

By Robert S. Dudley

Making of a Fighter Pilot

"The reason I decided to be a fighter pilot is because they said that I couldn't. It motivated me to just say, 'You know, this is wrong, and I'm going to be a part of proving that it's wrong.'"—*Rep. Martha McSally (R-Ariz.), retired USAF colonel and A-10 pilot, who said she originally wanted to become an Air Force doctor, Washington Post, Aug. 2.*

Smells Like Munich

"The Israeli defense establishment believes that agreements have value only if they are based on reality. They have no value if the facts on the ground are opposite to the ones the agreement is based on. The Munich Agreements didn't prevent World War II and the Holocaust because their fundamental assumption—that Nazi Germany can be partner to any agreement—was false, and because world leaders ... ignored clear statements made by Hitler and other Nazi leaders. [Iran] clearly and publicly declares that its goal is to destroy the state of Israel, and a US Defense Department report released this year asserted that it is the foremost supporter of global terrorism. ... Agreements like the one signed between the world powers and Iran only undermine the unwavering battle that has to be waged against terror states like Iran."—*Statement by Israel Defense Ministry, after President Obama claimed Israel now sees merit in his nuclear deal with Iran, Aug. 5.*

Article 5 Nonsense

"I hope that Donald Trump retracts it [a recent statement casting doubt on US obligations to defend NATO allies]. If Russian tanks moved into a Baltic republic, and then you decided to review whether they were meeting their expectations, the Russian tanks would be at the Baltic Sea before you could get the file."—*John Bolton, former Ambassador to the UN under President George W. Bush, interview in The Hill, July 21.*

Double Trouble

"The F-35 is the best air-to-air airplane in the world, except for the F-22. The F-22 is the best air-to-ground

aircraft in the world, except for the F-35."—*USAF Gen. Hebert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, head of Air Combat Command, remarks to reporters, July 11.*

Quiet Crisis

"[USAF faces a] growing shortage of fighter pilots. That shortfall is expected to grow from 500 to more than 700 pilots by the end of this fiscal year, a 21 percent gap between what we have and what we need to meet the requirements of our commanders around the world. ... The Navy and Marine Corps are facing parallel challenges as the commercial airline industry embarks on a prolonged hiring wave. ... Aside from an airline hiring surge, there are other reasons for the Air Force's pilot shortfall, from dramatically reduced flying hours for the high-end fight as a result of Pentagon budget cuts to a perceived falloff in quality of life when they return from deployments overseas. Make no mistake, this is a quiet crisis that will almost certainly get worse before it gets better."—*Op-ed by Deborah Lee James, SECAF, and Gen. David L. Goldfein, Chief of Staff, DefenseOne.com, July 14.*

Scattering Cockroaches

"We all know there will be a terrorist diaspora out of the caliphate, as military force crushes the caliphate. Those thousands of fighters are going to go someplace. Our job is to spot them and stop them before they come to the United States to harm innocent people. ... As the caliphate is crushed, the so-called Islamic State will become more desperate to demonstrate its continued vitality, and that will likely [take] the form of more asymmetric attacks, more efforts at terrorism."—*FBI Director James Comey, hearing of the House Homeland Security Committee, July 14.*

Trans-ition

"We have transgender members in the military services today. We believe that we have the same [medical-care] obligation to them that we have to our other service members. Allowing these transgender individuals to serve openly does not bring new medical

problems into the military. It brings these medical problems into the open and enables us to treat them in a way that promotes the readiness of the force."—*Pentagon spokesman Eric Pahon, on new DOD policies for medical services for transgender troops, Washington Times, July 14.*

Out of Mind

"Ten or 20 years from now, instead of having big expensive aircraft or drones, you can have hundreds or thousands of inexpensive [mind-controlled] ones you deploy in an area. Even if you lose half of them, you can still achieve your goals. ... We are adding more degrees of freedom and more capabilities."—*Panagiotis Artemiadis, Arizona State University's Human-Oriented Robotics and Control Lab, on development of RPAs flown by pilots using mind-control technology, Washington Post, July 12.*

Going Gray

"These [nuclear missileer] officers are trusted with the most destructive weapons in our inventory, and the responsibility they face is enormous. For many years, we counted on lieutenants to do this mission, and that created some problems. This is going to be the final step to creating a more senior crew force out in the field. ... They're going to become more senior. You're going to have more captains than before, more majors, and more lieutenant colonels than you currently have."—*Zannis Pappas, manager of Air Force 13N nuclear and missile operations career field, on USAF's plan to put more-experienced officers in nuclear crews, Air Force Times, July 20.*

The Road Not Taken

"At least two [rebel Turkish air force] F-16s harassed Erdogan's plane while it was in the air and en route to Istanbul. They locked their radars on his plane and on two other F-16s protecting him. Why they didn't fire is a mystery."—*Unidentified "former military officer," on failed military attempt to overthrow Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Reuters dispatch, July 18.*