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Commander, AF Global Strike Command**

**GS Challenge Symposium**

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**Lt. Gen. Kowalski:** Thanks Rocky, I appreciate it.

Thanks to everybody for attending this symposium. I look forward to seeing a lot of you tonight at the, what are we doing tonight? We're doing some kind of score thing or something? Is there a competition going on?

First of all I'd like to say hello to General Jumper. Sir, I saw you sneak in. Thanks for coming here and thanks for speaking to us tonight. I appreciate that. And say welcome again to General [Charaix] and his team coming here from France.

I'm not Garrett [Harencak], so it's not going to be as easy to stay awake during this presentation, but hopefully I'm talking about something that all of you are interested in, and who I really want to speak to here is the Airmen, the people that are part of Global Strike Command. We've brought you here because you are the best of the best. You are the competitors in the Global Strike challenge. We're trying to give you that big picture and then send you back to the units so you can share with them not only a keen knowledge of what you do, but also to share back the message that what you do is very very important.

I'm going to speak hopefully relatively briefly on why we have this nuclear deterrent, what we in Global Strike Command contribute, what we do, and where we're going in the future. Why don't you bring up the first slide?

When President Obama spoke in Prague, that was the speech that is largely credited with him earning the Nobel Peace Prize. But what the President said was really no different than what this nation signed up to in 1968 when we signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty -- to pursue a world free of nuclear weapons. That's been our nation's goal for a long time. Some administrations have pursued it more vigorously than others, and it's always been done with a sense of what the global security environment was. So when you read what the President says here, "Make no mistake, as long as these weapons exist we will maintain a safe, secure and effective arsenal, to deter any adversary, and to guarantee that defense to our allies." And our command's motto, "To deter and

assure." It's as simple as that. It's a straightforward as that.

So the why is pretty clear.

Let's go to the next slide.

The qualifier that the President had "as long as these weapons exist". Here are the major nuclear powers. In the yellow what you will see is who has fielded, fielded a new system in the last five years. In the green, what we'll bring up as we go through each one of these countries, is who has a system that is far enough along in its development and engineering that it will be fielded in the next five years. So let's start.

There's Russia and China. These are two nations that I am not going to stand here and paint them as adversaries. But I'm also not naïve and neither are you. They do not share our values. The people that hold the levers of power in these two countries are small groups. They are authoritarian governments. And while we coexist in an international community, while we share in the economic globalization of the planet, we have to be cautious. We cannot afford to be naïve.

Small groups of people that hold the levers of power can change quickly. We saw that in August of 1991 when the hardliners in the Soviet Union attempted to overthrow Gorbachev. Fortunately, they failed. The Cold War ended.

They continue to modernize their forces. They think a modern capable nuclear arsenal is important.

Next slide.

Pakistan. Joe Sarenioni, the President of Plow Shares. His quote on the Pakistanis -- "They're turning out nuclear weapons like sausages." That's not good for us.

India. Our friends and allies, the French, the United Kingdom. Nothing to build.

The U.S., nothing to build.

Nothing in the last five years, nothing planned in the next five years. We continue to have projects on the books, but we have to be committed to this enterprise.

The failure to make a decision is a decision. And if we don't modernize these forces we will lose them. They will age out.

And we will end up in a situation where we are unilaterally disarmed.

Next slide.

So what does Global Strike Command do? It's very straightforward. I'm going to spend a little time on this mission statement. This looks like a lot of major command mission statements. Develop and provide combat ready forces. We do it for two things -- nuclear deterrence, and a lot of thought went into that word nuclear. Those of you who heard Dr. Yaw speak the other day understand that in the Cold War nuclear deterrence and strategic deterrence was largely the same thing. Today our nation has numerous levers of deterrence.

We have conventional forces. Robust, capable conventional forces. We have economic levers of deterrence. We have informational and diplomatic levers of deterrence. And we have a nuclear lever of deterrence. And global strike operations. Since 9/11 that has become a unified command plan mission assigned to U.S. Strategic Command. Global Strike. It also captures all of our conventional responsibilities.

In the middle of that are the words safe, secure and effective echoing what the President said. I'll come back to that in a second.

Here is where this mission statement highlights the special trust and responsibility that you, the Airmen of this command have. Unlike any other major command in the Air Force, you provide forces directly to the President of the United States. He's the only one that can execute the nuclear mission. For all the other mission areas forces are provided, combat ready forces are provided to combatant commanders and they fight the forces. The President fights these forces. These are weapons of national policy. These are weapons of statecraft.

There are two other points that I want to make about what makes nuclear deterrence and the nuclear arsenal a special trust and responsibility. The other point is that when I go to an Air Force base, I can point to anything on that base. The Air Force owns that airplane. The Air Force owns that bread truck. The Air Force owns that transporter erector. The Air Force owns that computer. We own that desk. The Air Force does not own a single nuclear weapon. Every weapon is owned by the civilian part of our government. They're owned by the Department of Energy.

When our nation decided to go down this path in 1947 they established the Atomic Energy Act and they split the control of

the nuclear forces between the delivery systems in the Department of Defense and the actual weapons in the Department of Energy. Think about what you do every day. It's all two-man control, two-man policy, No Low Zone. That goes all the way up to the highest levels of leadership and how we manage this enterprise. It is different.

And last, we're very proud of the fact that when we need to get something done, we can tell some sharp NCO to grab some Airmen and go take that hill, and know that they'll get that job done. In the nuclear business we don't do it quite like that. We don't grab some NCO and tell him to take his team and hey, go out there and get that bomb off that missile and bring it on back. Just make it happen. We are very clear. You will brief this. You will follow these tech order procedures. You will do it exactly in this order. You will use nuclear-certified equipment. You will ensure each person is certified and on the personnel reliability program. You will comply with the No Low Zone and the entire bureaucracy of nuclear as surety because how we do this business is as important as what we do.

That takes me back to safe, secure and effective. And it's in that order. In this global security environment it is in that order because nothing can be more dangerous to us sustaining this capability for the nation than having that incident or accident. Safe, secure and effective.

Next slide.

So where are we going? Our B-2, this is our only long range penetrating bomber. Incredibly capable platform. Twenty years old. We're going to continue to sustain it. We just did an upgrade to some of the computing capacity. It's now capable with a massive ordnance penetrator, 30,000 pound weapon. We're working next year very aggressively on improving the aircraft availability. This is a small fleet. The Air Force is really good at a lot of things and it's good at doing a lot of things for a lot of things. It's difficult for the Air Force to do this kind of small fleet management. So we as leaders from the squadron level up that are involved in the B-2 have to be much more aggressive about working aircraft availability and mission capable rates.

Next slide.

Our B-52H. Last year at Minot Air Force Base they celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first delivery of a B-52H to Minot. And Lieutenant Daniel Welch got up and he spoke. Lieutenant Welch is a co-pilot in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron. Lieutenant Welch's father

flew B-52s in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron. That is not that unusual in our Air Force. Lieutenant Welch's grandfather flew B-52s in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron. This airplane has been around a long time. This year we celebrated the Year of the B-52. Sixty years since the first delivery. Fifty years since delivery of the last airplane. In that decade industry gave us 744 B-52s. There are 76 left. They've only got 18,000 hours on them. There's plenty of life left in that airframe. The great thing about the B-52, it's similar to this. This is an iPhone. If I could find one of the old-style hard plastic phones I'd hold it up in my other hand and I'd say look, these things are both telephones. Except this thing does a whole lot more. This thing does whatever you put on it. It's called an app.

Next slide.

Those are all the apps. They're all lined up there. [Laughter]. Everything from canisters that carry pamphlets that conduct information warfare, information operations, to nuclear cruise missiles, to jammers, to decoys, to mines, to penetrating weapons. If we wanted to we could hang an F-16 on the wing of that airplane. So there's an app for that.

Next slide.

Our Minuteman III. Nothing in our inventory complicates adversary planning, offensive and defensive more than the Minuteman III. Think about it. This is the foundation of our nation's strategic stability. There are 450 hardened launch facilities in the center of the United States. There are 45 hardened launch control centers. That's nearly 500 targets. Any adversary that wanted to threaten our nation with nuclear weapons, anybody that tried to coerce us would have to deal with 500 targets that were hardened. That's a thousand weapons. That would be two-thirds of the inventory that the Russians would have in New START. That's stability. There's no competition at the high end of this conflict. No one can escalate to that level because we make a modest investment to sustain our ICBM force.

Next slide.

Our UH-1s. Since 9/11 we've toughened up the security requirements. This used to be a missile field support helicopter. Today this helicopter is key to missile field security. But in that role, a role that it was really not designed for -- it does not fly fast enough, it does not fly far enough, and it doesn't carry enough of our tactical response force. It's not a question of if we replace this helicopter, it's a question of when. We will replace the UH-1. But this

command will not sit on our hands waiting for the nation's checkbook to improve our security. We take responsibility for this. So we will have an armed UH-1. We have put UH-1s now for the first time, we started this last year, we put them on 24x7 alert. There is always at every base a UH-1 ready to go with an armed team.

In the next year we expect to improve the lighting in the cockpit to make it night vision compatible. We're going to improve the seating in this helo. We're going to improve the FLIR ball. We're driving toward integrating a lot of the information systems we have out there so that we can take a lot of the lessons from the last decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan and apply it to our missile field security. We've got a lot of smart folks out there and they're working with us to come up with a strategic road map so I know where to put my next dollar.

Next.

Where are we going long term? Ground based strategic deterrent will be the follow-on to the Minuteman III. We're going to do this smart. We need to replace a number of different key components on the Minuteman III to get it to 2030. Congress has told us, sustain the Minuteman III to 2030. What we want is as we invest in those technologies -- new propulsion, new engine, new missile guidance -- that that becomes the baseline systems that then carry on into the follow-on to the Minuteman III. Regardless of how that missile is fielded. We're doing an analysis of alternatives that will start in March and in about 18 months we'll have some sense of where we're going long term for a ground based strategic deterrent.

Conventional Prompt Global Strike. That is a conventional ICBM or SLBM. It is not at this time a program of record. If it does become a program of record that is assigned to the Air Force, we in Global Strike Command expect to have that program and we're already working with OSD on concept of ops.

The Long Range Strike Standoff Missile. This replaces our air-launched cruise missile. That cruise missile that we currently have, the ALCM, we will do service life extensions on it, but it is not currently able to do all the things we need that missile to do. We continue to find, discover problems with it as it ages. It is more than ten years past its designed service life and we need a new missile. We need a missile that has some stealth properties to it so that we have operational credibility in this mission set.

Finally, the Long Range Strike Bomber. That bomber will come off the line and be certified first in conventional operations and that is entirely appropriate. In the current security environment the most likely use, the most likely need for the long range strike bomber is in conventional operational. Stealthy penetrating platform. The ability to reach out and touch mobile targets, to integrate with the ISR, to be part of that larger battle space awareness. We'll get 100 of those airplanes and one of the key attributes of this program as we go forward will be cost.

Next slide.

Speaking of cost. This is the challenge the nation faces. You can see on this slide about 1986 what's often called the Reagan buildup. Some would argue that that bought the big trough that followed, that it hastened the end of the Cold War. But that long almost two decades that we took a procurement holiday, all that did was build up requirements in the out years. So there are some tough decisions yet to be made about where we're going with that. There are tough decisions about the tradeoffs there in that bow wave that is coming our way. And what I challenge all of the Airmen of this command to do is don't be part of the problem. Be part of the solution.

We need to have a culture of innovation. At the lowest level. I need to hear what your best ideas are. We've put out a number of different programs trying to figure out what it is that we can do better. How can we do it faster? How can we do it cheaper? And one of the programs we put out is called Strike Now. Some of you have heard about it. You'll hear another push on it after the beginning of the year. But it's an opportunity for you to put an idea in the system so we have a culture where people say yes, we can do that if X, Y and Z, as opposed to the current culture that is common to all bureaucracies. No, we can't do that because of X, Y and Z. That's the same answer. We want to say yes. We want to figure out how to make things better. But we don't expect you and your supervisors to be the ones doing all that work, so we're going to take that at the headquarters. You put it in the system, anybody can say yes to that solution. I'm the only one that can say no. So if you get a no, it's been briefed to me if you put it into the Strike Now program.

So all of you as the best of the best, when you go back to your units, ask about it. Look it up. There's a web site that's share point. I need you to help us with that problem because I've got to get to these O&M costs, this ops and support.

I've got to get to our AFI problems. There are 1200 Air Force Instructions that your wing commanders are responsible for. Twelve hundred. I find it hard to believe that they are all perfectly right. They did not come down -- please don't take this the wrong way, General Jumper -- they did not come down from the mountain carved in stone. They're our AFIs. We can change them. Now you're in the nuke business so just don't change them while you're in the middle of a check list. But when you're done and you've got a better idea, let us know. We can't fix these things if we don't know about them.

Next slide.

I can't leave the stage without reminding everyone about our conventional capability, about our conventional commitments. We tend to talk more about the nuke stuff, but that's 55 percent of the business. The other 45 is what you see on this slide. I think it was around February. Secretary of Defense Gates, February of '11. The SecDef says, "We have no national interest in Libya." Three weeks later, B-2s are dropping bombs on hardened aircraft shelters. That's where Gadhafi found out his shelters weren't hardened and they really weren't shelters. [Laughter].

Then the 608<sup>th</sup> AOC executing for U.S. Strategic Command, Air Combat Command launches B-1s in a blizzard. They waived the visibility requirements. They launch in a blizzard in South Dakota. They strike targets in Libya. They recover in the Central Command AOR. They refuel, rearm, strike more targets on the way back to South Dakota. It had warmed up by then.

We can't forget this. We've made huge investments in our conventional capability and that is going to be critically important to our nation. That is a powerful deterrent, long range strike. Especially the way we do it now with targeting pods and precision munitions.

Okay, next slide.

That's where I'm at. That was the top level view of what you do and why what you do is important and how committed we are to making sure that the future is better for all of you, it's better for this nation because of the capability that you bring every day.

Now we'll open it up for some questions.

One person brave enough to come up. Mike, give me a coin.



**Question:** Sir, Lieutenant Arens with the 91<sup>st</sup> Missile Wing.

A few months ago there was discussion that if the President was reelected that we would see a decrease from our current 1550 to 900 or 1000 weapons. Do you have any insight on this, sir?

**Lt. Gen. Kowalski:** Mike, put the coin back in your pocket.  
[Laughter].

You heard me say up front, these are weapons of national policy. These are weapons of statecraft. It's interesting, one of the questions I got very early on when I went up on the Hill was sort of along those lines. The phrase that I use is, majors and master sergeants talk about 2000 pound bombs; senators and secretaries of defense talk about nuclear weapons. The decision on the right number to have is a national security level decision. Our job is to execute safe, secure and effective. And whether that's 10, 1000 or 1500, we will make sure that those weapons are safe, secure and effective for their role in our national security strategy.

So what we need to do is make sure we don't tie the number of weapons to how good we are at our job. Because if we did that, I can tell you that in about 1967 we had some 30,000 weapons. Well, wait a minute. We're still pretty good at this. In fact I will say we're better at this.

So the numbers should not be a reflection of how important it is to do this mission set and that's what all of you need to take away. So don't let yourselves get too wrapped up about all the chitter-chatter going on in DC. It really is not relevant to the stuff that we do every day. Good question, though, thank you.

**Question:** Captain Allengate, 20<sup>th</sup> Bomb Squadron.

General, one of the key missions that we do do is continuous bomber presence as part of that deterrent mission in the Pacific. You see the Pacific becoming more important on the national scale. Are we going to start folding the other bombers into it beyond the B-52, the B-1, B-2, back in the continuous bomber presence? Or maybe shifting around the Pacific more in that region to focus our efforts in other areas other than just Guam?

**Lt. Gen. Kowalski:** A lot of that depends on the Pacific Command Commander and then what the PACAF Commander recommends to him. I'm pretty comfortable with the force we have right now on Guam. Supremely capable. I think we need to do some infrastructure improvements. At the end of the day one of the things that makes this a great Air Force is our ability to do sortie generation.

We can see that the Russians are a good example. They can build a Black Jack bomber and they can fly it all the way to Venezuela and they can fly it back. But let's see them do that 24x7. Let's see them do what we do today out of al-Udaid with B-1s. 24x7 operations with heavy bombers and not a whole lot of bombers. Sortie generation for the team mates here that are on the flying side of this business, you saw me stress when I took command of Global Strike, you saw me stress a couple of things and one of them was achieving a sortie production rate because flying sorties is not just about getting air crew proficient. It's about getting all of you proficient. It's about being able to take a six-ship to the Pacific and fly the sorties out there that we've committed to the COCOMs we can fly. You've got to be able to practice that here so we know where the shortages are, where the constraints are, so that when we pack you up and we send you, we know you can do it, and you know you can do it.

That's what's important about being out in the Pacific from my perspective. The presence out there, the sorties that get generated out there, operating from a different location. Those are all important skills. That's an advantage that our bomber guys have now that as we draw down from other locations, other aviation communities will start to want more of because that's a unique skill set and it ages out very quickly.

In terms of the other airplanes, like I said that's up to PACOM and PACAF. I like the efficiencies we get from managing a force on Guam all the time. We've worked out the kinks in that and that works pretty good for us. We manage about \$21 million in savings a year from where this was about two years ago. That's important. That's money back on somebody else's pocket to do other things for our Air Force.

Thanks.

Any more questions? Good.

It is a privilege, a privilege to lead this command. That's a rare gift. I thank you for everything that all of you do out there every day. Hopefully you all enjoy this evening. There will be winners, there will be losers, but all of you as you go back to your units should be taking away something that you've learned at this symposium and sharing it with your teams. Also take back what you've learned at the tactical level as you polished your skill set preparing for this competition.

Thank you.

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