

The Jupiter Missile Experience

By
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The Journey to Turkey

I'm an Army Brat. I didn't specify "ex-Army Brat," for once you've been assigned that role in life; you're stuck with it forever. During my junior and senior high school years my dad was serving with the United States Army at Carlisle Barracks, PA...home of the United States Army War College. In 1960, while a senior in high school, I was not a politically astute person when it came to foreign affairs, especially as regards the country of Turkey. I recall an interest in business and the sciences...other than political...at the time. I was carrying a double load in high school (Commercial and College Prep courses), was working part time setting pins in a local bowling alley in the winter and life guarding at the local swimming pools in the summer. I did my best to also work in some semblance of a social life during this time as well. As my dad's assignment at the War College spanned six years...a long time for military people to be stationed at any one location...I had befriended many "townies," a slang term used to identify kids from town as opposed to kids from the Army base. We had essentially established the closest thing to "roots" during my life as an Army Brat than we ever had before.

While completing my high school senior year, early 1961, my dad received an assignment to TUSLOG, Izmir, Turkey. I remember the devastation associated with once again being uprooted and moving to yet another new place, leaving many friends behind. Turkey? The false perception that entered my mind at the time regarding the Turks was one of men wearing pantaloons, pointy slippers, and carrying belts filled with bullets and long knives with curved blades. Of course they all wore turbans, and none of them liked anyone from the West. I can recall at the time being very concerned about my family (and me!) being stationed in Turkey. The US Army was kind enough to wait until after I graduated from high school in June of 1961 to ship us out. It was around August or so of 1961 when we left for Turkey. I had the option to go along with the family, and as I was burned out from carrying double course loads in high school I was ready to either go to work in the USA or travel to Turkey with the family. As I didn't have a job lined up, Turkey it was.

It was an interesting trip, to be sure. Our family was booked passage aboard the ship "General William Darby," a Military Sea Transport Service ship. We embarked at New York, sailed to Rota then on to Barcelona Spain. The next port was Pisa followed by a short voyage down to Naples, Italy. We spent about a week or two in Naples, providing ample tourist activities for myself. I spent considerable time trying to figure out what this strange porcelain device was in my room that had a spigot shooting water up in the air from its center. It wasn't a urinal that much I knew for sure. I also found out how terrible pizza was as served from a street-side "window" store front. The Italians didn't dress up their pizzas as we do in America. Pizza there was nothing more than bread with a little tomato sauce brushed over its surface. We finally boarded either a Greek or Turkish ship to complete the last leg of the journey to the ancient city of Izmir, formerly known in past

years as “Smyrna.” Along the way we stopped for a day at Piraeus, the seaport of Athens, Greece. From there we sailed on to Istanbul, Turkey, where we again spent a few days as I recall. Along the way we were able to spend at least a day or longer at each port, which provided ample opportunity to go sight seeing...which I took advantage of whenever possible. Kemal was always the gracious host, again making sure I seen things that were important culturally to him...and of course which should have been to me as well. My dad was content to relax on the ship, so we didn't see much of him during these excursions.

What made this trip doubly interesting for me, and what dispelled my early impressions of Turkish people, was the chance meeting of a Major in the Turkish Air Force onboard the “Darby” as we crossed the Atlantic. Kemal was his first name. He had spent several years in the United States in attending military sponsored training schools in Texas, and spoke impeccable English...complete with a Texas accent! Kemal and his wife didn't have any children, and upon hearing we were being stationed in Turkey, our family and his became good friends...along with a pseudo-adoption of me into his family. As we sailed to the different ports, Kemal was one to take me along with him to visit things and places I would probably not have otherwise experienced. Our family eventually settled into a neighborhood in Izmir that was only a short distance from Kemal's home. Kemal was assigned to the Turkish Air Force Academy as I recall, located in one of Izmir's suburbs.

I do recall a tense moment in Istanbul when Kemal learned that in addition to his government's overthrow by the Turkish Army, his name was on some sort of “hit list” in the possession of a captured radical involved in the current political turmoil going on in Turkey. Unlike many Muslim mid-eastern countries of today, Turkey became a secular country in 1923 when Mustafa Kemal Ataturk established the Republic of Turkey, thus ending centuries of Ottoman dynastic rule. By 1950, the Turkish political party DP, led by President Celâl Bayar, along with Prime Minister Adnan Menderes and Foreign Minister Fuat Köprülü, controlled the Turkish government. During this time, the Turkish economy expanded rapidly as a result of a new economic liberalism and with large-scale foreign assistance, principally from the United States, that followed Turkey's entry into an alliance with the West. Ultimately, however, this too rapid economic growth combined with poor management led to severe economic and social strains. Increasing political discontent voiced by the political party CHP was being repressed by the DP party. A Turkish army coup overthrew the DP government in 1960, had imprisoned some odd 500 political prisoners on an island, hanged Menderes and a few of his associates on charges of corruption in 1961, and installed a new constitution based on modern economic and social principles with provisions to prevent the kind of repression the Democrats (DP) had inflicted. Turkey was now under martial law, with Turkish Army troops scattered all over the place carrying Sten guns and other assorted weapons to keep the citizenry under control. This was the environment into which we were assigned, and into which we stepped into as we disembarked the ship at Izmir, Turkey. I recall shortly after our arrival of seeing a picture adorning the front pages of a local Izmir newspaper of Menderes being hanged. Politics and political science began to take on a new meaning.

Getting a Job

Shortly after our arrival in Izmir and as my dad settled into his new assignment, I learned of a possible job opportunity with Chrysler Corporation Missile Division through my dad's commanding officer. You can imagine my "shock" when I learned that Chrysler had some sort of business in Turkey! I applied for the job, and with my limited but useful combination of skills...being able to type was a huge benefit here...I was granted the job as a "local hire" and went to work for Chrysler's Installation and Checkout Team 2, stationed out of Çigli (that's pronounced "chilly") AFB several miles down the road from Izmir. This team's tasking was to install Jupiter missile sites around the mountains of Turkey, then turn them over to the USAF to implement as protective and defensive measures against Russia and her allies.

My particular job turned out to have multiple facets. As I could type, a skill I picked up in one of my high school commercial courses, I was assigned to take care of all the office chores. This included preparing documents, answering the radio phones, managing time cards, and so forth. I was also assigned the job of being one of two Technical Expeditors. This job entailed traveling from the remote Jupiter sites back to Çigli AFB to a section called the Receipt, Inspection, and Maintenance (RIM) area. The RIM accepted and inspected new missiles as well as providing scheduled maintenance and emergency repair for missiles located at the remote sites. I would drop off items that required repair or cleaning (Liquid Oxygen hoses were a big item here. They had to be impeccably clean prior to installation at the sites); pick up new, cleaned, or repaired parts and supplies for the site; and try to find the time to snag a lunch along the way. Lunch would usually consist of a salted-beef sandwich from a "roach coach" operated by a Turkish national on the base. Those were some of the best sandwiches I've ever had. There's just something about Turkish bread that is most excellent! A Turkish beverage called "Gazoos" (that's as close as I can remember to the pronunciation, and I'm sure the spelling is off as well), a banana-flavored soft drink, was used to chase it down. I was also the projectionist when it came time to watch movies. Another skill picked up in high school. We were issued a 16mm projector, and would have available to us 16mm versions of popular movies making the rounds during those days. It was like pulling hen's teeth trying to get a cinemascope lens for that thing. Apparently they were in short supply! We would show our movies on a sheet hung at one end of our mess tent. I was also a very inquisitive person and had pestered anyone who looked like they were doing interesting things about every facet of their job. This eventually led to my being able to help out with menial tasks outside the office and around the site to complement my parts chasing duties...which had become to me a real thrill. I got to drive the forklift on occasion, flip a switch here and there, and would contribute as best I could to any other job that would come along. When you work in a situation like this, everyone seemed to have more than one job. This concept brought real meaning to the military job description I learned about during my service in the USAF: "and other duties as required."

Social Life in Turkey

During the course of my year's stay in Turkey, I got to know Kemal and his wife, their families, relatives, and friends. Kemal's wife had a very famous ancestor who 500 years

previous had written some popular Turkish music. Apparently it was still being played! I was introduced to a very nice Turkish lady (either related to Kemal or his family...or to close friends) named Birsen Irgi. Birsen didn't speak much (if any) English, and I didn't speak much Turkish. We would go to the Culture Park in Izmir, sit on a park bench, and try to maintain a conversation as best we could through the use of an English/Turkish dictionary. We were both the same age, and enjoyed each other's company as well. To go out on an official "date," I was expected to bring either parent along with us! I would be invited to accompany Kemal and friends, including Birsen, to social events such as dances around town or to picnics on a Mediterranean beach. It was a grand time socially for a 19-year old fresh out of high school. There was the time I visited Birsen's home, when her family convinced Birsen to demonstrate the famous "Belly Dance." Young girls in Turkey learned the belly dance, while the boys learned to play the violin...at least that's what I was told. What a piece of culture to witness as a young lad! The end of the dance was celebrated with Turkish coffee for all, with a 90-year old grandmother smoking Turkish cigarettes in the background adding a pungent odor to that already existing from the Turkish coffee. Being somewhat young and ignorant of many Turkish customs, and not being one accustomed to holding a dainty coffee cup between my thumb and index finger for lengthy periods of time (somewhat embarrassing for a young macho American teenager, don't you know?), I quickly swallowed the entire contents of the cup, including the unexpected coffee grounds. I thought I was going to die! I was choking, gagging, coughing...with everyone standing around laughing 'til tears came to their eyes at what I had done as well as the predicament I had put myself into! Grandmother and others quickly ran to fetch some candy and an overly large orange to help sooth the impact the rather strong Turkish coffee grounds had on my throat. I was so grateful for the relief, that to this day I've never forgotten it!

There were rules that we as Americans were to understand and observe while living in Turkey, including one that stated "don't spit on the streets." You didn't want to be an ignorant "ugly" American in Turkey...especially with the Turkish soldiers walking around carrying guns. We had a Turkish guard stationed near our apartment building...to either protect us, or to make sure we behaved...I'm not sure which. Nevertheless, I didn't want to test those waters.

I found the Turkish people to be some of the warmest, kindest people I've met anywhere over the years. I tried hard to learn and speak Turkish, with many of my Turkish acquaintances going out of their way to accommodate my faulty implementation of their language by trying to speak in English to me. Many of them spoke by far better English than I spoke Turkish, for which I was always grateful. I remember the old adage "if you have a Turk for a friend, you have a friend for life. If you have a Turk for an enemy, you have an enemy for life." I'm glad that all the Turks I met and knew were friends!

There were many stories heard during my stay in Turkey of Turkish law and the treatment of prisoners assigned to their jails. One story I recall tells of an American nurse who killed or injured a Turkish citizen in a traffic accident, was put in jail, and had no prospects of getting out. The Turkish penal system wasn't one for providing aid or comfort to their prisoners. Often times the only food or comfort items a prisoner would

receive was provided by a friend or relative. Another story going around at the time was about an American Captain of an American ship. The Turkish pilot designated to bring the American ship into the Turkish port at Izmir was apparently drunk and was in eminent danger of creating a hazardous condition for the ship and its passengers. The American Captain apparently forcefully removed the Turkish pilot from command and control of his vessel, and as a result was also remanded to a Turkish jail...and had supposedly been there a year or more at that time. As a result of the rather harsh Turkish laws...real or imagined...Chrysler didn't want their employees driving to and from Çigli AFB and the remote Missile sites for fear of them being involved in a traffic altercation. To alleviate this problem, Chrysler hired Turkish drivers to ferry us around to and from our various work locations.

Another story along this same vein... about the fate of an American, not one of our team members by the way, who had struck a Turkish national citizen with his car while driving through a small village along the main road on his way back to Izmir. The Turkish citizen allegedly stumbled in front of his car. It was the opinion of the driver that the citizen was inebriated. The employee took off, apparently comfortable with the knowledge that the citizen wasn't critically wounded in the encounter. Upon arriving home the American called his supervisor, told him what had transpired, and was told to drop everything and head to the airport right away, get on a plane, and get out of the country. Within 24 hours the Turkish police arrived looking to arrest the American driver, and not finding him arrested his wife instead...who had stayed behind. I heard she was eventually released. I often wondered if she might have ended up serving a sentence in a Turkish compound! I never did hear about the aftermath of that episode. And so, to say the least...we were comfortable having drivers!

I was assigned an older gentleman as my driver, who was perhaps in his late 40's or early 50's. We spent many a long hour traveling back and forth from the site to the RIM and back, enjoying many conversations about life in general along the way. We would stop for a tea break during our long trips in some small village along the way. Many of these villages had neither electricity nor paved roads. When it would rain, navigating these "streets" would become a real challenge. I'm sure these villages were hundreds of years old. As alcohol is frowned upon and discouraged in Muslim society, tea or coffee was the beverage of choice, with tea being the most commonly available beverage. Coffee seemed to be held out only for special occasions. Each village had their tea house, a sort of local gathering place. It was here that I learned to enjoy Turkish tea, Çay (pronounced "Chai"). There would be a light or dark version available. I eventually got into the dark. No matter, a lump of sugar was always a necessity. Tea would be served in glass "cups," maybe three or four inches high with a Coke bottle shape to them. The spoons used to stir the sugar into the tea were like miniature versions of our teaspoons. To this day, I'm still searching for a tea that comes close to that sensory delight experienced in those tea houses.

Anecdotes from the Jupiter Sites

I wasn't immediately sure of what my job responsibilities with Chrysler were as I traveled to my first remote Jupiter missile site located in the mountains of Turkey. The job description was essentially "whatever needs to be done." All I know is that many things were new on the one hand, and very old on the other. The city-dwellers of Turkey wore Western clothing, and wanted much the same things out of life as did I. As we would exit the city limits of either Izmir or Çigli AFB en route to a remote Jupiter missile site, I would begin to experience a culture that was as old as the land itself. The farther out of town you'd travel the further back in time you would find yourself. There were camel trains seen navigating the landscape. The women still wore the old pantaloons and covered their heads with scarves. The men usually wore clothing reminiscent of 1920's or 1930's America. There would be a grand Bazaar located where you would least expect it, offering a multitude of goods you wouldn't imagine...gold bracelets and other fine jewelry items, ancient muskets and rifles, along with various food items. I could have browsed through these goods for hours on end. You may even stumble across a camel fight if you're lucky!

The trips to and from the mountain sites were lengthy, especially to the site located near Akhisar, Turkey. A round trip would pretty much take up the whole day. Our vehicles consisted of either Plymouth Valiant cars with the good old reliable slant-6 engine or a Dodge Power Wagon...hard on the kidneys but would take you anywhere! With our Turkish drivers taking care of navigation and driving we got to see a lot of scenery along the way...and take pictures when the opportunity would present itself.

The first site I worked at was somewhat near completion upon my arrival. When this site was finally completed and turned over to the government we prepared to move on to the next (and last) Jupiter site to be built on Turkish soil. This last site was a complete and real experience. Motor Caravans were formed with trailer homes and Jupiter Missiles en route to the new site located near Akhisar, Turkey. Engineers and technicians would set up the trailer homes and offices prior to setting up the Jupiter missiles. A mess tent was set up as a place to eat and to enjoy the movies, card games, or other forms of entertainment. Someone had purchased some ceramic bottles containing Turkey's national drink, Raki ("Lion's milk," an aniseed-based distilled beverage) from the local village. During the course of the movie, several had shared in emptying the bottles. Those folks were found passed out on a table during the movie or seen staggering back to their rooms as soon as the lights came back on after the movie! The potency of Turkey's favorite national beverage had caught them by surprise. Incidentally, the kitchen trailer was set up adjacent to and adjoining the tent for the chef's convenience in serving food. It was almost like home!

The I&C Team 2 personnel mix consisted of several Englishmen who had signed on to provide various skills such as electrical, cook (chef), and so forth. I cannot remember the name of our English cook, but I do remember it took me several days to get to the point where I could understand him. After all, he spoke the Queen's English, and I spoke American English. He had a social agenda of his own that was aimed at several Americans on the team. One of his objectives was to attempt to sneak a piece of pork into

one of Moe Grossman's meals. Moe was perhaps the oldest member of our team and was also Jewish. Our chef just knew that it was all a bunch of malarkey about Jews eating pork and suffering some sort of catastrophic aftermath as a result. One day the chef succeeded. Moe ate the concealed pork, much to the delight of the chef. However, moments later Moe became very sick, left the dining area, and vomited up his dinner. Our chef was rather apologetic at this point, not knowing what to say or do with the results of his experiment.

Another of our chef's objectives was to make sure each of the "virgins" on the team would make the trip to the local village and visit the "compound" there, thus changing their worldly status. It seems that each community in Turkey has a designated place where women worked to satisfy the sexual desires of men, somewhat like a legalized brothel in America. The women who worked in these brothels were medically checked on a regular basis to minimize or eliminate STDs. I don't know whether or not women voluntarily worked at these compounds, but I do recall hearing that some of these women were apparently working off punishments for crimes committed either by themselves or a relative...perhaps even their husband's. I recall entering the village compound along with the group of us, as many as could fit in a Dodge Power Wagon, that were led to this den of iniquity by our chef. I remember experiencing the unmistakable odor of paraffin from the numerous candles providing what minuscule light there was inside the building, and seeing three or four ladies lounging around waiting for customers. These ladies were not particularly attractive in my mind, were rather overweight, and just generally not appealing to me. This opinion was shared by the rest of us as well...with the exception of our English chef...who pursued his objective for the evening while the rest of us waited outside. A note of interest here, the village mayor was also visiting the compound during the time of our visit. His horse-drawn carriage was parked in front of the compound, giving away his presence! Apparently, a visit to the compound by the men was a socially accepted practice. I have heard that Turkish soldiers were given a free ticket to visit a compound once a month. I've never verified this, and am only repeating what I heard. What I do know is that American military personnel were NOT issued free tickets to any compounds! I would also say that sex crimes such as those we experience in America were not well known, and either didn't occur or at the very least was not publicized during my stay in Turkey. It may be that compounds such as these provided an outlet for those in need, thus curbing crimes relating to those activities.

Our English chef would receive \$15 a week from each of us on the team with which to purchase food for our daily meals. More often than not he would make purchases from a local village near the site. Obviously, it was during one of these forays that he discovered the presence of the village compound! One day we were happy to see the presence on our evening menu of the old standard and favorite dish of Americans...meatloaf! We eagerly sat down in anticipation of a great feast that evening. As we bit into what we thought was meatloaf...we all began to experience a horrible taste in our mouths. We should have known something wasn't right, as the smell betrayed the contents well in advance. It tasted perhaps something like old rotten hamburger that might have been left for weeks in the back of a refrigerator. We quickly discovered that what we were eating was camel meat. I was asked to accompany our chef during his next visit to the village, and to make

sure that he didn't purchase something we'd all find deplorable and unacceptable to our taste buds. Upon our arrival at the local village's bazaar the following week, I found the source of this meat...it was a large chunk of meat hanging from a tripod in the middle of a dirt field. It was being occupied by a gaggle of flies, which probably went a long way to enhance the taste. There's no refrigeration there. Everything was pretty much "off the hoof" so to speak. I should mention that our chef deplored such culinary delights as catsup and peanut butter. We'd all go out of our way to make sure we used plenty of each just to get even with him and watch him cringe as we applied liberal amounts of catsup to whatever was fitting and was being served. Maybe it was the catsup that made his food edible. Have you ever eaten English meals?

The Jupiter sites, during their early phases of completion, didn't have a lot of security measures in place. We would have a few Turkish soldiers, Oskers, serving compulsory duty as guards at our site with old Sten guns being their weapon of choice. Eventually there would be a double-fenced cordon around the site to complement this effort. The guards would serve for a number of hours, then be relieved by guards from the next shift. On one occasion one of the guards accidentally discharged his weapon in the process of handing it over to his relief guard. The bullet traveled through the outer skin of one of the Jupiter missiles that had by now been erected in its vertical position and was soon to be in operable condition. To cover up his misdeed he took some chewing gum and plugged it into the bullet hole, then cut up a piece of cigarette paper and stuck it to the gum. The cover up was pretty well executed, considering his available resources at the time. It was sometime during the next day when a Rocketdyne technician (responsible for the missile's engine) was propping himself up against the missile with an outstretched arm, when much to his surprise one of his fingers poked a hole in the skin of the missile! After getting over the shock of this event, investigation revealed the bullet had traveled through the skin of the missile and lodged itself between some exotic metal and a seal located near the missile engine's thrust chamber. It wasn't long thereafter when the commander of the Turkish guards arrived on site, lined up his troops, and went face-to-face with each of them asking if they had perpetrated the crime. When one would answer "no," he would move on to the next. The response from one of his troops along the way didn't seem quite right to the commander, so he stomped on the foot of that particular guard causing much pain, and asked him again if he had committed this crime. Apparently that guard was the one who had accidentally fired the round into the missile during his tour of duty. After admitting that he had been the one who fired the shot, he was led away and we never either saw him again, or learned of his fate. The missile had to be lowered from its vertical position, then hauled back to the RIM. A new replacement missile then had to be brought out to replace the one that was sent in for repair. Put a bit of a kink in our schedule to be sure.

One night there was a commotion near the kitchen's trash cans. The site's dogs were barking, obviously not happy with whatever was going on. Those trash cans and their contents were the dog's private property...or at least they seemed to think so. When the guards arrived they discovered an individual hiding amongst the trash cans. Upon checking his ID they discovered the guy was from Bulgaria. At the time Bulgaria was

part of the Russian empire, so first thoughts were that this guy was up to no good. They transported him off site and back to Çigli AFB. We never learned of his outcome, either.

During an RP-1 fuel run from the RIM to our site, as the tanker was trying to navigate up a rather steep mountain incline, RP-1 began to leak from one of the tanker's valves. The fuel of course collected on the asphalt road. This fuel was rather slippery, and as a result it was not only difficult to stand up or walk around the area, traction became impossible for vehicles approaching from the rear of the tanker!

A cherry picker was used to reach the guidance package area of the Jupiter missile when it was in its vertical position. One day a technician was doing some work on the guidance package, and when attempting to lower the cherry picker upon completion of his work found out the truck had run out of gas, and that there was no way to manipulate the cherry picker basket back to the ground. Unfortunately, there was no gasoline to be had on the site, either! It was several hours...maybe three or four...before the gasoline tanker truck arrived at the site which allowed the cherry picker to be refueled and to subsequently lower the technician.

A story was heard regarding one of the other Jupiter sites that was either up and running or was being checked out prior to sell off that includes a brief period of sheer terror amongst the crew. The Jupiter was in its erect launching position, its "flower petal" protection panels had apparently been lowered from the base of the missile, and all was "go" for a test of the system's launch capability. The moment of terror occurred when the missile's spin rockets fired for some unknown reason. This was NOT supposed to happen at all during testing, but only when in orbit after a launch! My understanding is that everything was successfully shut down, and what could have been an international incident of grave consequences was avoided. Kudos to the team!

One of the last items installed on a Jupiter site would be the outside facility lighting. There wasn't much light to be had at night at these remote missile sites, certainly not enough light to provide good photographic conditions from a distance. Special lights with shades covering their tops were installed around the revetment areas and walkways. These lights would cast but a dim light to the ground. Nevertheless, a Russian MIG attempted to photograph one of our completed sites one day, and as I recall it was during the day, probably with the consideration that daylight photography would provide better photos. Unfortunately for the pilot, the MIG crashed during his efforts to photograph the site. We at our site were getting information and updates by radio phone about this event as it unraveled. It turned out that the pilot had captured some really good footage of the site! I often wondered if there were other, successful aerial attempts made by the MIG drivers resulting in pictures of our Jupiter sites in Turkey being placed in Russian hands...in much the same way as we had pictures of the Russian missile sites in Cuba later in 1962 as obtained by our U2 surveillance aircraft.

Contract Completion

When the objectives of the contract had been met, it came time for all to pack their bags and head home. It not only signified the end of a job, but spawned concerns about finding another. Our English subcontractors of course would head home to England, hopefully able to find another job with another contractor. The Turkish national laborers who did such a good job building the roads, revetment areas, and other projects around the sites all melted back into a normal life in their society. For those who were the original members of the team that had signed on in Detroit, they had been anxiously awaiting word as to whether or not Chrysler would win a contract with the Saturn C5 project. I believe that actually happened prior to the team disbanding, which hopefully meant all those involved would have work when they returned home. As for me, I was another year older and another year wiser...but still a teenager at the age of 19. It was an exciting time in my life, and I was honored to have been a part of this cold war effort. I must say I also emerged from this with a better appreciation as to what was going on in our world. I could no longer passively view events that were unfolding in lands beyond our borders or across the oceans and seas.

My future was about to be taken out of my hands and guided by the United States Air Force as I had made arrangements with my dad's "drinking" buddy MSgt. Gus Lee, the Air Force Recruiter of Carlisle, PA, to make sure I received an airline ticket from Turkey back to Pennsylvania where I could enlist in the USAF. When I left Carlisle, PA in the summer of 1961 with my family on our move to Turkey, I had neglected to let our local Carlisle draft board know of my forwarding address (not that I had one at the time anyway). I didn't even let them know I was leaving town! I didn't know I had to. One of the calls I received via our microwave radio phone about two thirds of the way through contract completion was a call from the Carlisle draft board wanting to know where I was, and why I hadn't been in touch with them! The thought of being conscripted into the Army...and possibly working for my dad...was more than I could bear!

We had an end-of-contract party sometime around March of 1962 where farewells were exchanged and war stories and lies were swapped. It was at once a happy time and a sad time. Happy in that we had successfully completed the contract, we were all alive to tell about it, and none of us ended up in a Turkish jail. Sad in that one was parting company with so many talented people who had become such good friends over a stressful period of time. Even more difficult was the going away party held by my parents in our apartment in Guzelyali, a suburb of Izmir. A small number of friends, including Kemal and his wife, friends, relatives...and yes, even Birsen was there. It was a somewhat subdued gathering, with many forced smiles and conversations that were stretched to the limit trying to avoid the fact I was leaving home, Turkey, and a life I fell into quite by chance. You'd think that after 18 years of Army Brat experience losing friends every year, or at best every 4 years due to military assignments, that these events would become passé. Not so.

When I arrived at Indiantown Gap in April of 1962 to be inducted into the USAF one of the first items on their agenda was to see where I could fit in their scheme of things. My intention was to attempt getting training and an assignment back to Turkey where I could

work on or with the Jupiter missiles I had been privileged to have been a part of setting up in the first place. Of course, this would also place me back with family and the many friends I made while living there during the past year. Who knows, I could even look Birsen up and maybe invite her and one of her parents out on a date! When the job classification interviewer learned that I had some knowledge (as miniscule as it was) regarding missiles, I was immediately tagged for the new Minuteman Missile program, and sent off after basic training to Chanute AFB, IL for a year's training on how to maintain a Minuteman missile.

It was during my assignment at Chanute that I heard the bad news. It was October of 1962. A crisis had erupted between the United States and Russia over missiles Russia had moved into Cuba. Proof of their existence was made available through high level aerial photography provided by our U2 aircraft. Apparently part of Russia's rationale in placing missiles in Cuba was the fact that the United States had already placed IRBMs in Italy and Turkey, not to mention the Thor missiles in England in a manner that, according to the Russians at least, threatened Russia's security. The events that unfolded were much dramatized, with an eventual solution reached between the two sides that included the removal of not only the missiles installed on Cuba by the Russians, but also of our Jupiter missiles located in Italy and...much to my chagrin...Turkey. I don't know how much of the solution's details were made available to the American public. I don't know that the average American even knew we had placed missiles in Italy and Turkey, thus targeting Russia during the cold war era. Nevertheless, our Jupiter missiles came down, barely a year on the job. I heard stories that they were cut up into small pieces and loaded aboard aircraft bound for the United States. It was the end of another chapter of the cold war era.

I graduated from the Minuteman Ballistic Missile Checkout Equipment Specialist school the following year in May of 1963 and was sent to Minot, ND for my first assignment. My instructors had a laugh at that...with promises of a woman behind every tree up there. We had no missiles at the time of my arrival, the holes in the ground where the missiles would be "buried" were still being built, and we had no equipment in our lab save for a desk and a trash can. Over the ensuing months we at Minot would travel to Malmstrom AFB, Montana to get our training as they were set up and ready to go with both their missiles and shop environments. Slowly with time the missiles arrived and were set up, travel teams to maintain the sites were formed, and our shop was equipped with modern (at the time, anyway) computer-based diagnostic and repair equipment. I was now a SAC-trained Minuteman Missileer. Minot, ND now seemed to be a long distance from Izmir, Turkey.