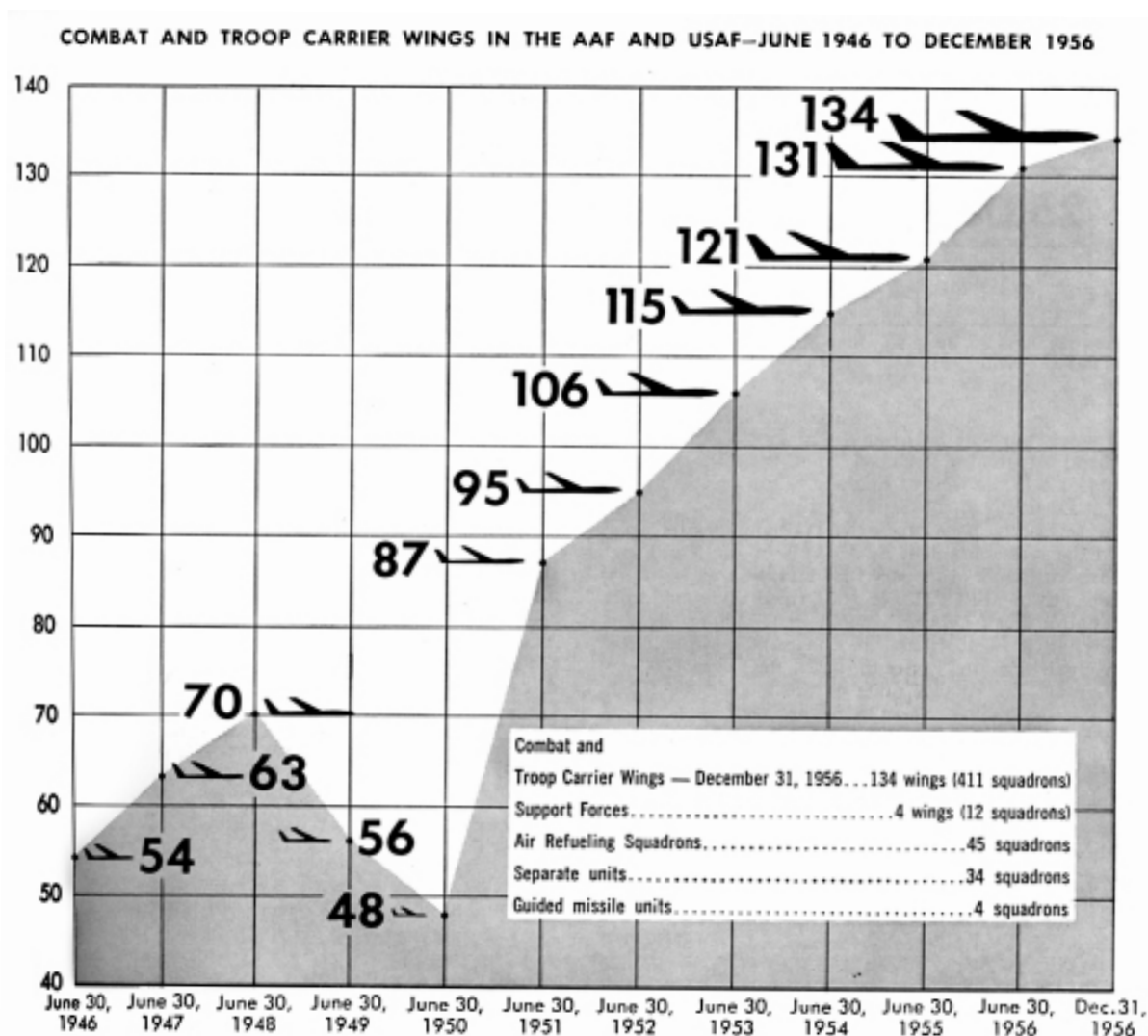


## An Air Force Turning Point

Between September 1945 (Japan's surrender) and March 1947 (the declaration of the Truman Doctrine), the US nearly dismantled the US Army Air Forces. An organization that on V-J Day boasted hundreds of combat and transport units shrank to only 54 wings. With the hardening of the Cold War in 1947, USAF tentatively built back up to 70 wings, but it was allowed

to shrink again to 48 wings by mid-1950. The June 25, 1950 outbreak of the Korean War, however, permanently changed the calculus, as shown by this 52-year-old chart, first published in the August 1957 issue of this magazine. Within a year, USAF's wing total had nearly doubled, and it kept growing. This time, there would be no stand-down for the Air Force.



Source: *A History of the United States Air Force, 1907-1957*, Alfred Goldberg, ed., © Air Force Association, published by Van Nostrand & Co., Princeton, N.J., 1957