

## **The Total Force: Preparing for the Future**

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It is a distinct pleasure to come and talk to you all.

As we rolled out the Quadrennial Defense Review, it was really all about trying to examine what future do we want to prepare for ourselves, as best we could forecast it. And one of the things that we were of course colored by is the present. And you have a profound interest in making sure that you can somehow minimize the number of casualties, the number of deaths that occur for our wonderful Army and our wonderful Marines and then our aviators, of course, and the naval personnel that accompany all of us. It is with that coloration that you always want to say, "Are we really looking in too close?" And the answer is "No, you have to do it all." And one of the things that occurred during the concept of the Quadrennial Defense Review is the realization that nobody relieved us of strategic dominance, nobody relieved us of air dominance or sea dominance when it comes to securing the sea lanes or securing the air lanes. We have actually just opened up a different spectrum of warfare, which we now have to master. And in that regard, it is imperative on us to make sure that we have that spectrum of warfare covered. Because nowhere in the Constitution did we scratch out 'provide for the common defense' and include some kind of 'to make sure that we have no casualties' or 'make sure we have no weapons of mass destruction, wherever they are in the world.'

This really means that you've got to have an emphasis on sea power. Sea power was earned over the course of the centuries, a lot of blood spilled to make sure that we could secure the sea lanes and provide for commerce. It means you've got to have air power, in the way it was described, 'global reach, global power, and global vigilance' in order to make way for a really profoundly peaceful world, in the sense of us being able to enjoy the fruits of all of that world commerce.

And then, we want local land dominance. And we need to have land dominance in an area where we send our soldiers in. And really, the very nice complement to the withdrawal of some of the Army from providing their own indirect fire, the Air Force and the Navy need to step up. And we need to be there when our colleagues need us. So we now have shifted, if you will, from scheduled air operations to on-call air operations. We have shifted from being forward deployed to having reach-back activities. We've shifted a lot from being a little bit isolated to being much more proactive. We actually go seek a battle, where we used to maybe guard against a battle. This is a very different approach to any of the warfare that we have previously seen.

As we prepared the Quadrennial Defense Review and as it then rolls into the budget this year, unfortunately to my Board of Director members here, there are 535 Board of Directors to the Department of Defense as there are to other departments in the executive branch, we have provided them a real tough problem. We have provided them a problem where, as I often say when you've got to get six pounds into a five pound sack, and you have done it year after year, we have to do it just periodically. It is a tough thing. I'm not providing a defense for my financial management colleagues who are here in the audience with me, but at least they'll know that actually I listened.

But this is about balancing resources in the future. And it's making sure that in our balancing of resources we don't neglect any of our missions that are assigned. It is about looking carefully at the revelation that occurred regarding the all-volunteer force. It is about looking at the revelation that occurred when some in Congress, taking a look at our colleagues who are suffering and do

have some wounds, and wanting to make sure that the benefits were accurate. And as they looked at it, it was an incremental increase in the benefits. As it was imposed in our budgeting situation, it was an exponential growth in the indirect side of our personnel accounts. And so we need to figure out how to cope with that. Because as we all say, we get into our budgeting meetings and we say, "Everything is on the table." Oh right, everything is on the table. I mean, it happens in every budgeting meeting that ever was.

But personnel is now coming in and saying, "But we're a must-pay bill." And they take about a little bit more than 50 percent of the money. And they scrape it off and they begin to steer and they say, "Have a nice day." And we're at war. And so we cannot neglect training and we cannot neglect operations and we cannot neglect the accomplishment of mission.

So the operations and maintenance negotiator has a lot of leverage. And so the pressure then comes into the investment accounts. The pressure is on the investment accounts, which is really what our American industry and our American citizens see -- because the United States government and especially the Department of Defense is the largest employer of science and technology.

So either through us or through our prime contractors or universities or foundations, we hire more than half of all the science and engineering talent in America. When pressure comes in that area, it is a profound pressure that all of a sudden begins to get directly back, if you will, to the members of Congress. Because that pressure means no grants, it means not enough contracts; it means some of the things we draw back. It's the old story that a recession is when your neighbor gets laid off, and a depression is when you get laid off.

Well a cutback in defense is interesting when your neighbor is impacted; it is profound when you're impacted. In the small businesses around America and in these colleges and universities, we worry because we need them desperately for the future. And we need to make sure that we cannot or try not to roll off of building a future that we can live with and enjoy.

If you look at that, we're now into the five- to eight-year time frame where the real pressures are concentrated and focused these days. And we're not looking for an increase in the top line; we're looking to manage more efficiently. So within the Air Force we've set up Air Force Smart Operations 21 to assist us with trying to exact efficiencies from an otherwise efficient operation. I mean, this is almost a corollary to, 'give a busy man a job because they'll find a way to squeeze the time in and do it.'

And trying to exact efficiencies from a very efficient operation is very difficult. But trying to exact efficiencies from a very responsive and directed organization is relatively easy and that's the real benefit and the really profound appreciation that I have for being the Secretary of our Air Force.

This is a responsive -- this is a very directed organization. They want to find ways to make this work throughout the process. We're using Total Force integration, which is really finding the talents that are in the active force, the Reserve Force and the Guard. To really get the benefits that all of that talent brings to your U. S. Air Force. We know that not one member of our Air Force, whether they're civilian, active, Guard, or Reserve, was forced to be here. They came aboard to make the Air Force a better place to work, a better place to live, and a better place to have a career. So it is singularly painful when we talk about denying them access to the rest of our talent pool, causing them to be redundant, looking for efficiencies that may actually result in someone losing the opportunity to continue as a member of the U. S. Air Force. So we look for lots of different things to try to assist us with getting six pounds into a five-pound sack.

When I was over in Iraq and we were going and having troop calls, and of course *The Air Force*

*Times* preceded my arrival with the lay down of all of the cuts we intended to make, which made the message, as you say, “diplomatic.” But I was curious at the response. I mean, the response was, “We can do things more efficiently and effectively. We must do things efficiently and effectively.”

There are reports that last night we did turn an airplane faster. Reports that Ramstein (Air Base, Germany), when I went through there, said to me, you know, we’ve defined our future as being a ‘through-port.’ We’re not even an aerial port, we don’t want airplanes on our run way -- we want airplanes in the air. So this is also about asset utilization. One of the secondary effects of this long war, and we’ve been at war for five years since 2001. So one of the secondary effects is we’ve got asset wear and tear. We’re using our C-17s that have created a medical miracle in aero-med, where we have jumped 15 points in saving lives. Because in Vietnam, the survival rate of a wounded soldier was about 75 percent. In Iraq, the survival rate is 91 percent. In fact if you reach Balad (AB, Iraq), your survival rate goes to 93.5 percent.

It is the miracle of Iraq, and it is the workhorse C-17 that is allowing it to happen, although we did have an ICU and a C-141. But the C-17 has really proven to be a work-horse. In asset utilization, we’re wearing them out at the rate of about 60 percent more than planned. We have been convincing, in the sense that the Department is willing to support us, and we have submitted an ‘unfunded priority list’ to try to make up for that asset wear and tear a little bit, in the terminology of accelerated appreciation. We’ll see how this turns out.

But it is not just C-17s, as you might imagine. As General Moseley likes to remind me, in 1993 who would have thought that in 2006 we would be engaged in Southwest Asia in the air war? Who would have thought? Well here it is – 2006. How far can we see? Because it looks to us that if all of our hopes and dreams come true, there will be still be sovereign air space to control in Iraq and Afghanistan for a long period of time. It is three hours from Southwest Asia to Bagram (AB, Afghanistan). I can’t have any American unit – whether they’re an adviser, or whether they’re the Marines guarding the barracks, guarding the embassy, or whether they’re a Special Forces unit out with the Iraqi Army – we cannot have them three hours from close air support. That tells me something. That tells me that we will likely be in Bagram. It’s an hour and a half to Kirkuk (AB, Iraq) – it tells me that if I have to support their requirements, I cannot be an hour-and-a-half on close air support. I mean right now, if it’s 10 minutes, the Army thinks their radios don’t work. As they one time told me, the one time their radios don’t work, is when you’re calling for direct fire. And it isn’t going to be, “Have donuts, order some lunch, we’ll be there after.” It’s got to be prompt. We sort of have made a pact with the Army that we will be there for you. And we need to survive that.

So that’s really the story in how we tried to package up the Quadrennial Defense Review. Your Air Force is on-guard, whether it’s Korea, whether it’s Taiwan, whether it’s Guam, whether its Okinawa, whether it’s wherever it is, we are on guard. Whether it’s in Europe, flying up and over Europe, just doing a safety flight, Afghanistan, Iraq, your Air Force is on guard.

We have people in that are right now designing National Missile Defense, and they are on guard. In fact, the bulk of our Air Force it turns out, every day, every day, we have about 76 percent of our Air Force that are actually dedicated to missions sponsored by combatant commanders. Reachback is really making it easier for us. The design of the air expeditionary force rotation is a phenomenal force management that has allowed us to be in this long war for a long period of time, and yet we mostly do all of our work with volunteers.

Whether it’s the Guard, the Reserve, or the active-duty (force), what we do is we still run all of our bases, we have about half of them deployed in country, and then we salt-and-pepper fill in with another half to run a base in Balad, or to run a base in Bagram or to run base in Camp Ali, or wherever we’re doing it. It is another genius that I get to stand on the shoulders of giants and

say that we are doing force management in the best way that I have seen. It is magnificent.

And so when you get to Balad, if you ever do, you get introduced to a unit, you don't know whether they are active, Reserve or National Guard. And that's why when I came back I said, you know "Total Force integration is not a future state, it's a now state." We need to celebrate the fact that we are doing it today. And so we are doing it today. Thank you very much for the opportunity to talk to you this morning.