

Rosie O'Donnell

Speaking

BY GEORGE CARROLL

"**W**E NEED a little more red-blooded Americanism, a little more pride in our American history, a little more fiber in our souls . . ."

When he talks to you like this, Lieutenant General Emmett O'Donnell, Jr., Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, United States Air Force, knows very well that he runs the risk of being labeled a flag waver.

But nobody ever has accused the inimitable "Rosie" of shunning a necessary risk before, and he'll not change his heading now.

So the man who led the first B-29 Superfortress raid on Tokyo and again led the big bombers back into battle during the Korean conflict says what he thinks. Unhesitatingly, he lays it on the line for all to hear or, if you will, on target.

O'Donnell has been doing a lot of thinking lately about America and Americans because they've dumped directly into his lap the responsibility for keeping our first line of defense, the Air Force, flourishing as an all-volunteer branch of our military establishment.

That "V," for "volunteer," behind the USAF, for United States Air Force, means a tremendous lot in continuing combat efficiency.

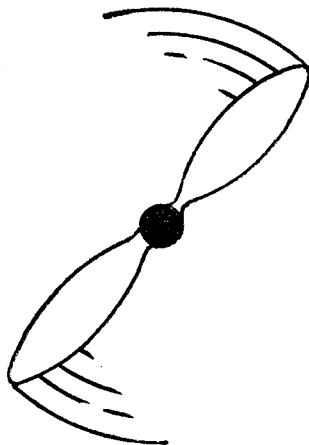
Thus it is that Rosie has been flying a desk in the Pentagon instead of such ultra-modern new bombers as the B-47 Stratojet and B-52 Stratofortress and one of his main missions, in a manner of speaking, is a mammoth manhunt — for patriots.

They're not too easy to find these days, sad to say.

"We're looking for sound, solid American boys with a good dash of iron in their blood," O'Donnell tells you.

Some very smart military people insist that if at least 1,000,000 out of our nation's 164,000,000 population won't voluntarily make a career of the Air Force, then our days of freedom are definitely numbered.

Why would this be so?



Because, they argue, we require an Air Force at least that big to counter the expanding air-atomic might of the Soviet Union *and it must be a professional, career Air Force and not an aggregation of short-term draftees.*

ROSIE O'DONNELL, the patriot hunter, has been having his troubles. Men have been draining out of the Air Force in the biggest kind of exodus since our 1946 demobilization after World War II. In the past year, about 200,000, a fifth of total USAF strength, departed. Replacing them is a costly business.

It takes about \$75,000 to train a jet pilot and around \$15,000 to train the average airman who enlists for four years after graduating from high school.

Secretary of the Air Force Talbott estimates the tremendous turnover of Air Force manpower during this fiscal year is costing the taxpayers \$2,500,000,000 in lost military skill and national protection.

That enormous dollar loss we can probably absorb without hurting too much but it is our weakened combat capabilities in the air that could be critical — if the Communists suddenly struck with atomic and hydrogen bombs.

What Rosie O'Donnell seeks to accomplish is to drive up that re-enlistment rate, retaining the old pros in Air Force blue. At the same time, he wants to attract top-flight

new blood through first-time enlistments.

"We want boys who know how important it is to preserve for their own youngsters the heritage they themselves got from their forefathers," O'Donnell says.

"We want boys who are willing to fight, if fight they must, to pass down that heritage intact. Some critics claim life in the military service is tough. The service *is* tough but it offers a decent, honest, gratifying way of life. Today the United States Air Force is completely voluntary in its makeup. We hope to keep it so."

O'Donnell will tell you no nation has ever suffered from raising its youth with an eye to the Spartan tradition. As a matter of fact, that's the way he was raised himself in old St. Michael's parish in the Bay Ridge region of Brooklyn.

To his mode of thinking, the United States of America is no exception to the general rule governing all nations in the stream of history.

Granted the Air Force has had its share of inequalities, but what segment of U. S. life hasn't? Isn't it true that the good and the bad, the sweet and the sour, come to us in a mixed package?

"Take the highly vocal, disgruntled minority who 'cry baby' about what the country is not doing for them as individuals," philosophizes Rosie.

"These people have a malady by

no means unique to the military service. It's a rapidly spreading, very contagious disease. If not isolated and cured, it could threaten our whole national life."

IN CASE this sounds like preaching superpatriotism, let any listener who rises to object have fair warning that Emmett O'Donnell, Jr. is a fellow who practices what he preaches.

In the midst of the Korean War the summer of 1951, the 16 major league baseball clubs unanimously voted to make Rosie the commissioner of baseball. It meant a salary about seven times his Air Force pay of \$11,000 or so (he was then a major general, not yet having gained his third star).

Spike Briggs of the Detroit Tigers went to O'Donnell with the offer. Harry Salsinger, sports editor of the *Detroit News*, later described the scene as Briggs recounted it:

"Rosie never batted an eye. He didn't ask time to think it over. He didn't ask time to discuss it with his wife and family.

"He told me right off: 'I can't take it, not with the international situation what it is. You bet I'm honored, though, and I could surely use the money and I want you to tell the owners how grateful I am.'"

In Rosie O'Donnell's book, the welfare of his country, even then in combat with the Communists, came ahead of a big fat pay check, plus the acclaim that goes with the czar-

dom of America's national game.

The turnover in Air Force officers has been about 45,000 annually out of a total 130,000, giving rise to the question:

What future can there be in an Air Force career if even the bosses want out?

Rosie O'Donnell had a beautiful "out" but he turned it down cold.

Admitted to West Point at 17, a brigadier general at 37, he figures he owes his country a thing or two. Still on the sunny side of 50, he one day may follow Arnold, Spaatz, Vandenberg and Twining as top boss of the Air Force.

Once during World War II, when the radio brought news of another O'Donnell exploit in the Pacific, his father, Emmett, Sr., put aside the questions of newsmen by saying: "We just like to pray and be proud of him in our own little way."

That's the kind of family from which Rosie comes. O'Donnell, Sr., retired in June, 1954, as head of the English Department at Manual Training High School, Brooklyn, where Rosie studied before choosing West Point. He and the general's mother still live in the old Bay Ridge neighborhood.

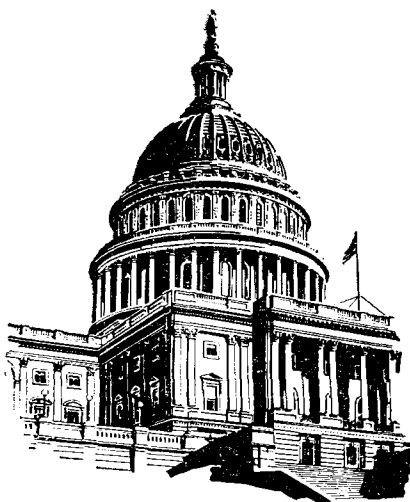
Now Rosie has three young sons of his own, Dale, Patrick and Terry.

Their dad may not be the czar of baseball but he has endowed them all, by example, with a heritage beyond price, an unselfish love of country in the tradition of Patrick Henry and Nathan Hale.

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SENATE WIVES

By Irene Corbally Kuhn



THE MEASURE of a man's success in his career and a woman's success as a woman is never more accurately taken than in the national political arena and the Capitol's bear-pits. In Washington today are 12 Republican Senators whose success as public figures is due in no small degree to their wives. All these wives are women who have a clear, profound understanding of their real rôles in life as wives and helpmeets, and they have marshalled all their abundant personal gifts in order to fill those rôles. To a woman, they believe in the rightness of their husbands' personal and political convictions, and in old-fashioned concepts like duty to country and to conscience.

These are the loyal wives of a dozen controversial Senators who

would have found life much easier in all respects if they had just taken the "normal" way for women and stayed on the socially alkaline side. Instead, they've chosen to make their husbands' principles their own, to work and fight for those principles, and to brave the acid baths of innuendo and criticism, smear and suspicion.

This group of exceptional women are outstanding for their own accomplishments; but even more, for the way they've stood up to the tough job of being married to men who've been fighting the battles of a minority party through the long years of Democratic rule, and carrying on the fight for frequently unpopular or little-understood issues in these first years of hectic and divided Eisenhower Republicanism.

These are the wives of the men