

The ICBM Cometh

"They've flown it very high so that they can test the range of the missile. If they were to shoot it on a normal trajectory, it's probably going to go out 6,000 or so kilometers. By definition, anything over 5,500 kilometers is an ICBM."—**Bruce W. Bennett, Rand Corp., on North Korea's most recent ballistic missile test, CNN, July 3.**

Counting the Cost

"The cost of not having the right level of readiness is that it will take longer to win. We will win, but it will take longer, and [fewer] airmen will come home. ... That ought to be unacceptable—and it's certainly unacceptable to me as a Chief—to ever send an airman in harm's way without being fully ready. But the reality is, if the nation calls on its Air Force to go, we'll go, just like those who've gone before us."—**Gen. David L. Goldfein, USAF Chief of Staff, San Antonio Express-News, July 1.**

41 Percent Air Force

"The Air Force is too small for the missions demanded of it, and adversaries are modernizing and innovating faster than we are, putting America's technological advantage in air and space at risk. We have the same level of taskings today as we did during Desert Storm [in 1991], but we have 55 [fighter] squadrons, rather than 134."—**Secretary of the Air Force Heather A. Wilson, remarks given in advance of Senate hearing, June 6.**

Horizontal Escalation

"We are a primary target for the Iranian regime. ... We won't wait for the battle to be in Saudi Arabia. Instead, we'll work so that the battle is for them in Iran."—**Prince Mohammed bin Salman al-Saud, newly anointed Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, quoted in theguardian.com, June 25.**

McPeak Looks at Russia

"We've made a big investment in airpower. It means that we can go anywhere in the world that we want to and create airspace control. And I don't want the Russians or anybody else thinking that they can eliminate that situation or make it deteriorate in any significant way. It's them that introduced themselves into

[Syria] late in the game. Their presence has not been benign; quite the reverse. It's they that should back away, not us. And, by the way, I believe that, if they try to escalate, they will get their butt kicked, so that would be fine also."—**Retired Gen. Merrill A. McPeak, USAF Chief of Staff 1990-94, interview with airforcetimes.com, June 26.**

Bomber Gaps

"The Islamic Republic [of Iran], with its widely varying geographic characteristics, has 82,000 target points. Commanders believe that ... [an anti-Iran air] campaign would require 103 bombers. A war against a rising great power such as Russia or China would pose an even greater challenge. ... An air campaign against Russia is projected to last 180 days at a minimum and would require nearly 260 bombers. Today, the Air Force has fewer than 100 combat-coded bombers, well shy of the levels required to respond to two regional conflicts simultaneously."—**New bomber study by Jerry Hendrix and USAF Lt. Col. James Price for the Center for a New American Security, June 28.**

Thermonuclear Fears

"It's clear they know how to make tritium. We know that's official. They can make tritium so they have the basic element for a hydrogen bomb."—**Stanford Prof. Siegfried S. Hecker, former director of Los Alamos National Laboratory, news conference in Seoul, June 27.**

Cyber Mutants

"Whether it's North Korea, Russia, China, Iran, or ISIS, almost all of the flash points out there now involve a cyber element. I'm not sure we understand the full capability of what can happen, that these sophisticated viruses can suddenly mutate into other areas you didn't intend, more and more. That's the threat we're going to face in the near future."—**Leon E. Panetta, former Secretary of Defense and CIA Director, quoted in The New York Times, June 28.**

One For All, All For One

"The President is absolutely committed to our [1949 North Atlantic] treaty. We are signatories of the treaty, and he said

we will never abandon those who stand with us, and he was very clear in saying everything but that explicit phrase that everyone was looking for, for some really odd reason. There's never been any doubt in the President's mind, anyone's mind, our allies' minds, about the commitment to Article 5."—**Lt. Gen. H. R. McMaster, Trump national security advisor, referring to the NATO "collective defense" provision, Center for a New American Security, June 28.**

We're Here to Help

"The Pentagon is complicated enough. This will make it more complex, add more boxes to the organization chart, and cost more money. If I had more money, I would put it into lethality, not bureaucracy. ... I don't need another chief of staff and another six deputy chiefs of staff. We need to simplify, not make it more complicated and bureaucratic."—**Secretary of the Air Force Heather A. Wilson, remarks to reporters slamming congressional moves to create a separate space service within the Department of the Air Force, breakingdefense.com, June 21.**

Snowden Worship

"I think there is a phenomenon—the worship of [NSA turncoat] Edward Snowden—and [stealing] American secrets for the purpose of self-aggrandizement, or money, or for whatever their motivation may be, does seem to be on the increase. ... It's tough. You now have not only nation states trying to steal our stuff, but nonstate, hostile intelligence services, well-funded folks like WikiLeaks, out there trying to steal American secrets for the sole purpose of undermining the United States and democracy."—**CIA Director Mike R. Pompeo, interview on MSNBC, June 24.**

Russia The Disastrous

"I never met with the Russians. Not worth it. They've got nothing to work with. Their economy is a disaster. Their demographics are a disaster. Their politics are a disaster. So they go with the second step, which is to undermine us, everywhere they can."—**Michael J. Morrell, acting CIA Director for a time in the Obama Administration, The Daily Beast, June 25.**