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Voiceover:

General Wright, over to you sir.

Gen. Wright:

Well, thank you and good afternoon. Beware, we're going to blow the roof off of this place tonight during the 75th anniversary of our United States Air Force and celebrate every Airman and Guardian who does such an incredible job of defending this nation, current and past. Well, our next speaker, General Mike Minihan took command of Air Mobility Command in October of '21. Picking up General Brown's direction to accelerate change or go faster, General Minihan and his team have developed a strategy that drives a warrior culture biased towards action, unencumbered by bureaucracy, and intentionally disruptive to the status quo. Our mobility forces are critical to projecting, connecting, maneuvering, and sustaining our joint force. And General Minihan's command is charging forward with clear intentions, a bold opinion, and a singular objective. Please welcome the commander of Air Mobility Command, General Mike Minihan.

Gen. Mike Minihan:

It's my new fight song. Get over here. If you participated in OAR, stand up please. So I realized that not everybody's standing is Mobility, and I realize that not everybody's standing may be an Airman. So I get often, when people run out of questions for me, they say, "What keeps you up at night?" What keeps me up at night is that my actions aren't worthy of theirs. What keeps me up at night is that I'm not meeting their passion and professionalism and getting after the mission as awesome as they are, that their mothers and their fathers and their sons and their daughters and their brothers and their sisters don't know how much I appreciate the courage they display in getting after missions that are incredibly challenging. So when I'm asked what keeps you up tonight, it's a mirror check for me. And I vow to do everything in my power, not just my command, my headquarters, but me personally to be as awesome as this crowd right here. So give them a round of applause please.

Speaker 4:

I appreciate it yet again.

Gen. Mike Minihan:

All right, So I'm going to make everybody nervous here. I'm not bound to the stage, I'm not bound to a script. I'm untethered as of now. My rehearsal consisted of me walking around this room at 7:15 this morning going check one, two, check, check, check. And so I certainly have something in mind that I want to say. I hope I get about 80, maybe eight would be my standard. About 80% across here. I do have something to say. I can't see the clock. I'm going to go till I go, all right? I'm finally that rank. It's important that I say thank you right now to AFA and General Wright.

It's important that I say thank you right now to those that are in the room that are loyal to me throughout my career. Ash and I are incredibly grateful. It's also important that I say thank you to those are just merely intrigued either by whether I'll have a job tomorrow morning or perhaps the mobility manifesto caught your attention. I'm grateful for your presence. I know you have a lot of choices on where to be right now. I'm also incredibly grateful for my headquarters team, my total force team, my spouse and family team, my wing woman, my wingman, Chief BK and his bride. I'm incredibly grateful and thankful for everybody that wears an Air Mobility patch.

And so, just an abundance of thank yous and appreciation walking into this. Slide. ROE, I'm going to speak not speech, means it's going to come out a little wobbly at times, maybe stutter, I might get some spittle going. It means that you'll see the DNA of my adjectives ties back to my Auburn education. I really only have about three. Anybody in SEC want to make a comment right now? Go ahead. Roll tide. The sound of a young mind shutting down. By the way, that works every time, just so you know. Means that I'm Irish. And you certainly already heard, when I talk about things that I love, I get emotional, and you'll hear the passion in my voice.

I don't very rarely get to the anger part, but there's certainly not a big screen between my words and the emotions that lie between them. That's the ROE. Why am I here? I wish I could say it's because I'm a hurt driver, but that's not true. I'm here because I spent 10 years in the Pacific. I was fortunate enough to have three jobs and two tours at USFK in Korea. I was fortunate enough to serve in headquarters Pack AF and then have three jobs and two tours up at Paycom. All that combined is about 10 years of experience in the Pacific worrying about the pacing challenge and nefarious actors like North Korea. That's why I have this job. And five minutes before he promoted me, General Brown said two words in the back room. Go faster. Go faster. And he didn't say it as a comment of my predecessors. He said it as a comment of my experience and the current environment, the retrograde from Afghanistan, COVID, the evac, and certainly we were watching the initial posturing of what is happening now in Europe and Ukraine. Go faster.

And in the nervousness before my change of command speech, I got a text from a brother, a weapons officer named Hefe Brown. And I had all these notes and all these cards that I was trying to formulate in my head what I was going to say. And he said, "Brother, fly it like you stole it." Fly it like you stole it. Like that formation of B-17s up there, surrounded by flak, driving to the objective. We're going to fly it like we stole it. So there's some initial admin with some more admin to follow. Go ahead. From my change of command speech forward, I realized that those things underneath that strategy aren't the strategy, but you need to know it's based on winning. This matters. We'll talk about it later. Nobody's going to care what our plans are for five or 10 years if we lose tomorrow. They won't care. There is an urgency here that the chief is very clear on, that the secretary is very clear on, that we need to get after.

And in getting after, I've got four gaps that I'm concerned about. Command and control, navigation, maneuvering under fire, and tempo. And I wish I was as smart as my classmate Jim's life. So I completely give you credit for this next column, sir. Three approaches to get after those gaps. Make the best with what we have. If the A2 were going to walk into my office tomorrow and say they're getting ready to go, what am I going to do now? We're going to take roll with who we got and we're going to take roll with the toys we have and we're going. So with that in mind, have I done everything possible in my organization to unleash the talent and unleash the quality of what we have to get after it? Tactics, techniques, procedures, risk, training.

Start from the objective area back and tie everything to what we're trying to achieve. And when that runs out, we look for value that already exists that may not be tapped into. Is there something that exists that I just need to buy that makes my life better? And then when I'll run out of those with my maleadmadgecom hat on, I have an obligation to drive what the future force looks like. Can I put a demand signal on industry to create a technology that makes my life better? Admin. Slide. Admin. Lethality matters most. When you can kill your enemy, every part of your life is better.

Your food tastes better, your marriage is stronger. Why is the mobility guy talking about lethality? I'm not coming at you as a C-130 driver, I'm not coming at you as a mobility officer. I'm coming at you like an Airman, like Rickenbacker, like Mitchell, like Lemae, Olds, Levitow, Sijan. This is who we are. We are lethal. Do not apologize for it. The pile of our nation's enemy dead, the pile that is the biggest is in front of the United States Air Force. This is why we mutinied in 1947.

Slide. That's just admin. Our toys are meaningless unless we put them in a place to be lethal. Our toys, our training, our desires are meaningless unless we maneuver them to advantage. Unfair advantage, unfair lethality, unrepentant lethality, lopsided lethality. If we can't get them to where they need to be to do that, then we are wasting our time. Slide. It's important that we surround ourselves with a winning lexicon. It's important that we surround ourselves with a winning lexicon. Destroy, dominate, kill, defend, secure, win, unfair win, lopsided win. Those terms matter. Slide. The context to why is incredibly important here. Incredibly important here. That's my grandfather's 344th bombardment group patch, which is now the patch of the 126 air refueling wing. Coincidentally, it's Scott Air Force Base. The bottom says we win or die.

And when you understand what's at stake, this victory language comes into a sharper contrast. Okay, your kids grow up subservient to a rules based order that benefits only one country if we lose this. There is no access to the global commons. There is no free and open. There is no rules based order. So the stakes are incredibly high. And I think the message coming out of this conference is incredibly consistent as we get after this. Slide. Problem statement, we are not ready to fight and win inside the first island chain. Who's we? Joint force.

What are the components of ready? Readiness, integration, agility. Forgive me, I've been moving everybody for 32 years, and I realize the C-130 is the Cadillac of the sky and there's a long list of people that want to go slow and only move six pallets. I get that. Nobody is as ready, integrated or agile as they think they are. And if we're going to carry that into the current fight, it ain't going to be pretty. Slide. What's the reason? Is it the overmatched west of the international dateline? Is it the quality and quantity of our pacing challenge? Is it that they, as Grace just said, are tailor making an air force to kill you?

Not you hypothetically. You. Look in the mirror. You. That they can project power to the first island chain, the second island chain, Hawaii and Konas? Pretty good reason not to be ready, integrated, agile. Slide. What it look like to do little. Two carriers, one squadron, B-25. Quality, quantity, tailor made force to kill him. Slide. What it looked like to Spruance. Sail in the Midway, quality, quantity, tailor made force to kill him. Slide. What it looked like to Ira Eaker. In 1942, more killed in action in the eighth Air Force than the Marine Corps.

Quantity, quality, tailor made force to kill him. Slide. So this ain't about the red. This is about us. Our decision to be ready, to be integrated, to be agile. Go back. I love the way the chief said it. It's unrehearsed. We've done this before. It's our turn. Generate your courage. Aim the pointy into the scary place and execute. Slide. We've done this before. Generate your courage. Aim the pointy into the scary place and execute. Slide. Generate your courage. Aim the pointy into the scary place and execute. Slide. Has nothing to do with them. I would argue there's more permissive than non-permissive on the slide.

When you base your argument on threat rings, you're making some flawed assumptions, the first being that it's a worst case scenario. It extends a persistence that's not real, it extends a custody that's not real, and it extends a magazine depth that's not real. Invest in our tenacity and go. We don't have a choice. We don't have a choice. The takeaway from this slide is there's more persistence, there's more permissive than non permissive. Invest in American tenacity. Invest in Airman tenacity. We've done this before. Slide. Problem statement. We're not ready to fight and win inside the first island chain. But we will be in a year. Well sir, that's a lot to do in a short time. Yeah, no shit. So we can decide to accelerate, we can decide to change, we can decide to be lethal, we can decide to maneuver and we can decide to win. Step up. Slide. Manifesto. Here's for the people that were intrigued. A public declaration of policy and aims, a written statement declaring publicly the intentions, opinions and objectives issued by a government organization build it. I'm not trying to be like Ted or Karl.

And I'm certainly not to equate myself to more amazing Airmen and Americans than me. I'm not at all the level of a Martin Luther King or a John F. Kennedy or certainly the founding fathers. And I'm not equating the mobility manifesto to things like I Have a Dream or the Declaration of Independence. But I do have intentions and I do have an opinion and I do have an objective. Slide. We can do big things quick. We just have to decide to do it. Not quite a year. On the mobility team fight club, the motto is bring the evil. He's the evil and I'm happy to bring him. And I want him to be successful. Make the main thing the main thing. Rehearsals. Put a map on the ground, commander. Tell me where you're going to go, what you're going to do. Tell me what your authorities are, tell me what your priorities are, tell me what your objectives are. Not hypothetical, not exercise. Rehearse it like it's going to happen tomorrow and get after it. Slide. I'm sorry, no, don't do that. Thank you.

Staff to staff down to AFSOC, over to Pack AF, Global Strike AFMC, ACC. We're getting after that. We could not possibly know the things we need to work unless we do it face to face. WEPTAC series. I'm tired of being the side show and I want to be on show center, not by myself but line of breath with every weapons officer in this air force. And I'm speaking now to the weapons officers, both my tribe and anyone that's out there, and anybody that's considering being one. Things I've never said. Get me somebody with exec experience. Things I've never said. Golf tournament projo, find him asap, get them over here.

Things I've never said. I'd rather have the ACSC and residence graduate than the correspondence graduate. Things I have said, get me the weapons officers, I need them now. And this crowd is pulling, pulling hard and every bit of momentum I got has been the shoulders on this weapons officer crowd. Thank you. Now you would think that a command that's entrusted to do amazing things in combat, command and control it, plan it, execute it, would have the authority to award my own combat awards. And it's true, I got it but only a week ago. And it's only because the most senior leadership over rode some opinions. I'm leave it at that. So I'm happy to have. It's meaningful to me and it's a statement on this manifesto. Phoenix rally. I will take our investment in the WEPTAC series and I will brief the chief personally on a scheme of maneuver that we're going to get inside the first island chain and win.

Mobility OI. I see myself in every single one of them. What I want most out of them is access and analysis, and we're well on our way. And Mobility Guardian, the crown jewel of the mobility exercises I'll do over the Pacific. With the schema maneuver, I brief the chief so I can demonstrate a win. I'll put the 46 on the foundational work that Jackie and the team did to get it up, put it into UCOMM, put it into Paycom, put it into Sycom, get her on step. And you can see underneath that I've combat certified it. It's ready to go. Certified that on Friday. 24 hour sortie, 30 hour sortie, 36 hour sortie, we're getting it. Pilot plus one. Nothing provocative here. You'll have to forgive me. I don't think fighter pilots are the only ones that have a birthright to fly an airplane solo.

And as much as I admire and trust that crowd, I admire and trust mine exactly the same way. There's a real operational need for it. In order to generate the tempo required to win, it's not hard to imagine a piloted boom on the bunk sleeping with a pilot and a boom in seats getting the mission done. And I'd rather test that out now than try to figure it out when the shooting's going on. External fuel tanks on a HERC, there's a boneyard full of them. There's hard points on a J. 8,000 pounds of gas each, 16,000 pounds total, three hours extra flying, offloaded into a bladder and it's a bag of gas for a fighter to at least get up on the tanker.

That's value that exists that we're simply not tapped into. Limited air crew ops for the exact same reasons for other AWS is relevant. Missing essential lists that account for the severity of the need for victory and what happens if we lose. Slide. A public declaration of policy and aim, a written statement declaring publicly the intentions, opinions and objective issued by our government or an organization. Slide. I'm not interested in being the best air force on the planet.

I'm interested in being the most lethal force the planet has ever known. I get it. You can't have one without the other. But the aspiration is important here. Only this air force can do it. AMC is the joint force maneuver. AMC is the meaningful maneuver. There is too much water and too much distance for anyone else to do it relevantly. At pace, at speed, at scale. Everybody's role is critical, but Air Mobility Command is the maneuver for the joint force. If we don't have our act together, nobody wins. Nobody's lethal. Nobody's in position. Slide.

I hope you're not offended by trolls. And I'm not desperate for talent. I'm desperate for collaboration. I'm desperate to accelerate. I'm desperate to change. I'm desperate to achieve what the chief and the secretary want. Because I believe in it. Bothered. It keeps you up at night. You understand what's at stake. Warrior, that we understand lethality and our role in it. Troll, the most affectionate term possible. The grinders, the get in a vault and figure it out team. The don't go to bed till it's done team. The take it personal team. The won't let it go team. I am agnostic when it comes to who's on the team. I value and demand the diversity. Diversity of background, diversity of rank, diversity of fly fix support, diversity of service.

If you want to help, I got a place for you. If I can't, PCS you, I'll TTY you. If I can't TTY you, I'll remote you. And if I can't remote you, you have access to my email. I'm not a good pen pal. But I'll have the professional courtesy to give you an act and I'll have the professional courtesy to get it into the team and I'll have the professional courtesy to truly take your input and put it into the scheme. Because I need it. I demand it. This is the investment of tenacity. Slide. Okay? That's my change of command speech. The very end of it. I'm not expecting you to read it.

I'll queue in on the bottom here in a second. But it's important before we leave here that you understand my appreciation for each and every one of you. I started worrying in the late innings before this speech that I wasn't emphasizing Airmen enough. But in bundling up the messaging of all the senior leaders that have come up on this stage, while the slides had maps and toys and projects and OPTs, this is really about us and our culture. So it is all about Airmen. It's nothing but Airmen here. This is about us. This is our time. We've been here before. We're simply following in the footsteps of giants and it's up to us to decide to accelerate, to change, to be lethal, to maneuver, to win. And you will get zero sympathy from me, zero, about having to do big things quickly.

You'll get zero sympathy from me when it comes to the legitimate, horrific challenges that exist. I owe each of you an enormous debt of gratitude for that. For those that came here because you're loyal to me, thank you. For those that were just simply intrigued by the title, I hope I at least scratched the curiosity itch here. Hopefully. For anybody that wears or has worn an Air Mobility patch, it is an honor and an inspiration each and every day to serve alongside you and to try to keep up, because you can kind of tell I don't need much coffee in life, right?

But my feet hit the floor in the morning running. Okay? I want to focus on the bottom line there and tie it back to my granddad's patch. When he says accelerate, change or lose, we say we win or die. And if that's framing the decisions that we need to make, we're going to be just fine. Last thing I'm going to sign off with, and I'm going to ask for a little audience participation here. And this is a mobility thing, so I realize the mobility team will do it and you guys can, maybe it is a loyalty test here. Yeah. Two words, let's go. When I say let's go, I'm extending much more than just vaminos.

When I say let's go, I'm saying thank you for the oath you took for the uniform you wear. Thank you to your parents for raising a patriot. Thank you to your spouses and your kids, and your brothers and your sisters, for the service and sacrifice and the support that they provide so that you can serve. When I say let's go, I'm saying, I know you know your mission, I know you are trained well, and I trust you with my life, with my kid's future, with the mission. And when I say let's go and you say it back, I know you're holding me accountable to the same, and that we're aligned on the stakes here, and that we're aligned

on the challenges here, and that we completely understand. It's our time to step up and decide. So I'll say it once, you say it back, and then I'll be up here up front. If you guys want to come up and meet me, I'd love to meet you. One, two, three, let's go.

Audience:

Let's go.

Gen. Mike Minihan:

Thank you.

