

Note from AFA President -- Afghan, Education, Holiday cards/ornament

AFA Members, Congressional Staffers, Civic leaders, DOCA Members, we hear a lot about Afghanistan ... and GEN McChrystal developing a new strategy and might ask for more troops. I thought it might be useful to point out how many are there now ... and from which countries. According to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), there are presently 64,500 allied troops in Afghanistan ... with the US providing 29,950 -- less than half of the total. There are 42 nations which are providing troops. The nations with the largest number of troops are:

- UK -- 9,000
- Germany -- 4,050
- France -- 3,160
- Canada -- 2,800
- Italy -- 2,795
- Poland -- 2,000
- Netherlands -- 1,770
- Australia -- 1,090
- Romania -- 1,025

It is important to note that the Air Force has 5800 Airmen on the ground in Afghanistan - more than any other country except for the UK. Plus the Air Force has thousands supporting the effort at AF Space Command, flying RPAs from Nevada, flying missions from Diego Garcia, flying tanker missions from the Gulf, and supporting the operation with lift on an hourly basis.

Additionally, a significant task is to train the Afghan National Army. Presently, there are 91,000 trained out of an authorized strength of 134,000. You can find more details about this data at:

http://www.nato.int/isaf/docu/epub/pdf/isaf_placemat.pdf

Secondly, we had an Executive Committee meeting this past weekend and among the discussion topics was the state of STEM Education [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math] in the US today. One expert on the subject opined that US citizens received less than 50% of all STEM PhDs in this country. That prompted me to do a bit of research ... and the "opiner" is not too far off. The seminal study in this area is done by University of Chicago ... and is based on data from 2005-2006 year. The entire document is over 19 Megs ... so I cut it and put the one page executive summary ... plus all the tables and graphs mentioned in the Executive Summary ... into one document on our website

(http://www.afa.org/ProfessionalDevelopment/AerospaceEducation/ReportsandStudies/RS_PDFs/06SRFinalVersion_Short.pdf). A few observations:

- 56% of all science and engineering doctorates were awarded to US citizens -- however, only 32 % of engineering doctorates went to US citizens
- Of those non-US citizens who earned doctorates, China (4,774) had the most; India second (1,742); then S. Korea (1,648); Taiwan (718); Canada (561)
- 51% of all research doctorates awarded to US citizens went to women
- 54% of those who graduated with employment ... planned to teach in universities

The point of above is we are approaching the time when we will be short of STEM graduates in this country. The aerospace industry is especially affected ... as one -- **repeat one** -- single aerospace company told me they hire over 5% of all undergraduate engineers the nation produces. It is also important to notice where the bulk of the non-citizen doctorates will reside in the future ... Nuff said.

Finally, I mentioned last week that AF Memorial Foundation had produced a limited edition holiday ornament -- that was selling fast. The Foundation also has a range of holiday cards. We plan to have a different ornament and card -- both featuring the Air Force Memorial -- every year. We will offer past years' ornaments until we run out and every year we plan to add to the holiday card selection that features the Air Force Memorial. You can find information on our website at: <http://www.afa.org/pdfs/Ornament-CCard.pdf>

For your consideration,

Mike

Michael M. Dunn
President/CEO

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