

Lieutenant General Frank G. Klotz
Global Strike Command

Global Strike Symposium

17 November 2010

Lt. Gen. Klotz: Thank you. It's a real pleasure to be with you all here today. I should point out that we have the traditional senior leaders who have joined us since this morning, our Under Secretary of the Air Force, the Honorable Erin Conaton. [Applause]. You will shortly hear from her as our keynote speaker. Also the Commander of Air Combat Command, the world's largest air force, General Will Fraser. [Applause].

As I said it's a pleasure to be here with you this afternoon and join so many friends and colleagues and fellow airmen in this inaugural technology and innovation symposium. It's also wonderful to be in a room filled with people who understand and appreciate the importance of the nuclear deterrence and global strike missions.

As I said in my opening comments yesterday morning, we've experienced a lot of "firsts" since the activation of Air Force Global Strike Command in August of last year. You would think that after being in business for 460 days that we would have experienced just about every "first" that's possible, but this week we've added three new ones. Our first technology and innovation symposium; our first visit from the French Strategic Air Forces, General Fuillon; and our first command-wide competition -- Global Strike Challenge.

Before we go any further, I'd like to recap the symposium and thank the people who have made it a resounding success. We just heard from General Fuillon, and let me add, departing from my script here, that I had the opportunity to be hosted by General Fuillon in July of this year. A delegation from Global Strike command visited three of his bases at Tabernis, NTCA, and [inaudible], and they were very open and very welcoming throughout the entire time. I must tell you that we all came away with the impression that this is a force which is very professional, which is very skilled, which is applying very modern capabilities, and one that serves as a great model not only for the entire French air forces, but for us as well. So we were absolutely delighted that we had the opportunity to reciprocate this week and to invite General Fuillon and a group of French aviators and intelligence officers to visit us here, to see Barksdale Air Force Base, to fly on the B-52, to journey up to 20th Air Force at Francis E. Warren Air Force Base where General Alston will host them there. So thank you very much, Paul, for both your visit [inaudible] and your interesting presentation.

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[Applause].

General Fuillon has another distinction. He is the speaker who has traveled the furthest to be here -- over 4800 miles. Or is it like you say in France, 7,700 kilometers to be here.

A bit closer to home, yesterday we heard from Generals Miller, Parensack, Chambers, Wayland and Carpenter discussing the nuclear enterprise and global strike issues. Mr. Bowerline and Mr. Prisky led a technology debate. And the former Commander in Chief [inaudible], General Jack [inaudible], talked to us about lessons he's learned both in and outside the Air Force.

On day two, today, Admiral [inaudible] the nuclear [inaudible], while General Thomas [inaudible] topics. Mr. Bender and [inaudible] talked about the nuclear enterprise and its relationship to the news media. And of course our keynote speaker for the conference, and next on the agenda, the Honorable Erin Conaton, Under Secretary of the Air Force.

What a great lineup. In fact the feedback I've been getting from the attendees as we've had our coffee breaks and over lunch is that the contents and policy of the presentations has been uniformly positive. So many thanks to each and every one of our speakers.

I'd also be remiss if I didn't give a special thanks to the Cyber Innovation Center, the CIC, as well as our many defense industry and local business sponsors. Without them, literally, without them this symposium would not have been possible.

Finally, to the good citizens of Shreveport, Bosier City and the surrounding area, thank you again for the greatest hospitality. Over the past 16 months as we've stood up Global Strike Command you have warmly welcomed over 900 members of our headquarters and their families, as well as our many guests and visitors into your community.

I still smile every time I drive down Airline or Yuri and still see the signs on the marquis outside the various businesses which say, "Welcome Global Strike Command."

This community has always been very welcoming of the military and we certainly appreciate all that you do for our airmen and their families. So can I ask all the airmen who are here to thank all the people who have made this possible, as well as the people in Shreveport and Bosier City.

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[Applause].

Speaking of a level of [inaudible] and strong support of Shreveport and Bossier City, I recently read a story in our local newspaper, the Shreveport Times -- John, it's good to see you here -- about a class [inaudible] at one of the parochial schools in Shreveport. It seems the entire third grade class was learning about the saints. Each student was asked to pick out a favorite saint and explain why that saint was their favorite.

One young boy raised his hand [inaudible] and asked that [inaudible]. He confessed that he had a hard time deciding who was his favorite saint. After all, there were so many of them. They had all performed miracles. They had all demonstrated great faith, even in the face of unrelenting adversity. And most importantly, they had all answered the prayers of many thousands, even millions of people. But even though it was hard to choose just one amongst so many saints, the young boy continued, I decided that my favorite saint is Drew Brees, the quarterback of the Saints. [Laughter].

We're all very proud of the Saints here in Louisiana, and they do command a lot of attention and respect in the local area. In fact this year Halloween fell on Sunday evening at the same time as the Saints and Steelers game was being broadcast on TV, and as a result, the number of trick-or-treaters was reportedly half that of the previous year. Apparently everyone stayed home to watch the Saints. But I'll have more to say about the Saints in a moment.

As many of you have no doubt noticed, nuclear policy issues have been in the headlines this past year as a result most likely of the publication of the Department of Defense's Nuclear Posture Review and the signing of the New START treaty by President Obama and President Medvedev of Russia, both of which occurred in April.

I know our Under Secretary will discuss both of these documents in some detail in her remarks so I will not do so now. I would, however, note they have resulted in perhaps the most extensive public discussion of nuclear policies that I have personally witnessed in over a decade. In fact just a couple of months ago I spoke at the Air Force Association conference in Washington, D.C. and there were seven presentations that covered nuclear deterrence and global strike issues. A few years ago I think you would have been hard pressed to find even one speaker discussing this critically important topic at any Air Force Association gathering, much less its premier event.

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Now because of our defense industry and local business sponsors and the speakers and the attendees, we have an entire symposium dedicated to the missions of nuclear deterrence and global strike operations right here in the Shreveport/Bossier area.

Over the last two days we've been able to focus on our current issues and discuss the innovative ways Air Force personnel are continuing to strengthen the nuclear enterprise.

In my remarks this afternoon I'd like to shift the focus for a moment from the larger nuclear policy issues, even though they're critically important, and speak directly to the competitors, as well as to their friends and colleagues, both those who are here and those who wait for them back at their bases. I'd like to explain, as it were, why you are here, why we have a competition, why we celebrate excellence, and why it's so important for our Air Force and for the country that we do so.

Since the activation of Air Force Global Strike Command in August of last year, I've had an opportunity to give status reports to many audiences on the standup of this command, our mission, and a variety of topics associated with the nuclear enterprise and global strike mission.

When it's time for the question and answer portion of the presentation, someone invariably asks has the nuclear enterprise been reinvigorated? Or when will the reinvigoration and strengthening of the nuclear enterprise be mission complete?

Those are always very good questions. In anticipation of similar questions here today I thought it might be useful to address them right up front.

In July this past year during a speech on the nuclear enterprise, the Secretary of the Air Force Mike Donley stated, and I quote, "Events in 2007 and 2008 revealed a need to reinvigorate the nuclear enterprise, and we have done that." So, since the Secretary has said it I'll say in response to the first question about whether reinvigorating the nuclear enterprise is complete, the answer is yes.

However, Secretary Donley went on to say, and I quote, "The Chief of Staff and I are now very focused on institutionalizing improvements and capitalizing on our gains. This is simply not a business in which we should ever be satisfied with the degree of excellence."

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So as far as when will the mission be complete? I think the answer is, drawing upon what the Secretary said, is never. When you are dealing with the most powerful weapons in our nation's arsenal, you can never take your eye off the ball. You must always focus with great intensity and with great passion on the people, the weapon system, and the mission.

This in fact is not a problem exclusive to the Air Force or to the nuclear enterprise. Earlier I mentioned the New Orleans Saints, and as most of you know, certainly as everyone here in northwest Louisiana knows, they are the reigning Super Bowl champions. Now because winning the Super Bowl is the ultimately goal for any professional football team, the Saints were at the top of their game where they had achieved mission complete in February this year, when they took home the Lombardi Trophy.

So as they started this new system with most of their best players still on the roster, same group of coaches, you might have assumed that it should be a relatively easy year for the Saints. Just keep doing what they were doing. Keep running the same plays and they would coast to a repeat as world champions.

But as we all know from experience, it doesn't work like this. Any team that wants to remain on the top of their game must constantly work and innovate to be the best. Right now the Saints are playing much better, but they had a couple of tough games in the early part of the season.

So to quote our Secretary of the Air Force again, "We understand this mission and what it means to the nation and will not, cannot, accept anything less than the highest standards of performance and accountability."

So as you can see, I think it's pretty clear to maintain the premier nuclear deterrent global strike force in the world we can never rest on our laurels or the results of our last major inspection or the outcome of the last command-wide competition. The men and women of Global Strike Command and the other great commands represented here must constantly strive to be the best at whatever they do. They must always look for ways to be innovative, to adapt new technologies to the mission, and ultimately improve the manner in which they do business as they provide for safe, secure and effective nuclear deterrence and global strike capabilities for the President and for the combatant commanders.

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From the very beginning of our history Air Force leaders have understood the importance of continually pushing the envelope to be the best. In 1948 Major General McMullen, Deputy Commander of Strategic Command, instructed all bomber units within SAC to concentrate on improving their bombing capabilities. It was at the time, quite frankly, not very good.

As part of this effort General McMullen announced that a competition would be held to focus attention on the need for improved accuracy and air crew proficiency. Under General LeMay this competition grew in size and scope and the Fairchild Trophy began to be awarded for the best bomb wings. Bomb Comp was born. Bomb Comp was held 35 out of the 47 years between 1948 to 1994 when the competition was suspended.

Missile Comp started out in 1967, known then as Curtain Raiser. The best missile wing was awarded the Blanchard Trophy. The competition was canceled in 1968 to be reborn the following year as Olympic Arena and remained Olympic Arena until 1994 when it changed its name again, this time to Guardian Challenge. There was a missile competition held every year from 1969 until 2002 when for a variety of reasons Guardian Challenge was scheduled to occur every other year.

Now all of the reasons for discontinuing these competitions or changing the frequency with which they were held reflected valid concerns -- money, OpTempo, shift in focus, the deactivation of a major command, just to name a few. I personally think we lost something, something important, something that ultimately contributed to the Air Force losing focus on the nuclear enterprise.

Competition promotes a culture of excellence and expertise. Striving to be the best, recognizing the best, is as much a part of our heritage as all the operations we've conducted as an Air Force over our 63 year history.

If we're going to be successful at building and sustaining a safe, secure and effective nuclear and global strike force, we must have competition and we must recognize and reward excellence and those who excel.

In Air Force Global Strike Command our stated values include pride in our nuclear heritage as well as superior technical and weapon system expertise. And both of these values are presented through our reinvigorated competition, Global Strike Challenge. An amalgam, if you will, of the best of Bomb Comp and the best of Missile Comp.

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As many of you know well, because you have lived it, our airmen train for months for the hope of making their wing's team and having the honor of competing against other bases. Then once the teams are selected, the training efforts are redoubled. The drive, enthusiasm and increased levels of performance created by Global Strike Challenge are what we are seeking to foster. As our competitors train with great intensity for their respective events, they are at the same time becoming unrivaled technical and weapon systems experts in their given disciplines. The knowledge each airman gains while preparing for Global Strike Challenge raises the bar at his base or her base and ultimately strengthens the entire Air Force nuclear enterprise.

As I said over the years there have been many changes to command-wide competition -- new trophies, new formats, new locations, new names, new events. But we firmly believe there must always be competition.

Last night at score posting we handed out about half the trophies. Tonight we'll crown the rest of our top performers throughout the competition. But let there be no misunderstanding. This is not sixth grade soccer where everybody gets a trophy. At the end of the score posting tonight we will have a no-kidding, clearcut champion, the Fairchild Trophy going to the best bomb wing, and the Blanchard Trophy going to the best missile wing. And unlike the college football rankings, a sore subject here in Louisiana, there will be no debates, no disputes. In fact because tonight's winners are the first-ever in the history of Global Strike Challenge, for this year and for this year alone, our winners will be the best ever in the history of Air Force Global Strike Command. [Laughter].

But there is something that will be special about the winners of this year's Blanchard Trophy and this year's Fairchild Trophy. Just like the Super Bowl champions of 1967, anybody remember who that was?

Voice: [Inaudible].

Lt. Gen. Klotz: Of course. The Greenbay Packers. They will always have a unique place in the annals of the Super Bowl by being the first-ever champions, just as our champions tonight will have a unique place in the annals of Global Strike Challenge by being the first winners.

But whoever takes home the two premier trophies tonight, savor the moment for sure, then you better get to work preparing

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for the next competition because there will be missile wings and bomb wings and squadrons, perhaps someday even the French, who will be working hard to take your place. That's the way it should be, and we, the Air Force and the country, will be stronger for it.

Finally, it would be a huge mistake and I think a terrible waste if you keep all that knowledge that you have gained in this process to yourselves. It's up to you to pass on what you have learned. It's up to you competitors to share your experience. It's up to you to train the future Global Strike Challenge competitors. And ultimately, it's up to you to develop the next generation of innovative defenders, maintainers, misileers, air crews. So I challenge each of you to pass on your newfound knowledge to make the Air Force just that much better.

Once again, thank you to all of you for your service. Please note the entire nation and especially your senior Air Force leadership are focused on what you do each and every day as you provide nuclear deterrence and conduct global strike operations.

Please also note that we are extraordinarily proud of each and every one of you. You are truly the best and brightest generation of airmen in the history of the Air Force, and I say that as someone with 38.5 years of active duty service. Our service and our nation are truly in good hands.

So thank you again, everyone, for attending this year's symposium. It's been both an honor and a privilege to be with so many friends and kindred spirits.

Before I relinquish the stage I think there's time for maybe one or two questions. Any questions? And I'm not going to disclose who the winner of the two big trophies are because, quite frankly, I don't know. I'm going to be surprised just like you are.

Question: There have been a lot of people over the last couple of days wondering whether the symposium and Global Strike Challenge will be an annual event. So I'm wondering, given the current fiscal constraints that we're in if you expect we'll be able to have these events on an annual basis.

Lt. Gen. Klotz: Happily, that decision will be one for my successor to make. [Laughter]. I am going to certainly leave it up to him and to the team of Air Force Global Strike Command to

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make the decision concerning the frequency with which to do this competition.

I think you understand at least how I personally feel about competition and what it does for us as an organization. And quite frankly, I think our staff has done a remarkable job of paring down the costs of holding this competition. In some respects by combining a lot of different activities in one week in November here at Barksdale Air Force Base. But you have to ask yourself what value do you take from competition? What value do you take from training and exercises? And in my view, the overall benefits that accrue both to our command as well as the other commands, Air Combat Command, the Air Force Reserves, National Guard that participated in this competition, are multi-fold.

And you don't always see it all at once. But having watched, at least on the missile side for a number of years this competition process continue year in and year out, I've watched, for instance, a missile maintenance team, young team members start out, try to join the missile maintenance team the first year. They don't quite make it. They say to themselves, I really would like to represent my group, my squadron, my wing. I know that I feel short in the testing and the tryouts this year so I'm going to try to work this coming year to be even better. So they get into the TOs, they get into their CDCs, they learn as much as they possibly can from the more senior members of the maintenance squadron that they serve in, and they try to expand their knowledge as much as they possibly can. Then next year they're successful. They get on the team. Then they have to work that much harder, they have to dig that much deeper into the books and into the simulators and into the work that they do out there. Maybe the win, or maybe that year they don't win, and they come back next year as a competitor.

Then the following year or a year after that, they're the trainers for the next team. And not only do they pass on their knowledge, but they deepen their knowledge. As you all know, teaching is one of the best ways of learning, of truly developing a profound understanding.

Those team members go on to be the head of team training or the head of QA or the maintenance supervisors and the Chiefs that run our operation and maintenance. The same thing for the security forces. The security forces you have to add to it. Not only do you have to get into the books, but you have to work on your marksmanship and you have to get physically fit in a way

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that no other Air Force member is. As well as for our air crews and for our missile crews.

So what's the value in that? What kind of price tag do you put on that level of expertise? That level of commitment? On that desire? That's what turns us into what General Chain referred to as, yesterday, warriors and winners. To me, it's worth a lot to achieve that level of excellence.

I've got the red light which means that my time is up. I do not want to hold this stage any longer than I need to lest you not take full advantage of our next speaker, the Under Secretary of the Air Force.

Thank you very much.

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