

## **USAFA Superintendent talks to cadets about racial slurs found on campus**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mUORfhvYN8s>

Introduction by the uploader: "Lt Gen Jay Silveria, Superintendent of the US Air Force Academy addresses students on the use of racial slurs within dorms for the Preparatory School. He urges anyone who cannot treat others with dignity and respect to 'get out.'"

### The Speech:

*"Ladies and Gentlemen!*

*You may have heard that some people down in the Prep School wrote some racial slurs on some message boards.*

*If you haven't heard that, I wanted you to hear from me.*

*If you are outraged by those words, then you are in the right place.*

*That kind of behaviour has no place at the Prep School, has no place at USAFA and it has no place in the United States Airforce.*

*You should be outraged not only as an airman, but as a human being.*

*And I'll tell you, that the appropriate response for horrible language and horrible ideas, the appropriate response is a better idea.*

*So that's why I'm here. That's why all these people are here on the Staff Tower. (So, let me have – everybody who's up here please pull forward to the rail –.)*

*Also, there are so many people here, they are lining outsides along the windows.*

*These are members of the faculty, coaching staff, AOCs, AMTs, from the airfield, from my staff, from my headquarters.*

*All aspects of the 10th Airbase Wing, all aspects who make up USAFA and the United States Airforce Academy.*

*Leadership is here: you heard from Brigadier General Goodwin; Regular General Armacost is here; Colonel Block from the Athletic Department is here. Mister Knowlton is in Washington DC right now.*

*That's why they're here. That's why we're all here: because we have a better idea.*

*Some of you may think that that happened down in the Prep School and doesn't apply to us.*

*I would be naïve and we all would all be naïve to think that everything is perfect here.*

*We would be naïve to think that we shouldn't discuss this topic.*

*We also would be tone-deaf not to think about the backdrop of what's going on in our country.*

*Things like Charlottesville in Ferguson, the protests in the NFL.*

*That's why we have a better idea!*

*One of those ideas: the dean brought people together to discuss Charlottesville. Because what we should have is a civil discourse and talk about these issues.*

*That's a better idea!*

*We received outstanding feedback from that session in Charlottesville.*

*But I also have a better idea! And it's about our diversity.*

*And it's the power of diversity. The power of the four thousand of you! And all the people that are on the Staff Tower and lining the glass!*

*The power of us as a diverse group. The power, that we come from all walks of life, that we come from all parts of this country, that we come from all races, we come from all backgrounds, gender, all makeup, all upbringing!*

*The power of that diversity comes together and makes us that much more powerful. That's a much better idea than small thinking and horrible ideas.*

*We have an opportunity here, fiftyfive hundred (=5.500) people in this room to think about what we are as an institution.*

*This is our institution and no one can take away our values, no one can write on a board and question our values. No one can take that away from us.*

*So, just in case you're unclear on where I stand on this topic. I'm gonna leave you with my most important thought today:*

*If you can't treat someone with dignity and respect, then you need to get out. If you can't teach someone from another gender, whether that's a man or a woman, with dignity and respect, then you need to get out. If you demean someone in any way, then you need to get out. And if you can't treat someone from another race or different colourskin with dignity and respect, then you need to get out.*

*Reach for your phones. I'm serious: reach for your phones. Okay, you have not to reach for your phones. So I'm going to give you an opportunity to reach for your phones.*

*Grab your phones, I want you to videotape this, so that you have it, so you can use it.*

*So we all have the moral courage together, all of us on the Staff Tower, lining the glass, all of us in this room.*

*This is our institution.*

*And if you need it and you need my words, then you keep these words. And you use them and you remember them and you share them and you talk about them: If you can't treat someone with dignity and respect, then get out!"*

[No applause at all. Silence only.]

Anhang zum Artikel "Der Chef ist am Wort" vom 31.03.2023 in der Kolumne auf [www.redemanufaktur.com](http://www.redemanufaktur.com)