



GENERAL LARRY D. WELCH

Retired July 1, 1990.

General Larry D. Welch is the 12th chief of staff, U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C. As chief, he serves as the senior uniformed Air Force Officer responsible for the organization, training and equipping of a combined active duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian force serving at locations in the United States and overseas. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, he and the other service chiefs function as the principal military advisers to the secretary of defense, National Security Council and the president.

General Welch was born in 1934 in Guymon, Okla., and graduated from Liberal (Kan.) High School in 1952. He received a bachelor of arts degree in business administration from the University of Maryland and a master of science degree in international relations from The George Washington University, Washington, D.C. The general completed Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk, Va., in 1967, and National War College at Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C., in 1972.

He enlisted in the Kansas National Guard in October 1951, serving with the 161st Armored Field Artillery until he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force. In November 1953, he entered the aviation cadet program and received his pilot wings and commission as a second lieutenant. He served initially as a flight instructor until his assignment in July 1958, to Headquarters Air Training Command, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas.

General Welch then served in tactical fighter units in Europe, the continental United States and Alaska before transferring to the Republic of Vietnam where he flew combat missions in F-4C's over North and South Vietnam, and Laos.

After completing the Armed Forces Staff College in July 1967, he was assigned to Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C., under the assistant chief of staff for studies and analysis. Upon graduation from the National War College in July 1972, he was assigned to Tactical Air Command, where he served in wing deputy commander for operations, vice commander and wing commander positions.

In August 1977, he transferred to Headquarters Tactical Air Command where he served as inspector general, deputy chief of staff for plans and deputy chief of staff for operations. In June 1981, he became commander of the 9th Air Force and Air Force component commander for the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force. In November 1982, he was assigned as deputy chief of staff for programs and resources at Air Force headquarters and became vice chief of staff of the U.S. Air Force in July 1984. From August 1985 to June 1986, he served as commander in chief, Strategic Air Command, and director, Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff, Offutt Air Force Base, Neb. He became Air Force chief of staff in July 1986.

The general is a command pilot with more than 6,500 flying hours. His military decorations and awards include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Distinguished Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster, Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with six oak leaf clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Joint Meritorious Unit Award and Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with "V" device and two oak leaf clusters.

He was promoted to general Aug. 1, 1984, with same date of rank.