

By Robert S. Dudney

Still Digging

"Last year, our readiness levels reached an all-time low. As we struggle to recover, we don't have enough units ready to respond immediately to a major contingency, and we're not always able to provide fully mission-ready units to meet our combatant commanders' routine rotational requirements. ... [This year,] we'll take significant cuts to flying hours and weapons system sustainment accounts, reduce precision munitions buys, and lower funding for training ranges, digging our readiness hole even deeper."—**Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, USAF Chief of Staff, Senate Armed Services Committee, May 6.**

Still Bleeding

"We are continuing to hemorrhage readiness and cutting further into modernization."—**Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff, Senate Armed Services Committee, May 6.**

Sending Signals

"We're telling them they just cost us too much, that they constitute a 'ticking time-bomb,' and that their sacrifice is 'eating us alive.' We are telling them that we are looking for a way out of fulfilling our commitments to them. This is not the right signal to send those who volunteered to serve in time of war."—**Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.), opening statement at Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, May 6.**

We Laugh. We Cry. We Barf.

"The rest of the world, almost unanimously, looks at America as the No. 1 warmonger—that we revert to armed conflict almost at the drop of a hat, and quite often it's not only desired by the leaders of our country but it's also supported by the people of America. ... We do it all the time—that's Washington, unfortunately—and we have for years."—**Former President James "Jimmy" Carter, interview with Salon, April 10.**

Victimhood Sucks

"There is one misperception of our veterans, and that is they are somehow damaged goods. I don't buy it. If we tell our veterans enough that this is what is wrong with them, they may actually start

believing it. While victimhood in America is exalted, I don't think our veterans should join those ranks. There is no room for military people, including our veterans, to see themselves as victims, even if so many of our countrymen are prone to relish that role."—**Retired Gen. James Mattis, USMC, remarks at the Marine's Memorial Club in San Francisco, quoted in USA Today, May 5.**

Rodman Clears the Air

"DENNIS RODMAN CLAIMS KIM JOHN UN DIDN'T ACTUALLY HAVE UNCLE EXECUTED AND FED TO DOGS."—**Actual headline from article in The Huffington Post, May 4.**

Advice to Freeloaders

"Today, America's GDP is smaller than the combined GDPs of our 27 NATO Allies, but America's defense spending is three times our Allies' combined defense spending. ... For decades, from the early days of the Cold War, American Defense Secretaries have called on European allies to ramp up their defense investment. And in recent years, one of the biggest obstacles to alliance investment has been a sense that the end of the Cold War ushered in the "end of history"—an end to insecurity, at least in Europe—and the end [of] aggression by nation-states. But Russia's action in Ukraine shatters that myth."—**Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel, address to the Woodrow Wilson International Center, May 2.**

Army and the A-10

"The A-10 is a great close air support aircraft. ... However, ... in Afghanistan, there is a significant amount of [close air support] missions ... being flown by other platforms such as the F-15s and F-16s. The Air Force has come to us and said that they absolutely believe this will be able to meet our needs in close air support. So we are working with them in the future to develop those techniques and procedures that will be necessary to provide us the proper support of F-16s. ... We are supporting their effort."—**Gen. Raymond T. Odierno, Army Chief of Staff, Congressional testimony, April 3.**

Why Tops in Blue?

"The truth is, it hurts morale. We are cutting programs that airmen actually

utilize—bowling alleys, auto hobby shops, other activities on base—and yet we're continuing to make bases spend money on hosting Tops in Blue. There's not a company in the private sector that would—[in] such dire financial straits, and cutting thousands of personnel—yet keep a traveling show band on the payroll. It's maddening to a lot of people."—**USAF Capt. Gavin Light, former member of Tops in Blue, the Air Force's traveling performance troupe, Air Force Times, April 30.**

You Think That's Maddening?

"This annual Dog and Cat Fur Protection Report to Congress ... is required by legislative language set forth in the Dog and Cat Protection Act of 2000. ... During Fiscal Year (FY) 2012, there were no violations of the Dog and Cat Protection Act of 2000 ... discovered during stratified cargo examinations, indicating a high level of compliance with the Act."—**Actual text from a recent report, quoted in Washington Post, May 3.**

Careful What You Wish For

"America's allies are nervous. With Russia grabbing territory, China bullying its neighbors, and Syria murdering its people, many are asking: where is Globocop? Under what circumstances will America act to deter troublemakers? ... Some will celebrate the decline of America's ability to deter. But wherever they live, they may find that whatever replaces the old order is much worse. American power is not half as scary as its absence would be."—**House editorial in The Economist, May 3.**

Mocking a Mock Up

"Whatever Iran hopes to do with the mock-up, it is likely to have zero impact on US Navy operations in the Gulf. Firing weapons at a stationary structure floating on pontoons is not a realistic representation of having the capability to target a 100,000-ton warship ... maneuvering at speeds in excess of 30 knots."—**Cmdr. Jason Salata, US Navy 5th Fleet spokesman, on Iran's claim that it staged a successful attack on a "mock-up" of a US Navy aircraft carrier, Associated Press dispatch, May 6.**