

This transcript is made possible through the sponsorship of JobsOhio.

Voiceover:

Ladies and gentlemen, our next presentation is the State of the Air Force, by Chief of Staff General C.Q. Brown, Jr.

Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr.:

We've done this before. We can do it again. When I became the chief, I shared my strategic approach, accelerate, change or lose, because as I looked across the security horizon, three things crystallized for me. Uncontested air force dominance is not assured. Good enough today will fail tomorrow. We must collaborate within and throughout to succeed. As the international security landscape changes, we must also change and prepare to preserve our way of life. In Hap Arnold's final World War II report, he said, "A modern, autonomous and thoroughly trained air force will not alone be sufficient, but without it there will be no national security." These words from 1945 are just as applicable today as when they were first written. If we don't get this right together, if we fail to adapt, we risk our national security, our ideals, and the current rules-based international order. But if we do get this right together, if we do adapt, we'll preserve the freedoms we hold most dear, the same freedoms that enables the spread of democracy, supports alliances and partnerships built on common values, and strengthen societies all around the world.

As a department and the Air Force celebrates our 75th anniversary, I want to thank our leadership of our one team, our secretary, the Honorable Frank Kendall; Under Secretary, the Honorable Gina Ortiz Jones; the Chief of Space Operations, General Jay Raymond; Chief Master of the Air Force, Joe Bass; and Chief Master of the Space Force, Roger Towberman. Thank you all for what you do for our Air Force and for our Space Force.

As the secretary shared in his remarks, one member of our leadership team will be retiring soon. Jay and Mollie, Sharene and I are honored to have worked closely with you on the historic task of standing up the Space Force. Having first cross paths back in 1996 at Air Command and Staff College, we, and I know so many others, want to wish you the very best as you open the next chapter. Although the leadership of the one team will change, the one fight will continue, focused on ensuring that we remain the world's preeminent air force and space force. Congratulations, Jay, on a job well done.

Now, I do wonder, as we make the transition to Salty, I wonder if Salty's going to get the Department of Air Force chief ... same haircut style. We'll see if we can put some money on how that's going to play out. I'll also say huge thanks to the Air Force Association for organizing this week, providing Airmen and Guardians an opportunity to celebrate an important anniversary, giving us all opportunities for professional development and strengthen our relationships. And Chief Murray, I'm not sure who approved you to be able to move away, but it's been a real honor to be working with you over the past several years at this event and throughout all the other events that the Air Force Association supports. So thank you very much for what you've done for us.

Our air power forefathers may have laid the groundwork that led to the establishment of our air force, but it's organizations like AFA and your unwavering advocacy that sustains us into the future. We appreciate your tireless support advancing air power. And finally, and most importantly, the world's

greatest Airmen, active, guard, reserve and civilian, and your families, thanks for all you do to make us the world's most respected air force.

Over the last two years, I watched with pride. I've seen the vision of accelerate, change or lose take hold in every corner of our air force. This year's 75th anniversary marks another way point on our journey. And as we cross three quarters of a century as a separate service, we have much to be proud of, but we cannot rest on our laurels. As I reflect on our history, as I ponder our future in the next 75 years, I remain confident, especially as I look across this crowd of incredible Airmen and all you represent.

Today, I reflect on how the world's greatest Airmen have collaborated, accelerated, innovated and thrived, many times in the face of daunting challenges. And it's clear our air force and nation already know how to accelerate change. We've done this before and we can do it again. And our past ingredients of success are collaborating with our joint teammates, allies and partners in industry and academia, accelerating change to out-pace our competitors, and innovating the technical and perceptive boundaries of what air power can do, all our fundamental elements we need to thrive when addressing the pacing, acute and unforeseen challenges of the future.

The Air Force's legacy started long before the establishment of our service. It began with a dream by two brothers from Dayton who unlocked the secrets of aerodynamics and achieved something thought impossible. That is our legacy. We are the United States Air Force. And when I say we have done this before, you may be asking, "What is 'this?'" This is what others accept as impossible, but the complacent dare not try. This is a difficult task that requires pushing through failure until finding success. This is taking risk, knowing what's at stake if we don't. This is accelerating change. And this has always been part of our DNA. And our incredible Airmen have always risen to the challenge and found a way.

We did this leading up to 1947, when air power partners pushed the limits, challenged the status quo, proving the permanence of air power against overwhelming odds, when courageous visionaries, the likes of Billy Mitchell, Bessie Coleman, Hap Arnold, Jimmy Doolittle, Amelia Earhart and Benjamin Davis, Jr. foresaw the importance of unlocking the hidden value of air power and talent of the air-minded, establishing air power credibility that led to the establishment of the Air Force as a separate service. We trace our lineage to these giants in aviation in air force history, who in some cases risked their reputations and their careers to pursue what they knew to be a noble cause.

We did this in 1948 when the US and our allies foiled the Soviet blockade in Germany and proved the Air Force could deliver air power anytime, anywhere. Without firing a shot, we embarked on the largest aerial resupply mission in history during Operation Vittles, landing at Tempelhof Airport every 45 seconds and delivering more than 13,000 tons of cargo in a single day.

We did this in the 1950s when we proved global strike can occur in a matter of minutes, enhancing our deterrence and creating the backbone of extended deterrence which exists today. As the Cold War heated up and the Soviet nuclear threat increased, the Air Force and industry and academia developed a solution. In just two years, the Air Force launched its first operational Atlas intercontinental ballistic missile. We did this in the '70s and the '80s. We developed a groundbreaking technology to counter increasing air defense capabilities around the world. The Air Force took an idea from an urgent operational need and filled it in brand new and revolutionary capability, the F-117 Nighthawk. We did so in record time, paving the way for [inaudible 00:10:41] technology we see today.

We did this in the 1990s, with a coalition of the willing, bringing stability to Southeast Europe, stopping a humanitarian emergency and upholding democratic values. 13 nations rallied around a common cause, to end the brutal ethnic cleansing of Kosovar Albanians, during Operation Allied Force. This campaign marked multiple firsts for our Air force, the filling of the MQ-1 Predator in 39 days, the first operational use of the B-2, and the first time the combined Air Operations Center was employed as a weapon system.

And we did this in 2001. We did not allow terrorists to break our spirits and change our way of life. We roses Americans and saw the strength of our nation when challenged. And for 21 years, there have been no major terrorist attacks on US soil. At every stage, in every new trial, no matter how difficult, we proved that we could rise above any challenge. We proved that we were willing to take risk. And we proved we could solve any problem. We collaborated across our Air Force and within DOD, with allies and partners, industry and academia. We accelerated by driving outcomes, challenging the status quo, and not waiting for the perfect conditions to be act.

We innovated through experimentation, rapid prototyping, adapting new ideas, and having a bias for action, risk-taking and creative disruption across all levels of Airmen. Nothing could stop us, in every challenge and in every era. We have done this before, no matter how seemingly impossible or difficult, and we can do it again.

For the last 30 years, we've enjoyed a period of steady state dominance in which we've grown accustomed to being an air force with unmatched technical prowess. We now find ourselves in a pivotal period, one that is fundamentally reshaping the international security landscape. When our nation was focused on countering violent extremists for two decades, our competitors focused on matching our way of war. Our tactical skills are sharp, but we need to reframe our thinking to meet the challenges we will face in the future.

In many ways, today's security environment parallels our past, from competition among nations, the race for technology advancements, territorial disputes, to vying for resources. These are not new challenges, but the complexity and combination are more than ever before. And the growing capabilities of our strategic competitors challenges our advantages, but our air force thrives under challenging conditions. We know strategic competition and we know what it means to accelerate change, because we've done this before and we can do it again.

When we provide intent, trust and empower Airman, they rise to the challenge, even in the most impossible circumstances, Airmen likes Senior Master Sergeant Cedric Evans of the PACKAF headquarters. Cedric, I know you're here someplace. Could you please stand up? Now, Cedric is leading the creation of the Inter-Pacific Air Forces Academy, delivering professional military education and collaboration with more than 10 allied and partner nations, sharing ideas, strengthening our relationships, and enhancing a free and open Indo-Pacific. Airmen like Senior Master Sergeant Brent Kenny of the 52nd Fighter Wing, who created a way to provide drinking water and save energy in remote locations. Instead of using pallets of prepackaged water and diesel generators, he used solar fabric and an environmental water harvester, saving money in precious cargo space.

Airmen like Senior Airman Kyle Swink, an Explosive Ordinance Disposal team member assigned to the 6th Air Refueling Wing. Kyle was frustrated that his counter ID system, the JCREW, would not stay stable in the field, impacting its operation. After collaborating with academia and within a single afternoon, a solution was developed. Kyle will take delivery of five units next month. Airmen like Captain

Taylor Bye of the 23rd Wing, who experienced the catastrophic gun failure on her aircraft, and the canopy of her A-10 went scoring through the sky. It is because of her immense professionalism, calm demeanor and ability to tap into her years of training, that Taylor was able to safely perform a gear up, no canopy landing.

Last week's Air Force tattoo in front of 49 international Air chiefs and a home crowd of thousands, our Air Force honor guard and the Air Force planned and executed a spectacular display of military and musical precision. This doesn't happen by itself. It's because of Airmen like Senior Airman Essence Martin, Tech Sergeant Matthew Slabin, and Tech Sergeant Brandon Lightburn from the Air Force Honor Guard. I know they're here as well; if they could stand up so they could also be recognized. And Master Sergeant Brooke Emory, Senior Master Sergeant Chad Randolph, and chief Master Sergeant Dennis Hoffman from the Air Force Band, I know you're also here. We'd like to get you a little publicity.

And finally, the man behind the magic, really, Lieutenant Colonel Dave Fink, who led the detail planning and coordination for more than 450 personnel. He spent a lot of time in my office talking about the vision for the tattoo. He really set the bar high for following tattoos. Dave, if you could please stand.

Last Thursday night, for those that went with us, you saw our Airmen demonstrate the unmatched discipline and professionalism found in all 689,000 Airmen that make us the world's most respected air force. Seeing all the incredible accomplishments our Airmen have done and continue to do, I'm confident we can do it again, but we must do this together. Success takes help. Failure can be done alone. In order to protect and enhance our future collective international security, we need our emphasis on collaboration and integrate like never before, because the emerging threats of today require a collective effort.

Considering we just completed a very successful International Air Chiefs Conference, I want to focus on allies and partners for a moment. We must start at the beginning with the end in mind. We need to be integrated by design. Integrated by design is a deliberate way we must all work together to understand the environment, to find the threat, share information and employ air power. Integrated by design is not new. It is a renewed emphasis on integration that is discussed more often than truly executed.

It expands our approach to developing people, policies and processes, and the need for partnership. Integrated by design is our cooperative effort to build the most capable air forces in the world. We must start with allies and partners in mind versus building the US first, then adapting to include our allies and partners later. We must collaborate when we innovate by design, because the evolving complexities of today remind us we can not do this alone. Not only do we need to collaborate and integrate, but we must accelerate. Our window of opportunity is closing.

Our future requires us to get beyond talking about what we want to do. We have to go do. We need an approach that serves our national security and defense strategies, our joint war-fighting concept, and recognizes the changing trends and tendencies in the character of warfare. We need to accelerate the adoption of operational concepts to integrate our core missions at key points in time. Adoption is more than just drafting the concept and putting it on the shelf in the event of crisis, contingency or conflict. Adoption is making the concepts part of our DNA, part of our culture. Bottom line, we must build our culture, not just our concepts.

We are committed to five areas that will drive culture change: mission command, force generation, agile combat employment, multi capable Airmen, and the wing A-staff construct. We must do it now, because our adversaries will not wait for us to perfect these concepts. You might ask, "Are we really going to do this? Are we really committed?" Let me tell you, if we can't drive culture change, if we can't get on the same page, if we debate and litigate decisions after they've been made, let there be no doubt the decision has been made. It is now time to execute.

We rewrote Air Force Doctrine Publication 1 with a focus on mission command, which requires mutual trust, shared understanding and clear commanders' intent. Leaders need to give our Airmen intent, empower them, and get the hell out of the way. Now, we might think this is intuitive. I assure you, based on Action Order B, it is not. To make our doctrine easier to grasp and to read, we took 141 pages and knocked it down to 16 pages, so there is no excuse not to read and know our doctrine. Bottom line, we can't wait to implement mission command in a conflict. It needs to be something we do every day.

We're transforming the way we deploy and integrate with the joint force through the Air Force Force Generation Model, or AFFORGEN. This has been a concept and model that's been in development for the past couple of years. AFFORGEN goes to its initial operational capability in just a couple of weeks on the 1st of October, with a predictable four [inaudible 00:21:46] model: prepare, ready, available to commit, and reset. Designed to balance combatant command requirements with building high-end readiness, AFFORGEN is about better articulating impacts to future readiness and driving strategic discipline and addressing the global demand for air force capabilities.

I'm serious about agile combat employment, because the way we deployed our forces to establish [inaudible 00:22:18] bases over the past several decades will not work against the advancing threat. ACE is a means of maneuver to increase survivability while generating and projecting air power; versus dispersing our capability on airfields, ACE is dispersing our capability across air fields. ACE requires us to be lighter, leaner and more agile.

As I've had the opportunity to visit bases across our air force, I've seen the progress we've made, but we must continue to develop and refine capabilities that are important to ACE: commander control, logistics under attack, resilient basing, air and missile defense, just to name a few. As we embrace ACE, we must all be multi-capable Airmen. It's not a checklist of qualifications, it's a mindset and technical competency that when things hit the fan, our Airmen are ready.

Multi-capable Airmen is about crushing bureaucratic hurdles and functional union cards that could be holding back the immense talent and innovative ideas and thoughts of our Airmen. It comes down to being ready. We are employing ACE. Multi-capable Airmen will be expected to accomplish tasks outside their core specialty. Multi-capable Airmen will ensure we are the more agile and lethal force that we can be, able to create increasing dilemmas for our adversaries.

As part of their joint force, we will train like we fight, moving to a wing A-staff construct. We may be moving at different paces across our match comms, but we're moving, nonetheless. Our wings need to support rapid decision-making, maximize responsiveness for crisis and day-to-day operations. When we're organizing our wings to an A-staff construct, we align from the headquarters of the Air Force all the way down to the wing level; organizing to an A-staff for most professional development, so our Airmen and air power are better prepared to plug in to a joint team. Mission command, force

generation, agile combat employment, and the wing A-staff construct: these are the concepts we must accelerate the drive culture change.

Air power is dependent on the potential of our Airmen, industry and academia to innovate, a potential which is not limited to technology but includes using current technology and capabilities in new ways. We cannot simply view new, big or expensive technology leaves as the only way to innovate. We must harness any innovation that can put meaningful capability into the hands of our war fighters. We can't let perfect be the enemy of good enough and get in the way of [inaudible 00:24:58] viable product. We must deploy, employ and iterate, but we must have the right talent to be effective.

Our Airmen, the ones sitting in this room, the ones getting the J-O-B done at every day, at every base across our Air Force, our active duty members, guard, reserve, and civilian, and our vast and incredible partners in industry and academia, you the heart of our innovation. And I'm constantly reminded, each of you drive the potential of our technology and the potential of our ideas. Both are unlimited, but our resources and timelines to provide credible combat power and capability are not. We'll need to have strategic conversations that make difficult choices to drive change and to solve our toughest problems, and make sure our seven operational imperative become a reality. These are the changes we need and the key areas we must modernize to have a credible combat force. And we put all these pieces together across domains and services, inter-agency, industry, academia, and with our allies and partners, we can assure and deter. We can have innovated deterrence. And we can have air power anytime, anywhere, should the deterrence fail.

In closing, every day when I come into the Pentagon, I come in through the river entrance. And just before I get to the top of the stairs, I pass the painting by Robert Emerson Bell entitled Wings Through Time. The painting was done for the 50th anniversary of our Air Force. It visually depicts every airplane related to the history of the Air Force since the Wright flyer. This painting is instructive, showing the large number of aircraft built early in our history. Between 1944 and 1984, on average, we produced a new fighter every two and a half years, a new mobility platform every year and a half. It's clear from our history, our Air Force and our nation already know how to accelerate change.

Now, if we could extend that painting to today, our 75th anniversary, you'd only see the addition of three fighters and two mobility aircraft. This painting is a visible reminder that we've done this before, but our future is not guaranteed. Together, we must plan and build for the future, with full acknowledgement that we must collaborate, accelerate and innovate so our Air Force can continue to thrive for the next 75.

As I reflect on the words from General Hap Arnold, I know we can and we must create the force we need for the future. We must be modern, with the capabilities and capacity that would outpace the threat, now and well into the future. We must be thoroughly trained, recognizing the changing trends in the character of warfare. And we must do this together, one team, one fight, because a strong Air Force will not alone be sufficient, but without it, there will be no national security. Last year, I told you I didn't believe in impossible. This year, I'm going to tell you, our Airmen don't either. We have done this before. We will do it again. Happy 75th, Air Force.

