

AIR FORCE

MAGAZINE



F-15EX vs. F-35A

USAF and Congress Face a Stark Choice **30**

A Side-by-Side Comparison **32**



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done, but [Nobody Kicks A** Without Tanker Gas].

Maj. Randall A. Nordhagen,
USAF (Ret.)
Altus, Okla.

From the Boneyard

[Regarding "Re-Engining the B-52," January/February, p. 38]: I discharged from my first enlistment in USAF in 1966. I moved to Connecticut with my family and went to work for Pratt & Whitney Aircraft Co., in the flight-test department. Our main test aircraft was one B-17, used for testing Hamilton Standard propellers; and two B-45s which we used to test jet engines, from JT-12s to TF-30s. Around 1968, P&W had developed the JT-9D but had no in-flight analysis of its performance. Its marketability was based only on ground testing. Boeing, at the time, had a need for that engine to power its new 747 aircraft, but required in-flight testing prior to purchasing. So, P&WA obtained a B-52E Stratofortress (56-0636) from USAF at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz., commonly referred to as the "Boneyard." It marked the first time a B-52 was refurbished from storage.

After acceptance of the aircraft at Bradley Intl. Arprt., Windsor Locks, Conn., it was placed in a Cantilever hangar where it remained while extensive modifications were undertaken. Numbers 5 & 6 engines and their supporting nacelles were removed. We built another nacelle in their place designed to hold the JT-9D; installed wiring and tubing to support requirements for instrumentation; and generally continued the aircraft's overall restoration. We worked two shifts, 10-hr days, six days a week for about a year to get her airworthy again. Her maiden flight was very successful and provided a dependable JT-9D test bed for years. In 1979, a tornado ravaged the airport and collapsed her hangar around her. She survived, was repaired, and flew for a few more years. I'll never forget the memories that she provided and one day hope to see her again in the "Boneyard."

SMSgt. Wayne C. Beach,
USAF (Ret.),
Beverly Hills, Fla.

I am very interested in how the engine selection will be made. The article stressed the importance of fuel efficien-

cy and reliability over the TF-33. This is a very important part of the equation, but I would hope the decision-makers also put emphasis on thrust. I am also pleased, for a lot of reasons, that the eight-engine configuration will be maintained. I am in favor of at least a 15 percent increase in thrust. This can easily be managed with the thrust gate management procedures, and I believe there are engines in this range that can be fitted in the desired dimensional envelope. It should be noted that the KC-135 re-engine program gave the aircraft a 70 percent increase in thrust with the CFM-56. I am a former B-52H IP (instructor pilot) with a total time of 3,000 hours in the B-52D, F, G, and H. I know how much the added thrust given to the B-52H was a great advantage. I am also a degreed aerospace engineer and have experience with flight testing B-52 weapons.

I believe there are plans to add heavy external stores to the B-52H in the order of 20,000 pounds to each wing. If anything, increased thrust over the 17,000-lb T-33 is needed. I have in-flight refueled the B-52H to 525,000 pounds. The bomber becomes very thrust-sluggish at that weight. Additionally, consider loss of engines and/or thrust with heavy external stores. Yes, they can be jettisoned, but at what cost?

The re-engine program must take into account current and future plans for the B-52H and consider the added drag any weight and external configuration options may introduce. After all, the BUFF has 30 more years in service. That in itself is awesome. I would also suggest that the "lessons learned" from the KC-135 re-engine program be examined. I am sure Boeing has a lot to offer here. I will watch with great interest how this important program matures.

Lt. Col. Bill Barton,
USAF (Ret.)
Niceville, Fla.

A Rose is a Rose is NOT a Rose

I must comment on your excellent article on Air Force Special Ops recruitment ["Special Treatment for Special Warriors," December 2018, p. 42]. The Air Force doesn't and never has understood the marketing value of a name. People want to be a Navy Seal or an Army Ranger because it is chal-

lenging and because it is something they know they will be recognized for and proud of for the rest of their lives. Combat controllers and other Air Force special operators work side-by-side with seals and rangers, but who's ever heard of CCT?

The Navy has "Top Gun," the Air Force has "Weapons School."

Huh? Do you think Tom Cruise would have been in a movie called "Weapons School?"

Back when computers were brand-new, I spent several months writing a flight-planning software program for our newly forming F-117 squadron. I hadn't given much thought to naming the thing when my wife suggested I should call it something catchy, like "Hanner-Planner" (after my last name). The program worked well and was used for several years.

Nearly 30 years later, upon meeting a new acquaintance at a military function, he remarked, "Oh, are you that 'Hanner-Planner' guy?" I was astounded! There is so much in a name, and the Air Force just doesn't get it.

Lt. Col. Dale R. Hanner,
USAF (Ret.)
Loveland, Colo.

Doolittle Was a Zealot

Welcome to *Air Force Magazine* ["Letters: From the Editor in Chief," December 2018, p. 3]. As a 30-year-plus Life Member of the Air Force Association, I have long appreciated the different perspectives expressed in *Air Force Magazine*.

The difficulties faced by the Air Force you present in your December inaugural editorial ["The Air—and Space—Force We Need," p. 2] are unfortunately only too true. The Air Force is "overtasked and under-resourced," causing the Air Force to "fray at the edges." And, it is a DOD-wide issue, impacting not only the Air Force. However, I disagree with your conclusion that we do not need a separate Space Force, for the following reasons.

My grandfather was in the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps under General Pershing in WWI. My father was in the Army Air Corps flying combat missions in P-47s from Ie Shima in the South Pacific. Renaming the Aviation Section to the Army Air Corps, then renaming the Army Air Corps to the Army Air Forces, did not resolve the