



Dr. Patrick Donley:

Wow. I was hoping for more than that, but that's okay. Good morning Airmen and Guardians and friends of AFA. In keeping with AFA's mission of honoring our heritage and this year's 50th anniversary tribute of our Vietnam veterans, it is my distinct pleasure to introduce a true warrior and Air Force legend, General Gregory "Speedy" Martin. General Martin, a fighter pilot with over 4,600 flying hours, primarily in the F-4 and F-15, had a distinguished 35 year career in blue, starting in 1970. He flew 161 combat missions in Vietnam, 68 of which were over North Vietnam.

General Martin's illustrious career included command of three fighter wings and two major commands. As commander of US Air Forces in Europe, Air Component Commander of EUCOM and commander of NATO's Allied Air Forces North, he commanded US Alliance and Coalition Air Forces during operations, Northern Watch, Joint Forge, Joint Guardian, and Atlas Response among others. As if that wasn't enough, General Martin also commanded Air Force Materiel Command until his retirement in 2005. Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming to the stage General Gregory "Speedy" Martin.

Gen. Gregory S. Martin, USAF (Ret.):

Wow. Patrick, thanks for that kind introduction. And let me thank the Air & Space Forces Association for all the work you do day in and day out for our Airmen and Guardians, officers, enlisted, civilian, and of course our family members to ensure that we remain the most powerful air, space, and cyber force in our solar system. And personally, let me say how humbled I am to be before this incredible group of Air and Space Force members, their supporters, their boosters, of course our Vietnam veterans, to represent the hundreds of thousands of citizens who put on the uniform and went to Vietnam and for that conflict and represented all of us. And I would ask for all of us to keep in our thought and prayers the 58,220 of our nation who died in that conflict. And the 1,582 members still unaccounted for and as well as praying for their families and friends.

In May of 1972, after completing pilot training in F-4 RTU, I headed off to Korat Royal Thai Airbase. As I was leaving, a friend of mine asked me, "Why are you going to Southeast Asia? We don't even care about winning." And I said, "Because we have a chance to get our prisoners back." Which really was the keystone of President Nixon's peace with honor effort. As I arrived in theater, North Vietnamese had kicked off the Easter offensive of '72 and our offensive air operations against North Vietnam were just being initiated under the name of Operation Linebacker. I received my theater checkout flying missions primarily in the DMZ area in southern North Vietnam, Northern South Vietnam. And then I was cleared for escort, attack, interdiction, close air support, and eventually hunter killer missions from Hanoi all the way down to the Mekong Delta.

During that checkout, one of the first things I was asked to do was to go down to the BX and pick up a handheld cassette tape player, and then take a case of beer to the Comm Squadron so that they could put together a patch cord so that we could tape our intercom conversations as well as our RF transmissions while flying our missions, so that when we finished we could come back and properly reconstruct what happened so that we could get better and better each day. Although at that time there were some units that were specialized for reconnaissance, night attack, close air support, Wild Weasel, combat search and rescue, and fast FAC and MICAP, my initial observation from my experience was that many of the multi role squadrons that were there were assigned missions in every one of those mission sets, and it was almost impossible or impractical for us to be able to make sure that every aircrew was as proficient as they needed to be in every one of those missions.

That notwithstanding though, as we got into Linebacker 1 and it progressed, some units did specialize their aircrew fours so that they could be proficient in the missions that they continually flew. An examples of that was the MICAPs out of Udorn, the night attack and laser guided weapons out of Ubon



and the hunter killer teams that came together initially with F-105Gs and F-4Es out of Korat. And during my tour in Southeast Asia, I was engaged in Linebacker 1 and Linebacker II, as well as various attack interdiction and close air support missions in South Vietnam. And when the prisoners started coming home in February of 1973, I remained in support of the South Vietnamese and in our interdiction efforts on the Ho Chi Minh Trail and Laos in Cambodia.

Now, 50 years later, what can I say about what I learned? What can I say about what our military leadership learned and what has that meant to the Air Force and now the Space Force as they make decisions about our future capabilities? First, let me say that as a newly married First Lieutenant, being assigned to an operational fighter squadron flying combat missions is the scariest, most exhilarating and most life tempering activity anyone can be engaged in. My squadron became my new family, for life. I am still bound to them. And although I may have achieved higher rank than some of those individuals, I still look up to them for the values, the ethos, and what it takes to be a effective, capable combat warrior that they instilled in me, again, for life.

Without getting into the national and political decisions made to commit forces or perhaps the restrictions that may have handcuffed some of our military leaders, in the remaining five minutes, I'd like to talk some about at the tactical level and the operational level experiences that our leaders took away from the Vietnam conflict to bring about eventually the dominant air and space forces that we have seen in Operation Desert Storm, Deliberate Force, Allied Force, Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, Odyssey Dawn, Inherent Resolve and Resolute Support as a result of the lessons that they learned from our actions in the Vietnam conflict.

After the war, our operational and strategic leaders believed we needed much more aggressive and specialized capabilities and much stronger training regimens. So they created the aggressor squadrons, the Checkmate division in the air staff, the red team construct. They created the most intense integrated training environments known at that time, red flag, blue flag, checkered flag, silver flag. They also focused on a comprehensive capability to document each player's actions and performance in the air combat training environment with cockpit and video and voice recording systems, as well as for the entire battle space through the air combat maneuvering instrumentation range system.

And they built new specialized mission aircraft. For air superiority it was the F-15 and now the stealthy F-22. Long range strike was the B-1, stealthy B-2, and the F-15 E. Close air support was the A-10 and the flexible multi roll aircraft, the F-16 and now the stealthy F-15, I'm sorry, stealthy F-35, where the various mission for those various aircraft can be modularized to do special missions such as suppression of enemy air defense, destruction of enemy defense, night precision, interdiction, tactile reconnaissance, but they could flex to other missions as necessary, defensive counter air and close air support. They were multi-role aircraft with specialized crews and specialized capabilities on those different jets.

And let's not forget the annual WEPTAC Conference or the Space Force's recent announcement to initiate their tactics development conference, TAC Devcon, to continually assess our capabilities, our tactics, and our threat environment to ensure we will bring about the necessary changes to prevail in any conflict. And let me add the criticality of the often unheralded, military unique ability that we have to project, sustain and command and control forces on a global basis based on our Airlift/Tanker and space forces. And then at the behest of the chief of staff in the early 70s, our Air Force senior leaders developed three defined challenges for the Air Force to focus on with a constancy of purpose and no programmatic announcement, no public fanfare, no public announcement. All these senior officers passed this on to each other.

And those three defined challenges were to develop the capability to have a seamless network of air and space sensors and communications capabilities to document any activity of interest or concern anywhere on the globe along with the C-2 capability to direct appropriate follow-on actions as



necessary. Number two, the ability to penetrate the most sophisticated integrated air defense systems in order to deliver appropriate capabilities to support our national leader's objectives on a global scale. And three, to be able to hold at risk any target of value or concern in all weather, day or night conditions. And by the end of the 20th century, our United States Air Force achieved those defined challenges. Now, I could go on forever about how we did that, but what is most important is not how we did it, but what's next?

And I would submit Secretary Kendall's Seven Operational Imperatives and his recent letter on how the Air Force must consider its comprehensive posture to face the pacing threat, along with General CQ Brown's Six Fights We Must Win, and General Salty Saltzman Theory of Success in Space Through Competitive Endurance may well be the next set of defined challenges with each services' initial plan on how to get after those challenges. And I might also suggest that when we solve those challenges, the result will be an air and space force that can take first and faster actions in all domains in order to present the adversary with more dilemmas than they can overcome.

Could I ask all Vietnam veterans to please stand?

Thank you. Thank you. I would suggest that these individuals while serving in Vietnam, showed us the kinds of actions that we must take and the capabilities we need if we're to be successful in future conflict. Veterans, I hope my words are meaningful to you, the people who carried the flag of this nation that has become the beacon of hope around the globe. Our leaders learn from your actions how we must provision, equip, and train our protectors. And I hope you're proud of your contributions, which are still fueling the changes needed to ensure our nation's security in the years ahead, and will allow us to take first and faster actions in all domains. Thank you for your service and thank you for this opportunity to explain a little bit about our heritage. God bless you all.