



MAJOR GENERAL THOMAS M. SADLER

Retired Oct. 1, 1983.

Major General Thomas M. Sadler is commander, 21st Air Force, with headquarters at McGuire Air Force Base, N.J. It is one of three numbered air forces in the Military Airlift Command. The 21st Air Force exercises operational control of a geographical area from the Mississippi River east to Europe and ending on the western borders of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

General Sadler was born in 1925, in Canton, Ohio. His family later moved to Montgomery, Ala., where he graduated from high school in 1943. The general earned a bachelor of science degree from Syracuse (N.Y.) University in 1965, and a master's degree from The George Washington University, Washington, D.C., in 1970. He also completed Squadron Officer School at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., and the National War College, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.

He entered the Army Air Corps in August 1943 and was assigned in the European theater of operations as a B-17 nose gunner. General Sadler flew 35 combat missions with the 8th Air Force's 92nd Bombardment Group. He was discharged in December 1945 and attended the University of Alabama until August 1948.

Returning to active duty in October 1948, the general entered the aviation cadet program at Waco, Texas. He graduated from advanced flying school and was commissioned a second lieutenant in September 1949. His first operational assignment was with Tactical Air Command's 50th Troop Carrier Squadron at Sewart Air Force Base, Tenn., as a C-119 pilot. From June 1950 to August 1951, General Sadler served in South Korea where he flew 300 combat missions. He then returned to the 50th Troop Carrier Squadron at Sewart Air Force Base. In 1955 he transferred to Evreux Air Base, France, where he served with the 317th Troop Carrier Wing. While there he was commander of the 317th Tactical Command Post.

General Sadler again returned to Sewart Air Force Base in April 1959 where he served as a C-130 flight commander with the 774th Troop Carrier Squadron. In May 1961 he transferred to Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., as an instructor in the Tactical Air Command Joint Air Ground

Operations School. During the Cuban crisis in 1962, General Sadler was assigned to the Tactical Air Command advanced echelon at Homestead Air Force Base, Fla.

From December 1962 to January 1965, he was assigned to Headquarters Tactical Air Command at Langley Air Force Base, Va., as an operations staff officer. During 1965 he attended the University of Syracuse under the Bootstrap program. Following graduation in October 1965, General Sadler again was assigned to the 317th Troop Carrier Wing, which was at Lockbourne Air Force Base, Ohio.

The general went to the Republic of Vietnam in January 1966 and served for a year with the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) as an air liaison officer and forward air controller, flying O-1s. He spent another six months in the Republic of Vietnam as an air liaison officer with the 834th Air Division where he developed and organized the emergency airlift system and tactical airlift liaison officer operations for 7th Air Force.

In August 1967 General Sadler returned to the United States and was assigned to Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C., as chief of the Special Air Force Branch, Tactical and Airlift Forces Division, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Operations. From July 1969 to July 1970, he was a student at the National War College. While there he also obtained his master's degree from The George Washington University. After graduation he returned to Lockbourne Air Force Base as vice commander of the 317th Tactical Airlift Wing.

General Sadler transferred to Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany, in August 1971 as commander of the 322nd Tactical Airlift Wing until January 1974. He was then named commander of the 437th Military Airlift Wing at Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., where he remained until March 1975 when he became chief of security police at Air Force headquarters. General Sadler assumed his present command in August 1977.

A command pilot with more than 9,360 flying hours, he is credited with more than 400 combat missions in World War II, Korea and Southeast Asia. His military decorations and awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star, Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, Distinguished Flying Cross with oak leaf cluster, Bronze Star Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with 15 oak leaf clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal, Purple Heart and the Italian Solidarity Star, 1st degree.

He was promoted to major general July 1, 1975, with date of rank Oct. 1, 1972.

(Current as of June 1983)