

*AIR, SPACE, AND CYBERSPACE POWER IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY*  
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**DAY ONE**

**SESSION THREE**

*Finding the Appropriate Force Mix:  
Balancing Capabilities with Priorities*

**2:30 - 4:00 P.M.**

**Lt. Gen. David A. Deptula**

**DR. THOMAS P. EHRHARD:** Let's get started with our post-lunch panel. Welcome back, and again welcome, everyone to this important event for the Air Force and thank you for being in attendance today. And again, I'm Tom Ehrhard, special assistant to General Schwartz. And today, we have a very interesting panel for you that hopefully will accomplish what the chief's mandate was from this morning, which was to get us to think about the future security environment, think about what we need to be doing with the Air Force in the future, and try to outline some of the key elements of the debate about what we need to do going forward.

The title of this particular panel is interesting. It's called "Finding the Appropriate Force Mix: Balancing Capabilities with Priority." So right off the bat, you have two terms that are problematic. The first one is "appropriate." So what we'll do today, and job one, is to make sure we don't do anything that's inappropriate.

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**LIEUTENANT GENERAL DAVID A. DEPTULA:** First chart, please. Thanks for the introduction, Tom, and good afternoon, Chief, Air Force leadership and all of you interested in

the future security of the United States. It's a real pleasure to be here. I don't know about being the first one to talk after lunch, but we'll see how it goes. This is a topic of critical importance that Tom's introduced, and that's the balance between the demands of today and the challenges of the future with investment and appropriate force mix to accomplish both.

Using the past as a starting point, I feel we'd be remiss in discussing a balanced force for the future without taking a look back where we thought we needed to be today in 1996 when we published Joint Vision 201. You all remember that document? Emerging from Desert Storm, we set about defining what we thought our forces should be able to do 10 to 15 years into the future, much like what we're trying to do today. There was a lot of gnashing of teeth then over network centric warfare and the tenets of dominant maneuver, precision, focused logistics and whether or not full spectrum protection is achievable, and whether or not information superiority was even desirable, much less achievable. Well, I would suggest to you that they were. They enabled us to rapidly accomplish military objectives in three very different conflicts and respond to global crises in days what previously would have taken months. And I might add that these current concepts are being demonstrated for you today in Haiti where we're providing rapid relief to a truly devastated nation.

Now our challenges, however, didn't diminish with the achievement of these new capabilities as they, too, have adapted and grown. Today, we're faced with a rising global extremism while still facing traditional threats that are growing in capability. In addition, while increasingly important in terms of access and political support, we're seeing our alliances change in terms of capability, as scarcity of resources and global economic slowdowns force hard choices about how much our partners can contribute.

At the same time, the commercialization of technology is making it more and more available to a wider array of potential adversary actors. Where the U.S. used to have a monopoly on leading edge technological capability, that's no longer the case. And that fact alone significantly complicates our security plan.

Now, balancing the challenges of today and tomorrow requires that we not only address the question of force structures, but that we carefully take a look at our organizations and processes that we rely on that drive the rationale and application of those force structures. We need to review those organizations and processes and adapt them to the realities of an information age giving growing defense resource constraints and a growing and very complex array of potential threats.

In many ways, we're still living with organizations and constructs that were designed in the industrial age of warfare. The foundation of our national security architecture today was laid as a result of the National Security Act of 1947. Are these still optimal for meeting our security needs in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? In the Air Force, we have two large major commands and a smaller one that are focused on domains; air space and cyber. To achieve cross-domain integration, is there a more appropriate functional organizational construct that we ought to be considering?

We all have a JCIDS process for those of you who are intimately aware of that acronym, and that stands for joint capability integrated development system. That's a process that if we made a decision today on the next iteration of a remotely piloted aircraft and that was executed, it would take until 2021 to get that remotely piloted aircraft to initial operational capability. We have laws that govern the use of information devices that were written before the cell phone and internet were even invented. Do we need to revisit those laws in the context of the accelerating growth of operations in cyberspace?

Now, while seemingly disconnected, all these questions will have a direct effect on the character and shape of our force structures of the future. Let's take a look at each one in just a tad bit more detail.

With respect to jointness, I think it needs to be recognized and exercised for what it is. Jointness means that among our force services is a separate array of capabilities that's provided to a joint force commander. His or her job is to assemble a plan from among this menu of capabilities, applying the right force at the right time at the right place for a particular contingency. It does not mean that four separate services deployed will fight and simply align under a single

commander. Nor does jointness mean everybody necessarily gets an equal share of the action, or does it imply homogeneity amongst those forces.

The reason joint force operations creates synergies is because this approach allows each service to focus on, hone and offer its own core functions and competencies. So to have effective joint operations requires different capabilities, concepts and perspectives of our separate services.

Interdependence is the next step in the evolution of jointness and will be critical as we chart our way ahead. Now, it's not dependence, it's interdependence where two or more service components together amplify capabilities such that they can synergistically meet a challenge in support of the objectives of the joint force command. Application of a B52 is a good example of this principle. By itself, it's a formidable weapons system. But depending upon the contingency situation, couple it with a joint terminal attack controller embedded with surface forces and it's even more powerful and more precise.

Designing our forces with an eye towards where they meet in the operational environment and make each other better, stronger and more effective is going to be a must if we're to preserve the kind of flexibility that the information age demands.

Now all that said, there's a cautionary note that we need to consider in our visions for and approaches to national security and the balance of forces that we designed to secure it. At present, we define our military challenges through the environments of regular or irregular catastrophic and disruptive challenges. These may be useful constructs of strategic environments, but these distinct individual characterizations of potential conflict are intellectual bins that perhaps say more about us than they do our adversary. And they may lead us down the wrong road with respect to defense planning.

Consider the environment above Iraq and Afghanistan. It's permissive. It's one where we own the air and the space and no one's attempting to wrest control of it from us. The rapid expansion and availability of technologies is going to present us with contested or denied operating environments in the future. And it's in these environments where I believe our greatest



**DR. EHRHARD:** Thank you very much, Jim. Okay, that's the end of our panel and we do have some time for questions. There's plenty of you to deal with in that time, in these discussions. So does anybody have any questions out there? I'd rather get to yours right now. Go ahead?

**AUDIENCE:** Yes, sir. Colonel J. D. Klemm from SAF/AQQ. This is not a stuff question. When we discuss balance and force mix, what is the thinking reference the ARC? Should it mirror the active? Specifically, as resources become tighter, can we afford to equip the ARC as stand alone force projection outfits when the maximum and during deployment posture is only 1:4 or 1:5? Should we instead focus the ARC on different missions as we are with remotely piloted vehicles such as nuclear security, homeland defense or cyber?

**DR. EHRHARD:** Does anyone want to take that one?

**MR. THOMAS:** Yes. We could elaborate on it, but I think your comment, question, gets to the heart of it. And as we move to the future where we have greater and greater constraints on our personnel, we ought to incorporate our reserve component in an optimum fashion where the mission sets make sense. And those that require less deployment are a perfect fit for the ARC in some of the missions that you mentioned. And that we're jumping in with two feet to do that. But the Director of the Air National Guard was in my office the other day and we were talking about greater incorporation of Air National Guard folks doing the remotely piloted aircraft mission, as well as the distributed common ground station analytic back end piece. A perfect match that will truly take us to the next level of total force integration.

**DR. EHRHARD:** Thanks, sir. Another question? Go ahead.

**AUDIENCE:** Sky Forrester from the Eisenhower Center of Space and Defense Studies at the Air Force Academy. Couple of references to commercialization, particularly as it relates to space. The reality is, as you all know, a substantial percentage of our capability, information flows, communications, comes from non-U.S. government assets in space, commercialization. To what extent is the commercial sector part of this consideration of what our own space assets ought to be, or are we still predominantly thinking about DOD and Air Force space assets and

kind of leaving that to fend for itself? The thousand ship Navy is a bad metaphor, but there may be something-- there's some element of that that might be interesting to pursue. I'd be interested in your comments.

**DR. EHRHARD:** I can say the space posture review is another one of the reviews that we're sort of waiting to come out. But I do know they've addressed that and we don't really have the right people up here, perhaps, to deal directly with that question. But it always has been a part of how we think about space and the difficulty is that it changes over time. For a while there, it looked like there wasn't going to be a lot of capacity in space toward the end of the '90s. Some of the systems, Iridium, et cetera, were not very successful. So it makes it a very difficult planning challenge to understand just how much capacity is going to be out there. Now we see private, commercial companies getting into even some pretty high fidelity imagery-type work. So there can be no question that just like in aviation, air power is a larger part of both military and commercial and civil. The same thing applies to space.

I will just say this. Once again, when you start talking about force mix, you have to ask in an era of such constrained resources and the different kinds of challenges that all the speakers talked about here, you have to ask yourself, what is your core capability? What are really the things that you have to have in the U.S. military? And some of the challenges that were talking about here are not easy ones. They have to do with the fact that there's going to be growing challenges to unfettered access and exploitation of space. So there is no doubt about the fact that this, it's changing rapidly, what the composition of those space assets are. But we have to ask serious questions about when you fall back and you're dealing with a bandwidth constrained environment, for instance. What are those pieces that we have to have as military assets up there that do specific jobs for us and going forward the space mix?

Let me just add one other challenge to that. General Deptula deals with ISR every day. And there are huge issues dealing with the space and air mix, as well, and how we hedge against a future, more contested environment in both domains and how we balance those two capabilities. So there's no question about the fact that commercial assets are being used today. They're a critical part of all those predator caps and reper caps that we're running every day, those commercial

bandwidth paths. And so they've just become a part of the way we do business, and I don't think that's going to change in the near future.

I want to get off the stage now, we have Secretary Carter, is going to be speaking to you in a minute. I want to thank the speakers again for their words today, and hope we gave you something to think about when it comes to the future force mix for the Air Force. Thank you very much.

END OF SESSION III