

STATEMENT OF GENERAL (Ret) RICHARD E. HAWLEY

UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND

30 April, 2009

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to discuss future roles, missions, and capabilities of U.S. military air power. By way of introduction, I am a graduate of the United States Air Force Academy and of Georgetown University. I served on active duty for 35 years, retiring in 1999 as Commander of Air Combat Command at Langley Air Force Base in Hampton, Virginia. My combat experience is as a forward air controller with the 4th Infantry Division in the central highlands of Vietnam, where I learned about the application of airpower in irregular warfare. I accumulated about 1,000 hours in the multi-role, multi-service F-4 Phantom II, and a like number of hours in the single service, single mission F-15 air superiority fighter, so I understand the difference between those competing concepts of fighter design and acquisition. I have flown the A-10, C-130, C-141, C-17, B-52, B-1 and B-2 as a pilot, and as an observer in most other aircraft in the Air Force inventory.

I served for two years as the principal deputy to the Undersecretary of the Air Force for Acquisition and in 2005 as a member of the Defense Acquisition Performance Assessment Project, studying the problems we face in that area. Also in 2005, I served as a member of a DoD Red Team supporting the last Quadrennial Defense Review. Since 1999 my perspective has been broadened through work as an independent consultant, mostly in support of the aerospace industry and US Joint Forces Command as a Senior Concept Developer. I hope that my testimony can be helpful to the committee as you consider the President's proposed defense budget for 2010.

For the subject of this hearing, that budget promises to be more noteworthy for what it will not contain than for what it does. It will not propose funding for additional production of F-22 air superiority fighters or C-17 strategic airlift aircraft, and it will not propose funding for development of new combat search and rescue or long range strike aircraft. These omissions have major ramifications for the future of US airpower, and the first two will be irreversible. Therefore, I will focus these opening comments on the proposal to end production of the F-22 and the C-17, and hope that your questions will allow me to comment on the other issues.

The Air Force is responsible for the development of capabilities to gain and maintain air superiority over the battlefield, and to provide strategic airlift capabilities that allow our armed forces to respond rapidly to global crises. To fulfill those responsibilities, the Air Force conducts rigorous analyses to determine the attributes these aircraft will need to successfully accomplish their missions over their expected 30 to 40 year service lives. In the case of the F-22 and C-17, those analyses were presented to the Congress and, after long and thoughtful debate, the Congress approved funding to develop and subsequently field these aircraft. Both are without peer in their respective mission areas and are the envy of every Air Force in the world today.

Having developed these capabilities, the Air Force is then charged with advising the Secretary of Defense and the Congress on the number required to successfully support our National Security, National Defense and National Military Strategies. The Air Force conducts an equally rigorous analysis to support its conclusions with regard to this important question. In doing so, it is guided by direction from the Secretary of Defense concerning the number and nature of the contingencies for which it must prepare forces for employment by the combatant commands. Although that guidance evolves as the threats to our nation evolve, it has consistently required forces able to support more than one major regional contingency at a time while still defending the homeland and deterring other would be aggressors.

As a participant in those analyses regarding the F-22, I can assure you that the number of F-22s required to conduct operations in two major regional contingencies, against adversaries who are capable of contesting our control of the air, is 381. That number is sufficient to equip ten operational squadrons with 24 aircraft each, along with the supporting training base, test aircraft and some attrition reserve. Others in the Air Force and the joint staff have conducted mobility studies that set the number of C-17s required to support our defense strategy at 205, but those studies did not consider the planned growth in the size of the United States Army and Marine Corps.

To my knowledge, there is no analysis that would call into question these requirements for F-22 and C-17 aircraft, but the recommendation to the President and the Congress is to close both production lines after building just 187 F-22s and 205 C-17s. The recommendation on the C-17 seems to be based on a dated analysis of the requirement, and that for the F-22 on no analysis whatsoever. The F-22 recommendation rests on an assertion that we cannot afford to equip our airmen, on whom we rely to gain and maintain air superiority, with the best weapons that our defense industrial base has developed. Rather, we and they are asked to accept the risk of sending them into the fight with weapons designed for an entirely different mission.

I find that logic to be suspect. Federal outlays in 2010 will be about \$3.5 Trillion, while keeping the F-22 and C-17 lines open, so a closure decision could be informed by the QDR and a review of our national security strategy, would cost less than \$4 Billion. In my view, these recommendations, if implemented, will preempt the full and open debate that should precede any major change to the force sizing construct. A force of 187 F-22s may be sufficient for one major regional contingency, but there will be no reserve left to help deter an opportunistic aggressor elsewhere in the world. Should the President and Congress conclude that our forces should be sized to deal with only one contingency where our control of the air is contested, that will be an appropriate time to terminate production of the F-22. Until then, the actual requirement is for 381 aircraft, not 187 or even 243. As to the C-17, I find it difficult to believe that the requirement can remain stagnant even as the forces that must be deployed and sustained grow substantially in number.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my views on these important issues. I look forward to your questions.