

The United States Air Force and Humanitarian Airlift Operations 1947-1994

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Office of Air Force History, U.S. Air Force : The United States Air Force and Humanitarian Airlift Operations 1947-1994 before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The United States Air Force and Humanitarian Airlift Operations 1947-1994:

Historians have written extensively about the United States Air Force as an instrument of war, focusing on aerial

combat, bombing, strafing, and the transportation of troops and weapons. They have written less about the role of the USAF in supporting disaster relief operations, in helping emerging nations meet the needs of their citizens, and in feeding the hungry anywhere in the world missions which are cumulatively known as humanitarian airlift. One might even think this is a new role for the U.S. military. This book attempts to fill a historical gap by addressing humanitarian airlift missions as an important part of Air Force heritage. Rarely acting alone in conducting humanitarian relief efforts, the U.S. Air Force has served with the U.S. Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. It has worked with other federal agencies such as the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the State Department, and the Agency for International Development. It has also interacted with private charitable organizations. Air Force humanitarian airlift operations include providing assistance at home and abroad. In the event of a domestic disaster, the federal government follows a procedure first defined by the Federal Disaster Act of 1950. After an emergency, a governor requests federal assistance and the president declares the region a federal disaster area. In recent decades, the Federal Emergency Management Agency has coordinated domestic disaster relief, often requesting the support of the Department of Defense for airlift missions. In the case of an international disaster, a foreign government requests relief through the U.S. embassy, permitting the State Department's Agency for International Development and its Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance to coordinate the relief effort. Both organizations have used the USAF for airlift when commercial aircraft were not available or could not perform the mission. In recent years, the Department of Defense established its own office of humanitarian assistance to coordinate congressionally-mandated transport of privately donated relief supplies and distribution of excess nonlethal Defense Department cargo. The Military Airlift Command dominated, but did not monopolize, humanitarian airlifts during the Cold War. Other Air Force commands, such as U.S. Air Forces in Europe, Pacific Air Forces, Tactical Air Command, Alaskan Air Command, Caribbean Air Command, Southern Air Command, and Air Mobility Command took part in significant relief flights. Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard crews and aircraft also participated in many operations, either independently or by complementing active organizations.