographic Magazine, November 17, 1976.

policy that allowed the young service the ability to build a new service that attracted and retained the youth of the United States.

It has been documented in several books including Thomas Coffey's *Iron Eagle: The Turbulent Life of General Curtis LeMay* and Warren Kozak's *LeMay: The Life and Wars of General Curtis LeMay*, that General LeMay, while crotchety and often without a smile, did his personal best for his people.⁸² Throughout his tenure he continually sought better wages for his Airmen and while the Hook Commission officially improved pay for the entire military, a later SAC commander opined "all the credit has to go to General LeMay."⁸³ LeMay also expanded promotion opportunities and just a year after being on the job, he received permission from the Air Force to create SAC's Spot Promotion program where a person could be promoted, on the spot, for superior performance.⁸⁴ It was a huge morale boost and became part of SAC's cultural legacy. But the centerpiece to his People Programs were the housing and recreation facilities.⁸⁵

⁸² Warren Kozak, *LeMay: The Life and Wars of General Curtis LeMay* (Washington D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 2009), 297-300; General Curtis LeMay, *Mission With LeMay*, (Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Company, INC., 1965); Thomas M. Coffey, *Iron Eagle: The Turbulent Life of General Curtis LeMay*, (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1986), 296-297.

⁸³ SAC Historian. *Peace is Our Profession: A History of Strategic Air Command*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, nd.), pp. 29. (This is a draft study that while complete, was never released to the public because it remains classified. Portions cited here are unclassified.).

⁸⁴ John T. Bohn and R. M. Kipp. Interview with Gen Curtis LeMay (USAF Ret). November 16, 1972; John T. Bohn. Interview with Gen Curtis LeMay (USAF Ret). March 9, 1971; HQ SAC History Office, "Historical Study No. 167, SAC SPOT Promotion Program: Its Rise and Demise," October 1, 1978.

⁸⁵ SAC Historian. *Peace is Our Profession: A History of Strategic Air Command*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, nd.), pp. 30-33. (This is a draft study that while

LeMay's Housing Programs

As early as 1946, the Air Force had started to plan the design of its new bases. From the beginning, family housing and recreational facilities ranked just as important as runways and parking aprons, but modernization and rehabilitation efforts for troop housing (barracks), which required a longer lead time, did not rank as high. After a few years of inaction, in 1949 the Army passed responsibility for base design to the Air Force and Congress began funding the base design plans. While these plans focused on the mission of the Air Force flying jets they equally embraced the concept of family with neighborhoods, recreational facilities, and schools taking their place on the base map.⁸⁶ Because the Air Force planned its bases in this manner from the beginning, it automatically had a leg up on the other services that clung to the idea that "if the military wanted you to have a family they would have issued you one."⁸⁷ Of note, the Army continued to think this way until 1981 when it established its Family Advocacy Program in reaction to low retention and recruitment rates.

In 1948, when General LeMay took command of SAC, the nation was contending with a massive housing shortage. The famous Levittown program was in its infancy and General LeMay claimed because of the shortage of houses near air force bases, "some

complete, was never released to the public because it remains classified. Portions cited here are unclassified.)

⁸⁶ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command July-December 1950*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1 May 1951), pp. 207-209.

⁸⁷ Army MWR, "About Us." Armymwr.com. <https://www.armymwr.com/about-us/history/> accessed September 12, 2016).

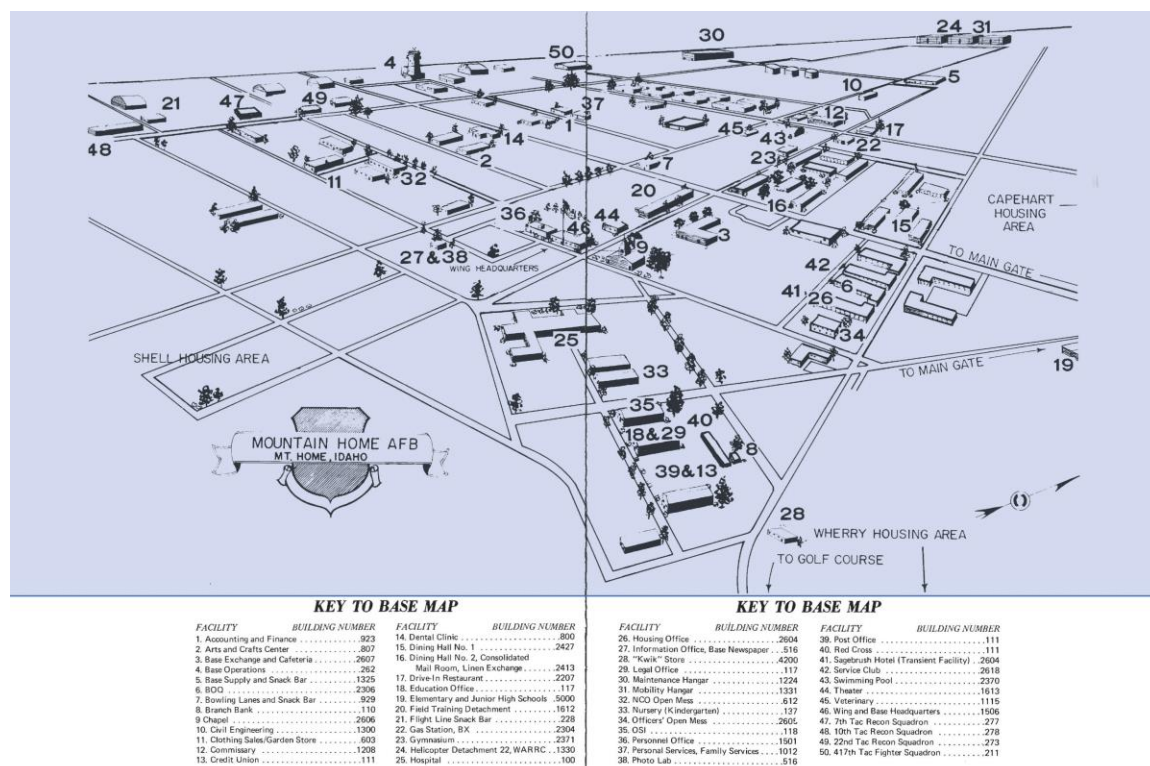
married airmen had to live in converted chicken-coops.”⁸⁸ The Air Force further compounded the issue when it announced it would fully integrate its forces and allow African-Americans and whites to live in the same neighborhoods. Because the Air Force’s authority ended at the exit to the base gate, SAC could not control local, off-base organizations who did not readily comply with the Air Force’s idea of equality. Although SAC was at the time a historically all white male operation, General LeMay wanted to capitalize on the pool of young African Americans who could fill the ranks of his new, modern command. To do this he needed to overcome not only the shortage of housing for his white airmen, but also for his black Airmen.⁸⁹

LeMay’s first approach to counter this problem was to form the Strategic Air Command Housing Association where SAC airmen would contribute seed capital for a new housing development on base. SAC would eventually return this money, without interest, to each man upon his separation or retirement. As planned, when SAC had gathered the needed funds the association would purchase supplies and airmen would assist in constructing the houses at various bases. The building costs would be low as each man would assist in building his, and his friends’ homes. Once built, the men would pay their mortgages with their monthly rental allowances, the allowances they would have received if they had lived off base. All seemed to be going well until the Washington comptroller

⁸⁸ Walton S. Moody, *Building A Strategic Air Force*, (Air Force History and Museums Program: Washington D.C., 1996), 261.

⁸⁹ Walton S. Moody, *Building A Strategic Air Force*, (Air Force History and Museums Program: Washington D.C., 1996), 261.

general informed LeMay that SAC could not issue rental allowances for men living on base.⁹⁰



Mountain Home AFB Base Guide, circa 1967.

Figure 6 Base Map from Mountain Home AFB circa 1967

⁹⁰ Thomas M. Coffey, *Iron Eagle: The Turbulent Life of General Curtis LeMay*, (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1986), 296-297; General Curtis LeMay, *Mission With LeMay*, (Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Company, INC., 1965), 469-472; SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command July-December 1950*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1 May 1951), pp. 176-180; Department of the Army and the Air Force, "Joint Army and Air Force Bulletin No. 25, National Housing Act and Title VIII-Military Housing Insurance," August 30, 1949; Department of the USAF, "Preliminary Operating Procedure for Dependents Housing Projects Under Air Force Rental Housing Plan," June 22, 1949.

Eventually General LeMay contacted Senator Kenneth S. Wherry of Nebraska who sponsored the Wherry Housing Act that used contractors to build the houses on land leased from the government. Construction began shortly thereafter at not only SAC bases but at other Air Force installations as well as Navy and Army posts.⁹¹ The Wherry and Capehart⁹² neighborhoods reflected features common to post-WW II suburban communities with curvilinear streets, large front lawns, sidewalks, and play grounds or tot lots. The Air Force engineers located the neighborhoods just far enough away from the base administrative and industrial areas to maintain security, but close enough where children could visit their mom or dad and families could have lunch at the officer's club or visit the base swimming pool. At last SAC had an option for providing living accommodations to its airmen, black or white.⁹³

⁹¹ Kathryn M. Kuranda. "Housing an Air Force and a Navy: The Wherry and Capehart Era Solutions to the Postwar Family Housing Shortage (1949-1962)," Department of the Air Force and Navy. June 2007.

⁹² The Capehart neighborhoods were follow-on construction projects to the Wherry Program. Senator Homer Capehart from Indiana championed the need for the additional housing.

⁹³ U.S. Public Law 626, 80th Congress, 2nd Session, June 12, 1948; U.S. Public Law 434, 81st Congress, 1st Session, October 20, 1949; Christopher Goodwin and Associates. *Neighborhood Design Guidelines Department of the Air Force Department of the Navy Wherry and Capehart Era Family Housing* (Frederick MD: R. Christopher Goodwin & Ass, Inc, June 2007).

Wherry Housing

INDIVIDUAL, PRIVATE SPACES

With the conditions at Mountain Home AFB in the 1940s - 1950s mirroring those of military installations nationwide, architects Richard Neutra and Robert E. Alexander of Los Angeles were hired to design the Wherry housing units in the Wherry housing area, as the first units in September 1953. Roman-based architecture firm Hummel, Hummel & Jones (H&J) served as the local team supervising construction. Ground broke a year later, in November 1954, when the *Spokane Courier* reported, "The ring of hammers and rattling whir of saws are joining in with the roar of heavy equipment in the Wherry housing area, as the first units begin to rise out of the powder-like dust of the sagebrush surrounded clearing."

Architect's concept sketch and matching photo of "focal space" for Wherry officer housing.



Wherry projects nationwide included mostly duplexes, four-plexes and multi-unit apartment buildings, with single-family units kept to a minimum for the purpose of cost. Buildings were typically constructed from commercially available plans that were cheap and easy to replicate. Ideal plans accommodated numerous residents and allowed everyone an individual, private yard.

Located in an enclave all their own, Wherry housing at Mountain Home AFB totaled 500 units for military families, and included both single-family and multifamily units. This was the largest housing project authorized in Idaho by the FHA at that time. Known on base as "Oasis Housing," Neutra & Alexander designed the Wherry project to provide individual, private spaces while creating an open community. The units had many novelties, including private garages, concrete patios, new appliances, and central heating—a must for those enduring the cold, biting winters. A playground for the children, as well as the incorporation of outdoor spaces, encouraged neighborhood interaction. Oasis Housing was urban living at its finest.

"Design, never a harmless play with forms and colors, changes our life as well as our inner balances."
—Robert E. Neutra, Architect



Wherry housing interiors showcased modern design.

Facets of single-family Wherry housing for officers.

Multifamily Wherry housing, also known as Oasis Housing.




Mountain Home *Mentor*

Capehart Housing


DESIGNED FOR LIFE

While housing in the civilian market continued to boom throughout the 1950s, the military was still at a shortfall. The Capehart Housing Act aimed to increase the number of new houses for military personnel while solving the problems that led to Wherry's demise. Capehart promised larger homes, better amenities and secure investments. Also, by the time the Capehart Act was authorized in 1956, builders and planners had gained the necessary experience to execute large-scale housing projects in an efficient and cost-effective way, benefiting all future projects.

Neutra & Alexander were contracted in 1958 to design Mountain Home AFB's \$43 million Capehart Housing project, which included 270 units—108 officers' quarters.

From foundations to framing, 270 Capehart units went up between 1958-1959.

Including the Senior Officer Housing, and 162 duplex apartments for enlisted men. Single-family and duplex housing were encouraged in Capehart projects nationwide. Also encouraged was the creation of outdoor spaces, parks, and neighborhoods. Given an increased budget, Neutra was able to integrate an extensive landscape design into the Capehart site plan as well as provide more spacious floor plans.




The backyard of officers' duplex housing.


For his buildings at Mountain Home AFB, Neutra was challenged to design not for one family, as he was used to doing, but for numerous families moving in and out in rapid succession as their assignments changed. Undaunted, he developed a philosophy to keep in mind when designing these houses:

"The puzzling thing is that a house designed for one should fit another, a very different set of human circumstances... If a house is designed for life, especially having properly the essential, the basic, the physiological register, much satisfying on the biological level, it is enjoyable in any normal human in any century, nothing to say of a few decades. Life very much plays in time, is very much dependent on calendar seasons, but independent of calendar years."

Overall, residents seemed to be far more impressed with Capehart housing than Wherry housing. The creation of larger interior spaces and more exterior spaces gave residents the space they needed within their homes, and the place they desired within their community. One Capehart resident, quoted in *Fort of a Home*, put it like this: "I was assigned... the ultimate assignment. With a beautiful wife and two sweet children, a good salary, and a brand new house—hey, it can't get better than that."



Front elevation for officers' duplex housing.



1958 advertisement from the *Spokane Courier*, an official newspaper published weekly in the interest of personnel at Mountain Home AFB.

Mountain Home *Mentor*

Sheri L. Bowden and John R. Kennedy. "Wherry and Capehart Housing, Mountain Home AFB, Idaho: A Historic Context for Wherry-Capehart Housing." Prepared for 366th Environmental Flight CES/CEVA, Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho.

Figure 7 Wherry and Capehart Layouts

By early 1952, the Air Force only had 27,913 Wherry homes that rented for \$69 per month, and to offset the lack of housing, the Air Force opened trailer parks on its bases.⁹⁴ Because of this, in 1952 Air Force recruiters usually avoided enlisting or attempting to reenlist a first term Airman who was married. The process at the time required permission from the base commander from which that Airman was assigned. Of note, under no circumstances did recruiters enlist married women or women with dependents under the age of eighteen. By 1953, with recruitments down and the Air Force suffering from a mass exodus of married Airmen, it relaxed its ban on accepting and retaining married male Airman hoping that men with families would be more inclined to sign additional reenlistments.⁹⁵

In 1950, 50.9 percent of all civilians were married contrasting the 29.7 percent in the Air Force. By 1955, the Air Force percentage had grown to 44.1 percent. This increase revealed the dire need for housing. In 1956, the Director of Personnel told LeMay, "If we are going to retain the people we need, we must look after the family."⁹⁶ In later testimony, where LeMay attempted to convince a housing committee to extend the Air Force's

⁹⁴ Thomas M. Coffey, *Iron Eagle: The Turbulent Life of General Curtis LeMay*, (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1986), 296-297; General Curtis LeMay, *Mission With LeMay*, (Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Company, INC., 1965), 469-472; Mark R Grandstaff., *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), pp. 165.

⁹⁵ Mark R Grandstaff., *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), pp. 104-105; AFR 34-24, Jul 15 1949, *Marriage of Airmen in the Lower Four Grades*; AFR 39-9. 1949, *Restrictions to Enlistment, The Airman's Guide*, 2d ed. (Harrisburg, PA: Military Service Publishing Co., 1950), pp. 101-105; *USAF Statistical Digest: Fiscal Year 1955*, pp. 344-345.

⁹⁶ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command July-December 1956*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, nd.), pp. 193.

Capehart housing contracts for an additional three years--until September 30, 1959--he stressed the Air Force needed 100,000 additional housing units. "The need," he said, "was not only for planes and men, but the men had to be close enough to the planes so that they could get into the air on a moment's notice night or day."⁹⁷ LeMay also pointed out the military's tradition of rank has its privileges and how lower ranking Airmen had been traditionally ignored in the military housing programs. "These men," he said, "often hold important crew or ground positions. Besides that, they were the source of future noncommissioned officers."⁹⁸ Because these lower grade airmen received only \$50-70 a month in quarter allowances, they often had to live in poor housing or elect to not reenlist. Family life and spouse support had become an important deciding factor of whether or not a military man would stay or go.

The Capehart and Wherry housing programs ran from 1949 until 1962. During that time, various contractors built 62,475 Wherry and 77,208 Capehart family housing units for the Air Force and the Navy. The Army also had 19,616 units built to supplement its existing neighborhoods. The Air Force constructed many more units than the Navy and Army due largely in part because it was a new service building new bases. In fact, the Air Force built more Capehart units than the Army and Navy combined. In addition to the

⁹⁷ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1 July 1954-30 June 1956*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, nd.), pp. 372.

⁹⁸ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command 1 July 1954-30 June 1956*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, nd.), pp. 373.

Capehart and Wherry units, the Air Force and Navy built an additional 6,607 houses through the Federal appropriations process.⁹⁹

Table 1. Wherry & Capehart Housing Constructed between 1949 and 1962

Service	Wherry Units	Capehart Units
Air Force	38,014	62,816
Navy	17,434	10,020
Marines	7,027	4,372
R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates. <i>Neighborhood Design Guidelines Department of the Air Force Department of the Navy Wherry and Capehart Era Family Housing</i> (Frederick MD: R. Christopher Goodwin & Ass, Inc, June 2007).		

⁹⁹ R. Christopher Goodwin and Associates. *Neighborhood Design Guidelines Department of the Air Force Department of the Navy Wherry and Capehart Era Family Housing* (Frederick MD: R. Christopher Goodwin & Ass, Inc, June 2007).

SAC Dormitories

For unmarried airmen working in SAC and living in the barracks, General LeMay also instituted a program that is still in use today by the United States Air Force, but whose origins are unknown to many. In 1949, the Air Force still operated by many of the Army's traditions including reveille in the morning and living in open bay barracks. With SAC's commitment to a 24-hour alert status, the open bay concept did not work well with personnel working odd shifts and walking through the bays disturbing other airmen's sleep cycles. Morning reveille also disturbed many and SAC leadership quickly abandoned the time-honored tradition. One historian quoted LeMay as saying:

I see no reason why a man that comes off duty at midnight should have to go to bed without turning on the lights for fear of waking other people up. I think he should be able to sit down, prop his feet up and read the paper if he wants to, in the privacy of a room. There's no reason either why the men should have to stand in line in the morning to shave, or why they should have to stack their belongings in foot lockers and sit on bunks. They should have closet, chairs, and a desk for reading and study. I believe we can provide that for them and I believe we can do it for less money than the old barracks cost.¹⁰⁰

As envisioned, SAC leaders wanted Airmen to feel as if they lived in dormitories, similar to those modern structures found on college campuses of the day. At the time, many men in the Air Force received technical training costing the government between \$12,000 and \$20,000 per man which they could immediately transfer to the private sector while

¹⁰⁰ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command July-December 1950*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, May 1 1951), pp. 198.

demanding a large salary increase. SAC leaders believed SAC Airmen deserved living quarters comparable to the work the Air Force demanded.¹⁰¹

As for the barracks issue, LeMay requested that the Army Corps of Engineers design and then build dormitories that would house two men per room. After some initial push back from the Army, who commented that two-person private rooms pampered the unmarried airmen, LeMay got his dormitories.¹⁰² Walton S. Moody comments in his book, *Building A Strategic Air Force*, “LeMay’s concept of a professional, highly skilled, extremely motivated career force harmonized with the priority the country seemed to accord the Strategic Air Command.”¹⁰³ Issues such as good housing attracted the right people for the job in the early 1950s and those quality of life standards enticed people to stay. However, there was also a surface change that went unnoticed by many; how the Air Force altered its image.

As the Air Force distanced itself from its Army roots, it changed its uniform, it changed the stripes on the enlisted uniform, and it changed the way Airmen talked. They

¹⁰¹ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command July-December 1950*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, May 1 1951), pp. 199-203; Office of Public Information, HQ SAC, “Press Release #164RB Enlisted Barracks,” December 29, 1950.

¹⁰² HQ SAC by Command of Gen LeMay to Director of Installations, USAF, memorandum, “Construction Costs, Offutt Air Force Base (216) Airmen’s Barracks, nd; Col Louis J. Feron, Chief Construction Branch, Air Installations Division, HQ SAC, memorandum, “notes on barracks contract and construction,” March 6, 1951; Lt Colonel Louis J. Feron, memorandum, “Report of Staff Visits-Binghamton, NY and Nutley, NJ,” July 11, 1950; Lt Gen Curtis LeMay to Director of Installations, HQ USAF, memorandum, “Reconstruction of Barracks 40M, Offutt Air Force Base,” June 5, 1950; Brig Gen K. E. Tibbetts to Commanding General SAC, memorandum, “Additional Airman Barracks and Mess Facilities for Offutt Air Force Base, Omaha, Nebraska,” August 22, 1950.

¹⁰³ Walton S. Moody, *Building A Strategic Air Force*, (Air Force History and Museums Program: Washington D.C., 1996), 264-265; Thomas M. Coffey, *Iron Eagle: The Turbulent Life of General Curtis LeMay*, (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1986), 295.

no longer lived in Army barracks. They now lived in Air Force dormitories. They no longer ate at the chow hall. They now ate in a dining facility. And they no longer lived in run down shanties. They now lived in Capehart and Wherry houses in neighborhoods that resembled those being built by Mr. Levitt. For many Airmen, the American Dream was now in reach for those receiving technical training while serving their nation.



Dean Jones Collections, John Bohn Research Facility, Barksdale AFB, LA., *the Military Engineer*, Jul-Aug 52..

Figure 8 Transformation from Barracks to Dormitories

The People Programs

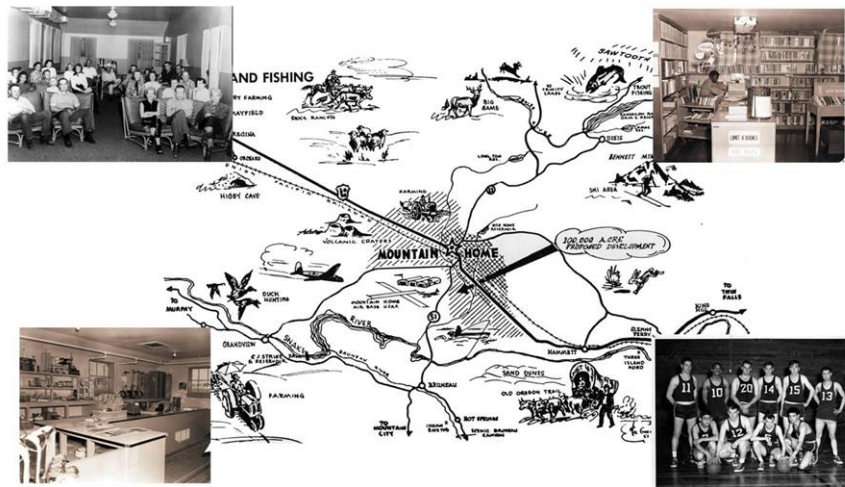
Also at this time, the Air Force began developing its Welfare Construction Program. To fund these programs the Air Force used non-appropriated funds, or NAF funds, to build recreational facilities for enlisted personnel. These funds came from Base Exchange and theater profits, and in the beginning, these NAF funds sponsored construction or improvements for sports related activities like baseball fields. Eventually, the NAF programs expanded to libraries and air conditioning for certain buildings, but eventually it supported General LeMay's People Programs. These included auto hobby shops, wood hobby shops, ceramic and other arts and craft shops.¹⁰⁴

By the end of the 1950s and into the early 1960s, recruitment and retention programs had stabilized. Running parallel to these developments, the Air Force designed and implemented multiple social programs to make life more pleasant for families. At the same time, the United States passed the Dependent's Medical Care Act to furnish medical care to military retirees and dependents and improved survivor benefits.¹⁰⁵ In addition to the housing programs, bases opened child daycare centers with funding offset by non-appropriated funds, and as mentioned earlier, SAC's Dependent Assistance Centers were adopted Air Force wide. It appeared that that the Air Force had found balance in democratizing the military and making enlistees feel like individuals, but it had also

¹⁰⁴ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command July-December 1950*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1948), pp. 210-213; Maj Gen W. E. Farthing, Acting Chairman, Air Force Committee, Joint Welfare Board, to Commanding General SAC, memorandum, "Welfare Construction Program-1950, Utilizing Non-appropriated Funds," memorandum, June 14, 1950; Maj Gen A. W. Kissner, SAC Chief of Staff to Joint Welfare Board, Departments of the Army and Air Force, memorandum "Welfare Construction Program—1950," December 13, 1950.

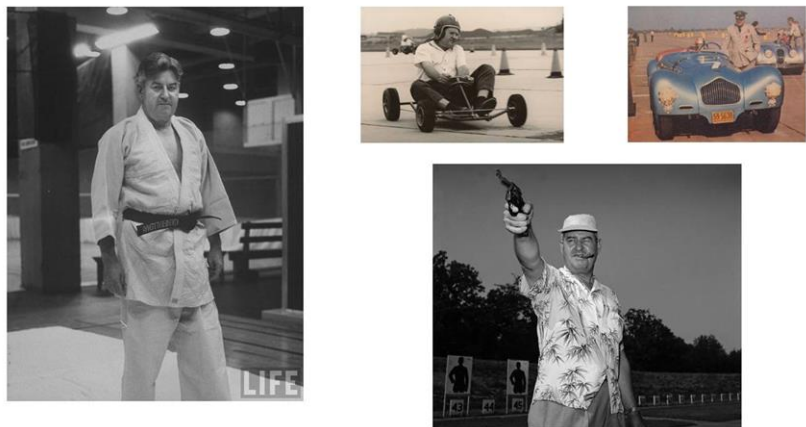
¹⁰⁵ *Dependent Medical Care Act*, Public Law 84-569, June 7, 1956.

adopted the family values espoused by the government in the post WW II time. These social programs, these People Programs, would become a financial burden and the evolution of the nuclear family would eventually pose a threat to retention.



Mountain Home AFB Base Guide, circa 1952, 1967.

Figure 9 Examples of SAC's People Programs



“Air Force general Curtis LeMay born 100 years ago 10 pictures,”

www.gettyimages.com, <http://www.gettyimages.com/event/air-force-general-curtis-lemay-born-100-years-ago-71088443?#air-force-gen-curtis-lemay-pointing-at-huge-world-map-as-he-confers-w-picture-id50526250>.



“Turner AFB, GA, Tool Room and Hobby Shop,” photograph, Turner AFB, nd, Bohn Research Facility, SAC Photos.

Figure 10 Gen LeMay and SAC’s People Programs

Recruiting the Right Person

In 1956, the lack of skilled manpower continued to plague the Air Force. In the spring of 1956, General LeMay testified to a U.S. Senate Subcommittee on the Air Force, stating:

There is one deficiency which pertains not only to Strategic Air Command but to the military services as a whole, which I believe should be brought to the attention of the committee. This is a deficiency in skilled manpower. [emphasis added]

We will never be able to maintain the kind of force in being capable of striking against the enemy on a moment's notice or of assuming an alert posture which will in any way approach what we ought to be able to do with the money which has been expended against our equipment and facilities unless we have skilled professional manpower required to maintain and operate a modern weapons system.¹⁰⁶

He went on to add, “I consider the lack of skilled manpower to be my most critical deficiency.”¹⁰⁷ He blamed the problem on two factors: the high personnel turnover and the retraining required for the expansion and modernization of SAC. To improve the problem LeMay offered five solutions. First, the military needed a realistic pay structure noting that there was no truth in the antiquated idea that one man in uniform is worth as much as another when modern equipment demanded an Airman with technical skills. Without a realistic pay structure, he and the other military leaders could not retain the people who

¹⁰⁶ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command July-December 1956*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, nd.), pp. 9; General Curtis E. LeMay, CINCSAC, April 27 1956, contained in *Study of Airpower Hearings before the Subcommittee on the Air Force of the Committee on Army Services*, U.S. Senate, 84th Congress, Second Session, April 16-June 1, 1956 (Washington D.C.: GPO).

¹⁰⁷ General Curtis E. LeMay, CINCSAC, April 27 1956, contained in *Study of Airpower Hearings before the Subcommittee on the Air Force of the Committee on Army Services*, U.S. Senate, 84th Congress, Second Session, April 16-June 1, 1956 (Washington D.C.: GPO).

received the technical training. Congress would pass the Pay Bill in 1958 answering LeMay's plea, but moreover, the entire military's want.¹⁰⁸ He also noted the Air Force needed more housing, complete medical care for dependents, a full restoration of Base Exchange and commissary privileges, and an expanded educational program.¹⁰⁹

Since the mid-1940s, Air Force leaders had stressed that they needed to recruit the brightest to fill the ranks of the very futuristic and technical-oriented Air Force. However, research in the 1950s found that the smarter recruits enlisted in the Air Force for reasons such as training, to escape the Army's draft, or to gain access to college, not for a career with the Air Force. Therefore, as Mark Grandstaff documented in his book, *FOUNDATION of the FORCE*, one influential planner wrote, "The best student does not necessarily make the most efficient and effective man on-the-job."¹¹⁰ That planner added, "The man we want in numbers is an individual of average intelligence, aptitude and ability who is capable of improving with age and experience and, most of all, who will stay with us."¹¹¹ By the 1960s, with Air Force training methods improving and greatly deemphasizing the need for

¹⁰⁸ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command January-June 1958*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, Apr 1957), pp. 55-60; *the Career Compensation Act 1949*, Public Law 85-422, May 20, 1958.

¹⁰⁹ SAC Historian. *History of Strategic Air Command July-December 1956*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, nd.), pp. 9-16.

¹¹⁰ Mark R Grandstaff., *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), pp. 180.

¹¹¹ Mark R Grandstaff., *FOUNDATION of the FORCE: Air Force Enlisted Personnel Policy 1907-1956*. (Washington D.C.: Air Force History and Museums Program, 1997), pp. 180.

highly skilled technicians, recruiters began targeting recruits who had a high school diploma and average mental scores because they would more than likely reenlist.

CHAPTER 3

The Turbulent Years

By the early 1960s the Air Force stood on firm ground with its recruitment program, but retention remained a problem. By the late 1950s, the Air Force had evolved its training procedures to meet the needs of an era of supersonic aircraft, guided missiles, and space craft. The growing technological complexity of the evolving weapons systems along with the functions to support these developments required additional training, training that was expensive. By the end of 1959, training costs had started to rise, due to their intensity and complexity. While Mark R Grandstaff is the authority on Air Force personnel issues from the late 1940s until the late 1950s, George Lemmer fills that role for the 1960s. In his study, "The Changing Character of Air Force Manpower, 1958-1959," Lemmer wrote, "The higher-caliber force being built in 1958-59 cost more per man than the former short-term, partially trained force."¹¹² A multitude of factors, including the 1958 pay raise, along with personnel gaining higher rank and earning more pay caused costs to skyrocket. Lemmer adds, "Also, a higher percentage of men were married and had larger families than the 'first termers' who previously formed the bulk of the manpower force, making it necessary for the Air Force to spend more money on medical care, family housing, and education for the

¹¹² George F Lemmer. "The Changing Character of Air Force Manpower." (USAF Historical Liaison Office: Washington D.C. April 1961), pp. 3.

school-age children of its personnel.”¹¹³ Only by retaining these people could the Air Force maintain and operate such weapons systems as the B-52, B-58, the F-105, and the even more intricate missiles. These systems not only required men with focused training in electronics and other technical areas, but because many of these systems belonged to Strategic Air Command, they were located in isolated environments and harsh climates. Not only would the technicians need a developed sense of responsibility and dedication, so would their families.

The effect of the Air Force fielding missiles and more complex aircraft drove the need for technically trained officers and airmen. Earlier in 1952, the Air Force adopted its own Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) for its officers, rather than continuing with the Army’s Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) designators in order to assign personnel to particularly important jobs. By the mid-1950s, the Air Force had 180 specialties grouped into 26 occupational fields. Options for employment ranged from pilot, intelligence, budget, personnel staff, legal, research and development, to weather.¹¹⁴ The Air Force would later go on to build a similar system for its enlisted corps. Many of these skills were in short supply and high demand both in and out of the military and once a person received training from the Air Force it was tempting to move into the private sector. Contrasting this, attracting men and women with the requisite skills to enlist in the Air Force also had problems. As the Senior Editor of *Air Force and Space Digest* wrote in April 1961, “You cannot expect a highly skilled research and development officer who has come into the

¹¹³ George F Lemmer. "The Changing Character of Air Force Manpower." (USAF Historical Liaison Office: Washington D.C. April 1961), pp. 4.

¹¹⁴ “New Deal for USAF Officers,” *Air Force: The Magazine of American Airpower*, (May 52), pp. 31.

flying game and has specialized in research and development to suddenly take a \$220-a-month pay cut, and resist an offer from civilian life of maybe \$25,000 to \$30,000 a year.”¹¹⁵

LeMay, now the Chief of Staff, United States Air Force, said this about people in the way of future programs in September 1961:

By stressing good management and human relations significant improvements are going to be made to further broaden opportunity and compensation. While we do not foresee the day when the military will be able to compete with industry in take-home pay for skilled personnel, we will, however, continue to work for comparable compensation. This means pay adjustments, housing, restored commissary and exchange privileges, and other fringe benefits. All of these things are needed to attract quality people, but the Air Force member must also have inherent qualities that cannot be bought. A dedication to the mission and a willingness to work to the breaking point because the job is important and must be done. The Air Force fortunately, has always been composed of this type of person.¹¹⁶

To attract and retain the types of people mentioned by General LeMay, the Air Force planned to institute education programs for both officer and enlisted (these included Bootstrap and G.I. Bill), expanded housing programs, adjustment of quarters allowance, revision to reenlistment bonus payments, and pay adjustments to included incentive pay, proficiency pay, alert pay for combat crews, and responsibility pay.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Claude Witze, “How missiles and space affect people...Training, Retraining ...and Retaining,” *Air Force and Space Digest: The Magazine of Aerospace Power*, (Apr 61), pp. 91.

¹¹⁶ Curtis E LeMay. “Our First Priority: People,” *Air Force and Space Digest: The Magazine of Aerospace Power*, (Sep 61), pp. 46.

¹¹⁷ The Bootstrap Program allowed enlisted Airman to pursue a college degree through the ROTC program. The Air Force paid for the college tuition, but the enlisted Airman paid for housing. Upon graduation, the enlisted Airman was commissioned and became and USAF officer.

These new programs came at a good time as the Air Force had started to evolve its strategy to survive a Soviet attack. The new operational concepts called for dispersing the Air Force's bombers and tankers to outlining satellite bases while keeping a portion of its fleet airborne twenty-fours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. In addition, in the 1960s, the Air Force fielded its InterContinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) force over the plains of North America. Because of this, there was less of a reliance on the large air bases, where the families lived, so service men and women traveled to distant missile fields to highly guarded alert facilities, affectionately called Mole Holes. In all cases, service men and women spent less and less time with their families so the base leadership and community served as an extended family. However, separation from family caused by constant deployments and the Vietnam War became the X factor that the Air Force had not predicted and it increased the amount of Airmen leaving the Air Force.¹¹⁸

For more than a decade Air Force leaders had worked hard to encourage trained Airmen to reenlist, but each year fewer and fewer young officers and airmen accepted that offer. There had been multiple pay increases in the 1960s and incentives that included hostile fire pay, but despite these efforts, in the early 1960s, the Air Force estimated that roughly 8,000 families of USAF enlisted men lived on incomes below the poverty level as defined by the President's Council for Economic Advisors. Lemmer wrote, "To supplement incomes, approximately 148,000 airmen (21 percent of the force) had part-time jobs and 133,000 other members of airman households also worked. According to an Air Force study in February 1965, the income of officers was about 83 percent of that of their

¹¹⁸ George F Lemmer. "The Changing Character of Air Force Manpower." (USAF Historical Liaison Office: Washington D.C. April 1961), pp. 7-15.

civilian counterparts; of enlisted men, about 73 percent.”¹¹⁹ As a result, in April 1964, General John Paul McConnell, the Air Force’s sixth Chief of Staff, directed that no married men without previous service be accepted for enlistment because the pay was too low to support a family. The policy stayed in effect until November 1965 when draft deferment of married men was dropped and all services need more men for the war in Vietnam. The 1965 Pay Act increased base pay for enlisted and officers and the Air Force increased its proficiency pay to encourage enlisted personnel to reenlist.¹²⁰

In the 1960s, the Air Force also struggled to maintain its quota of pilots and navigators. In 1963 and 1964 about five percent of the pilots requested release to pursue a career with the airlines, but by 1966 about 60 percent had started to apply. The airlines offered far greater compensation than the Air Force as airline pilots not only received more pay, they also received leave, travel expenses, moving expenses, and medical care. In addition, retirement pay eclipsed that offered by the Air Force and a 1964 investigation indicated an airline jet pilot could retire with a monthly income at least equal to that of a brigadier general on flying status. However, the main reason for the mass exodus centered on the dangers facing military pilots in combat. The USAF mortality rate had nearly doubled that of any civilian occupation.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ George F Lemmer. "USAF Manpower in Limited Wars 1964-1967." (USAF Historical Liaison Office: Washington D.C. November 1968), pp. 35.

¹²⁰ George F Lemmer. "USAF Manpower in Limited Wars 1964-1967." (USAF Historical Liaison Office: Washington D.C. November 1968), pp. 44-46; *the 1965 Pay Act*. Public Law 89-132. August 21, 1965.

¹²¹ George F Lemmer. "USAF Manpower in Limited Wars 1964-1967." (USAF Historical Liaison Office: Washington D.C. November 1968), pp. 41-48.

Of particular interest, Lt Colonel John D. Rhodes cited a U.S. Department of Navy "Pilot Retention Study," in his February 1968 Air War College Research Paper and documented that the Navy suffered similar pilot shortages at roughly the same time. The Navy study was the first of its kind to study push-pull factors affecting pilot shortages. The Navy defined a pull as an outside force like the airlines' attempts to convince aviators to leave the Navy. The Navy defined a push as a high operations tempo and the associated deprivations of a naval aviators' family life. Though the Navy labeled the push as the most significant reason for an aviator to leave the Service, the Navy elected to ignore these factors and instead increased bonuses and flight pay to offset the possible temptation of the airlines. The Navy did not address this push, or any quality of life improvements. This was an interesting decision as the Navy was in the midst of Service-wide study to address quality of life concerns. During that effort, the Navy had listened to its Sailors and their families and introduced sweeping changes ranging from housing programs and training and education to changes in dress code and haircuts.¹²²

By 1966, some doubted the familiar explanations for why men and women elected to not stay with the Air Force. Some officials wondered whether or not the Air Force's decision to emphasize the "military image" for its officers had made the difference, so to find answers, the Air Force directed a "New View" study to gauge the problem. Researchers interviewed 148 officers on 68 bases in 12 commands and found that rated

¹²² John D. Rhodes, Lt Col, "Pilot Retention: An Historical Analysis, No. AU-AWC-86-178" *Air War College Research Report*, Feb 1986; U.S. Department of the Navy, Bureau of Naval Personnel, "Pilot Retention Study," February 14, 1966; John A. Oudine, Editor, "Special Report--The SecNav Task Force: Its recommendations Affect Navymen and Their Families, Ships, and Shore Stations, Personnel Assignment, Career Opportunities and Fleet Operations," *All Hands*. pp. 38-53, May 1966.

officers loved flying, especially tactical fighters, but objected to long assignments as copilots in SAC and Military Airlift Command. They also disliked too much temporary duty, standing alert, poor duty assignments, and bad administration of their careers. In describing their dissatisfaction, the young officers noted, unreasonable policies, bad supervisors, and dull or unimportant work. They stated Tactical Air Command (TAC), SAC, and Military Airlift Command (MAC) were the greatest offenders.¹²³

In the mid-1960s the Air Force took a different approach, an approach that had been avoided in past recruiting and retention efforts, it stressed service to country (patriotism) in its officer service schools. The Air Force emphasized the “whole man” concept or a “generalist” concept, something the Army had pushed, the “every man a soldier” marketing scheme. Young Air Force officers cringed as they did not identify with this approach, but rather identified themselves as engineers, scientists, aviators, teachers, and professionals in other fields. They did not accept the concept of the “USAF officer” as a primary profession. Results were similar for the enlisted men and women, with one exception: they left the Air Force to take advantage of the G.I. Bill.¹²⁴

Towards the end of the 1960s the planners attempted to improve living and working conditions, expand educational opportunities, refine the promotion system, and build esprit de corps within the Air Force. By this point, housing shortages continued to undermine the retention program and though the Air Force had established people programs, and started to plan for the future, every year thousands of highly competent Airmen left the Air Force

¹²³ George F Lemmer. "USAF Manpower in Limited Wars 1964-1967." (USAF Historical Liaison Office: Washington D.C. November 1968), pp. 41-48.

¹²⁴ George F Lemmer. "USAF Manpower in Limited Wars 1964-1967." (USAF Historical Liaison Office: Washington D.C. November 1968), pp. 41-48.

to accept better paying jobs in the private sector. In the late 1960s and early 1970s to support operations in Southeast Asia, the Air Force accelerated recruitment and allowed all first term Airmen to reenlist no matter the case. This would cause overages in the 1970s.¹²⁵

¹²⁵ George F Lemmer. "USAF Manpower in Limited Wars 1964-1967." (USAF Historical Liaison Office: Washington D.C. November 1968), pp. 49; Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command FY 75*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 465-467.

CHAPTER 4

The Air Force And the All-Volunteer Force

The Air Force's work in the 1950s to create recruitment and retention programs that attracted the best and brightest offset the recruiting woes of the All-Volunteer Force, so in the early 1970s the young service did not struggle to meet its recruitment and retention goals. That would change as national policy stripped service members of valuable fringe benefits and the concept of family changed. To offset these actions, the Air Force refocused its personnel programs, including recruitment and retention methods, but also its social programs. The Air Force also took a deeper look at how it perceived the family, ramping up its child daycare center programs and taking a realistic look at the role of the spouse.

Personnel Programs and the Erosion of Benefits

Coming out of the Vietnam War, and with the dawn of the All-Volunteer Force and the end of Draft, the Army worried it would not be able to meet its manpower quotas. This was not the case for the Air Force. By strict definition, the Air Force had always been an all-volunteer force and before the draft ended in 1973 many men trying to avoid service in the Army joined the Air Force. Because of the recruiting actions of the late 1960s and early 1970s by October 1974, the Air Force had taken action to pare down the overages in many skills. At the time, the Air Force had manpower overages and many of these men and women were improperly matched to their jobs. To manage this problem the Air Force

introduced the Career Airman Reenlistment Reservation System (CAREERS), a new management tool that would match individual skills with Air Force-wide needs.¹²⁶

The key tool of the CAREERS program rested with the career job reservation (CJR). Prior to an airman's initial enlistment contract expiring, he would apply for a CJR if he held the grade of E-4, had his five skill level, and his commander had approved him for reenlistment. With this all approved, he would forward a CJR application to the Air Force Military Personnel Center (AFMPC). This normally guaranteed the Airman reenlistment in his current career field, but if a CJR did not exist for that career field, he could retrain in a specialty that the Air Force declared as a shortage. If selected for retraining, the airman would attend technical school, receive his three level and begin working towards his upgrade, a five level. In many cases, retraining also meant the airman would move to another permanent location. Lastly, for many first-term airmen working in critically manned skills, the Air Force offered a monetary incentive, the selective reenlistment bonus (SRB). The SRB convinced many first termers to reenlist so retention rates for second term and career airmen were always much higher than those of first term airmen.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command FY 75*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 465-467; Air Force Military Personnel Center to CINCSAC, et al, Letter, "CAREERS Briefing," March 6, 1975; Air Force Military Personnel Center to CINCSAC, Letter, "FY 1975 Selective Reenlistment Reservation System (SRP)," July 9, 1974.

¹²⁷ Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command FY 75*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 465-467.

In 1979, for the first time in history, the Air Force failed to meet its recruiting goals, enlisting 66,616 recruits instead of 68,000. This did not come as a surprise to Air Force leadership for many reasons. First, between January 1972 and October 1976, the cost of living increased by 41% while military basic pay only went up by 30%. This resulted in a loss of purchasing power for many Airmen, but of greater concern, the use of food stamps had gone up. A survey of 77% of Air Force personnel revealed that they believed their pay had not kept pace with inflation and that two thirds believed Congress needed to lobby on their behalf. Most did not realize that the steady erosion came from Congress chipping away at military entitlements during every session. Congress supported the phase out of the commissary subsidy, to cut dentists and optometrists at the base hospital, to limit the amount of coverage for medical insurance forcing military members to shop around for lower cost doctors or to pay more out of pocket costs, and to adjust clothing allowance, just to name a few. In addition, personnel joining the military after January 1977 no longer received the G.I. Bill. Rather, a person was encouraged to contribute \$50-\$75 per month, then upon separation or retirement, the Veterans Association would provide two times the amount towards educational costs. Lastly, the Congress openly debated a replacement for the current retirement system. All of this made Airmen and their spouses believe that the Air Force no longer represented a career or an attractive life.¹²⁸

Even though 1976 represented the best year on record for Air Force recruiting, in mid-1975, Air Force recruiters forecasted that they would not meet the Air Force's

¹²⁸ Chief Master Sergeant C. L. Dean, "Erosion of Benefits," February 15, 1977; GS-15 Huff, "Veteran's Educational Assistance Program," February 9, 1977; Lt Col Chappelle, "Recruiting Initiatives," February 25, 1977; Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command 1979*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 729, 741-742, 746; AETC History Office, *A Brief History of the Air Force Recruiting Service*, (Sep 12), pp. 7.

recruitment goals in the future. They based this analysis on several factors: more stringent enlistment criteria, improving private sector job market, and a reduction in VA benefits. In late 1977 and continuing into 1978, pilots began leaving the Air Force at an unprecedented rate, due to airline industry deregulation, the associated route expansion, and the need to hire 4,200 new pilots in 1978 alone. However, this anomaly affected the entire force, including enlisted men and women no matter their rank or job specialty. To prepare for this, the Air Force did what it had done in the past, it looked to the commander to market the needs of the Air Force. Strategic Air Command implemented a grass roots program at the unit level to encourage first term airmen to reenlist while General Richard Ellis, SAC commander in 1979, had his staff study the situation writ large. That group found that the erosion of benefits played a role in reenlistments, but the evolving American society, including youth attitudes, changing population patterns, job opportunities, and more and more women working, would produce a difficult recruiting climate.¹²⁹

Bracing for the rough seas ahead, commanders also recognized the possibility that the Air Force may need to lower its standards and accept recruits without high school diplomas, or worse yet, not separate a person for the minor infractions once found undesirable in the Air Force. General Ellis noted in a 1979 SAC history that "more disciplinary problems, lower productivity, with more accidents, and more administrative discharges were evidence that the airmen being assigned to SAC from basic training were, as a group, of lower quality than the first-term airmen assigned to SAC just a few years

¹²⁹ *History of Strategic Air Command 1979*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 729, 741-742, 746; Lt Col Chappelle, "Recruiting Initiatives," February 25, 1977.

before."¹³⁰ At the time, the absent without leave (AWOL) and disciplinary rates supported General Ellis' conclusions and some SAC commanders believed the Air Force was entering an era which manpower shortages demanded a more aggressive program to rehabilitate an airman rather than separating him. Worse than all this, in the late 1970s, headquarters and base judge advocates notified leadership that airmen had started to talk about the idea of unionizing the military. This had gained so much attention that eight bills were before Congress seeking to prohibit any attempt to make the military a union. Talk of unions had taken place early in the Air Force's history when benefits were in question and it was not surprising to see this topic again surface in the 1970s with the erosion of benefits.¹³¹

Social Programs

Beginning in the late 1960s, in reaction to the social changes occurring in American society and culture, the Air Force implemented a host of social programs to help Airmen and their families. In reaction to rise of drug and alcohol abuse in the military, the Department of Defense and the Air Force designed and fielded a broad rehabilitation and education program. In addition, to prevent discrimination, the Air Force developed its social actions program.¹³²

¹³⁰ *History of Strategic Air Command 1979*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 800.

¹³¹ Brig Gen Thomas B. Bruton, SAC/JA, "Busy Giant XIV Rehabilitation versus discharge or problem personnel," May 1, 1979; William Poole, "Unionizing the Military S. 274, S. 997," *Issue Bulletin The Heritage Foundation*, June 14, 1977.

¹³² Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command 1979*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 484-486; SACR 30-3, SAC/DPZ, "Management of Social Actions Programs," June 7, 1974; SAC/DPZ, "SAC Equal Opportunity Affirmative Action Plan," March 31, 1975.

There is no denying that, even in the 1970s, discrimination still occurred. The Air Force had taken a very hard stance on this issue, however, investing large amounts of money and time to first build programs to stop discrimination before it occurred, and second, when it did, to address grievances immediately. By 1974, the number of racially motivated incidents in the Air Force had been low, with minor incidents usually lasting only a short time and involving no more than six people. The incidents normally did not involve damaged property, but rather were fist fights leaving the participants to seek care in the emergency room. However, in January 1975, an incident at Minot AFB, North Dakota, received national attention.¹³³

Life at Minot was rough for anyone as Airmen and families experienced months of darkness, extreme weather, and the stress of the SAC alert mission. Life at Minot, and for that matter most of SAC's northern tier bases, placed an extra burden on African-American Airmen. Social life and dating proved difficult as slightly over 12 percent of the total military population at Minot was black and virtually no minorities lived in the local area. On January 15, 1975, three separate fights took place at the Airmen's Club named the "Lokal Pub." A group of African-American airmen then barricaded themselves in a base dining hall, refusing to come out until they could talk with a black leader of national prominence such as Julian Bond, a Georgia legislator; Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm; or comedian and civil rights activist, Dick Gregory. General Russell Dougherty, the SAC Commander at the time, arranged for Representative Chisholm to talk with the airmen via

¹³³ Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command FY 75*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 488-492. Brig Gen Richard N. Cody, "Final Report of the SAC Inquiry Team's Findings at Minot AFB, N.D. 16 Jan-2 Feb 1975," circa Feb 75.

telephone. She convinced the airmen to stand down and leave the dining hall. General Dougherty assured the airmen they would not receive disciplinary action and that he would personally look into the allegations.¹³⁴

Air Force leaders considered many of the complaints valid. Complaints included a lack of black-oriented goods (soul food) on and off base, services, and entertainment, but they also lamented the condition of the airman dormitories and the overcrowding of the recreation facilities. Moreover, a communication gap existed between the airmen and their leadership when it came to the reasons why the Air Force separated some airmen and not others. With the implementation of the CAREERS program, black airmen felt they were being targeted for separation, when in fact the rumors were incorrect. In general, the complaints of this one group applied to many minorities being handed an assignment to SAC's northern tier bases. To remedy many of the grievances, SAC worked with the commander of the Army and Air Force Exchange Service so the on-base stores would carry more black-oriented products ranging from clothing and magazines to hair products and makeup. Strategic Air Command also contracted several construction projects to relieve overcrowding in the base recreational facilities, but the Air Force would not complete most of these efforts until 1980.¹³⁵

In late 1971, the Air Force decided to triple the number of enlisted women in the Air Force by the end of FY78 and open all AFSC's to women except the combat related

¹³⁴ Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command FY 75*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 488-492. Brig Gen Richard N. Cody, "Final Report of the SAC Inquiry Team's Findings at Minot AFB, N.D. 16 Jan-2 Feb 1975," circa Feb 75.

¹³⁵ Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command FY 75*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 488-192. Brig Gen Richard N. Cody, "Final Report of the SAC Inquiry Team's Findings at Minot AFB, N.D. 16 Jan-2 Feb 1975," circa Feb 75.

areas. While this objective aligned with national equal opportunity objectives, the Air Force had a practical reason for its decision; women represented an untapped labor pool and a valuable resource of potential professional technicians. As planned the number of women in the Air Force would go from 24,520 in 1975 to 48,000 in June 1978. To get there, the Air Force recruited women into jobs that had once been the exclusive jurisdiction of men. In 1975, enlisted women would serve in all but seven combat-related specialties, while female officers were only prevented from serving as pilots, navigators, or as a member of an ICBM crew. To fully integrate women, the Air Force abolished the WAC and WAF units in December 1975, later assigned women to pilot KC-135s and other support aircraft, and eventually allowed women to serve as ICBM crew members in 1978. Ironically, while the USAF allowed women to sit at the console of the world's most powerful weapon in the late 1970s, it would be more than a decade before they were allowed to pilot or crew combat coded aircraft. Nevertheless, the changes mentioned above offered opportunities not seen in the past and increased the pool of talented recruits.¹³⁶

The New Definition of Family, Daycare and Dual Income

There is no doubt that eroded pay and entitlements represented the number one factor for why Airmen left the Air Force, but one element, often the most overlooked, is the family, represented by the spouse and the child. As the Air Force created its culture in the 1950s and early 1960s it stressed a culture of the family, one that mirrored the nation's nuclear family. The Air Force had created neighborhoods like those of the 1950s, it stressed customs and courtesies similar to those perpetuated in the 1950s, and it expected the

¹³⁶ Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command FY 75*. (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 495-500; SAC/HQ, "A Study of Females on Minuteman/Peacekeeper Crews," January 31, 1985, pp. 12-20.

spouse, the wife in most cases, to support her husband and obey his command. There is no other monograph that captures the role of a SAC wife better than Melvin G. Deaile's, *The SAC Mentality: The Origins of Organizational Culture in Strategic Air Command, 1946-1962*. He documents that in 1952, SAC conducted a study and randomly surveyed 25 officers' wives and 25 airmens' wives. The results showed strained marriages with 40 wives responding "expressed marked dissatisfaction with the effects of SAC requirements on married life."¹³⁷ Wives worried about moves, changes in schedules, and schools for their children, and though SAC built houses, "homes were not something [SAC] couples built together."¹³⁸ An *Airman's Guide* from 1967 still retained many of these customs, but it is the substantial collection of Wives' Club materials that details the acceptable role of the military spouse throughout the 1950s and into the late 1970s. In short, the wife needed to support her husband, but this did not traditionally include having a job outside of the household. This was not the case in 1980 as 52% of Air Force wives worked. They had to. They needed to help their spouse make ends meet because the military had failed.¹³⁹

Very little is publically documented about the transition of the spouse to the workforce although in the later years the Air Force, and mainly SAC, altered its policies to accommodate this trend. In her Air War College paper, "The New Dual-Income Families: Implications for Air Force Policy Planners," Lt Col Linda K. Sindt wrote, "Attitudes

¹³⁷ Melvin G. Deaile. *The SAC Mentality: The Origins of Organizational Culture in Strategic Air Command, 1946-1962*. (North Carolina: Chapel Hill, 2007) pp.227.

¹³⁸ Melvin G. Deaile. *The SAC Mentality: The Origins of Organizational Culture in Strategic Air Command, 1946-1962*. (North Carolina: Chapel Hill, 2007) pp.227.

¹³⁹ Stockpole Books. *the Airman's guide 14th Edition*. (Harrisburg PA: The Stackpole Company, 1967), pp. 167.

towards parental roles, family leadership, household responsibilities, and employment of wives are all undergoing change.”¹⁴⁰ Research had shown that Air Force policies had not kept pace with societal changes as the Air Force had many single parents serving in 1980 resulting from the rising divorce rates, the recruitment of more women, a greater willingness to rear children outside of marriage, and the death of a husband or wife. In all cases, parenting, for that matter single parenting, was no longer the purview of just the wife. However, before 1979, the Air Force had no regulations defining single parent responsibility for dependent care. Moreover, the Air Force Recruiting Service did not enlist a person for active duty without a waiver in writing showing that the potential recruit would transfer child responsibilities to a relative during initial training and any deployments. There were no requirements made for day-to-day activities and how a person would offset child costs. This, coupled with the rise of working spouses, led the Air Force to build a robust child care system.¹⁴¹

In the early days of the Air Force, volunteers from the officer and airman wives’ clubs staffed SAC’s child care centers, essentially converted rooms in a portion of an existing base building. At this early period, these volunteers rendered short term babysitting so other military spouses could shop, participate in base or community services, or engage in a host of other activities. Realizing the need for professional child care operations, in the 1960s Strategic Air Command began building separate structures to house its child care centers. As the new buildings went up, the demand for child care

¹⁴⁰ Linda K.Sindt. "The New Dual-Income Families: Implications for Air Force Policy Planners." (Maxwell AFB: AU, 81), pp. 2.

¹⁴¹ Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command 1980* (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 729-735.

services outpaced the abilities and time of the spouse volunteer programs, and as a result, base-level morale, welfare, and recreational (MWR) offices took management of more and more SAC child care centers and staffed the organizations with women paid an hourly wage from the NAF coffers. In 1973, the Air Force made the Air Force child care center an official Air Force MWR activity. By 1980, nearly 3,000 children received care in SAC Child Care Centers. General Ellis put forth the argument that “unlike in an earlier day, SAC’s child care centers performed a function that was directly mission-related. They dispensed supervised care and child development training to sons and daughters of active duty officers and airmen upon whom he depended for readiness.” He added, “Equally important, by freeing military parents having to worry about child care, the centers rendered as great a service to the parents as they did to the children.”¹⁴² But it came at a cost. Between 1975 and 1980, SAC spent \$5.7 million of its NAF funds to remodel existing child care facilities or build new ones. SAC was ahead of the larger Air Force and the Air Force outpaced the other services by over a decade. Following the Air Force’s lead, on March 17, 1978, the DoD approved funding child care for all services. By that year, the Air Force had 162 child care facilities at 122 installations serving 16,000 children daily. Because it had started its programs earlier and invested heavily, compared to the Army’s and Navy’s programs, in 1982 the Air Force programs needed very little work.¹⁴³ This was

¹⁴² Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command 1980* (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 736.

¹⁴³ Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command 1980* (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 735-740; General Accounting Office, "Military Child Care Programs: Progress Made, More Needed," pp. ii, June 1, 1982.

not the case for the Army which until the 1980s openly stated, “if the Army had wanted you to have a family, it would have issued you one.”¹⁴⁴

In response to the retention problems where the spouse played a large role in whether or not the service member would reenlist, the Air Force took an active interest in understanding how it could make change. It began in 1979 when SAC introduced its First View program to heighten the wife’s awareness of the SAC mission and how her husband played a role. Later that year in December, SAC initiated a second program, Busy Partner, which allowed spouses to fly on a KC-135 from their husband’s base of assignment to highlight the importance of the Air Force’s mission and to make them feel included. In July 1980, General Lew Allen, Jr., the Air Force Chief of Staff, appointed an Assistant for the Air Force Family Matters to “better define and prioritize a consolidated and coordinated Air Force family support program.”¹⁴⁵ In September 1980, the Air Force held a conference on families. During that gathering, leaders learned that 52% of all Air Force wives worked outside of the home; 44% of officers’ spouses worked while 65% of enlisted wives worked, largely due to “rapidly rising prices, low military pay, and diminished benefits combined with greater societal acceptance of working wives and mothers.”¹⁴⁶ Captain Katie Cutler later wrote in an Airman magazine article, "Family Care," that the definition of family had changed. “Their needs were less consistent with those of the ‘traditional’ family of the Air

¹⁴⁴ US Army MWR website, “U.S. Army MWR History,” accessed August 11, 2016.

¹⁴⁵ Linda K.Sindt. "The New Dual-Income Families: Implications for Air Force Policy Planners." (Maxwell AFB: AU, 81), pp. 16; Major James, E. Cochran. “Improving Family Programs.” *Air Force Magazine*. Aug 81, pp. 47-49.

¹⁴⁶ Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command 1980* (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 749; Linda K.Sindt. “The New Dual-Income Families: Implications for Air Force Policy Planners.” pp. 10-11, (Maxwell AFB: AU, 81).

Force years gone by. Working women, single-parent families, dual-career couples, all blurred the image that used to automatically come to mind: the family headed by male supported by a steadfast wife who took care of the kids, fixed the plumbing, and paid the bills during his frequent and lengthy absences.”¹⁴⁷

In 1981, the Air Force focused its efforts on the family. It began a pilot program and developed Family Support Centers at four test bases. The Air Force would eventually open one on each base. In October, over 400 people representing various interests gathered to participate in the second Air Force Family Conference. Dubbed “Family Focus: Phase II,” General Allen stressed the importance of the meeting and of charting a way forward that would encourage service members to reenlist, but he reminded the audience, “that the mission of the Air Force comes first and solutions for family concerns must not deviate from that principle.”¹⁴⁸

In 1979, officers and NCOs with eight to twelve years of service in the military were making the choice to leave. The Air Force asked why. It studied the problem and within years it had reset its recruitment program and enticed airmen to reenlist. At the national level, both President Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan listened and the latter led an effort to build a “People Budget” for fiscal year 81 to improve quality of life in a number of areas including: pay and allowances, cost of living increases, reimbursement for travel costs for both mileage and food and lodging, and enlistment bonuses, just to name a few.¹⁴⁹ Those in power listened and later house hunting trips were authorized for change of station

¹⁴⁷ Captain Katie Cutler, “Family Care.” *Airman*. (May 81), pp. 42.

¹⁴⁸ Captain Katie Cutler, “Family Focus Phase II.” *Airman*. pp. 8-10, (October 81).

¹⁴⁹ “Air Force Report,” *Airman*. pp. 9, 13, (March 80).

moves and variable housing allowance (VHA) was set authorizing VHA to supplement basic allowance for quarters (BAQ) payments when their rent exceeds their BAQ by more than 15 percent. It was clear that there was a top level commitment to restoring entitlements while embracing the idea of a new definition for family. As Lt Gen A.P. Iosue, Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Personnel put it at a September 1981 Air Force Family Conference, "We've changed our entire attitude toward the Air Force Family--not only because it would help us improve retention, but also because it is the right thing to do. This is something we should have been doing years ago; an attitude adjustment whose time has come."¹⁵⁰ Of note, in the mid-1980s, the Air Force began a program to revitalize the aging Capehart and Wherry houses that were now approaching 30 years of age and in July 1985, the new G.I. Bill became available to qualified people enlisting after this date.¹⁵¹

In the post glow of the Air Force's "Year of the Family," retention rates climbed, but as the Cold War started to come to a close, the issue of a spouse's role continued to surface. Several Air War College papers captured the struggle of dual-career couples, but the process to promote officers and select squadron commanders still had a linkage to how the spouse interacted with leadership and how "she" played her role. This was a culture from the 60s that did not align with the culture of the 1980s. As documented in "Expanding Role of the Air Force Squadron Commander," one Air Command and Staff College officer said it "is not a cliché that the Air Force recruits people but retains families, implying that

¹⁵⁰ Linda K.Sindt. "The New Dual-Income Families: Implications for Air Force Policy Planners." pp. 22, (Maxwell AFB: AU, 81).

¹⁵¹ Bohn, John. *History of Strategic Air Command 1980* (HQ Strategic Air Command: Nebraska, 1987), pp. 694-697; AETC Office of History, "A Brief History of the Air Force Recruiting Service," pp. 8, Sep 12.

if the family is unhappy with the Air Force, the officer will not stay in, and vice versa.”¹⁵² Many assumed that old-time Air Force leaders still believed in a "two-for-one" policy where the spouse had to play a role in squadron functions and its social life. When discussing the role of the spouse, many asked, “Can the helping/charitable needs of our community be met? Can unit morale be maintained without the total involvement of the Air Force spouse?” Some asked why it was a question, one surveyed officer stated, “My wife never joined the Air Force.”¹⁵³ In 1987 the issue came to a head with the Chief of Staff of the USAF and the Secretary of the Air Force (SECAF) forming a Blue Ribbon Panel to address the issue of the spouse’s role in the Air Force.¹⁵⁴ The committee concluded that, “Over the years there has developed a set of attitudes that spouses of military members in certain leadership positions are expected to fill preconceived roles in terms of volunteer work, social functions and membership in social organizations to ensure the career success of military members.”¹⁵⁵ Secretary Aldridge, the SECAF, went on to add, “This set of attitudes had gained such widespread acceptance as to constitute an unwritten policy. In order to eliminate those perceptions, we must focus on the fact that career success is based on evaluation of the performance of military members in their assigned roles.”¹⁵⁶

¹⁵² Colonel Silas R. Johnson, Jr., Lt Col Henry L. Hungerbeeler, Lt Col Karl F. Whittenberg, Lt Col Steven L. Tindell, “Expanding Role of the Air Force Squadron Commander.” pp. 37, (Maxwell AFB, AL: AU 89).

¹⁵³ Colonel Silas R. Johnson, Jr., Lt Col Henry L. Hungerbeeler, Lt Col Karl F. Whittenberg, Lt Col Steven L. Tindell, “Expanding Role of the Air Force Squadron Commander.” pp. 37, (Maxwell AFB, AL: AU 89).

¹⁵⁴ USAF, “Spouse Issues: Blue Ribbon Panel Report,” pp. 1-2, March 88.

¹⁵⁵ “AF blue ribbon panel findings,” *GRYPHON*, pp. 2, March 11, 1988.

¹⁵⁶ “AF blue ribbon panel findings,” *GRYPHON*, pp. 2, March 11, 1988.

Towards the end of 1988, it looked as if America's greatest foe, the Soviet Union would soon implode. As a result, American leaders reevaluated the size of its military. While the Air Force had worried over its recruitment and retention numbers after 1979 and had implemented great solutions, the drawdown of the 1990s would lower overall manpower numbers tremendously, 832,000 in 1989 to 684,000 in 1992. By 2016 that number would drop to 310,000.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ Deputy Assistant Secretary of Cost and Economics, "USAF Statistical Digest FY92." pp.D-38.

CHAPTER 5

The USAF's Entitlement Artifacts

In the early 1990s, on the heels of major military reorganization and draw downs caused by the end of the Cold War, the term Quality of Life became a buzzword throughout the American armed forces. With constant deployments to support operations in the Middle East many began questioning their loyalty to the military and the demand for more entitlements started to drive a national dialogue. For those who tolerated the additional deployments, they sought benefits to offset the time away from home and these needs often manifested themselves in a demand for better pay and better housing and an overall better life for their military family. When the personnel seeking these perks did not receive immediate satisfaction, they sought employment elsewhere. At the same time, the Air Force faced a changing military environment due to overseas reductions, domestic base closures, major force reductions, and increased deployments. With re-enlistments down, Congress eventually became involved when it heard from its Army sources “it costs over \$26,000 to recruit and train an enlisted soldier for the first assignment. This investment is lost each time a soldier must be replaced.”¹⁵⁸ Though throughout the years national attention had been paid to military pay, medical benefits, and housing, the Department of Defense had allowed each service to attend to these matters and resolve these issues

¹⁵⁸ House of Representatives, “Military Construction Appropriations Bill, 1998,” June 24, 1997.

internally. Where the Air Force had focused on what SAC had called People Programs, along with other social entitlements, to entice civilians to enlist and Airmen to remain in service, the Navy and Army had taken a different path and their Quality of Life had suffered. In turn, they struggled with recruitment and retention.¹⁵⁹

In response, Undersecretary of Defense Paul G. Kaminski directed John O. Marsh, the Chairman of the Defense Science Board, to form a Task Force (the Marsh Commission) to address Quality of Life in the military. This group would explore three areas: military housing, personnel Ops tempo, and community and family services. Conceptually, these three areas, along with two other areas studied by a separate Task Force, would help define a quality of life package for the military.¹⁶⁰ The authors of the Task Force report cited that according to Secretary of Defense William J. Perry, "An 'iron logic' connects the Armed Forces' readiness and their quality of life."¹⁶¹ They noted that "quality of life, pay, and housing topped a list of 53 reasons Army troops gave for leaving."¹⁶² Until the mid-1990s, the overall re-enlistments (with differences between the Services) had kept the military at strength, but first-time enlistments as documented in a GAO report were down.¹⁶³ Secretary

¹⁵⁹ Honorable Paul G. Kaminski, Under Secretary of Defense, to John O. Marsh, the Chairman of the Defense Science Board, "Terms of Reference--Defense Science Board Task Force on Quality of Life," Memorandum, December 9, 1994.

¹⁶⁰ This Task Force would study service compensation and medical care.

¹⁶¹ John O. Marsh. "Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Quality of Life," pp. 1. Oct 1995.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ Norman J. Rabkin, Director, National Security Preparedness Issues to the Subcommittee on Personnel, Committee on Armed Services, United States Senate, *Military Personnel First-Term Recruiting and Attrition Continue to Require Focused Attention*. February 24, 2000.

Perry wanted the Task Force to confirm if quality of life had played a role in creating this problem, and as a result, in 1994, the Quality of Life Task Force traveled the world, examined the problem, conducted surveys, and talked to military members, their families, and local base affiliates.

Prior to, and in some cases concurrent with, the Marsh Commission' efforts, several of the services conducted their own internal investigations. The Navy led the way with its April 1990 Joint Type Command Quality of Life Symposium at San Diego. Rear Admiral Roberta L. Hazard, the director of the Naval Military Personnel Command, Pride, Professionalism, and Personal Excellence Department opened the four-day meeting with "Quality of Life is an individual's state of satisfaction with his or her working and living environment." The symposium addressed many issues including housing and temporary quarters, along with child day care and education, just to name a few. Jan Kemp Brandon, a reporter who covered the symposium, later wrote about bachelors' quarter, "The Navy is one of the largest hotel chains in the world, with an inventory in quarters and furnishings reaching into the \$8 billion range, and a typical annual budget of \$160 million." At the time, the Navy had a 79,000 bed shortage for enlisted bachelor quarters. Brandon wrote that Captain Charles A. Cook, director of the Navy Housing Division, said "he is used to berthing sailors three high and living 80 to a berthing compartment aboard ship and believes that a lot of Navy personnel have been used to living that way." She went on to add that, "According to RADM Hazard, during its 215 year history, the Navy has always

put accomplishment of the mission first, while QOL factors have been pushed back.” Of importance, in an earlier survey Sailors blamed the Navy for creating these problems.¹⁶⁴

The symposium attendees briefly addressed housing, but discussed child care at length. Specific to housing, the group focused on the need to offset the rising cost of living downtown and it is assumed that this occurred because the Navy lacked an extensive pool of housing for its married Sailors. However, in later testimony, Mrs. Christine D. Nicholson, a Navy spouse, addressed the condition of Navy government housing on Staten Island, New York. "Once the movers arrived and we started to unload our household goods, we ran into our first problem. Some of our average-sized furniture wasn't making it up the stairs. After trying what seemed to be thousands of angles, we decided that our sofa would have to stay on the first level. Then we noticed our box spring to our bedroom set wasn't fitting up the stairs, either, so we cut it in half."¹⁶⁵ She also addressed the condition of her home:

Once the housing started to settle was when the real problems started to arise. Lumps started to appear in the kitchen floor and the linoleum started to peel. A ½ inch gap appeared from the kitchen cabinet to the kitchen wall. Nail lumps started to come through the rugs. One-and-a-half-inch gaps appeared from our stairs to the wall; and in one instance I was walking down from the second level to the first and half of the railing came out of the wall.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁴ Jan Kemp Brandon, "Navy Quality of Life: Joint Type Command Symposium," *All Hands: Magazine of the U.S. Navy*. pp. 9-11, Jul 90.

¹⁶⁵ Mrs. Christine D. Nicholson. "Remarks before the Subcommittee on Installations and Facilities of the House National Security Committee on Recruiting, Retention, Readiness, and Quality of Life," in *Military Housing and Quality of Life Infrastructure*, 104th Congress, 2nd Session, July 30, 1996.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

Her testimony not only highlighted the age of the Navy housing, but its lack of upkeep.

As for child daycare, while the Navy leadership had taken a position that child care was crucial for its people, Master Chief Petty Officer Duane R. Bushey was vocally opposed. Brandon captured the Master Chief's sentiments well:

We [the Navy] are not in the child raising business. We are in the business of keeping peace throughout the world. I think we should provide some child care...because of working hours being long, because of having to stand duty, because of having to move--you can't establish that support network that you would out in a civilian community. Therefore, I think that we need to help provide some child care. It's not [the Navy's] responsibility, but [it] will put some [child care] here to help you.¹⁶⁷

Rear Admiral Hazard agreed that child care services were not a benefit or a right, but a service provided by the Navy.

The Marines commissioned Elyse W. Kerce who led a series of surveys and then developed a report titled "Quality of Life in the U.S. Marine Corps." Kerce found a series of inputs for future Quality of Life studies. A total of 10,332 active duty Marines completed the 1993 QOL Questionnaire, about six percent of the Marine Corps. As expected, the junior enlisted expressed unhappiness while the senior and warrant officers responded positively. Even with the limited response, the effort uncovered several issues including inadequate housing, both for married and unaccompanied personnel, but most of the suggested actions centered on unmarried Marines. The report appeared to have a bias for fixing the problems associated with barracks life, rather than pleasing the spouse. The young Marines lamented that they did not have a place to "hang out" with their friends and

¹⁶⁷ Jan Kemp Brandon, "Navy Quality of Life: Joint Type Command Symposium," *All Hands: Magazine of the U.S. Navy*. pp. 9-14, Jul 90.

many expressed that they were not interested in the MWR activities such as golf, tennis, camping (they expressed that they do enough of that on the job), or any other organized activities related to work. They wanted better physical fitness facilities and additional access to reading material and music.¹⁶⁸

The Air Force conducted its own internal look in 1995 with the survey receiving 356,409 responses, the largest to date for any Service.¹⁶⁹ The survey revealed that 66% of the active duty force intended to make the USAF a career of at least 20 years. Seventy-four percent of the officers expressed this view compared to sixty-four percent of the enlisted force. The junior enlisted force expressed some issues with 29% saying they would seek a full career, 36% saying they were eager to leave, and 35% being undecided. So, while the Air Force, in comparison to the Navy and Marines, appeared to be moving in the right direction, higher Air Force echelons remained unconvinced believing that they had a morale problem brewing just below the surface.¹⁷⁰

Most of the concerns centered on several areas. First, Ops tempo and how it affected the ability to study for promotion. Second, recognition or the chance to be recognized for a job well done. Next, slightly more than half the enlisted respondents complained about the evaluation system being unfair, as did 43% of the officers. Many complained about the assignment system, but almost all commented about housing. Sixty-eight percent of the officers and sixty percent of the enlisted stated that the location of their home had a large

¹⁶⁸ Eylse W. Kerce, "Quality of Life in the U.S. Marine Corps: Executive Summary," January 1996.

¹⁶⁹ Every enlisted, officer and civilian employee had access to a computerized version of the survey.

¹⁷⁰ Peter Grier, "The Quality of Military Life," *Air Force Magazine*. December 95.

impact on their quality of life. Safety, cost, and quality of housing, both on and off base, all factored into the responses. Overall, the Air Force's base housing received favorable ratings while those living in the dorms were somewhat less satisfied. Eighty percent of the enlisted who responded thought that a private sleeping room would improve the quality of their job.¹⁷¹

Housing

As expected, the nature of an all-volunteer force implied greater expectations for the availability, size, and amenities of family housing. During the visits to various bases and posts, the Task Force found hundreds of instances of inadequate housing, either too small, poorly maintained or inconveniently located. At the time of the study, the DoD owned or leased about 387,000 family homes with an average age of 33 years, most dating to the Wherry/Capehart program. The major construction programs of the 1950s and 1960s had produced modern homes with standards accepted for the time, but a lack of funding for maintenance and replacement turned many of these homes into low-quality housing by the mid-1980s and the standards of the 1950s were no longer accepted. As an example, most Wherry/Capehart homes lacked a two-car garage or family rooms and these were common by the mid-1990s in homes offered off-base.¹⁷²

Further compounding the problem, the number of married, junior enlisted personnel had increased since the 1950s and strained the already overtaxed housing delivery system. The lack of military housing, the poor condition of this housing, and the policy of rank has

¹⁷¹ Peter Grier, "The Quality of Military Life," *Air Force Magazine*. December 95.

¹⁷² John O. Marsh. "Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Quality of Life," pp. 19-20. October 1995.

its privileges, forced many military personnel to make the hard choice, in some cases, the only choice, to live off base. The Navy had the most people living downtown at 74%, with the Army having the least, at 57%. Also those who lived in military housing varied: grades E-4 to E-6 occupied about 64% of the military housing, but comprised 55% of military families. Contrasting this, almost 70% of married, junior enlisted (E-1 to E-3) rented housing in the local community, causing the least paid personnel to incur a large bill. The large rent amounts were a result of the large demand, but limited housing units. Many civilian communities had been unable or unwilling to meet the increased military family housing needs because of a hesitation associated with the recent military force relocations and base closures, as well as, the change in military demographics. The military had more families than it had in the past.¹⁷³

Overall, the Air Force fared well in the report in regards to housing with the authors noting:

The Air Force has generally provided the best housing, setting the standard for the Defense Department. The Navy and Marine Corps have acknowledged erratic investment practices in the past and have initiated broad programs to renovate and replace unsuitable housing. *The condition of family housing reflects the priority a Service gives to quality of life in relation to other competing mission and readiness requirements.* {emphasis added}¹⁷⁴

This was a clear indicator that Air Force's interest, but more importantly SAC's emphasis on its People Programs, allowed the Air Force to lead the DoD in the matter of Quality of Life with respect to family housing.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ John O. Marsh. "Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Quality of Life," pp. 20. October 1995.

To immediately remedy many of the problems associated with housing, the Task Force offered several prescriptions. First, they suggested addressing the inequities associated with the long wait time for housing as it pertained to rank. Long standing tradition had rewarded career service and often resulted in higher priority for senior personnel, rank has its privileges. At most installations, by construction standard, the units were divided up by area of rank, with airmen, senior enlisted, and officers having their own neighborhoods, with adequate units for the limited, higher ranking personnel and not nearly enough for the lowest grades. As a result, senior personnel waited a short amount of time to move into base housing whereas some lower ranking enlisted troops could wait upwards of two years. The report noted that "Grades E1-E3 make up 29 percent of the enlisted force (ranging from a high of 49 percent in the Marines to a low of 22 percent in the Air Force). Of the 25 percent of families in the grades of E1-E3 with dependants, 19 percent live in military housing, and about 12 percent are unsuitably housed in the civilian community, because of cost, size, condition, or location."¹⁷⁵ While promotion to E-4 varied for each service, most promotion periods took three to four years. The report's authors offered sage insight when stating, "In the interim, married junior enlisted members must balance the pressures of low pay and allowances with growing family and financial responsibilities. To ensure high morale and retention, these young families must be provided access to adequate and affordable housing."¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁵ John O. Marsh. "Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Quality of Life," pp. 24. October 1995.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

The Task Force suggested a few other items in addition to eliminating rank has its privileges as it pertained to housing wait times. First, they suggested replacing the Wherry/Capehart neighborhoods and when building new housing that the services should update the homes to meet the expectations of modern-day home owners. This included large family rooms, laundry rooms, two-car garages, and bedrooms for each child. The Task Force stressed the need for the services to privatize housing responsibilities where the service member paid rent to a contractor who maintained the structures, mowed the lawns, and provided overall upkeep of the neighborhoods. For those military members who were waiting for on base housing or elected to live off post, the Task Force suggested raising the housing allowance.¹⁷⁷

Prior to the Marsh Report being published, the Department of Defense started to address the housing problem. First, in 1993, as a guideline for each Service, the DoD released DOD 4165.63M, "DOD Housing Management."¹⁷⁸ As the Marsh Report later pointed out, the manual lacked clear guidance and updated terms to adequately implement new QOL measures, and unfortunately, it would take the DOD 17 years to release an updated version that addressed these issues. Therefore, it became the responsibility of each Service to make up for the shortfall in direction. In some cases, this created county options as Major Command and base commanders attempted to resolve the housing crisis locally. As expected, the Air Force quickly updated its instructions and re-issued Air Force Policy Direction 32-60, "Housing." This began the process for the Air Force to begin updating its

¹⁷⁷ John O. Marsh. "Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Quality of Life," pp. 25-26, 29-33. October 1995.

¹⁷⁸ OSD, "DOD 4165.63M: DOD Housing Management." September 1993; OSD, "DOD 4165.63M: DOD Housing Management." 28 October 2010.

policies and eliminating “rank has its privileges” as it pertained to housing wait times. It also began the process of renovating existing housing or completely razing the landscape and building new neighborhoods.¹⁷⁹

The needed funding in all branches drove Congress to inject monies into the annual 1995 and 1996 budgets to rebuild not only the decaying infrastructure, but also the young Airmen’s confidence in the military. As an example for Idaho, up until 1996, the majority of new construction at Mountain Home AFB centered on accepting the new composite wing mission and building B-1B bomber hangars, but when Idaho Senator Larry Craig received a tour in late 1994, he was appalled at the conditions in which the Airmen lived. He immediately lobbied for a Congressional insert and in 1995 the Department of Defense let contracts to rebuild a portion of the Woodland Groves housing complex, one new General Officers Quarters (GOQ), and three Senior Officers Quarters (SOQ). The money flowed immediately. Ironically, prior to the construction, Defense Secretary William J. Perry promised other disappointed service members “a home and not just a bunk” as he proposed the Military Family Housing Revitalization Act of 1995.¹⁸⁰ This action would lead to monies for all services, the construction of new homes, not modifications to old, and to the privatization of all base housing facilities.

¹⁷⁹ Brig Gen James E. McCarthy, AFPD 32-60, “Housing,” 20 July 1994; *US Air Force Family Housing Guide for Planning, Programming, Design, and Construction*. August 2004; Dusty Stehr, “Family Master Housing Plan,” December 18, 2003; Col Karsten H. Rothenberg, “Air Force Military Construction and Family Housing Economic Analysis Guide,” *AFM 32-1089*. August 1, 1996.

¹⁸⁰ Jim Garamone, “Perry proposes legislation to revitalize military family housing,” *Gunfighter*, 9 Jun 95. MSgt Gary Pomeroy, “CMSAF: Adequate housing top concern,” *Gunfighter*, 17 Mar 95; H.R. 104-137 — 104th Congress: Military Construction Appropriations Bill, 1996.” [www.congress.gov. https://www.congress.gov/congressional-report/104th-congress/house-report/137](https://www.congress.gov/congressional-report/104th-congress/house-report/137)

By early 1996, Phase I of a plan to rejuvenate the aging housing began when contractors demolished a section of the Woodland Groves complex, a former Cold War Capehart neighborhood. Combined with the Military Family Housing Revitalization Act, a decade of destruction and construction began at Mountain Home in order to update and build the neighborhoods.¹⁸¹ Between 1996 and 2009, the base hired multiple contractors who razed the Cold War housing projects and in their place built new, modern domiciles for Mountain Home Airmen. Of note, this was not an Air Force-only phenomenon as each Service began updating or replacing its housing and then privatizing the housing operation.¹⁸²

Bachelors' Quarters

As for the barracks, the bachelor housing at many posts, not air bases, failed to meet minimum standards of privacy and comfort. Of interest, the Task Force had a difficult time with a cross-service comparison, as each service managed its barracks program differently with each having a slightly different room assignment policy and a variation in how it funded programs for construction, upkeep, and replacement of furniture. However, during the interviews, it became very clear that every unmarried service member wanted more privacy, space, better storage, furnishings, and amenities. At the time of the fact finding trips, like housing, the Air Force led the way, providing ample privacy and amenities for

¹⁸¹ “Going, going, gone...,” *The Gunfighter*, 15 Mar 96; Brigadier General William Peck, “MHAFB Comprehensive Development Plan: Mountain Home AFB Into the Future,” 18 Jun 96; H.R. 4453 — 103rd Congress: Military Construction Appropriations Act, 1995.” www.GovTrack.us. 1994. March 13, 2017 <<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/103/hr4453>.

¹⁸² Dusty Stehr, “Family Master Housing Plan,” December 18, 2003; Yancy Mailes, “History of the 366th Fighter Wing 2000-2004 Chapter 4 Mission Support,” Jun 2005; Home Innovation Research Labs, “Army Family Housing Planning Guide,” April 2014.

its people. Where Army troops lived with upwards to three or four roommates, or in worse conditions, lived in open bays, the Air Force had more than 40% of its enlisted personnel in a system where each person had his or her own room. Eventually, all AF enlisted personnel living in the dorms would have their own room. Of note, how the Air Force treated its enlisted personnel had become a source of dissatisfaction among members of the joint community with some using the term the Hotel Air Force when describing the enlisted living conditions. This is illustrated in Figure 11.¹⁸³

¹⁸³ John O. Marsh. "Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Quality of Life," pp. 37-40. October 1995.



"The 13 Funniest Military Memes of the Week 3/30/16." Military.com.

<https://undertheradar.military.com/2016/03/the-13-funniest-military-memes-of-the-week-33016/>



Running John, "Wooside 50K Race Report: March 26, 2011. April 2, 2011.

<http://runningjohn.blogspot.com/2011/04/wooside-50k-race-report-march-26-2011.html>

Figure 11 Memes of Air Force Living Conditions

In testimony roughly nine months after the Task Force published its findings, the top ranking enlisted men discussed Quality of Life before the Military Installations and Facilities Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security House of Representatives. Their testimony illustrated the disparity between the Air Force and the other Services in how they treated their people and gave consideration as to how jealousies had developed. Master Chief Petty Officer John Hagan testified that the average Navy barracks were 38 years old and though he recognized that Secretary Perry had directed that all services adopt the Air Force's 1-to-1 standard, the Navy would not meet that standard until 2013. Additionally he noted that while the Navy had a "vision of berthing junior shipboard Sailors ashore in barracks while their ship is in homeport," this "gives us new goals and challenges."¹⁸⁴ He stressed that,

Sailors do not complain about shipboard living while at sea. No, to the contrary, they live, considerately, in harmony and make it work, and frankly they are quietly proud of the sacrifices they make. The privacy and other adequacy issues of at sea shipboard life cannot be changed. Likewise, the family separation is a fact of sea duty life. That is what makes the barracks and family housing and pier side single Sailor facilities so important. FACILITIES ARE DIRECTLY RELATED TO BASIC FAIRNESS AND QUALITY OF LIFE EQUITY FOR SAILORS. {emphasis from testimony}¹⁸⁵

He gave similar testimony for family housing stressing the need to replace and rebuild, but also noted that Quality of Life initiatives would compete with operational needs as well.

¹⁸⁴ Master Chief Petty Officer John Hagan. "Remarks before the Subcommittee on Installations and Facilities of the House National Security Committee on Recruiting, Retention, Readiness, and Quality of Life," in *Military Housing and Quality of Life Infrastructure*, 104th Congress, 2nd Session, July 30, 1996.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

Sergeant Major Lewis G. Lee was more to the point about Quality of Life for the Marines. "The trend to move to a one-by-one standard that has been set by the DOD to build to, again, we're going to have to fall off of. We have determined that we're not going to go to a one person per room, shared head, with another person in another room. We can't do that just yet. We would like to, but we can't. We're going to put two men, two women, in a room, with a shared head."¹⁸⁶ He also added that the Marines would begin to improve Quality of Life for their Marines, by first allowing Marines to have private telephones in their rooms, but that the contract would be between the Marine and the local telephone carrier. Next, they would try to get the furniture replacement cycle down from 25 to 13.5 and eventually seven years.¹⁸⁷ Of note, Air Force personnel had been living two to a room since the 1960s and telephones and televisions in each room had been an acceptable practice for decades.

Contrasting the Navy and Marines, Sergeant Major Gene K. McKinney of the U.S. Army took a different approach during his testimony. He stated, "I define quality of life for soldiers as peace of mind." He added, "When soldiers know their families are being adequately cared for, they concentrate on their job, accomplish the mission, and return home safely." Specifically to the barracks, he noted that currently single soldiers lived in buildings 30 to 40 years old designed for the austere standards of a conscript Army built for wars of the past. They needed modernization. He described the Army's "Whole

¹⁸⁶ Sergeant Major Lewis G. Lee, USMC. "Remarks before the Subcommittee on Installations and Facilities of the House National Security Committee on Recruiting, Retention, Readiness, and Quality of Life," in *Military Housing and Quality of Life Infrastructure*, 104th Congress, 2nd Session, July 30, 1996.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid*; Eylse W. Kerce, "Quality of Life in the U.S. Marine Corps: Executive Summary," January 1996.

Barracks Renewal Program" and how the Army would improve morale by embracing the 1+1 concept. But as a bottom line, "The Army wants to provide single soldiers with excellent facilities comparable to those of married soldiers." The new Army barracks would not have administrative offices, command and control, or dining facilities attached. Instead, each soldier would have 118 square feet of living space with a closet instead of a wall locker, separate temperature controls, and their room would be wired for cable TV and telephone. They would also have additional bulk storage in another location.¹⁸⁸

Chief Master Sergeant David J. Campanale testified that the Air Force was pleased to "see that the Secretary of Defense's Quality of Life Task Force (also known as the Marsh Commission) validated many of our concerns and incorporated many of our proposals for improving the Quality of Life for every member of the Air Force team." He noted that the Air Force had embraced an improved dormitory living criteria for its airmen since the late 1950s and that the 1+1 concept would "enhance morale while assuring personnel privacy--the number one concern for our 70,000 people who live in dorms both at home and abroad." He also mentioned that the Air Force was actively eliminating its worst facilities along with all gang or central latrines with a targeted completion date of 2000.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸ Sergeant Major Gene K. McKinney of the U.S. Army. "Remarks before the Subcommittee on Installations and Facilities of the House National Security Committee on Recruiting, Retention, Readiness, and Quality of Life," in *Military Housing and Quality of Life Infrastructure*, 104th Congress, 2nd Session, July 30, 1996.

¹⁸⁹ Chief Master Sergeant David J. Campanale, USAF. "Remarks before the Subcommittee on Installations and Facilities of the House National Security Committee on Recruiting, Retention, Readiness, and Quality of Life," in *Military Housing and Quality of Life Infrastructure*, 104th Congress, 2nd Session, July 30, 1996.

Child Care

The demand for child care had increased as more and more families joined the Service, and as expected, military families demanded access to affordable child care. The Air Force had a robust child day care system in place and as reported by the Marsh Commission, the fees collected in FY90 and FY95 had exceeded the operational costs for non-appropriated funds. Therefore, the Air Force was making money from its child care centers. None of the other services could claim this success, and as a matter of fact, in 1995 the Army invested \$104 million in appropriated funds to offset the operation and construction costs for its child care programs. This stemmed from its late arrival in understanding the importance of this facet of QOL. In contrast, the Navy had made several adjustments and demonstrated the possibility of privatizing child day care across the DOD, but this was still being studied well after the publication of the Marsh Commission Report.¹⁹⁰ During later testimony, Master Chief Hagan surprised the committee when he stated, "I do not favor expanding child care services except in the most thoughtful, conservative and mission oriented manner. I do not believe [the] Navy can satisfy every demand of a changing Navy without committing resources which in fact are needed for single Sailor quality of life programs." This echoed the sentiment from the 1990 Joint Type Command Quality of Life Symposium at San Diego.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ John O. Marsh. "Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Quality of Life," pp. 99-103. October 1995.

¹⁹¹ Master Chief Petty Officer John Hagan. "Remarks before the Subcommittee on Installations and Facilities of the House National Security Committee on Recruiting, Retention, Readiness, and Quality of Life," in *Military Housing and Quality of Life Infrastructure*, 104th Congress, 2nd Session, July 30, 1996.

Education

Upon reviewing the surveys, the Marsh Commission realized that training and educational opportunities represented one of the most desired items for enlistment and re-enlistment. While each Service reimbursed a military member up to 75% of their tuition cost, it varied on how much each Service would pay per credit hour. The Air Force led the way offering \$250 per credit hour while the Army offered \$60-85, and the Navy \$125. This equated to the Air Force budgeting \$60 million for its FY95 budget, \$9.6 million for the Marines, \$25 million for the Navy, and \$34 million for the Army. The Commission also suggested that the other Services copy the Air Force's Community College of the Air Force (CCAF) program and allow those who desired an Associate's Degree the opportunity to gain higher education. The Air Force had offered Associate's Degrees in Applied Science to its airmen since 1973 and in 1994, it conferred more than 11,000 Associate Degrees. The other services could not claim this level of success or innovation.¹⁹²

Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR)

Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) activities had been part of the Air Force's history since its inception. During General Curtis LeMay's tenure he implemented an expansion of these basic programs inherited from the Army and created SAC's People Programs. This led to the development of the various hobby shops, including the auto, wood, and ceramic shops. SAC also created gun ranges and bowling alleys at each installation and the Air Force followed suit. By 1994, many of these facilities existed on sister service bases and had become part of the overall military culture; however, times had

¹⁹² John O. Marsh. "Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Quality of Life," pp. 108-111. October 1995.

changed and many young people no longer associated with these types of recreational activities. As a result, the Marsh Commission reported that many people wanted more money for fitness centers and youth activities for dependent children.¹⁹³ Sergeant Major McKinney emphasized the need for better physical fitness centers noting, "Improvements to facilities and construction of new facilities receive constant attention from Service leadership. They rank among the Army's priorities."¹⁹⁴ Master Chief Hagan echoed the Army's opinion stating, "As fitness is a condition of employment, we recognize the importance of a strong infrastructure."¹⁹⁵ CMSgt Campanale testified that the Air Force needed to update its fitness centers and that military construction funds had been earmarked. In addition, the Air Force had started to develop its Health and Welfare Centers at each base, which was professionally staffed with individuals focusing on fitness and health assessments, as well as health promotion and disease prevention. By 1996, the Air Force had 56 centers in operation with a goal to establish one at every base.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ John O. Marsh. "Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Quality of Life," pp. 112-113. October 1995.

¹⁹⁴ Sergeant Major Gene K. McKinney of the U.S. Army. "Remarks before the Subcommittee on Installations and Facilities of the House National Security Committee on Recruiting, Retention, Readiness, and Quality of Life," in *Military Housing and Quality of Life Infrastructure*, 104th Congress, 2nd Session, July 30, 1996.

¹⁹⁵ Master Chief Petty Officer John Hagan. "Remarks before the Subcommittee on Installations and Facilities of the House National Security Committee on Recruiting, Retention, Readiness, and Quality of Life," in *Military Housing and Quality of Life Infrastructure*, 104th Congress, 2nd Session, July 30, 1996.

¹⁹⁶ Chief Master Sergeant David J. Campanale, USAF. "Remarks before the Subcommittee on Installations and Facilities of the House National Security Committee on Recruiting, Retention, Readiness, and Quality of Life," in *Military Housing and Quality of Life Infrastructure*, 104th Congress, 2nd Session, July 30, 1996.

The findings included in the Marsh Commission report validated that the Air Force had made a good decision when focusing on an Airman's quality of life. The decisions made during General LeMay's tenure had built the Air Force's cultural foundation, a foundation that treated Airmen with dignity and respect and created a democratic process for the Air Force. Specific to culture, the Marsh Report's authors noted that,

each Service has developed its own, unique traditions and culture. Many of the differences discussed in the Report arise from this uniqueness. The steps recommended to remove inequities do not impinge on the integrity of each distinct tradition. By aligning toward the top, making every Service's best treatment the rule for members of every other branch, the individual traditions and cultures remain sources of great strength to the U.S. Armed Forces.¹⁹⁷

It appeared that SAC's People Programs, and the Air Force's ongoing attention to Quality of Life had placed the young service ahead of its sister services.

¹⁹⁷ John O. Marsh. "Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Quality of Life," pp. 14. October 1995.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

The findings in the Marsh Commission report validated that the Air Force had taken the correct approach to recruiting and retaining its personnel while improving quality of life for its Airmen and their families. It also highlighted that the other services had not been aggressive enough when adopting new programs to improve quality of life. The decisions of General LeMay and those serving in Strategic Air Command had played a large role in creating the foundation of today's Air Force culture, a culture deeply rooted in the base designs of the late 1950s and early 1960s. While building the new service the Air Force developed recruitment processes that recognized the family; embracing the concept that the Air Force recruits Airmen, but retains family. Along the way, the Air Force's innovative and open policies allowed integration and equality to flourish and although the Air Force had been slow to recognize the changing culture of working women, it quickly remedied its mistake and embraced the concept of the working spouse. In doing so, it abandoned the 1950s idea of the nuclear family and the stay-at-home wife and developed systems to support working spouses. It was ahead of the other Services in almost every aspect of quality of life.

While the Air Force's recruitment and retention programs worked well, the focus on family and the concept of the air base created bills for future leaders. The infrastructure costs associated with housing along with the various MWR programs had become some of the largest bills being paid by the Air Force. While General LeMay's focus on the People

Programs spoke to a generation who liked to bowl, build models, or work on an automobile, it did not speak to the current generation of Airmen. By 1994, the DoD had found a process to save money on housing costs and implemented housing privatization, but the bill associated with the MWR programs still existed. To solve the ongoing MWR bill, in 2014, Air Force leaders began to discuss how to consider reshaping the air base as it had been understood for years.¹⁹⁸

In closely held conversations during the very secretive CORONA briefings, the Air Force's top leaders discussed the possibilities of eliminating services that had been core to its quality of life program for decades and creating a new city-base model for its Air Force bases. The four-star generals asked if they did not close facilities like the coveted golf course, library, bowling alley, and the officer's club, then how would they pay to keep them operating while needing to buy new weapon systems? They also asked if the current generation of Airmen really wanted these services. Such facilities had grown obsolete and unlike the 1950s where most air bases operated far from town, the local communities had grown towards the base and now offered many of the same amenities being duplicated and poorly operated on Air Force installations around the world. In the end, those hard conversations did not produce change. The men and women included in those very secretive talks had grown up in the Air Force enjoying the benefits of SAC's People Programs and it was difficult for them to kill something that had been so important to them

¹⁹⁸ Larry Fallow, "City Base concept still progressing," 311th Public Affairs Office, November 13, 2003.

and their families. Thus, LeMay's People Programs remained a vital part of the Air Force's culture.¹⁹⁹

The idea of enhancing a soldier's quality of life began to publically surface after World War II and helped shape the Air Force's recruitment and retention policies. As the Air Force began to build up in late 1946 and early 1947, so too did the United States, and like the Air Force, great change was coming. The nation began building massive neighborhoods and the military offered returning WW II veterans access to the G.I. Bill and options for purchasing a home.²⁰⁰ So, as leaders in SAC and the Air Force worked to attract the best and brightest, they competed with the temptation of the American Dream of owning a home and having a good life. To offset these temptations, SAC and the Air Force leaders implemented numerous People Programs and constructed Levitt Town-like neighborhoods at each air base to replace the dilapidated structures at most WW II bases. (Please see Figure 12 for an example of air base structures in 2012). The majority of these programs for the Air Force originated in the late 1950s and matured during the mid- 1960s. The Air Force's early decision to focus on quality of life programs created a successful recruitment and retention program and improved quality of life for its Airmen and their families.

¹⁹⁹ Defense Communities, "Reimagining the City Base Model," Washington D.C.: Capital Hilton June 22-24 2015; HQ USAF, "AF 2023 CONUS Installations 24-25 Jun 14 Workshop," as of 25 June 2104.

²⁰⁰ R. B. Pitkin, "How the First GI Bill was written," *The American Legion Magazine*, Jan, Feb, May 69.



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Figure 12 Air Force People Programs circa 2010

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