



BIOGRAPHY



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

BRIGADIER GENERAL THOMAS D. PILSCH

Retired December 01, 1994

Brigadier General Thomas D. Plisch is commander, U.S. Forces Azores, 65th Support Wing, Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal.

General Pilsch was born in 1944, in Baltimore, and graduated from the Baltimore Polytechnic Institute in 1961. He earned a bachelor of science degree in engineering with a major in astronautics from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1965 and a master's degree in engineering from Princeton University in 1971. He completed Squadron Officer School in 1973, Air Command and Staff College in 1977, Armed Forces Staff College in 1978, Air War College in 1980 and National War College in 1983.



After graduation from the Air Force Academy, General Pilsch attended undergraduate pilot training at Williams Air Force Base, Ariz., where he earned wings in August 1966. He then was assigned to the 36th Tactical Airlift Squadron, Langley Air Force Base, Va., as a co-pilot and, later, as a C-130E Hercules aircraft commander. In April 1968 General Plisch was assigned as a forward air controller with the 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron, Da Nang Air Base, South Vietnam, where he flew the O-2A Skymaster. He returned from Southeast Asia and attended graduate school at Princeton University from June 1969 until June 1971. He then was an assistant professor of aeronautics at the Air Force Academy until June 1975.

From July 1975 until January 1978 the general was assigned to the 18th Military Airlift Squadron, McGuire Air Force Base, N.J., as a C-141 Starlifter aircraft commander and, later, as assistant operations officer.

After graduation from the Armed Forces Staff College in June 1978, General Pilsch was assigned to Headquarters Military Airlift Command, Scott Air Force Base, Ill. He served as

chief of the Airlift Division, Directorate of Operational Requirements, and as the assistant director of the Military Airlift Command CX Source Selection Team that evaluated proposals for what has become the C-17.

He was commander of the 63rd Avionics Maintenance Squadron, Norton Air Force Base, Calif., from June 1981 until June 1982. Upon graduation from the National War College in June 1983, General Pilsch was assigned to Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C., as chief of the Airlift and Training Division in the Directorate of Operational Requirements, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Research, Development and Acquisition.

General Pilsch became vice commander of the 60th Military Airlift Wing, Travis Air Force Base, Calif., in March 1985, and assumed command of the wing in May 1986. The 60th MAW is the largest operational unit in the Military Airlift Command and the only operational wing in the Air Force flying both C-5 Galaxy and C-141 Starlifter transports. He was qualified and current in both aircraft. In April 1988 he was assigned to Forces Command, Fort McPherson, Ga., as deputy chief of staff. In May 1990 the general became assistant deputy chief of staff, requirements, MAC headquarters. He assumed his current command in August 1991.

The general is a command pilot with more than 4,000 flying hours in the C-5, C-130, C-141, CT-39, O-2 and T-29. His military awards and decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Air Medal with 17 oak leaf clusters, and Air Force Commendation Medal.

He was promoted to brigadier general Aug. 3, 1991, with same date of rank.

(Current as of February 1993)