

F R I D A Y , M A R

Testimonial of Retired U.S. Air Force Master Sergeant



Dear Sir,

I am a retired United States Air Force Master Sergeant. I served from 1973 through 1994. I took the Oath of Enlistment several times. Only one was necessary, but the others were good for reinforcement of what I had sworn to do. My duties ranged from the most mundane to serving as a First Sergeant in several units.

As many have said, the Oath doesn't have an expiration date nor any "exceptions" noted by asterisks or footnotes. It means what it says, just, as I might add, does our Constitution, judicial activist interpretation and political manipulation notwithstanding.

When I was a new enlistee, one of the first lessons we were taught in our training, which was repeated several times throughout my first enlistment, was that each man (or woman as the case may be) was duty bound to evaluate each order given by a superior and only obey those that were lawful. Not "legal", but lawful. Lawful in that orders must be consistent with the Supreme Law of the Land as

well as the UCMJ (Uniform Code of Military Justice). They were always careful to make that distinction. It was our inherent responsibility, we were told, to carry this burden and not "just obey orders" because we were also held to account by "a higher authority" and that disobeying an unlawful order was fulfilling our obligation to our country as well as the Oath. That meant if you had to defy the President of the United States, you were to do so. They even taught us how to refuse to obey, with this statement, "Sir, I respectfully refuse to obey that order. I believe it to be unlawful and cannot comply with it."

After my first enlistment, when I became a "lifer", and matured not only as a NCO but as a man, did I understand the why's and wherefore's of the Oath because of the wonderful mentors I had that were comprised of primarily senior NCO's (mostly combat veterans) who would, in their own way, gruffly explain what the Oath actually meant in terms not meant for polite company.

We were also taught to be apolitical, as our duty was to safeguard the Nation and were to trust our civilian population to do their part in safeguarding the Constitution. Even during the Carter years, we still trusted, but his violations of the Oath through his own actions as the President of the United States started to corrode that trust, and by the time I retired, I, as well as many of my peers, no longer trusted the civilian population to do its part. The country was not the same as it was 20 plus years before.


Now, as a retired Senior NCO and having been witness to what's going on in our country for the last 15 years, I join with you to reaffirm that I will fulfill my Oath.

I applaud your effort and will spread your site to all the vets I know. Force multiplication is occurring as you read this.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Randall, Jr, MSgt, USAF (Ret)



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