WING AND BASE COMMANDERS CONFERENCE
HEADQUARTERS FOURTH AIR FORCE
2-3 Mar 45

1

COMMANDING GENERAL

GENERAL PARKER:

1. . . .

b. Passive Resistance. I have found that there is such a thing as passive resistance among everyone from the heads of the commands on down. Any orders that I give, I want obeyed. I do not want any bucking or deliberate disobedience of orders. I will cite several examples of passive resistance within this command since I arrived.

(1) An order was issued whereby I directed the bases to draw up a M/T to include a deputy commander at each base. Innumeral commanders stated that they did not want a deputy - they did not need one. That is a fact that I knew but there was a reason for the directive. First, no base commander can help but have more to do than he can handle. Second, we are receiving a surplus of full colonels from overseas theatres and have no jobs for them. It was necessary to prepare a M/T that would provide for four or five colonels on a base. Third, I wanted a man whose sole job would be to watch training and maintenance at each base. This is also a means to train potential base commanders for a job they will have to perform at some future date.

(2) A second example was the passive resistance to Fourth Air Force Memorandum 65-22 which gives you a maintenance organization set up in detail. Each base heretofore has had a maintenance organization peculiar to itself. Many complaints were received that you did not want to change over to the new system. It is necessary that a standard system be placed into effect which may be changed from time to time as we receive reports on better methods of procedure. And I charge you each to comply with it.

(3) Another example was the request made by General Arnold and General Giles regarding the AAF Officers Association. I presented the details of the association over my personal signature to the bases last October. I received two replies - Lemoore and Hamilton Field. General Arnold wrote a letter of inquiry whereupon I sent a follow-up. Three or four bases replied - some had never

heard of it. They were presented to club members and were turned down. The purpose of the association was to create a central fund for future use of the AAF. These funds to be obtained from the officers clubs as they were closed. It was intended to make every man who had been a member of the AAF, a member of the Officers Club. The War Department thought it such a good idea that it took the initiative and issued a regulation stating what will be done with all the money in the Officers Club fund. Now all the AAF Officers Clubs, who did not corporate in their constitutions a statement to the effect that the monies were to be turned over to the AAF on closing, will lose their monies to the War Department. I think a lot of trouble connected with passive resistance is caused by your staff officers and enlisted men in not passing up to you the memoranda and directives that were sent to your base.

c. Maintenance. Maintenance is one of my principle interests. Each base commander should make it his personal job to see that maintenance is at its maximum efficiency. We have the poorest maintenance in the United States - although it has improved slowly during the last six months. We are trying to introduce factors so that we can compare each base with the other in a way that is sane and intelligent. We will take into consideration all the varying factors such as sub-depots, number of personnel, geographical location, etc. . . .

NOTE

2. Lack of Harmony on Bases. The lack of harmony on some bases is one of the reasons I want a deputy commander. There have been too many instances where operations were fighting with maintenance. If the personnel cannot work in harmony then get rid of them. This is one of the duties of a deputy commander to see that maintenance and training and operations work hand in hand with a minimum of friction.

. . .

5. On the Job Training. We have orders from Washington to establish on each base an on-the-job training schedule and program. That has been put into effect by this headquarters but the results are poor. There will be no more training by any kind done by the training command. No training of mechanics or engineering crews. The only mechanics you will have to work with are those who will train on the job at your base or those that have been trained at another base within this command. We are short of a great number of MOSs. You will have to train them. We have set up in this headquarters an on-the-job training section which will help supervise and set up a schedule. This is an important job and must have your immediate attention.

. . .

MAJOR GEORGE K. SMARTT: Personal Affairs.

1. . . .

3. Special Services. Your attention is invited to Fourth AF Letter 75-7A, 2 February 1945 and Fourth AF Letter 34-102, 1 February 1945 which explains our entertainment policies. It is the general policy to provide our isolated and semi-isolated bases with big-name entertainers and toward that end transportation by air will be authorized when the need arises. Other bases will not be allowed air transportation unless a remote base is included on the entertainers' itinerary. Much can be accomplished by cooperation between the bases. We have placed an officer on temporary duty in Los Angeles which should help promote and coordinate this program. Your attention is also invited to AAF Letter 30-15, 26 January 1945 which states that Budget and Fiscal officers should coordinate through special services officers and information and education officers before submitting their budget estimates on needed appropriated funds. WEMA funds in limited quantities will be available for the fiscal year 1945 as well as for the fiscal year 1946. The Fourth Air Force has lost 11 bands within the past few months. It is hoped that the 8 remaining bands will try to fulfill engagements at any and all Fourth Air Force bases that are located in the vicinity of their station. . . .

III

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

COLONEL C. J. HERLICK:

1. The primary mission of the Fourth Air Force at the present time is training combat crews. In addition to this type of training the Fourth Air Force is responsible for a great variety of other types of training. Without going into detail, as each of the respective bases are familiar with the details of their special training program, I will list the various types of training for the general information of all. B-24 crews; B-25 crews; P-38 crews; Night Fighters; Jet Propelled Units, Engineer Training; Camouflage School (which is being transferred 1 April to the Training Command); Communications of all types; Aircraft Warning; Ground Radar; Radar Counter-measure Crews or "ferret" crews; Fighter Control Schools; Signal Companies. The training program on communications is quite heavy. Overall, the Fourth Air Force is responsible for more communications training than the other three continental air forces combined and it is imperative that all base commanders lend every aid to accomplish this

1

mission. Your attention is invited to Fourth AF Memorandum 20-15, 24 February 45 which covers the subject of communications coordinators. This is mentioned in order that you may pay particular attention to see that the office of the base communications coordinators is properly organized because flying is dependent on having good communications at all times. Increased and new types of training to be assumed by the Fourth Air Force in the near future is jet-propelled units in the P-80 type plane, also the conversion of two B-24 stations to B-32 training.

2. Army Air forces has directed that on the job training be stressed - that all available facilities be used to the fullest extent in order to efficiently conduct this training. An On The Job Training Section is being organized in this headquarters and directives covering all phases of this training will soon be published. It will be necessary for the bases to set up On The Job Training Section which Management Control of this headquarters is incorporating in the new manning tables. The Processing Out activities will be transferred from Hamilton Field to Salinas Army Air Base on approximately 15 March 45. Hamilton Field will remain assigned to the Fourth Air Force furnishing all housekeeping facilities for ATC activities. The Training Command will be held responsible for all Processing-In of combat crews for the continental air forces. Therefore, it is planned to close Lemoore as a Processing-In station as soon as final plans are formulated by Army Air Forces and the Training Command assumes this responsibility. . . .

VI.

WING COMMANDERS

GENERAL MORRIS:

There is a problem on returning personnel. We have all been faced with the problem of having people assigned who do not fit in the picture. Many who have been deservedly promoted to high rank for excellent qualifications and specialties which cannot easily fit into our picture. If we permit each new individual who is assigned to upset our complete organization we sould prepare oursleves for chaotic conditions. We must accept the fact, we will never reach the saturation point as far as returning personnel are concerned. By that I mean we will receive more people than we can accommodate. The fact remains that we will get more people and this process will continue for long after the war. It will require every bit of vision and in-

1