

## Not All There

"I have great admiration for US Air Force friends whose P-47s, P-51s, F-80s, F-86s, and A-7s furnished much-appreciated close [air] support in three wars. I cheered the B-17s and B-24s that overflew my foxholes in 1944 and 1945. But I learned as a lieutenant that they were part-time soldiers, great when they were available, but not to be relied on routinely. They were never there at night, or in bad weather, or when 'priorities' sent them elsewhere. ... To my knowledge, it has not changed today, despite the additions of night vision, infrared sensors, and 'smart' bombs. The Army has paid a high price for the unfulfilled promises of airpower since World War II—between wars in budget battles and during wars in facing enemy capabilities with which we were unprepared to cope. ... Even with the wondrous capabilities of today's technology, airpower is still a part-time participant."

**Retired US Army Gen. Frederick J. Kroesen, former commander in chief of US Army Europe, writing in the January 1999 issue of Army.**

## Since September

"In September, I reported on the readiness condition of the United States Air Force and said it was very fragile. It is. Mission capability rates of our aircraft have declined over the past nine years by almost 10 percent; 1 percent of that has occurred since September. ...

"The top two readiness categories of the United States Air Force's units [have] declined 15 percent since 1986, and 3 percent of that has occurred since September. And our cannibalization rate has gone exceedingly high—78 percent higher than it was in 1995—and much of that has occurred very recently. ...

"This year will be the toughest year we've ever had in recruitment. It's becoming much, much more difficult. For the first time in the United States Air Force since 1981, we missed our retention goals in all three categories in this year, and we are going to struggle with it next year. ... Our pilot

retention continues on a [decline]. We are short 850 pilots today, and we predict that, by the year 2002, we will be 2,000 pilots short."

**Gen. Michael E. Ryan, USAF Chief of Staff, in Jan. 5, 1999, testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee.**

## Limited Warfare

"Rather than put our pilots into harm's way, do you think it's time we took out the [Iraqi] airfields and the aircraft that are coming out and challenging our air assets, in direct violation of the [1991] cease-fire agreement? ... I don't think the event today was insignificant. I wouldn't think it was insignificant if I [were] in the cockpit of one of those aircraft, General, and I think it's unconscionable if you subject our pilots and crews to this kind of threat without taking it out. We've seen this once before, and I believe that it is mandatory if we are going to send these young people into harm's way we should remove the threat that exists to them as quickly as possible."

**Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), a Vietnam War veteran and POW, to Gen. Henry H. Shelton, JCS Chairman, in a Jan. 5, 1999, exchange about DoD's decision to enforce an Iraqi no-fly zone with "minimum force," even after Iraqi fighters tried to target USAF fighters.**

## Fighting Words

"We want to degrade Saddam Hussein's ability to make and to use weapons of mass destruction. We want to diminish his ability to wage war against his neighbors. And we want to demonstrate the consequences of flouting international obligations."

**Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen, in a Dec. 16, 1998, press statement at the outset of Operation Desert Fox.**

## Strategic Sandwich

"Operation Desert Fox repeats on a larger scale recent cruise missile attacks on Afghanistan and Sudan. These attacks can do nothing to

impose change on a hostile regime. Whatever the damage and degradation wreaked upon the Iraqi military capacity, the retribution is limited, the respite temporary. What looks like strength at the outset of the bombing campaigns dwindles at the conclusion to evident weakness. Mr. Clinton's failure either to act against Saddam earlier or to repudiate appeasement unreservedly condemned him to bomb Iraq at a time unpropitious to him, sandwiched grotesquely between his impeachment proceedings in Congress and Ramadan, of all factors to have to consider."

**David Pryce-Jones, author of The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of the Arabs, writing in the Dec. 21, 1998, Wall Street Journal.**

## Case Closed

"Never did I imagine that the Navy's leadership would allow the devastation that has now resulted in a 300-ship Navy. ... [Given current shipbuilding trends and plans] we will be headed for a 200-ship Navy. ... It was allowed to happen by leaders who were unable or unwilling to make the case for a larger Navy. ... They didn't fight at 600 ships. They didn't fight at 500. They didn't fight at 400. They're telling the world that 300 is fine and doable, while they're on the way to 200."

**James H. Webb Jr., Marine Vietnam veteran and former Secretary of the Navy, in a speech at the Naval War College, Newport, R.I., as quoted in the Nov. 25, 1998, Washington Times.**

## Prepare, But Don't Deploy

"What about weapons in space? ... It has always been the space policy of this Administration to prepare for future space threats but not to deploy [space weapons] at this point. So, there is no part of the armed forces [that] is really preparing to actually weaponize space. That is not part of the Administration's plan nor is it indeed part of anybody's budget."

**F. Whitten Peters, acting Secretary of the Air Force, in Dec. 17, 1998, remarks to the Defense Writers Group in Washington, D.C.**