



(U) InSIDer's View of History: How a Four Star General Once Waited for a Lowly Captain to Finish Eating Lunch

FROM: [REDACTED]
DASS Requirements Manager (S2J52)
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DASS Requirements Manager (S2J52)

(U) During one three year segment of my checkered past, I was a Special Air Missions Aircraft Commander (read that to say Pilot) in the 1402 Military Airlift Squadron at Andrews Air Force Base here in Maryland. In that role I had the privilege to fly a number of interesting individuals in the political/military hierarchy during the Carter Administration. Two of the names in the President's inner circle that may still ring a bell were Ms Lillian Carter and Zbigniew Brzezinski.

(U) Other passengers who flew aboard my aircraft during that time period included Lt General Tom Stafford (commander of the Apollo Soyuz Space Mission), numerous senators and congressmen as well as one former NSA Director. This leads me to my story about how a Four Star General once waited for a lowly Captain to finish eating lunch.

(U) On that occasion, I was flying General Lew Allen from Andrews to Edwards Air Force Base in California. General Allen was Commander of Air Force Systems Command at the time. His wife was traveling with him to Edwards. We had to stop for refueling at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha. The General stated that he was in a bit of a hurry to get to Edwards. I radioed ahead to ask for a quick refuel and was told that Base Operations would do what they could. On arrival at Offutt I was told it would take about twenty minutes to refuel the aircraft. I advised the General of this fact and told him that the both the copilot and I would check the enroute weather at Base Operations (within a short walking distance) and advised him that he and his wife might like to make use of the facilities. Our CT-39, Sabreliner, had little or nothing on board in the way of amenities.

(U) After a quick check of the weather and our own use of the restrooms, the copilot returned to the aircraft and I entered the Base Operations Snack Bar in an attempt to quickly consume part of my Air Force Issue box lunch. After just one bite of my sandwich, the Transient Maintenance Crew Chief approached me. He said that they had expedited our refueling and the aircraft was now ready to go. Both General Allen and his wife were nearby and observed the exchange. The General's wife then said "Finish your lunch Captain, we can stand to wait a few extra minutes. And don't rush yourself. We wouldn't want you to get indigestion." I looked at the General who just shrugged his shoulders slightly and turned away. And so it was that I ate my lunch (quickly, of course, but without obvious haste), while a Four Star General and his wife waited.

(U) The year was 1979. General Allen was DIRNSA from August 1973-77. Little did I know I would be working here myself about eight years later.



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(U) Note from SIGINT Communications: if you missed it, have a look at the [previous InSIDer's View of History](#) from Charles Berlin. Also, please send us YOUR story!... see our [call for submissions](#) for details.

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