

By Robert S. Dudley

Squeezed Out

"I'd love to build a new CAS airplane right now, while we still have the A-10, [and then] transition the A-10 community into the new CAS airplane. We just don't have the money to do it, and we don't have the people to keep flying the A-10 and build a new airplane and bed it down. [However] we don't think this would take that long to do, and we don't think it [the design problem] is that complicated."—*Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, then USAF Chief of Staff, Defense Writers Group, June 15.*

Sour Note

"For every dollar that is spent on our bands to entertain at social functions, that's a dollar we're not spending on national security and our troops and families. ... While our communities certainly do enjoy being entertained by our military bands, they would prefer to be protected by our military."—*Rep. Martha McSally (R-Ariz.), a retired USAF colonel and A-10 pilot, quoted in Air Force Times, June 26.*

Paper, Money, Gunship

"You've got to have a wheelbarrow full of paper [for documentation] before you get a wheelbarrow full of money. Well, we're busy filling the wheelbarrow [with] paper. ... I'm a firm believer that it's time we take directed energy in the form of high energy lasers and move it into the battlefield on an AC-130 gunship. The next weapon is a directed energy weapon."—*Lt. Gen. Bradley A. Heithold, head of Air Force Special Operations Command, remarks at the annual Directed Energy Summit, June 23.*

Through the Side Door

"I really question who is going to do it. I don't see a lot of people I know of saying, 'Hey, I want to go abandon my current position and go be in the military.' Can you imagine someone coming in as an O-5 or O-6 and not knowing who salutes who? Or how to wear a uniform? The traditional military's worst nightmare is to bring in some long haired hippie and make him a colonel."—*Former USAF officer Richard Bejtlich, now a cybersecurity expert at Brookings Institution, on DOD*

plan to allow "lateral entry" of civilians in the armed services, Military Times, June 19.

80 Percent Solution

"I think it's possible that the USAF has reached the point with bombers where it's being driven to the '80 percent solution.' The B-21 might well be a B-2 'mini me.' Modern computerized design and production techniques will certainly make production of a B-2-like aircraft less costly than it was 20 years ago. If that's the case, it's smart—silver bullets have simply gotten too expensive. The USAF might have realized that it has to choose between quantity and 'quality' (AKA sophistication)—and has chosen the 80 percent solution this time. The B-21 might be to the B-2 what the Virginia-class submarine is to the exquisite but prohibitively expensive Seawolf class—good enough to get the job done and affordable enough to buy."—*Andrew Davies, research analyst, Australian Strategic Policy Institute, online posting, July 1.*

History Rhymes?

"It is hard not to feel a certain satisfaction with the comeuppance that Brexit has delivered to the unaccountable European Union bureaucrats in Brussels. Nonetheless, we would do well to refrain from smug condescension. Unity is not easy. ... Seven decades into the postwar era, ... the EU is facing an existential crisis. Yet where were we Americans seven decades into our great experiment in continental confederation, our 'more perfect union' contracted under the Constitution of 1787? At Fort Sumter."—*Syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer, Washington Post, June 30.*

Well, Do Give Up the Ship

"If I had decided to start a fire, I know a lot of my guys would be dead. We might all be dead at that point. ... I didn't want to start a war with Iran either. I didn't want to start a war that would get people killed. ... That was also on my mind. ... Allowing us to be captured—that was my decision and my decision alone. ... I made the gamble that they were not going to kill us. I made the gamble that they were not going to take us to Tehran and parade us around

like prisoners of war."—*Unnamed Navy lieutenant who, as skipper of a riverine ship in the Persian Gulf, surrendered at gunpoint to Iranian Guards. Navy report quoted by Navy Times, June 30.*

They Did Not Try

"We expect our government to make every effort to save the lives of Americans who serve in harm's way. That did not happen in Benghazi. Politics were put ahead of the lives of Americans, and while the Administration had made excuses and blamed the challenges posed by time and distance, the truth is that they did not try."—*Rep. Mike Pompeo (R-Kan.), member of the House Benghazi panel, statement on June 28, upon release of the highly critical report.*

On the Run, Part 2

"There has been no strategic victory for ISIS in over a year now. We have seen them, in fact, lose significant territory over and over again. Fallujah, Ramadi, Rutbah, Hiit, Sinjar, Baiji on the Iraq side. In Syria, we've seen them lose Al Hal, Shaddadi, Tishrin Dam, and now the stranglehold on Manbij, and they will soon lose that as well."—*Navy Capt. Jeff Davis, spokesman for the Defense Department, June 27.*

Carter Speaks

"I'm announcing today that we're ending the ban on transgender Americans in the United States military. Effective immediately, transgender Americans may serve openly, and they can no longer be discharged or otherwise separated from the military just for being transgender."—*Secretary of Defense Ashton B. Carter, formal statement, June 30.*

McCain Speaks

"I will be calling up the chiefs of the services, those men [and women] in uniform who are the heads of the military, and asking their views. ... Unlike any other Administration that I have been associated with, we received no heads up. ... It's customary ... to give members, particularly the chairman, a briefing. ... Something like this will require some legislation."—*Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), on removal of the military's ban on transgender persons, interview on Fox News, June 30.*