

GENERAL ROBERT E. HUYSER

Retired July 1, 1981. Died Sep. 22, 1997.

General Robert E. Huyser is commander in chief of the Military Airlift Command with headquarters at Scott Air Force Base, Ill. As commander of a specified command he is responsible to the president and the secretary of defense through the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the planning and performance of airlift missions during wartime, periods of crisis and peacetime exercises. He directs the management of all strategic and tactical airlift forces worldwide to insure operational support to unified and specified commands engaged in military operations. During routine peacetime conditions airlift service is provided by the commander of the Military Airlift Command, through the secretary of the Air Force, in his role as executive director of the Single Manager Operating Agency for Department of Defense Airlift Service. He is also responsible for Air Rescue, Air Weather, Aeromedical Evacuation, and Combat Documentation and Audiovisual Systems throughout the world.

General Huyser was born in 1924, in Paonia, Colo., where he graduated from Paonia High School. He later attended Ouachita College at Arkadelphia, Ark., and Modesto College at Modesto, Calif. He was drafted into the Army in April 1943 and in 1944 entered the aviation cadet program. In September 1944 he graduated from flying school and received his pilot wings and commission as a second lieutenant.

During World War II he flew B-29s in the Southwest Pacific area. In May 1945 he was assigned as a B-29 pilot at Clovis, N.M. From August 1946 to May 1947, General Huyser was an aircraft commander in the 307th Bombardment Wing, MacDill Field, Fla. He next became an aircraft commander in the 93rd Bombardment Wing at Castle Air Force Base, Calif., and in 1950 was assigned to the wing staff as chief of training.

During the Korean War General Huyser was assigned to the Far East Air Forces Bomber Command as chief, combat operations. During that period he flew combat missions in B-29s with the 98th Bombardment Wing.

He returned to the United States in September 1953 and was assigned as chief, Combat Crew Section, Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force, March Air Force Base, Calif. In February 1957 he became chief, Training Division, for the 92nd Bombardment Wing, Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash., and later was named director of operations.

General Huyser returned to Headquarters Fifteenth Air Force in January 1959 as assistant chief and then as chief, Combat Operations Branch. In July 1960 he became chief, Operations Plans Division. He entered the Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., in August 1962. After his graduation in July 1963, he served as chief, Concepts Branch, Operations Plans Division, Headquarters Strategic Air Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

In July 1966 he assumed duties as vice commander of the 454th Bombardment Wing at Columbus Air Force Base, Miss., and in December 1966 he assumed command of the 449th Bombardment Wing at Kincheloe Air Force Base, Mich.

General Huyser returned to Headquarters SAC in April 1968 and was assigned to the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, as director, command control, and in February 1970 he assumed duties as director of operations plans and chief, Single Integrated Operational Plans Division, Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff.

His principal involvement in the Vietnam conflict was administering the contingency war plans for SAC headquarters. He planned the B-52 missions, weaponeered the target boxes and executed the strikes. He also managed the SAC tanker support for the Southeast Asia area. To insure a complete understanding of the operations, he flew B-52 combat missions over Vietnam and

tanker support sorties out of Thailand.

In June 1972 General Huyser was assigned to Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C., in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans and Operations, as director of plans. In April 1973 he became deputy chief of staff, plans and operations. He participated in the decision-making processes that resulted in C-130 resources being assigned to the Military Airlift Command and the designation of the Military Airlift Command as the Department of Defense's third specified command.

General Huyser became deputy commander in chief of the U.S. European Command, Stuttgart-Vaihingen, Germany, in September 1975, where he was one of the major users of Military Airlift Command airlift support. The European Command is the senior U.S. military headquarters in Europe and has operational command over Army, Air Force and Navy elements assigned to the command by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. There are more than 300,000 personnel assigned from all the services. Its area of responsibility extends from Western Europe through the Mediterranean, the Middle East land mass and North Africa. He assumed his present position in June 1979.

He is a command pilot and has flown more than 5,000 hours in SAC bombers, nearly 2,000, hours in SAC tankers, about 1,400 hours in single engine jet aircraft and 1,500 hours in B-25, C-54, T-39 and various light aircraft. His military decorations and awards include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Army Commendation Medal, Presidential Unit Citation emblem, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award ribbon, Small Arms Expert Marksmanship ribbon and Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation ribbon.

He was promoted to general Sept. 1, 1975, with same date of rank.