

By Robert S. Dudley

## The New Bomber ....

"We have viable bids. ... When I look at a program, I look at whether it's affordable, whether the program plan is executable—is it a reasonable schedule, reasonable amount of money, reasonable requirements? I already did all that. So unless we learn something from the bids that changes some of those parameters, it's merely a matter of verifying that those parameters were valid. ... I do not consider this to be a difficult decision. ... We're comfortable with the risk reduction that's been taking place. [The Air Force] will have to make a choice, then off we'll go."—**Frank Kendall, undersecretary of defense for acquisition, on the status of new USAF bomber development, interview with Anthony Capaccio of Bloomberg News, Oct. 5.**

## ... and Bomber Requirement

"We haven't firmed that up yet. We currently have 159 bombers, of which 96 are combat-coded. I certainly can't imagine a situation where we would need less than that. ... As we get the LRS-B [Long-Range Strike Bomber] in production, procure them, and start fielding them, we will have to have a very healthy discussion of the requirement."—**Gen. Robin Rand, commander of Air Force Global Strike Command, House Armed Services Committee, Sept. 29.**

## Hiding Among Civilians

"When insurgents try to use civilians and public places to hide, it makes it very, very difficult, and we understand how this can happen. You have [a choice]: Either continue operations to clean up—and that might involve attacks in public places—or you just let the Taliban control. In this case, the public understands we went with the first choice, along with our international allies."—**Afghan legislator Fawzia Koofi, on the accidental US air attack on a hospital, Washington Post, Oct. 4.**

## Same Old Ivan

"To me, it [Russia's initial air attack in Syria] was representative of what you'd expect from dumb bombs, be-

ing dropped from airplanes at medium altitudes, which is not that impressive. I think precision matters. If they approach this with indiscriminate bombing, then I think it's going to create second or third effects for them. ... I'd be hard pressed to think of what intelligence I'd want to share with the Russians at this point. Speaking just for myself, I have a low level of trust with the Russians."—**Lt. Gen. Robert P. "Bob" Otto, Air Force deputy chief of staff for ISR, remarks to Defense Writers Group, Oct. 1.**

## What Could It Be?

"We see some very sophisticated [Russian] air defenses going into those [Syrian] airfields. We see some very sophisticated [Russian] air-to-air aircraft going into these airfields. I have not seen ISIL flying any airplanes that require SA-15s or SA-22s [Russian missiles]. I have not seen ISIL flying any airplanes that require sophisticated air-to-air capabilities. These very sophisticated air defense capabilities are not about ISIL. They're about something else."—**USAF Gen. Phillip M. Breedlove, Supreme Allied Command of NATO, quoted in Military Times, Oct. 4.**

## Foregone Conclusion

"We have at the present six positions, six career fields, which are closed to women. They all relate to our special operations team. They're all very physically demanding positions, and they all demand a great deal of mental acuity. So over the last couple of years now, we have been looking at putting in place and developing gender-neutral, operationally relevant standards. And the idea is once we have in place these standards, we would like to open up these six positions to women."—**Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James, interview with the Washington Post, Oct. 1.**

## Warm and Cuddly

"We thought that people's responses to the robots ... would be fearful—'Oh, it looks like a Terminator; I should be scared of it.' We discovered this other effect. The effect was extreme. When the robot fell down, people

went, 'Oh my God!' At one point, the MIT bot fell down, and a woman at the press briefing asked, almost with tears in her eyes, 'Do you know if the MIT robot is OK?' I don't quite understand it, but I suspect that the bond between people and robots will be very strong."—**Gill Pratt, program manager for the DARPA Robotics Challenge, quoted in Defense One, Aug. 30.**

## Lost Generation

"Washington tends to want fixed and easily met deterrence requirements, and the 1990s post-Cold War threat environment seemed to promise a benign new world order with little demand for US nuclear capabilities. The Cold War was over; US-Russian relations were moving to partnership; terrorism was the only threat; US conventional forces would be unbeatable forever; nuclear deterrence and weapons were increasingly irrelevant; and history supposedly was moving toward nuclear 'abolition.' The main US nuclear policy question was not modernization, but which nuclear forces to reduce and how quickly. An entire generation of Americans has grown up with this unrealistic view of the world."—**Strategic analyst Keith Payne, president of National Institute for Public Policy, op-ed in Defense News, Sept. 1.**

## Receding Frontier

"Over the next five to 15 years, if US and [China's] PLA forces remain on roughly current trajectories, Asia will witness a progressively receding frontier of US dominance. The United States would probably still prevail in a protracted war centered in virtually any area. ... US and Chinese forces would likely face losses on a scale that neither has suffered in recent decades. But PLA forces will become more capable of establishing temporary local air and naval superiority at the outset of a conflict. In certain regional contingencies, this temporal or local superiority might enable the PLA to achieve limited objectives without 'defeating' US forces."—**From "The US-China Military Scorecard: Forces, Geography, and the Evolving Balance of Power 1996-2017," published by Rand Corp., Sept. 14.**