

For the past 60 years, Air Force aircraft, missiles, and satellites have kept our Nation safe. While the many technologies and advancements have certainly contributed to our national defense, it is the most prized resource of the Air Force—its airmen—that truly make a difference for our Nation and the world. As a member of the Air Force Caucus, I am pleased to recognize the service of both current and former Air Force personnel on this 60th anniversary.

As we consider this resolution, our Nation's airmen are serving in every corner of the world, including many in Alabama's Second Congressional District. I am proud to represent Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base, home of Air University, along with the 42nd Air Base Wing, the Operations and Sustainment Support Group, the 908th Airlift Wing, the 754th Electronic Systems Group, the Air Force Logistics Management Agency, and the newest squadron in the Air Force, the 100th Fighter Squadron. The 100th Fighter Squadron is special because it was the squadron of the famed Tuskegee Airmen during World War II, and I am pleased that this squadron will call Montgomery home.

Air University is a major component of Air Education and Training Command and is the Air Force's center for professional military education. Air University provides the full spectrum of Air Force education, from pre-commissioning to the highest levels of professional military education, including degree granting and professional continuing education for officers, enlisted and civilian personnel throughout their careers.

Air University's Professional Military Education programs educate airmen on the capabilities of air and space power and its role in national security. These programs focus on the knowledge and abilities needed to develop, employ, command, and support air and space power at the highest levels. Additionally, Air University conducts research in air and space power, education, leadership, and management and contributes to the development and testing of Air Force doctrine, concepts and strategy.

This year the Air Force also celebrates the 25th birthday of Air Force Space Command. As Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Strategic Forces Subcommittee, I am privileged to work with some of the finest in the Air Force on a set of programs that I believe will only become more important to our future security. Our world is becoming increasingly dependent on assets and platforms in space, and America's Air Force is meeting the challenges of the 21st Century security environment.

During the cold war, Air Force U-2 reconnaissance aircraft kept us safe by keeping watch on the Soviets. I am proud to note that I served as an Intelligence Analyst supporting this platform from 1955–1959 in West Germany. These aircraft performed a number of critically important missions and made a vital contribution to our National defense.

Air and missile crews manning nuclear bombers and ICBMs provided our Nation with a powerful strategic deterrent. These capabilities were a major component of our "Peace Through Strength" policy that enabled the United States to win the cold war, and I think it is appropriate for Congress to recognize the dedicated service of countless numbers of airmen who protected our Nation during this time.

As the Air Force ushers in its next 60 years, we can be assured it will be postured to meet new challenges in air, space, and cyberspace. As a member of the Air Force Caucus, I am proud to provide for the needs of current and future force. Although the service is the youngest of the branches of our Armed Forces, there is no question that the Air Force has made, is making, and will continue to make an extraordinary contribution to our nation's defense.

As a nation, we are indebted to the Air Force for its commitment and sacrifice. I congratulate Secretary Wynne, General Moseley, and the entire Air Force team for 60 years of dedicated service and defense of our freedom.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, 60 years ago President Harry Truman, through the National Security Act of 1947, created the United States Air Force and ended a 40-year association with the U.S. Army. This move signaled the dawning of a new age and placed airpower in its proper place as a vital element of our Nation's defense.

Airpower had proven its worth to President Truman and many others over those 40 years. From Military Air Balloon success in World War I, to Billy Mitchell's airpower demonstration off Virginia's coast, to the Doolittle Raids and the devastating bombing raids in World War II, airpower allowed our military commanders to fight for and defend our Nation as never before.

Creating a separate Air Force allowed our brave service men and women to fully concentrate on honing the skills and pushing the ever-expanding envelope of airpower.

In Georgia today, we have Air National Guard and/or Air Force Reserve units at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Robins Air Force Base, Savannah, Macon and Brunswick as well as active-duty units at Moody Air Force Base.

And whether it is C-130s from the 165th Airlift Wing or men and women from the 117th Air Control Squadron which just won the 2007 Outstanding Air Control Squadron award from the National Guard Association of the United States, each of Georgia's units and the outstanding men and women who serve in them contribute around the world fighting the Global War on Terrorism. They also provide a formidable force in the face of disaster here at home, as was seen in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina when rescue helicopters from Moody teamed up with other Air Force rescue units to save more than 4,300 people from the disastrous and deadly storm.

Dobbins, Robins and Moody can all trace their beginnings to the Army and the 1940–1941 timeframe when the War Department was making preparations in case the United States went to war—which came to fruition on December 7, 1941 when the Japanese declared War on the United States and attacked Pearl Harbor.

Dobbins began as Rickenbacker Field, but was re-named in 1950 in honor of Captain Charles M. Dobbins of Marietta, whose airplane was shot down during the war near Sicily.

Robins is named after Brigadier General Augustine Warner Robins, one of the Army Air Corps' first General Staff Officers. The Warner Robins Air Logistic Center which preceded the base is also named after the General.

Moody is named after MAJ George Putnam Moody, an early Air Force pioneer killed in

May 1941 while serving with the Beech Aircraft Company in Wichita, Kan. At the time of his death, the major was working on the inspection board for AT-10 transitional trainers which were later sent to Moody.

While each base has a rich history, Moody began a new chapter in its history just recently when the 23rd Fighter Group relocated to Moody and began flying A-10 missions in the skies over Valdosta.

The 23rd Fighter Group also known as the "Flying Tigers" was formed under the command of General Claire Chennault and was part of his China Air Task Force, taking over the mission of the disbanded American volunteer group "Flying Tigers." Several of the original Flying Tigers flew with the 23rd Fighter Group in the China-Burma-India Theater, passing on their knowledge and experience.

Like Mitchell before him, Chennault was another early pioneer and controversial figure who made today's Air Force possible. He argued vehemently for the fighter plane in the 1930s—a time when the rise of the bomber aircraft had consumed the Air Corps experts and were the focus for their tactics.

In fact, it was his continued belief and passionate advocacy for the fighter that led to his isolation at the famed Air Tactical School and eventually drove him to become an advisor in China and the rest as we say is history.

Today we mark the Air Force's 60th birthday in order to reflect on its heroes of the past, and more importantly, to recognize the courage and sacrifice our airmen and their families make each and every day for our freedom. Quite simply, I salute you.

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SARBANES). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 207.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the legislation, H. Con. Res. 207.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from South Carolina?

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.