

*From Pentagon Press Briefing  
February 25, 2009  
Presenter: Geoff Morrell, Pentagon Press Secretary*

Q A question on the F-22.

MR. MORRELL: Yes.

Q Will there be a decision by March 1st, a go or no-go decision, or will that be delayed until your more detailed budget rollout?

MR. MORRELL: Well, I would take issue with the characterization of "go or no-go." There will be a communication to the Congress by March the 1st about the \$140 million in funding that they have authorized for us to spend on long-lead parts, primarily for the four replacement aircraft that will -- that will be in the FY '10 supplemental, but also for the -- for the potential that we would buy planes above and beyond that. Right now, we have only spent (\$50 million of that (\$140 million that's been authorized, so we're still sitting on \$90 million. So I think there will be a communication made to the Congress about the status of that \$140 million.

But I would caution you not to read too much into that, so that if we made -- if we informed the Congress that we weren't going to spend any more than the (\$50 million of this, you know, as of March 1st, or we were going to spend a little more, or all the 90 (million dollars) that remains, that should not necessarily signal where we are going with the F-22 program. The decision about how many, if any, additional planes we wish to acquire will be made in the context of the FY '10 budget.

Q Okay, which means in layman's language that that decision point won't be made until mid-April, when the final budget is rolled out?

MR. MORRELL: It won't be made by March 1st, I'll tell you that. Yeah.

Q I'm just --

MR. MORRELL: Yeah.

Q So on that --

MR. MORRELL: Yes, you're absolutely right. It will not -- we will not signal in our communication to Congress that is due on March 1st, with regards to this (\$140 million in long-lead parts, we will not signal where we are going with the program.

Q More -- closer to the April --

MR. MORRELL: You will know when the FY '10 budget is rolled out where the F-22 program is going, but not until that point. Okay.

Q It will -- the planes would be in the fiscal year '10 supplemental?

MR. MORRELL: They were moved from the FY '09 supplemental and into the FY -- it's our anticipation they will be in the FY '10 supplemental.

Q Is that a commitment to those planes, then?

MR. MORRELL: Well, we've -- we've made a commitment to the replacement aircraft. We made that -- we've talked about this, you know, I think a year ago. So those replacement aircraft would put us above the 183 to 187. But those are replacement aircraft. That doesn't speak to where we are going with this program. I mean, that's old news. It's been out there. It's been reported. It's been discussed.

Q This --

MR. MORRELL: Part of the reason not to read too much into how that -- the \$140 million is spent -- and this has been communicated by John Young to members of Congress on several occasions -- is that that -- that the long-lead parts that we have bought, for example, with the 50 million (dollars) we've spent already, especially the titanium, these are dual-purpose parts.

So even if there's a decision that we're not going to buy any above the four replacement aircraft, those materials could be used for other aircraft; for example, the Joint Strike Fighter. So I just caution you not to read too much into whatever the communication is that's made to Congress on March 1st. To know the future of the F-22 program, you will have to wait until the FY '10 budget is rolled out.