



SCHOLARSHIP IN HONOR OF

**GENERAL
THOMAS D. WHITE**

U.S. AIR FORCE

General Thomas D. White

The U.S. Air Force's fourth Chief of Staff, Gen. Thomas D. White, led the Air Force into the aerospace age. It was in the time of development and operational deployment of the Thor IRBM and the Atlas and Titan ICBM's, of design work on the Dynasoar aerospace craft, and of early launchings of satellites. The Air Force was making major advancements for the Nation in aeronautics, science and space technology.

For 10 years General White made his influence felt at the top level of the Air Force military leadership. From 1951 to 1961 he was successively, Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Vice Chief of Staff, and Chief.

In 1960, about a year before he retired, General White looked back on his career and observed: "I was a first lieutenant of infantry that famous summer of 1921 when Billy Mitchell led the bombers which sank the warships anchored near Cape Charles. A quarter of a century later I was to become aware that a cape of another name was destined to provide us with still another dramatic landmark - Cape Canaveral in Florida. Things were happening there that conceptually were as fresh, and in their implications as revolutionary, as had been the experiments at Cape Charles years before."

It was typical of General White that he not only witnessed significant milestones in aeronautics and astronautics, but he perceived their relationship to larger events. He had the rare knack of relating happenings to concepts. He, more than any other national leader, advanced the concept that the atmosphere and space are a single operational medium called aerospace.

General White's father was an Episcopal Bishop. His great grandfather, also an Episcopal minister, had officiated at Abraham Lincoln's wedding. Thomas Dresser White was born in Walker, Minn., on August 6, 1901, and grew up in Springfield, Ill. He attended St. John's Military Academy at Delafield, Wis., and was one of the youngest men ever to be graduated from the U.S. Military Academy. He was commissioned at the age of eighteen and promoted to first lieutenant the same day, July 2, 1920.

It was four years later that the young lieutenant transferred from the Infantry to the Air Corps and learned to fly at Brooks and Kelly Fields, in Texas. From 1927 to 1942 his assignments included military attache duty in China, the Soviet Union, Italy, Greece, and Brazil. During World War II he was Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence at Air Force headquarters, the Deputy Commander of the 13th Air Force in the Pacific. He was Commander of the Seventh Air Force in the Marianas and Okinawa for a year. Later he served two years in Japan - one year as Chief of Staff of Pacific Air Command and a year as Commanding General of the Fifth Air Force.

After his return to the United States in 1948, General White served as Director, Legislative Liaison, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force; Air Force member of the Joint Strategic Survey Committee in the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Director of Plans on the Air Staff. For two years he was the Air Forces' Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations. He became Vice Chief of Staff in 1953 and succeeded Gen. Nathan F. Twining as Chief of Staff in July 1957. He was Air Force Chief of Staff until he retired on June 30, 1961.

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General White was distinguished by the wide range of his interests. Throughout most of his career he studied languages on his own time, becoming proficient in Chinese, Italian, Russian, Spanish, Greek and Portuguese. He translated several vocabularies of aeronautical terms into English from China, Russian, and Spanish. He was the only foreign military flying officer to have been given a Soviet flying license by the Soviet government. This enabled him to fly over Soviet territory without an escort. His official reports home as an observer were of particular value and special interest.

Another of his serious hobbies was the study of the habits of fish; and he was a skilled sports fisherman and ardent conservationist.

When he retired from the Air Force he continued to serve in a variety of tasks until his death on December 22, 1965. He was appointed by President Kennedy as a member of the general Advisory Committee of the U.S. Army's Control Disarmament Agency. He was a military affairs columnist for Newsweek. He was a director of several companies.

Upon his retirement in 1961 he was honored by the National Geographic Society who dedicated their Annual Space Award as the "General Thomas D. White Space Trophy."

Dear General Bellis:

An outstanding combination of soldier and scholar, General White, for 41 years, served his country throughout the world in a wide variety of assignments. As Chief of Staff during a period of revolutionary change for the Air Force, he supervised the formation of the Air Force Academy, brought in supersonic fighters, promoted the "mixed force" concept of strategic bombers and ballistic missiles and guided the Air Force into the challenging aerospace age.

It is with great personal satisfaction, as a close friend of General White and his wife, Constance, to be able to sponsor a scholarship in General White's honor. I want to give young men and women an opportunity to become future leaders of our country and follow in the footsteps of General White.

Sincerely,

Mia

*Mrs. Charles A. Wood
(Ludmilla Molodovsky)*



The Falcon Foundation is a 501(c)(3), non-profit foundation. Its purpose is to provide scholarships to College or Preparatory Schools for motivated young people seeking admission to USAFA and a career in the Air Force.

Although it is a separate organization, the Falcon Foundation works closely with USAFA.