

By Robert S. Dudley

## Hostage I

"I am going to fight to the death to protect the F-35 because I truly believe that the only way we will make it through the next decade is with a sufficient fleet of F-35s. If you gave me all the money I needed to refurbish the F-15 and the F-16 fleets, they would still become tactically obsolete by the middle of the next decade. Our adversaries are building fleets that will overmatch our legacy fleet.... I am fighting to the end, to the death, to keep the F-35 program on track. For me, that means not a single airplane cut from the program."—*Gen. G. Michael Hostage III, head of Air Combat Command, Defense News, Feb. 3.*

## Hostage II

"It appears that I will be told I have to continue to purchase Global Hawks, and given the budget picture that we have, I cannot afford both the U-2 and the Global Hawk. I will likely have to give up the U-2. ... We are going to have to spend buckets of money to get the Global Hawk up to some semblance of capability that the U-2 currently has. ... As I lose the U-2 fleet, I now have a high-altitude ISR fleet that is not very useful in a contested environment."—*Gen. G. Michael Hostage III, Defense News, Feb. 3.*

## Hostage III

"The A-10 [is] a weapon system I would dearly love to continue in the inventory because there are tactical problems out there that would be perfectly suited for the A-10. I have other ways to solve that tactical problem. ... That solution is usable in another level of conflict in which the A-10 is totally useless. ... I have to do something, and unfortunately, the something that is left is worse than cutting the A-10 fleet."—*Gen. G. Michael Hostage III, Defense News, Feb. 3.*

## Fear and Loathing

"I believe, now, that we do have systemic problems within the [ICBM] force. I heard repeatedly ... that the need for perfection has created a climate of undue stress and fear—fear about the future; fear about promotions; fear about what will happen to them in their careers. ... A very terrible irony

in this whole situation is that these missileers didn't cheat to pass, they cheated because they felt driven to get 100 percent. Getting 90 percent or 95 percent was considered a failure in their eyes. ... This is not a healthy environment."—*Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James, commenting on the cheating scandal in the missileer force, DOD press briefing, Jan. 30.*

## The Commission Speaks

"The Air Force can, and should, entrust as many missions as possible to its reserve component forces. Transitioning missions from the active component to the reserve components will allow the Air Force to perform these missions with less expensive part-time Reservists while reducing the active component end strength, thus saving money in the military personnel accounts that can be put to use in readiness, modernization, and recapitalization accounts."—*Report of eight-member National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force, delivered Jan. 30.*

## Let's Get Small—Again

"I feel quite certain we will become a smaller Air Force, but it will remain highly capable and on the cutting edge of technology, so we can always step up to the plate and meet the country's needs."—*Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James, address to Air Force Association audience, Jan. 29.*

## China, Space, and Danger

"The current and evolving counter-space threat posed by China to US military operations in the Asia-Pacific Theater and outside is extremely serious. And the threat ranks on par with the dangers posed by Chinese offensive cyber operations to the United States more generally. ... These dangers are acute because the US space systems ... are extraordinarily vulnerable and extraordinarily valuable at the same time."—*Ashley J. Tellis, former National Security Council specialist, remarks to joint session of two House Armed Services subcommittees, Jan. 28.*

## Aw, Shoot

"On occasion, I did use profanity for emphasis, even sometimes out of frus-

tration, as did other members of my staff. But if I did use profanity, it was usually just one word, in private, in my office, with the door closed, and it was not derogatory, or directed at anyone. As an example, I have said things like, 'What the hell is going on?'"—*Now-retired USAF Maj. Gen. Stephen D. Schmidt, quoted in an Air Force Inspector General report alleging he was profane toward subordinates, Air Force Times, Jan. 29.*

## All Hat, No Cattle

"Lately it seems that we have been reading many stories of misconduct among US military officers. ... The Robert Gates approach of finding someone to fire, whether or not the firee was even aware of whatever is the latest problem to become public, does not help. It makes the person doing the firing look decisive but offers no reason to believe that things will be better under new management. New management in the Air Force does not seem to have made much positive difference in behavior in the part of the service that handles nuclear weapons."—*Paul R. Pillar, former CIA official, now at Georgetown University, writing in The National Interest, Feb. 2.*

## Here and Now

"The Department of Defense is being challenged in ways that I have not seen for decades, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. Technological superiority is not assured. ... This is not a future problem. It is a here-now problem."—*Frank Kendall, undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology, and logistics, House Armed Services Committee, Jan. 28.*

## Probably Just Rumors

"It doesn't seem prudent [to] me for you to say the first thing you've got to do is cut soldiers' pay and benefits when you don't know if you can run the place a little bit better. ... We hear of just the unbelievable waste and fraud that goes on in the Pentagon."—*Sen. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.), comment to acting Deputy Secretary of Defense Christine H. Fox and Adm. James A. "Sandy" Winnefield Jr., vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, at Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, Jan. 28.*