

By Robert S. Dudley

Speaking of Surrealism

"We need help in planning for the future. We can adjust to any reality once we have a reality."—*Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, USAF Chief of Staff, Colorado Springs Gazette, Nov. 4.*

A Vanilla Gorilla?

"We are trying to stick to a [development] plan, for once. Adding things means risk—risk of increasing costs, risk the plane won't be built. ... [Using] technology that has been fielded is the only answer. If it hasn't already been tested, we aren't interested. ... This plane is not going to be all things to all people."—*USAF Col. Chad Stevenson, Long-Range Strike Bomber program officer, quoted in the Wall Street Journal, Nov. 3.*

When Trumps Are Gone

"The US military remains virtually the sole employer of large-scale precision strike efforts, especially over long ranges. ... Eventually, however, precision strike will proliferate into the hands of prospective American adversaries both large and small. ... The eventual spread of precision strike raises the possibility that countries such as China and Iran will one day manage to exploit precision strike to create 'no-go' zones into which it would be too difficult and too costly for the United States to project military power using today's overseas bases and expeditionary forces. ... Either new ways of projecting power around the globe from long ranges would have to be developed or else America's ability to protect its global interests, intervene around the globe militarily, and reassure allies would shrink. How soon US leaders may have to face this choice is anyone's guess. ... Nonetheless it is one possible result of a mature precision-strike regime in which the US military no longer holds most of the trump cards."—*Barry D. Watts, former USAF fighter pilot and DOD official, now senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, The National Interest, Nov. 2.*

Knowledge Is Power

"This command, this commander, and the 26,000 airmen he leads are [entrusted] with two-thirds of our nation's nuclear triad. What you do is provide our nation with the ability to hold any

target at risk, anywhere in the world, at any time. You know that, the rest of the world knows it, and that's why strategic deterrence works."—*Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, USAF Chief of Staff, remarks at Global Strike Command, Barksdale AFB, La., Oct. 23.*

The Inman Flush

"My advice [to today's embattled NSA leaders] would be to take everything you think Snowden has and get it out yourself. It would certainly be a shock to the agency, but bad news doesn't get better with age. The sooner they get it out and put it behind them, the faster they can begin to rebuild."—*Retired Adm. Bobby R. Inman, former NSA director, New York Times, Nov. 2.*

Trading Places

"[A] revelation that has emerged from US post-Cold War combat experiences has been that when it comes to major conventional warfare against modern mechanized opponents like the former Iraqi army or North Korea today, the classic roles of airpower and land power have changed places. In this role reversal, ground forces have now come to do most of the shaping and fixing of enemy forces, with airpower now doing most of the actual killing of those forces. ... This changed phenomenon of joint warfare in the past two decades is not simply a matter of the notional 'hammer' of friendly airpower smashing enemy forces against the 'anvil' of friendly ground power. Rather, as one former Army colonel explained, it more entails 'a case of ground power flushing the enemy, allowing airpower to maul his forces, with ground power finishing the fight against the remnants and controlling the ground dimension in the aftermath of combat.'"—*Benjamin S. Lambeth, senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, writing in the fall 2013 issue of Strategic Studies Quarterly.*

Chinese Cheese

"We need to look at it [China's anti-access defense] not as an iron dome but as a block of Swiss cheese that gets more dense as you get closer to the center. ... The way you deal with it is you find the holes in the Swiss cheese and widen them. Those holes

in the Swiss cheese ... that's where our ... money ought to go. You've got to buy the things that increase our asymmetric advantage, and we have many, many, many of them. [Everything else], let it go, because we're just throwing money into places that aren't going to make a difference."—*Adm. Samuel J. Locklear III, commander, US Pacific Command, remarks to a recent National Defense Industrial Association conference, as reported in breakingdefense.com, Nov. 4.*

The Killing Fields

"Because the Midwest states of the US are sparsely populated, in order to increase the lethality, [our] nuclear attacks should mainly target the key cities on the West Coast of the United States, such as Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Diego. The 12 JL-2 nuclear warheads carried by one single Type 094 SSBN can kill and wound five million to 12 million Americans. If we launch our DF 31A ICBMs over the North Pole, we can easily destroy a whole list of metropolises on the East Coast and the New England region of the US, including Annapolis, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Portland, Baltimore, and Norfolk, whose population accounts for about one-eighth of America's total residents."—*Statement in Chinese state-run Global Times, reported in the Washington Times, Oct. 31.*

First (and Only) Use Doctrine

"The ultimate objective of the nuclear deterrent is to make sure that the weapons are never used. And yet, we use them every day to do that. It's almost counterintuitive from people who aren't informed, but we use those weapons every single day."—*USAF Gen. C. Robert Kehler, then commander, US Strategic Command, House Armed Services strategic forces subcommittee, Oct. 29.*

Process, Process, Process

"Time is money. We really need to look at how we get things to market faster and more efficiently. How we test, how we learn, and how we make improvements has become overtaken by a slavish adherence to an ever-increasing process."—*Retired Adm. Gary Roughead, former Chief of Naval Operations, on the need to streamline testing of the new F-35 fighter, interview with Reuters, Oct. 30.*