

Note from AFA President -- F-22, Schlesinger, Predator

AFA Members, Congressional Staffers, Civic leaders, and DOCA members, as you may know, this week the Senate voted to strip F-22 funds from the Authorization bill. Following that, both Chairmen of the House and Senate Appropriations Committees announced they would follow suit and not force additional F-22s on the Administration. AFA, of course, believes the Air Force needs more F-22s. We made our case often to anyone who would listen. We did our best to counter the mounds of misinformation on the aircraft. However, we did not prevail. I can only hope that years in the future we won't be forced to say: "We wish we had more of these aircraft."

Recently, the Wall Street Journal (WSJ) conducted an excellent interview with former Secretary of Defense, Dr. James R. Schlesinger. The subject was nuclear deterrence – a subject in which Dr. Schlesinger is one of our nation's foremost experts. The start of the article quotes Dr. Schlesinger as saying: "Nuclear weapons are used every day." You can find the link to the piece on our website under education and opinion:

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124726489588925407.html> [As an aside, the AFA Chairman of the Board, Joe Sutter, selected Dr. Schlesinger for AFA's Lifetime Achievement Award. He will be honored along with the Tuskegee Airmen and the Doolittle Raiders at this year's Anniversary Dinner which ends the Air & Space Conference in Washington on 16 Sep.]

Finally, last week an intriguing piece in the WSJ covered a tough subject – Predators and Civilians. The editorial attempted shed light on the issue of predator strikes which sometimes cause civilian casualties. I think the article is balanced and weighs a lot of factors. You can find the piece at:

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124743959026229517.html> As an aside, two weeks ago, I listened to The Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Gen Norton A. Schwartz, address a group of House members and staff. He made the point that the name "Unmanned Aerial Vehicle" is really a misnomer. It implied that no humans were involved in its operation – which as the experts know is not the case. I have started using the term: "Remotely Piloted Vehicle" or RPV as a better description of this category of weapon system.

For your consideration,

Mike

Michael M. Dunn  
President/CEO

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