Air Force History Essay, Research Paper

1- The position of Chief Master Sergeants of the Air Force occupies the top enlisted grade, and has great responsibility and prestige in the Air Force. The objective of this background paper is to inform on the career progression, awards, and decorations of the former Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Thomas N. Barnes. In the first main point, I will trace the former CMSAF military career from Non-Commissioned Officer to Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Tier. Secondly, I will discuss the major awards and decorations of former CMSAF Thomas N. Barnes. CMSAF Thomas N. Barnes has been a significant figure in the development of Air Force History.

2- In April 1949 Chief Barnes entered the U.S. Air Force, and received his basic training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. After completing basic training, he attended Aircraft and Engine School and Hydraulic Specialist School at Chanute Technical Training Center, Illinois. During this time period the Soviet had controlled East Germany came into existence as the German Democratic Republic. In October 1950, he was assigned to the fourth Troop Carrier Squadron of the 62nd Troop Carrier Group at McChord Air Force Base, Washington. This was in the period when the Air Force had spent much of the 1950s training and equipping itself for a nuclear conflict. In September 1951, he transferred to Tachikawa, Japan, and continued flight engineer duties. Chief Barnes transferred in June 1952 to the 30th Air Transport Squadron, Westover Air Force Base, Mass., where he attended C-118 school and continued his flight engineer duties in that aircraft. In September 1965, he went to Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash., and continued duties as senior controller. In October 1966 he entered the F-4 Field Training Detachment at George Air Force Base, Calif., and in December 1966 went to Southeast Asia. In addition, during this time there was an extended debate resulted in the defeat of a major civil rights bill forbidding discrimination in housing and of a bill permitting states to enact right-to-work laws. The Senate also voted, in effect, to annul a provision of the 1964 Civil Rights Act that required desegregation of hospitals. In December 1967, he returned from Southeast Asia to Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas, where his duties were T-38 section line chief. During the same year, the United States had over 475,000 troops in South Vietnam. Chief Barnes was promoted to the grade of chief master sergeant on December 1, 1969, and was transferred to Headquarters Air Training Command in October 1971 to assume duties as command senior enlisted adviser. On Oct. 1, 1973, he was appointed chief master sergeant of the Air Force. At the expiration of the initial two-year tenure, he was extended for an additional year by the chief of staff. In addition, during this period, the United States withdrew its combat troops in 1973; the air force began to experiment with its first “precision” bombs. In February 1976, he was selected by the chief of staff to serve an unprecedented second year extension, shortly after he retired Jul. 31, 1977. Chief Barnes has made tremendous strides throughout his Air Force Career, which is highlighted and associated with his awards and honors received. Next, I will discuss some of Chief Barnes’ major awards and decorations.

3- Chief Barnes’ awards and decorations were awarded for his exhibition of extraordinary standard and conduct while in the Air Force. I will begin discussing some of his major awards and decorations in order of precedence. First, I will discuss the Legion of Merit; it was originally ranked directly below the Distinguished Service Medal in the Navy’s pyramid of honor. The Legion of Merit is worth seven points on Weighted Airman Promoted System. Next, I will discuss the Meritorious Service Medal. This decoration was established by Executive Order 11448 on Jan. 16, 1969 and may be awarded to any member of the Armed Forces of the United States who distinguishes himself or herself by either outstanding achievement or meritorious service to the United States. This decoration is worth five points on the Weighted Airman Promoted System. Next, I will discuss the Air Medal award. This decoration was established by Executive Order 9158; and is awarded to U.S. personnel for single acts of heroism or meritorious achievements while participating in aerial flight and foreign military personnel in actual combat in support of operations. This decoration is worth three points on the Weighted Airman Promoted System. Next, I will discuss the Outstanding Airmen of the Year award. This ribbon is awarded to airman nominated by the MAJCOMs to Head Quarters for competition in the 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year program. Finally, I will discuss the Air Force Commendation Medal. The Secretary of the Air Force authorized this medal on March 28, 1958, for award to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who has distinguished themselves by meritorious achievement and service.

4- In closing, the mere mention of the title “chief” brings to mind visions of wisdom, strength, bravery, commitment and honor. Moreover, the mere mention of Chief Barnes’ Air Force career is both exemplary and outstanding by anyone’s measure and is thought of very highly. Chief Barnes has played an integral part in Enlisted History and has made significant contributions to Air Force History.

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