

REMARKS OF CAPTAIN DAVID R. PRICE, U.S. NAVY
ON ASSUMING COMMAND OF TRAINING AIR WING FOUR
9 JULY 2008 – CORPUS CHRISTI, TX

As amazing good luck would have it, I've done this before on this stage, in this hangar and have a little tradition. So to my parents: Look at me! I'm Commander of a U. S. Navy air wing!

Admiral Guadagnini, Admiral Christensen, Captain Salazar, colonels, captains, fellow commanding officers, honored guests, my dear family and friends, and especially the men and women of Training Air Wing FOUR. Thanks for being here to share this day with us.

Welcome to Ben Price, our nephew from San Diego. Aunt Susan and I are very proud of the man you've become. Welcome to our dear friend Angelika Sitarski. You and Chuck are truly part of our family. Welcome also to the Fishers, Don and Taffina, who drove in from Pensacola; to the Lippmans, Ron and Lisa, from Pennsylvania; and to all of the former Rangers who have made this event so special by sharing it with us.

Tradition has it that the incoming guy should keep it short. I've got some special folks to recognize this morning so let me get to it.

Admiral, thanks for giving me command. I will do my level best to be the commander this wing, our Navy and our Nation deserves.

Thanks to my friend Moose Maynard for turning over a wing that is firing on all cylinders. All of U.S. military aviation is better for your service and contributions here. We are poised to do even greater things in the next couple of years due to your vision and hard work. All best wishes to you, Sandy and the kids as you embark on your next great Navy adventure.

To Captain Gabe Salazar, thanks for the confidence you had in me as one of your COs. Any good we do here on my watch will be your legacy as well.

To my parents, it means so much to Susan and me that you are here to make this event complete. You've been great examples of what is good and descent in America – namely hard work, individual responsibility and self-reliance. I hope Susan and I are living up to your and Bill and Betty's example. We wish they were here but know they are watching over us.

To my sons, Sean and Nick: I'm so proud of the young gentlemen you have become. The many moves and deployments have been tough on you boys and Mom but you should know I strongly believe the defense of our way of life more than justifies our family's relatively minor sacrifice. As you grow older and are exposed to more history and humanity you'll agree with me. You both have the opportunity to make the world a better place. In my opinion your future success will be empty if it isn't achieved in consideration of the greater good.

To my beautiful bride, Susan: all I am, anything I achieve, is a reflection of you. You are what gives meaning to my life, my work, and my service. I know everyone I've ever served with is grateful for your influence on me.

I am humbled that our government is entrusting to me the lives of America's sons and daughters as we train them to be combat aviators. I will command as if they were my own sons and daughters. We will train them as though the very survival of our Nation depends on it. It does.

Ladies and gentlemen, please indulge me for a moment while I address the air wing for the first time as their commander.

I'm a Naval Aviator so my first general order to you is a simple one: Follow me! It's going to be one hell of a ride!

I expect you will carry out that and all orders with dedication and loyalty and energy. I will give my greatest effort to earn that dedication, loyalty and energy.

Well, with all of this pomp and ceremony, it's easy to think that command is about me. It is not. It's about us. I have three simple expectations for us.

First; I expect... I demand, safe mission accomplishment. We will make the world's finest combat aviators for service in the most effective fighting force in human history. We don't need to hurt anyone or wreck any airplanes doing it.

Second; I expect we will take care of each other. That's one of the things that make us different. Team then self.

Third; I expect that with every word and with every deed we will always reflect positively on the armed forces of the United States.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for your kind attention this morning. May God continue to bless our great Nation with the dedicated Service of her young men and women in uniform, and the willing sacrifice they and their families make in our defense.

All Naval traditions and customs will be honored on my watch. All notes, cautions and warnings remain in effect. All Training Air Wing FOUR general orders, instructions and procedures remain in effect...until I say otherwise.

Let's go get something to eat. Adjutant, please take charge and complete the ceremony. Thank you.