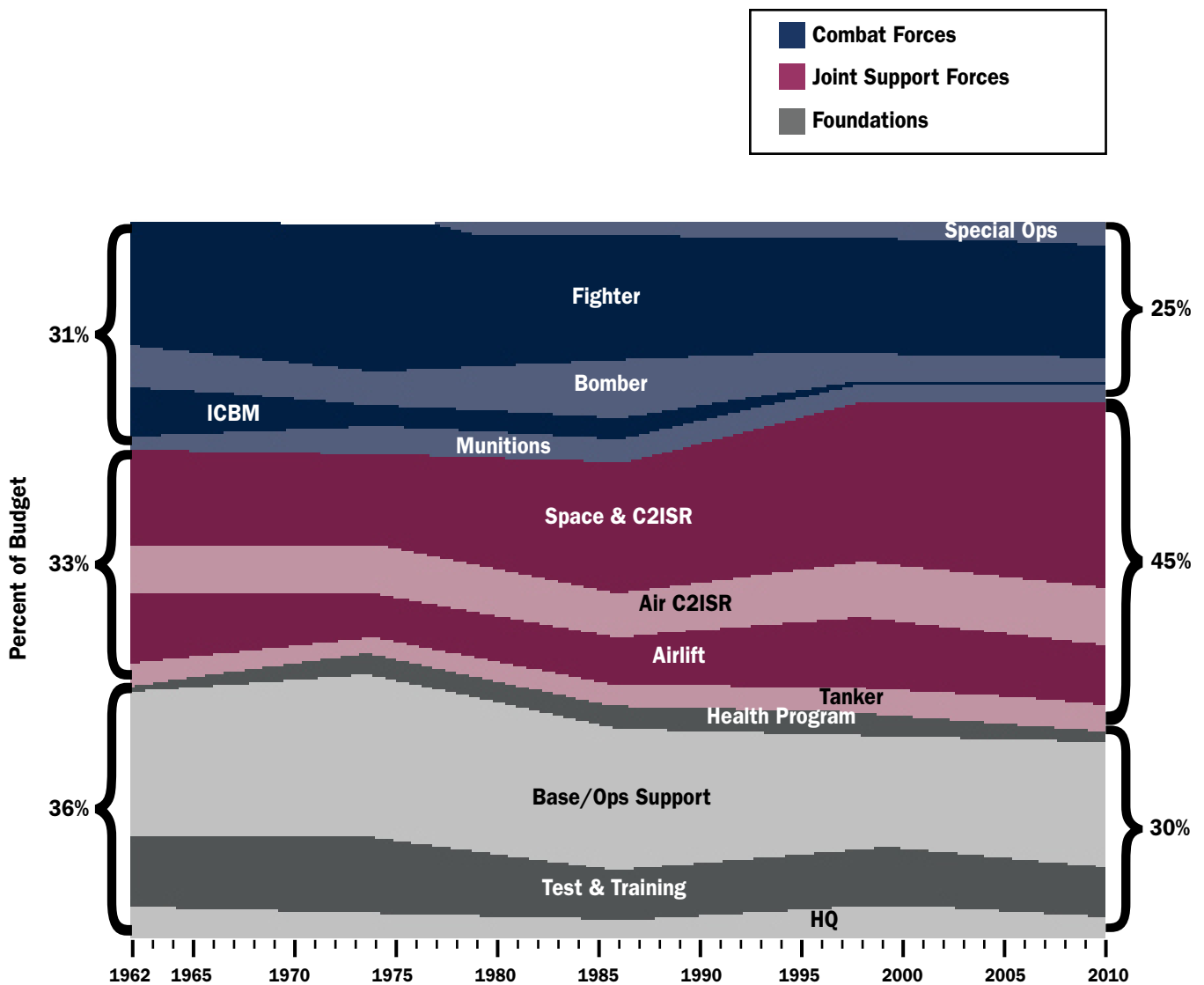


## Rise of an “Existential” Dilemma

The Air Force has undergone a long-term shift in spending. The figure on this page illustrates where the service has invested funds since 1962. Spending on “foundations”—bases, test, training, and so forth—changed little. However, spending on joint force “enablers”—space, mobility, intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance capabilities—has zoomed from 33 percent

to 45 percent of USAF’s budget. As a result, the combat air force has been squeezed; CAF’s share of the budget has dropped from 31 to 25 percent. James C. Ruehrmund Jr. and Christopher J. Bowie, authors of a recent analysis of USAF spending, believe this trend constitutes “a serious existential dilemma” for the service.

### USAF’s Inventory—Less Bang, More Support



Source: “Arsenal of Airpower—USAF Aircraft Inventory 1950-2009,” James C. Ruehrmund Jr. and Christopher J. Bowie, Mitchell Institute Press, Arlington, Va., November 2010.