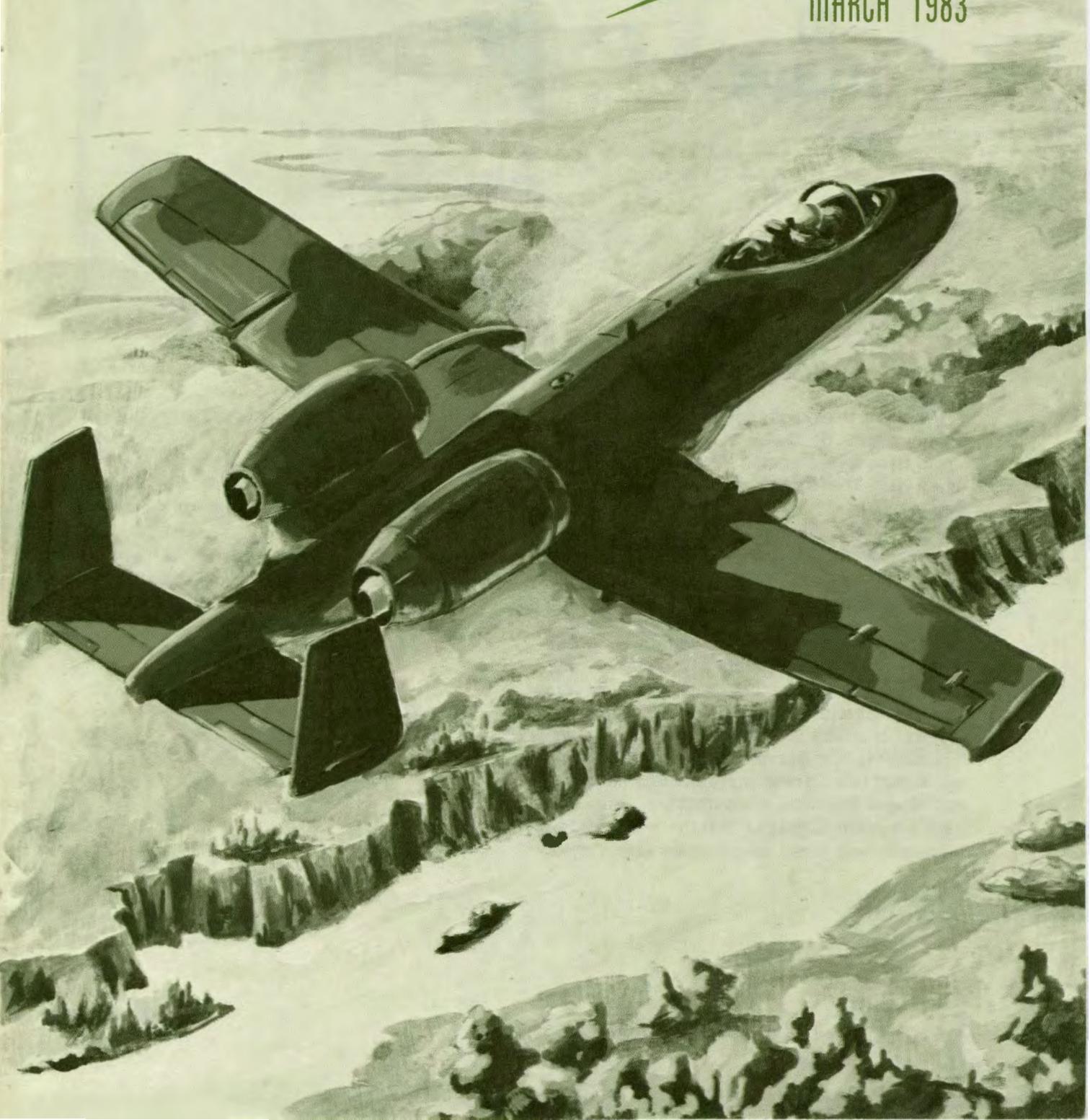


RV

TAC ATTACK

MARCH 1983



AIRCREW of DISTINCTION

On 25 October 1982, CAPT THOMAS L. DARNER was flying an F-106B on a cross-country mission with a passenger in the rear cockpit. Shortly after departure from runway 33 at Griffiss Air Force Base, New York, while level at 15,000 feet, both Captain Darner and his passenger felt a persistent airframe vibration. All other cockpit indications were normal. Captain Darner decided to return to the base because of the persistent vibrations. As he turned back to the base from about 18 miles out, he saw the Master Caution light and the Oil Pressure Low light come on. Captain Darner declared an emergency. Thirty seconds later, the engine flamed out because of the oil system failure and subsequent failure of the engine accessory unit.

Captain Darner concluded that a restart was not possible with this type of failure, so he concentrated on planning a flameout approach straight in to runway 15, opposite traffic. He briefed his passenger on the approach and the possibility of ejection. Controlling the airplane with hydraulic pressure supplied by the ram air turbine, Captain Darner extended the landing gear with the emergency system and flew the approach. A towed B-52 was on the runway he was approaching. As Captain Darner flew across the threshold, 500 feet in the air at 250 knots, the B-52 cleared the runway. He touched down with 7,000 feet of runway remaining, then deployed the drag chute, dropped the tailhook, and jettisoned the external tanks. The airplane engaged the BAK-12 cable, and both Captain Darner and his passenger climbed out with no injuries.



Capt Thomas L. Darner
49 FIS
Griffiss AFB, NY

Captain Darner's prudent decision to return to base with an unknown problem made the flameout landing possible. Then he skillfully handled the emergency, which required analyzing the engine problem, deploying the ram air turbine, maintaining aircraft control, briefing the passenger, making necessary radio calls, and planning and executing an approach with no power, while he had to be concerned about the B-52 on the runway. His actions preserved an important air defense resource and prevented possible loss of life. He has earned the Tactical Air Command Aircrew of Distinction Award.

